

SPRING 2025

FTL *Connect*



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

YOUR KEY TO THE CITY

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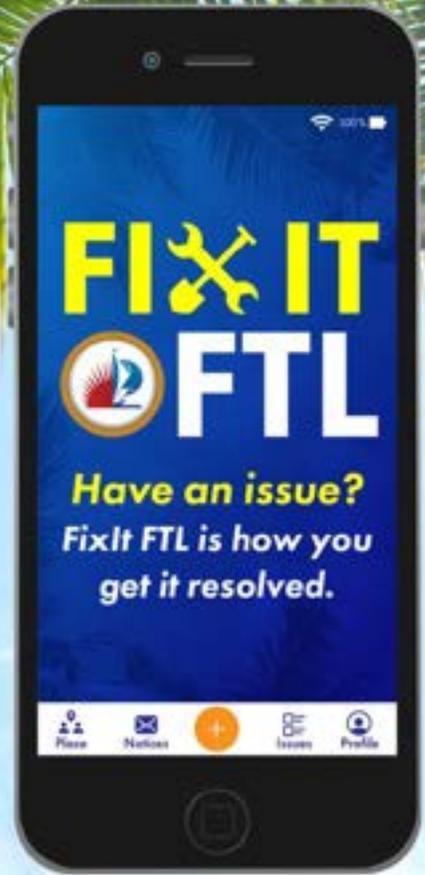
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Easily report non-emergency issues such as...

- Streetlight outages
- Potholes
- Graffiti
- Code complaints



Report potentially hazardous situations

- Flooded streets
- Clogged storm drains



Use GPS to identify the exact location

Download it today on the App Store or Google Play!



INFO: fortlauderdale.gov/FixItFTL

Directory of IMPORTANT CONTACTS



Customer Service Center

954-828-8000

cservice@fortlauderdale.gov
fortlauderdale.gov/FixItFTL



Police Department

Non-Emergency: 954-828-5700
IN AN EMERGENCY, DIAL 9-1-1



Fire Rescue Administrative Office

954-828-6800

IN AN EMERGENCY, DIAL 9-1-1



Development Services Department (DSD)

700 NW 19th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311
954-828-6520, Option 2



Parks & Recreation Department

954-828-PARK (7275)

parksinfo@fortlauderdale.gov



Utility Billing Customer Service

954-828-5150

Sanitation Pick-Up, Sewer, Storm Drains:
954-828-8000



Transportation and Mobility/Parking

Transportation Inquiries

954-828-4TAM (4826)

transportation@fortlauderdale.gov

Parking Inquiries

954-828-8000

parkingservices@fortlauderdale.gov



City Manager's Office

954-828-8000

city.manager@fortlauderdale.gov

If you would like this publication in an alternate format, please call 954-828-4755 or email strategiccommunications@fortlauderdale.gov.



Check Out Your COMMISSION DISTRICT

The City of Fort Lauderdale is divided into four City Commission districts with the Mayor serving the entire City as an at-large member.

See the map below and find your district.

MAP
KEY



City Limits



District 1 – Vice Mayor John C. Herbst



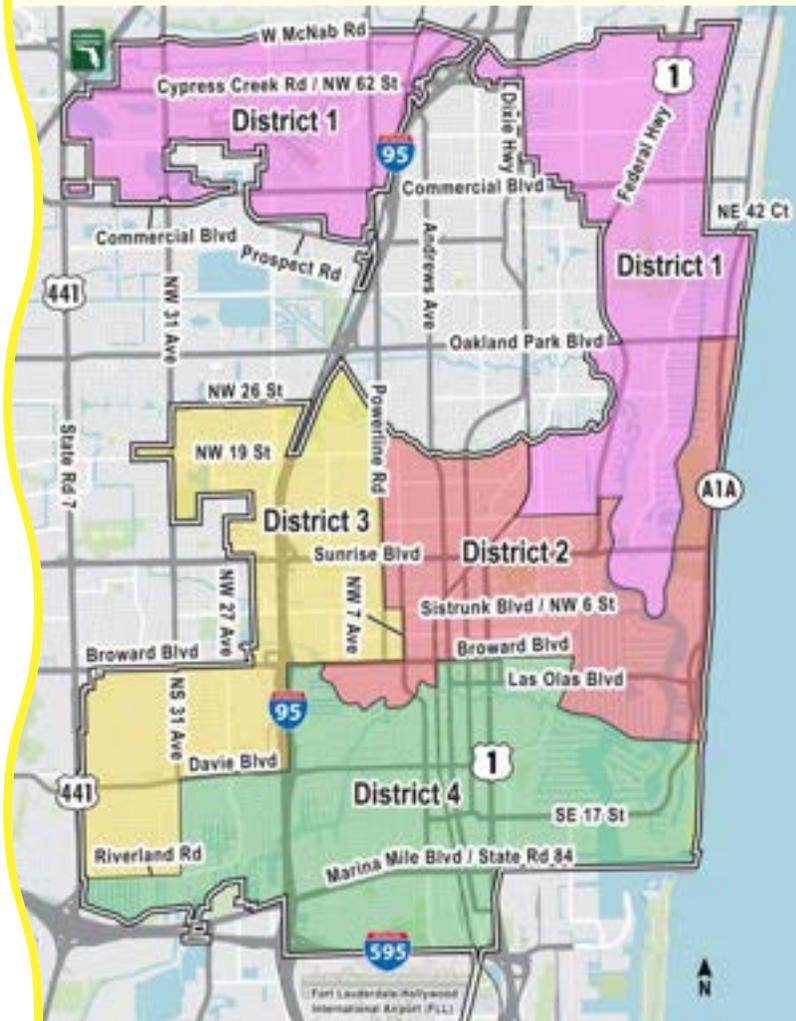
District 2 – Commissioner Steven Glassman



District 3 – Commissioner Pam Beasley-Pittman



District 4 – Commissioner Ben Sorensen



SCAN CODE or visit
ftlcity.info/districts for a
more detailed map.





Mayor Dean J. Trantalis

A Message From the Mayor

This year has started off as an amazing one for progress across Fort Lauderdale as we continue to improve the city's quality of life and make our city infrastructure ever more resilient.

Take a look at what's going on with our city parks. From Huizenga Park downtown to neighborhood recreation spots like Hardy Park, big improvements are underway.

At Huizenga Park, the new Riverwalk is taking shape, particularly with the construction of the planned Riverwalk Overlook and the installation of a new seawall cap. We expect construction to be completed by the end of the year.

Huizenga Park will truly become downtown Fort Lauderdale's signature gathering place -- beautifully designed, activated, safe and comfortable.

Park work is progressing across the city. We are committed to keeping the promises made to voters when they approved a bond issue for major park improvements.

In March, we approved the construction of new restrooms for Mills Pond Park, an item that has long been sought by the sports teams that use the park.

We also approved the construction of improvements in Bass Park. This \$7 million project will include a new recreation center with pool access, restrooms, fitness stations, landscaping as well as an interactive water feature. The updates should be completed by November 2026.

Construction is underway in Hardy Park. This includes better lighting, a paved pathway, a new playground, an improved exercise station and better security. This work should be completed this summer.

Work should start this summer on a second phase of upgrades at Holiday Park. Improvements will be made to the playground, dog park, restrooms and walkways.

In January, the City Commission took a major step on another front of improving recreation options at Holiday Park. We approved a 10-year agreement with the United States Tennis Association involving upgrades to the Jimmy Evert Tennis Center.

The agreement was facilitated by a \$1.5 million legacy gift from Orange Bowl Tennis. The money is designated to upgrade the facility to meet international standards, suitable for high-caliber tournaments and to once again attract top-tier tennis events to the city.

Over in Snyder Park, we are already seeing the success of The Fort pickleball facility.

It hosted its first major tournament, the Humana APP Fort Lauderdale Open, where pickleball pros and amateurs from all over the country gathered for five days of competition.

The Fort is the result of a public-private partnership with My Park Initiative. The complex boasts over 36 courts and seating for nearly 2,000 spectators.

We have critical initiatives underway involving roads and infrastructure.

We completed the repaving of Las Olas Boulevard. We're beginning design work on street improvements in the Tarpon River and Shady Banks neighborhoods. And, construction will soon begin on improving Northwest 15th Avenue from East Sunrise Boulevard to Mills Pond Park.

We have big news regarding the Durrs neighborhood. The stormwater improvement project there is being completed a year early! In the Progresso Village neighborhood, we've approved a \$39.6 million project to reduce flooding and improve stormwater drainage.

But that's not all. The new police headquarters will be completed late this year, and work is moving forward on the new water treatment plant. We are beginning to install new high-tech water meters to better report residential water usage.

Yes, great things are happening all over Fort Lauderdale. Stay tuned as 2025 will be an exciting year for the continued enhancement of our wonderful city.



▶ ftlcity.info/mayornewsletter

A Word From Your DISTRICT COMMISSIONER



**Vice Mayor
John C. Herbst**

Vice Mayor/Commissioner District 1

Fort Lauderdale is upgrading its infrastructure with the installation of smart water meters. These meters provide real-time water usage data, ensuring more accurate billing, faster leak detection, and improved water management. Residents can track their consumption through an online portal, making it easier to manage usage, reduce waste, and potentially lower water costs. The system also helps the City quickly identify unusual patterns or leaks, preventing unexpected high bills. Fort Lauderdale is committed to a more sustainable and efficient water system. We're pleased to announce that Imperial Point will be the first neighborhood to receive the new meters! Vice Mayor Herbst may be reached via email at jherbst@fortlauderdale.gov or by phone at 954-828-5003.



▶ ftlcity.info/district1



**Commissioner
Steven Glassman**

Commissioner District 2

As we close out the first quarter of 2025, our city goals are full steam ahead! Of the top priorities identified at our Commission Prioritization Workshop, Homeless Response will continue to be on the forefront of my agenda. We are making great strides to help the unhoused while balancing the needs and safety of our neighbors. I am confident that the outreach, engagement and utilization of new and upcoming programs will make a huge impact for all neighbors in this city. Commissioner Glassman may be reached via email at sglassman@fortlauderdale.gov or by phone at 954-828-5003.



▶ ftlcity.info/district2



**Commissioner
Pam Beasley-Pittman**

Commissioner District 3

Fort Lauderdale takes a significant step towards enhancing public safety, thanks to the newly awarded SAFER grant, which will bring 28 new firefighters to the city's team. We are strengthening our commitment to public safety with a \$11.4 million SAFER grant from FEMA. This funding will allow the city to hire new firefighters, which will improve emergency response capabilities. As the population grows, increased staffing will help reduce response times and enhance public safety. The grant will support additional personnel for medical rescue units, ensuring teams are fully equipped for emergencies. By investing in firefighter staffing and resources, the city is taking innovative and proactive steps to protect residents and property. This funding reinforces Fort Lauderdale's dedication to maintaining a strong, prepared, and responsive emergency services team. Commissioner Beasley-Pittman may be reached via email at jawalker@fortlauderdale.gov and jfray@fortlauderdale.gov or by phone at 954-828-5680.



▶ ftlcity.info/district3



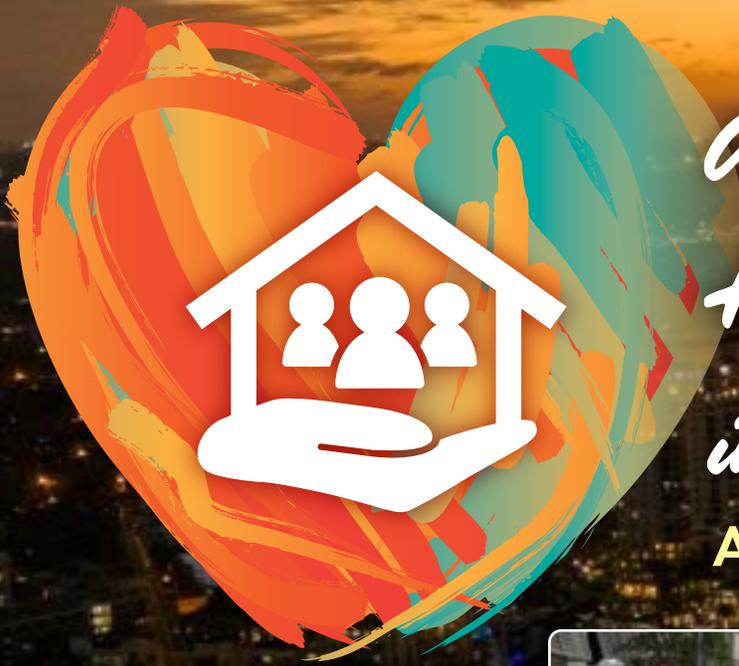
**Commissioner
Ben Sorensen**

Commissioner District 4

Since returning to the city commission, I went straight to work. Addressing homelessness by bringing all stakeholders to the table, helping connect unhoused people to services, and advocating for affordable and workforce housing are all key pieces to the puzzle. Regarding the New River Crossing, I have reaffirmed our commitment to a tunnel as the locally preferred alternative for the future Broward Commuter Rail and visited the successful Port Miami tunnel. Additionally, I am excited about our city's progress in improving our waterways' quality as we explore seawalls, mangroves, and other innovative solutions. Please reach out to my office anytime! Commissioner Sorensen may be reached via email at bsorensen@fortlauderdale.gov or by phone at 954-802-3311.



▶ ftlcity.info/district4



Addressing Homelessness in Fort Lauderdale

A Multi-Pronged Strategy

Fort Lauderdale is committed to providing compassionate, strategic and effective solutions for assisting people experiencing homelessness. Through multiple programs, partnerships, and dedicated teams, the City focuses on outreach, support and long-term solutions. Here's a look at key initiatives.



HOT Team

The Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) is a dedicated group of six police officers who engage directly with people experiencing homelessness on the streets of Fort Lauderdale. The officers are able to refer them to critical services, assist in securing a spot in a shelter, as well as purchase bus tickets to reunite people with friends or family. The team logs every interaction to ensure follow-up with service providers and continuity of care. Since 2020, the HOT Team has helped 182 people reunite with loved ones.

- **2,878** connections made with individuals through outreach in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024
- **142** Notices to Appear (NTAs) written in FY 2024
- **30** reunifications in FY 2024
- **182** people reunited with loved ones since 2020



Community Court

Community Court is where essential services come together, providing a one-stop shop for those in need. Every Wednesday, the court brings together service providers who offer everything from mental health care and medical assistance to showers, haircuts, and meals. If someone is facing a misdemeanor, like trespassing or panhandling, the judge will assign community service hours instead of fines, giving them an opportunity to get back on track. Nearly 400 people visited in February 2025, many seeking shelter or housing support. It's a crucial resource for those looking to stabilize their lives, with both referrals from the Homeless Outreach Team and walk-ins welcome.

- **Nearly 400** people visited Community Court in February 2025
- **2,772** walk-in visitors in FY 2024
- **2,842** total visits between NTAs and walk-ins in FY 2024



SCAN CODE or visit ftlcity.info/homeless-initiatives for more details on our home.



Housing Navigation

Fort Lauderdale has teamed up with TaskForce Fore Ending Homelessness to provide essential support for people seeking permanent housing. The Housing Navigation program is designed to guide people through the process of securing stable housing by assisting with benefit applications, obtaining IDs, and connecting them to essential resources such as assisted living facilities and long-term housing options. Case managers work closely with each participant, addressing their unique needs and creating tailored solutions. This service is critical in overcoming barriers, such as lack of income or identification, that often prevent people from securing housing. Through personalized support from dedicated caseworkers, people are empowered to transition out of homelessness and achieve lasting stability.

- **162** individuals on our housing navigation list in FY 2024
- **34** individuals were housed or reunified in FY 2024
- **21%** housing success rate in FY 2024

Emergency Shelter Beds

Broward County is facing a severe shortage of shelter beds, with approximately half of the county's homeless population residing in Fort Lauderdale. In response, the City has taken decisive action to address this critical issue by securing 20 designated beds at The Caring Place. These beds are specifically reserved for individuals referred directly by the Fort Lauderdale Police Homeless Outreach Team, providing seamless access to shelter and comprehensive, hands-on support.

"You can't just walk up to a shelter and say you need to stay there," says Luisa Agathon, Neighbor Support Manager. "There's a process and it's not immediate."

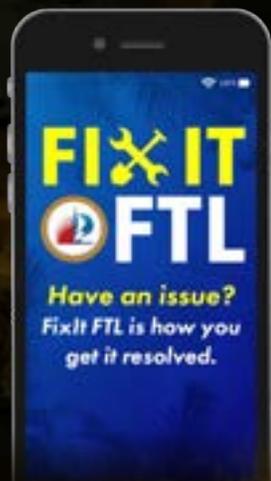
This initiative is crucial in creating a direct and efficient pathway to shelter for those in urgent need of housing, offering swift access and the essential support needed to help individuals take the first step toward rebuilding their lives.

- **20** designated beds have been secured by the City at The Caring Place
- **29** individuals referred to emergency shelter in FY 2024
- **12** individuals were on a housing and employment plan from July through September 2024

House Bill 1365: Addressing Public Camping

House Bill 1365 outlines specific guidelines for addressing public camping on public property. Camping is legally defined as the presence of a tent, hut, lean-to, shack, or any temporary shelter providing cover from the elements for the purpose of sleeping, resting, or conducting daily activities. It's important to note that it applies solely to public property, excluding private property and general loitering. In anticipation of HB 1365, two additional officers were added to the Homeless Outreach Team, bringing the total to six officers. In February, 234 cases were filed through FixItFTL, reflecting a decrease of 69 requests compared to the previous month when HB 1365 took effect. While not all reported incidents fall under the bill's definition, the City ensures a timely response to all cases, addressing them within the five-day mandated window.

- **2** additional officers were added to the Homeless Outreach Team
- **6** HOT team officers in total
- **234** cases were filed through the FixItFTL app in February 2025, which is a decrease of 69 requests from January 2025



How to Report Camping or Sleeping on Public Property under HB 1365?

To report instances of camping or sleeping on public property, residents and business owners can use the FixItFTL app and select "Camping or Sleeping on Public Property – HB 1365." A report can be filed online by visiting fortlauderdale.gov/fixitftl and following the same process.

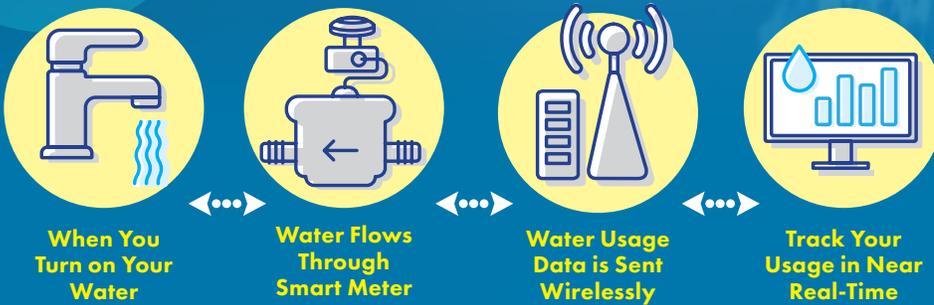


► fortlauderdale.gov/fixitftl

Smart Water Meters

Modernizing Water Management in FTL!

The City of Fort Lauderdale is embarking on a significant upgrade to its water infrastructure, transitioning to a high-tech smart meter system. This initiative, known as the Smart Water Meter Program or Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI), aims to empower customers with greater control over their water consumption.



“The Smart Water Meter Program is a vital step in our commitment to providing our neighbors and businesses modern, efficient and sustainable services.”

- Ingrid Kindbom, Program Manager

What Are Smart Water Meters?

These advanced devices automatically track water usage multiple times daily, allowing the City to remotely read meters and provide customers with near real-time information about their water consumption via an online portal.

Installation and Timeline

The City plans to begin installing smart meters in 2025, with full deployment expected to take up to three years. As exchanges are planned throughout Fort Lauderdale, notifications will be sent via mail, email and social media.

Key Benefits:

- **Near Real-time Monitoring:** Say goodbye to waiting for monthly bills to track water consumption. Customers will have online access to monitor their water usage in near real-time, enabling proactive water management.
- **Water Usage Alerts:** The system will provide notifications about unusual spikes in consumption or continuously low flowing water, such as from open taps or leaking toilets, allowing for prompt repairs.
- **Enhanced Water Management:** By tracking usage in near real-time, residents and businesses can better understand their consumption habits and make informed decisions to conserve water.



▶ ftlcity.info/smartwatermeters



Update Prospect Lake Clean Water Center

What's been completed?

Since construction began in November 2023, most underground water and electrical piping has been installed, and the site has been brought up to final elevation.

What's happening now?

- Constructing and installing various tanks, foundations and process equipment
- Erecting the administration building
- Installing mechanical equipment and standby generators
- Fabricating the nanofiltration building

What's next?

A major milestone will be achieved this summer with the completion of the \$50 million, 17,600-foot water main (48-54 inches) connecting the Prospect Lake Clean Water Center and the Fiveash Water Treatment Plant, which will ensure efficient water distribution.

The Prospect Lake Clean Water Center is expected to be fully operational by September 2026. Once completed, the plant will be capable of producing 50 million gallons of treated water per day.



▶ ftlcity.info/prospectlakeproject



Fortify Lauderdale

Building a More Resilient Future Together

New stormwater pump station under construction in Historic Dorsey-Riverbend

As a coastal city, rising sea levels, intensified weather and aging infrastructure pose significant threats to Fort Lauderdale. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, the City launched the Fortify Lauderdale initiative to proactively address these challenges and protect its most vulnerable neighborhoods.

The Stormwater Master Plan: A Blueprint for Resilience

At the heart of Fortify Lauderdale is the Stormwater Master Plan, a strategy for managing stormwater and reducing flood risk. The plan includes projects to construct, upgrade and expand drainage systems to reduce flood risks by adding new stormwater pipes, new pumping stations, swales and seawalls, increasing system capacity, and improving water quality in waterways. This long-term effort is a considerable investment that will utilize a phased approach to address the most vulnerable communities first.

“By combining engineering expertise with neighbor insights, we can develop solutions that are tailored to the specific needs of each neighborhood.”

Deborah Cueva, PE, MPA,
Project Manager II

Strengthening Our Communities

The first phase of Fortify Lauderdale projects focuses on eight neighborhoods in southern Fort Lauderdale. Projects in these areas are completed, underway or in the design phase:

- Edgewood **Completed**
- River Oaks **Completed**
- Durrs **Completed**
- Historic Dorsey-Riverbend **Underway**
- Progresso Village **Underway**
- Melrose Manors/Riverland **In Design**
- Southeast Isles **In Design**
- Victoria Park **In Design**

Phase 2 Progress

Phase 2 of Fortify Lauderdale is expanding the program’s reach to more than seventeen additional neighborhoods. By participating in surveys and public meetings over the past few months, neighbors are playing a key role in the development of future projects in their neighborhoods.

- Chula Vista & Adjoining Areas
- Croissant Park
- Flagler Village
- Harbour Inlet & Adjoining Areas
- Imperial Point
- Lake Ridge
- Lauderdale Isles
- Melrose Park
- Middle River Terrace
- Oak River & Adjoining Areas
- Poinsettia Heights
- River Landings, Riverland Manors, Riverland Woods & Adjoining Areas
- Riverland Village
- Sailboat Bend and Riverside Park
- Shady Banks
- South Middle River
- Tarpon River



▶ fortlauderdale.gov/fortifylauderdale

Completed Early!

In Durrs, a neighborhood-wide stormwater improvements project was completed in February 2025, more than a year ahead of schedule!

These improvements, together with a new stormwater pump station that is under construction in nearby Historic Dorsey-Riverbend, will help drain stormwater quicker and more efficiently after heavy rainfall.

- **35,000** feet of stormwater pipe
- **250+** drainage structures
- **81,000** square yards of reconstructed swale



Bringing Mobility to the Northwest

LauderGO! Expands to More Communities

Fort Lauderdale's LauderGO! Micro Mover program is reaching more residents than ever since the launch of the Northwest Community Service Area. What began as a small pilot project in August 2022, serving just the Downtown and Beach areas, has since expanded to better connect neighborhoods across the city.

Residents in Rock Island, Lake Aire Palm View, Golden Heights, Dillard Park, Lauderdale Manors, River Garden Sweeting Estate, and Home Beautiful Park can now take advantage of free, door-to-door rides within the service zone. Whether heading to work, school, a local business, or a transit station, this expansion ensures that more people have access to reliable transportation.

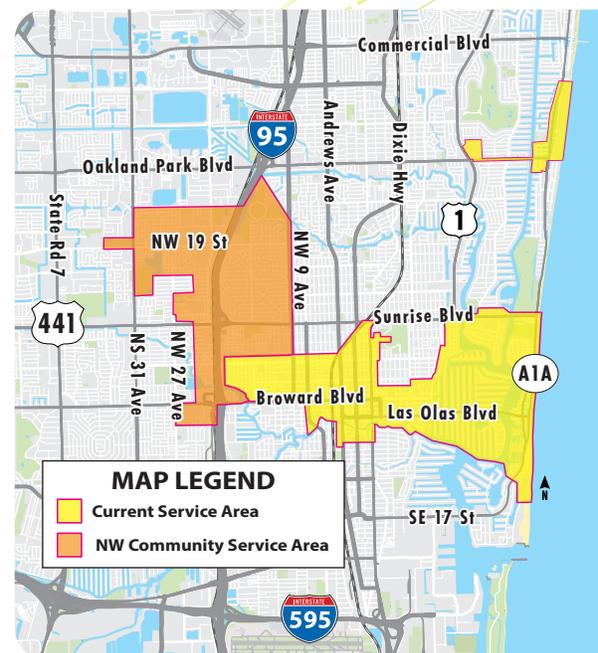
"This new service in the NW Community will be a game-changer for my students at the Arthur Ashe Junior campus, providing greater access to essential resources and opportunities. It will help remove barriers

to education and empower them to succeed," said Jean Vilus, Assistant Director of Atlantic Technical College – Arthur Ashe, Jr. Campus.

By connecting residents to Broward County Transit, the Fort Lauderdale Tri-Rail station, and the LauderGO! Community Shuttle, the program enhances mobility while reducing emissions and traffic congestion. The new service is 100% funded by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), making it possible for Fort Lauderdale to continue providing sustainable and accessible transportation.

Ready to Ride?

The LauderGO! Northwest Community Service operates Monday through Sunday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Booking a ride is simple; just download the Ride Circuit app and request a ride. Don't have a smartphone? No problem. Use the Circuit call center to book a ride, just call 954-869-4775 with your pickup and drop-off locations.



So why drive when you can ride for free? Fort Lauderdale is moving forward one electric ride at a time.



SCAN CODE or visit fortlauderdale.gov/laudergo to learn more about LauderGO!

Creating a Safer and More Connected Fort Lauderdale

NE 15th Avenue Mobility Project

NE 15th Avenue serves as a critical connection for neighborhoods, businesses, and commuters. Recognizing the need for safety improvements, the Lake Ridge Civic Association played a vital role in advocating for changes to better protect pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Their vision included adding crosswalks, landscaped medians, bike lanes, and raised intersections to slow traffic and enhance overall safety.

What started as a neighborhood-driven initiative in Lake Ridge has expanded into a broader mobility project spanning from Sunrise Boulevard to the South Fork of the Middle River. Through a collaborative planning process, the Transportation & Mobility Department has worked closely with residents, engineers, and planners to develop a comprehensive strategy for improving safety and efficiency along NE 15th Avenue.



Expanding the project to include Poinsettia Heights, the City incorporated additional features such as raised intersections at NE 14th Street and NE 17th Court, as well as improvements to the roundabout at NE 18th Street.

Testing for Success: A Pilot Project Approach

Before finalizing designs, the City implemented a pilot project using temporary materials to test proposed changes. The results were clear: the introduction of median islands, bike lanes, and crosswalks made a difference.

Before installation, 60% of drivers exceeded the speed limit. After the changes, that number dropped dramatically to just 1% of drivers exceeding the speed limit.

But not all features were liked by the community. The removal of the northbound right turn lane from NE 15th Avenue to NE 13th Street generated concerns from residents, leading the City to restore the turn lane later this year. This highlights the value of the pilot program, allowing adjustments before permanent construction begins.

Michael Albetta, President of the Lake Ridge Civic Association, expressed pride in the community's role in shaping the project:

"[We are] proud to have had the opportunity to collaborate with transportation and mobility experts to implement traffic calming solutions that made sense for our residents and positively impacted our neighborhood. Residents enjoyed coming together, working side by side with each other,

elected officials, and staff to increase transportation and neighborhood safety. We look forward to the continued relationship and permanent solutions."

Funding a Safer Future

The success of the pilot project helped secure a grant through the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization's Complete Streets and Other Localized Initiatives Program. With this funding, the City is now moving toward a full-scale implementation that will bring permanent safety improvements to NE 15th Avenue.

As Fort Lauderdale continues to invest in smarter, safer streets, the NE 15th Avenue Mobility Project stands as a model for thoughtful, data-driven transportation planning. Through a combination of resident input, strategic design, and innovative pilot programs, the City is paving the way for a more connected and livable future.

Upcoming EVENTS

SCAN CODE or visit
ftlcity.info/events for
more upcoming events.



Carter Park Jamz
April 18 | May 16
September 19 | October 17
Fridays | 7-10 PM | Carter Park
1450 W. Sunrise Blvd.

Enjoy a free concert series with a broad range of musical varieties featuring a different live performer each showtime! Carter Park Jamz takes place on the third Friday of select months.



Sunday Jazz Brunch
First Sunday of the month
11 AM - 2 PM | Along the Riverwalk

This free, live outdoor concert series features the area's best local jazz artists. Listen to the music on three different stages on the first Sunday of each month.



Relay for Life
Friday, May 9
6 PM - Midnight | Carter Park
1450 W. Sunrise Blvd.

Through celebratory laps for survivors and caregivers, a moving Luminaria Ceremony, and team fundraising, Relay For Life unites individuals in the fight against cancer.



Great American Beach Party
Saturday, May 24
11 AM - 6:30 PM
Las Olas Oceanside Park (LOOP)
3000 E. Las Olas Blvd.

The event features live bands, kids' zone, classic cars, sand sculpting, art, a military tribute, a SOCOM parachute jump, and the Walk of Fame Ceremony.



Memorial Day Ceremonies
Monday, May 26
9 AM | Lauderdale Memorial
Park Cemetery
2001 SW 4th Ave.

11 AM | Sandy Ninger Statue
Join us as we pay tribute to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our great nation in the United States Armed Forces.



**Bank of America
Starlight Musicals**
Fridays | June 6 - August 8
Fridays, 7-10 PM | Holiday Park
150 G. Harold Martin Dr.

Celebrating 46 years of free outdoor concerts, a perfect way to enjoy summer with family and friends.



Juneteenth Celebration
Saturday, June 14
12-4 PM | Carter Park
1450 W. Sunrise Blvd.

Join us as we commemorate Juneteenth with a vibrant celebration of freedom, unity, and cultural heritage.



4th of July Spectacular
Friday, July 4
12-9:15 PM | Las Olas Oceanside Park
3000 E. Las Olas Blvd.

Celebrate Independence Day with a national music artist, water fun, games, and a spectacular fireworks show.



Summer Jamz
Friday, August 15
7-10 PM | Mills Pond Park
2201 NW 9th Ave.

Summer Jamz marks the end of summer with the hottest concert you don't want to miss including headlining artists as well as local favorites. Enjoy a kids' zone with bounce houses and yard games as well as food, drink, and merchandise vendors.

Commission SPOTLIGHT

 **We Are FTL**



A celebratory ribbon-cutting marked the transformation of DC Alexander Park, one of Fort Lauderdale's iconic oceanside parks, unveiling a new era of beauty and community enjoyment.



Baptist Health IcePlex at Holiday Park opened, marking a major step toward the revitalization of the FTL War Memorial complex.

The Grand Reopening Ceremony of Broward Health Park at Imperial Point, honoring the legacy of Dottie Mancini, took place during the annual Winter in the Park event, celebrating community, history, and a renewed commitment to wellness.



Volunteers joined the YMCA MLK Day of Service at the LA Lee YMCA & Provident Park, giving back to Fort Lauderdale and building on Dr. King's legacy of public service.



A ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrated the completion of the River Oaks Pump Station Project at the River Oaks Preserve — finished ahead of schedule and under budget after 18 months of construction.



The grand reopening ceremony of Pier Sixty-Six, a beloved Fort Lauderdale landmark. Originally built in 1957, this iconic property has been transformed through a breathtaking \$1 billion redevelopment, redefining luxury and innovation.



A Tu B'Shevat Ceremony at the North Ocean Boulevard pocket park honored the Jewish tradition of planting a Jerusalem Thorn—a lasting symbol of growth, resilience, and sustainability.



The annual Street Striping Ceremony at Tunnel Top Plaza kicked off St. Patrick's Day celebrations as dignitaries painted the town green in a festive tradition.

Enhancing Parks for Every Visitor

Parks Bond Program Updates

New fitness station installed at Bayview Park

Thanks to the City of Fort Lauderdale's Parks Bond program, major upgrades are transforming parks throughout the city, including Bayview Park, Hottt Park, Jimmy Evert Tennis Center, and Riverside Park. These enhancements focus on sustainability, accessibility, fitness, and fun for all ages, with the goal of making Fort Lauderdale's parks more vibrant, inclusive, and enjoyable for the entire community.

Brighter, More Sustainable Parks

A major upgrade to Fort Lauderdale's parks includes the installation of new LED lighting, a game-changing feature designed to improve energy efficiency, safety, and visibility. These energy-efficient lights not only reduce operating costs but also minimize light spill and glare, ensuring parks remain inviting and well-lit after dark. "The new lighting not only improves safety but reduces our environmental impact," says Senior Project Manager Alex Torres. "It's a great step toward safer, more sustainable parks for the entire community."



Enhancing Accessibility

The City is making great strides toward creating parks that are inclusive for all residents. Upgrades across several parks include new accessible site fixtures, sidewalk improvements at Riverside Park, and a new concrete walking path at Hottt Park. At Bayview Park, substantial renovations to the restroom and concession building have been completed to improve accessibility for all visitors.

Encouraging Physical Activity

New amenities at Fort Lauderdale parks are designed to promote healthy outdoor exercise. Bayview Park now has a new fitness station, and with field drainage improvements, the area will be usable all year long. At Hottt Park, the outdoor fitness area has been upgraded with accessible surfacing, making it more inclusive for all visitors. Riverside Park's tennis and basketball courts have also been refreshed with new lighting, surfacing, hoops, and nets, keeping them in prime condition for athletes of all levels and providing more hours for use.



Bayview Park concrete walking path



Bayview Park restroom and concession building



Hottt Park fitness station

Commission Priorities PUBLIC PLACES

More Fun for Kids

Families will be thrilled with the newly installed playground at Hортt Park, offering a fresh, engaging play space for children. Riverside Park has also revamped its playground, adding more play elements and upgrading the protective surfacing to ensure safety and accessibility for all children.

Jimmy Evert Tennis Center Renovation

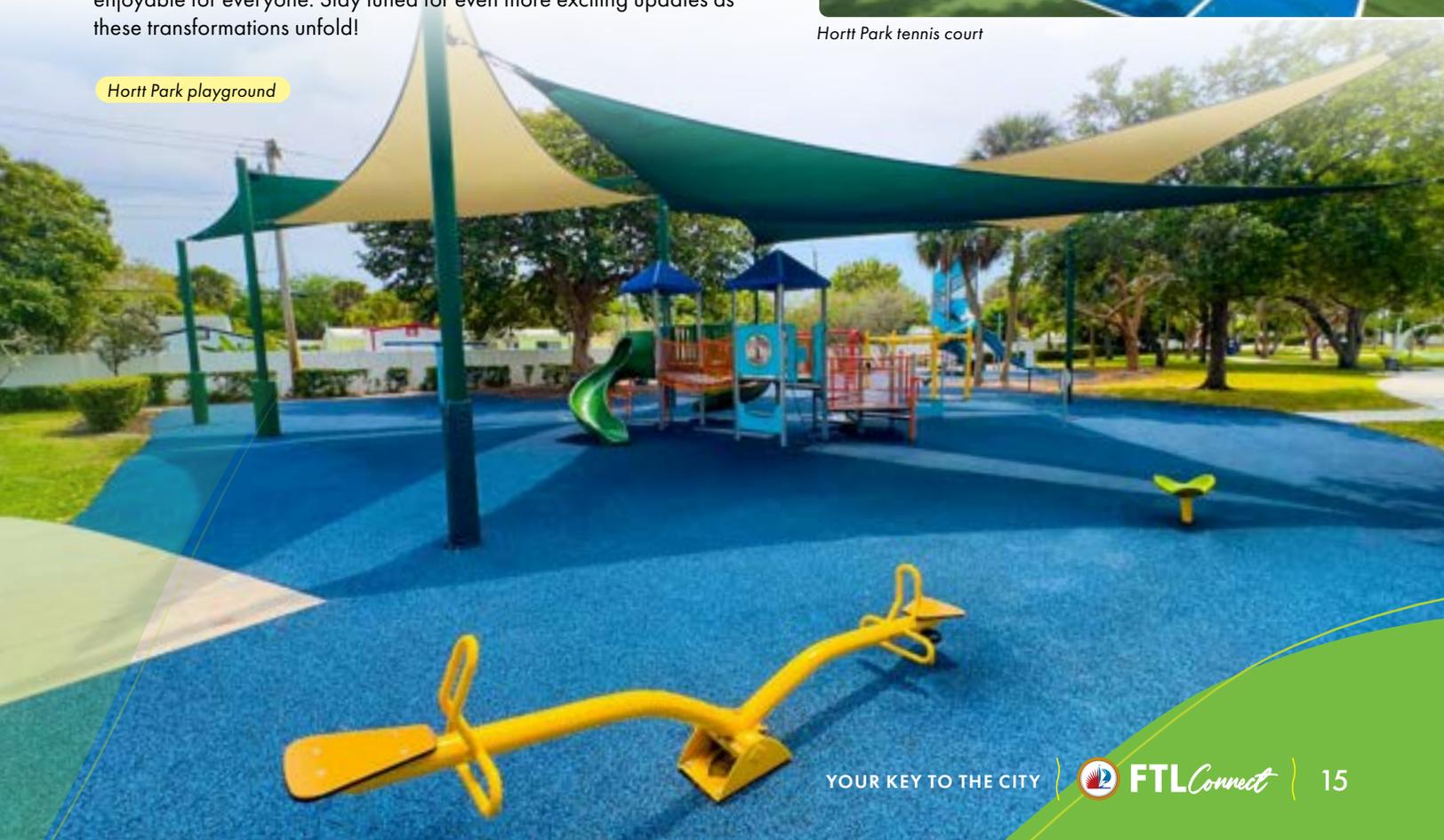
A major renovation project began at the Jimmy Evert Tennis Center on January 6, 2025, with the installation of state-of-the-art sub-irrigation courts at the heart of the transformation. This cutting-edge system, now the industry standard at premier tennis centers worldwide, constantly regulates moisture levels in the clay surfacing to maintain an optimal playing surface while minimizing downtime between games. Additionally, the system reduces water usage by limiting evaporation, supporting sustainability and water conservation efforts.



While the renovation is in progress, the City appreciates the community's patience and understanding. The project is expected to take about 10 months, with an anticipated reopening in fall 2025. "This renovation is a major upgrade for the Jimmy Evert Tennis Center," says Senior Project Manager Alex Torres. "We're enhancing the facilities to serve both serious and casual players."

These improvements are just the beginning. As the Parks Bond Program continues to reshape Fort Lauderdale's outdoor spaces, the City is committed to providing parks that are sustainable, accessible, and enjoyable for everyone. Stay tuned for even more exciting updates as these transformations unfold!

Hортt Park playground



Riverside Park playground



Riverside Park tennis courts and basketball court



Hортt Park tennis court



Protecting and Serving

A Rewarding Career with the FLPD



FLPD's recruiting tent during spring break season

Becoming a police officer is more than just a job—it's a calling. It's about making a difference, protecting the community, and upholding justice. At the Fort Lauderdale Police Department (FLPD), officers embody a commitment to service, integrity and excellence.

"The job isn't easy, but it's one of the most rewarding careers you can have," says Fort Lauderdale Police Chief William Schultz. "Every day, our officers go out and make a real impact. They help people in crisis, build trust with the community and ensure public safety. We're looking for individuals who want to be part of something bigger than themselves."

A New Era of Police Recruitment

In today's world, recruiting new officers is more complex than ever. Law enforcement faces heightened public scrutiny, evolving expectations, and the demands of a job in public safety. Recognizing these challenges, FLPD has adopted a proactive approach to finding and hiring the next generation of officers.

"Our recruitment strategy isn't just about filling positions. It's about finding the right people," explains Detective Eric Perez from FLPD's Recruiting Unit. "We've expanded our outreach to diverse communities, colleges, military personnel, and specialized groups to ensure we're bringing in officers who reflect the community we serve."

In 2024, FLPD ramped up its recruitment efforts, attending 34 expos and career fairs, participating in over 170 physical fitness and swim tests at Broward College's Institute of Public Safety, and engaging directly with candidates at 80 community events. The team also visited six police academies, attended multiple military and veteran recruitment events, and held presentations at 20 in-state schools.

"The people who succeed in this career are the ones who have a strong sense of duty and a passion for helping others," says Chief Schultz.

“ We're looking for dedicated, service-minded individuals who want to be part of a team that values professionalism and community trust. ”

- FLPD Chief William Schultz

Why Choose a Career in Law Enforcement?

A career in policing offers more than just a paycheck. It provides purpose, growth and a sense of belonging. Here are some reasons why becoming an FLPD officer is a fulfilling career choice:

✔ **Serve and Protect:**

Make a direct impact on your community by ensuring public safety and helping those in need.

✔ **Job Stability & Benefits:**

Law enforcement offers a secure career with competitive salaries, health benefits and strong retirement plans.

✔ **Career Growth Opportunities:**

From specialized units to leadership roles, FLPD provides pathways for advancement and skill development.

✔ **A Dynamic Work Environment:**

No two days are the same. Officers face new challenges daily, keeping the job engaging and exciting.

✔ **A Sense of Purpose:**

Knowing that your work makes a tangible difference in people's lives brings unparalleled fulfillment.

For more information on how to apply, visit flpd.gov/join-flpd or contact the recruiting office by calling (954) 828-FLPD (3573).





Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue Welcomes Largest Recruit Class in Over Two Decades!

The Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue Department is entering a new era with the addition of its largest recruit class since 1999. Thirty-five new hires officially signed their contracts in February, began training in March, and are set to join active shifts in early May. This milestone represents a significant investment in the safety and well-being of the city.

"This is an historic moment for our department," said Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue Chief Stephen Gollan. "Adding 35 new recruits, the largest class since 1999, represents a major step forward in our mission to serve our community with excellence and efficiency."

“ This is an historic moment for our department. ”

- Fire Rescue Chief Stephen Gollan

Building a Stronger, More Prepared Department

This expansion is made possible by an \$11.3 million grant from FEMA's Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) program. This grant enables fire departments to increase personnel and enhance emergency response capabilities. Of the 35 recruits, 28 are funded through the SAFER grant.

"This grant is a game-changer for our department," Chief Gollan said. "It allows us to expand our team significantly and ensure we're always prepared to respond

to emergencies with the staffing levels needed to save lives."

With the addition of these new recruits, most of the City's rescue units will now be staffed by three-person teams, a change already shown to improve patient outcomes. A study of over 1,000 EMS calls from 2021 to 2023 revealed that 27.8% of cardiac arrest patients treated by three-person teams experienced a return of circulation, compared to just 17.3% for two-person teams. This expanded staffing is expected to have a profound impact on the health and safety of the community.

Meet the New Recruits

The new hires bring a wealth of dedication and diverse experience to Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue. Among them is Donovan Futrell, who joins the department from Orange County. "Joining Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue is a dream come true," said Futrell, a Broward County native. "I've always wanted to serve my community, and I'm thrilled to be part of this historic recruit class."

Two of the new hires, Kris Ledoux and Dunya Milai, are graduates of the department's Fire Explorers program, which prepares young people for careers in fire rescue. "Being part of the Fire Explorers program gave me a strong foundation and prepared me for this moment," said recruit Kris Ledoux. "It's an



Recruits in Class 25-01 signed their contracts during a ceremony in February.

honor to join the department that helped shape my career."

The new recruit class is highly qualified, with 15 certified paramedics and 20 EMTs. Their advanced training ensures that Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue is well-equipped to handle a wide range of emergencies.

Looking Ahead

As Fort Lauderdale Fire Rescue prepares to welcome this new wave of talent, the department is optimistic about the future. "With this exceptional group of recruits, we're building a stronger, more capable department that will continue to meet the needs of our growing community," said Chief Gollan. "Their dedication and passion inspires us all."

This new recruit class enhances the department's emergency response capabilities, ensuring that Fort Lauderdale remains a safe and vibrant community for years to come.



Meet Todd Stilphen

Bringing Fun to Fort Lauderdale

After graduating from SUNY Brockport in New York, Todd Stilphen packed up his car and drove straight to Florida, ready to launch his career in the Sunshine State. His journey led him through roles in the Town of Davie, the City of Hollywood, and even running a wellness program for the Florida Department of Corrections. "It was a rewarding experience, and I learned a lot from that position," he says. Todd eventually joined the City of Fort Lauderdale Parks Department in 2005, where his career truly began to take off.

Today, as Community Program Manager, Todd oversees some of the City's largest events and internal special events while managing Snyder Park, the Beach Community Center, Morton Community Center, and the Club 55 program for seniors. He is also the City's go-to person for all things related to pickleball facilities, a sport that continues to surge in popularity.

Todd estimates that up to 50% of his time is spent planning and coordinating special events, handling logistics, and securing contracts. The other half is dedicated to overseeing daily programs, managing department operations, and leading a team of three.

For Todd, the biggest challenge in his role is the constant unpredictability of event planning. "The planning process starts months in advance, sometimes up to nine months when booking national artists for our major events," Todd explains. "It requires a lot of coordination, especially when working with booking agents and trying to align talent availability."

Once the event is underway, things don't always go as planned. "There's always something you can't anticipate," Todd adds. "Dealing with Mother Nature can be the toughest - whether it's lightning, rain, or even hurricanes. You never know what's coming, but you learn

to adjust quickly and keep everything moving forward."

Despite the challenges, Todd finds immense satisfaction in his work. "With all the effort that goes into it, it's incredibly gratifying to see people come out, enjoy themselves, and smile. It's rewarding to know you've helped bring some fun and stress relief to the community."

Favorite Events

“ The Big Toy and Truck Extravaganza stands out - kids love getting in the trucks, honking horns, and even going up in the bucket truck. And of course, I love the St. Patrick's Parade Festival because there's such a festive atmosphere. ”



Meet Nigeria Livingston

Nigeria proudly calls herself a 'parks baby'

Her career journey began as a summer camp counselor, and she quickly advanced to part-time roles at Mills Pond Park and Holiday Park. In 2007 she landed a full-time position at Carter Park and has steadily risen through the ranks to her current role as Recreation Program Supervisor, where she plans and manages Parks events. "I love everything about this job," Nigeria says.

“It’s not just about working in parks – it’s about connecting with people and bringing the community together.”

Her passion for the work is no accident. Nigeria credits her parents, Ralph and Kay Livingston, as her inspiration. Kay spent 30 years with the Recreation Department, and Nigeria was there every step of the way, witnessing her mom’s commitment firsthand. Growing up, the parks were Nigeria’s second home. Her

father, Ralph, also contributed to the parks, working part-time in maintenance at several locations. Their legacy of service instilled in Nigeria a profound respect for the community.

Nigeria finds her job incredibly rewarding. She takes charge of every aspect of event planning, from managing budgets and booking entertainment to securing security, coordinating cleaning crews, and organizing essential rentals like bounce houses, portable restrooms, and light towers. She also arranges staff schedules and handles all logistical details, ensuring each event runs flawlessly from start to finish. "It’s a lot of work, but if you love people, you’ll love this job," she says. "It’s all about engaging with the community, building relationships, and ensuring everyone has a great time at events." It’s this attention to detail and dedication to creating a fun atmosphere that makes her role both challenging and fulfilling.

In 2021, her perspective on both work and life was forever changed when she experienced a stroke. "It grounded me. I never expected something like that at my age," she reflects. After seven months of recovery, she returned to work with a renewed sense of purpose.

“It taught me life can change in an instant, but you have to keep moving forward.”

Throughout her nearly 27-year career with the City, Nigeria has remained committed to both her job and the community she loves. "If you push through, you can conquer anything," she says. "And that’s how I approach my work every day."



Empowering Local Entrepreneurs

Public Affairs Division's Business Development Programs

Fort Lauderdale is committed to fostering a thriving business environment, with the Public Affairs Division's Economic Development Section leading the way. Through a variety of strategic initiatives, the City actively empowers local entrepreneurs at every stage of their journey, whether they're just starting or looking to grow. Programs like StartUp FTL, SizeUp FTL, and the annual Business Survey provide entrepreneurs with access to cutting-edge tools, invaluable resources, and opportunities that position them for long-term success.

StartUp FTL Nurturing the Next Generation of Entrepreneurs

For aspiring and early-stage entrepreneurs, StartUp FTL is the ideal launchpad. This free, 12-week hybrid program is more than just a course - it's a transformative experience designed to turn ideas into sustainable business ventures. Guided by the renowned FastTrac Kauffman curriculum and supported by local industry experts, participants gain practical knowledge in areas like market research, financial planning, and business operations.

"StartUp FTL provides entrepreneurs with the essential tools to navigate the complexities of business ownership," says Melissa Mata, Senior Management Fellow. "We're not just offering education; we're also creating a community that fosters collaboration and growth."

Applications for the 3rd Cohort will open soon, set to launch in Summer 2025.

▶ ftlcity.info/startupftl



SizeUp FTL A Game-Changer for Small Businesses

Launched this spring, SizeUp FTL is set to revolutionize the way small businesses access market insights. This powerful online platform provides entrepreneurs with access to customized research, industry rankings, customer demographics, and advertising strategies. This tool levels the playing field for small businesses by providing the same market insights typically available to large corporations.

"SizeUp FTL empowers business owners to make smarter, data-driven decisions that were once only available to large companies," says Daphnee Sainvil, Public Affairs Division Manager. "It's a game-changer for small businesses looking to stay competitive in today's fast-paced market."

▶ ftlcity.info/sizeupftl



Annual Business Survey Shaping the Future of Fort Lauderdale's Economy

The Fort Lauderdale Business Survey is a critical initiative that captures valuable insights from local businesses about the challenges and opportunities they face. By participating in this annual survey, business owners and entrepreneurs have the unique opportunity to help shape the policies and programs that drive the long-term success and growth of Fort Lauderdale's commercial sector. The feedback gathered will be instrumental in refining resources, optimizing processes, and cultivating a dynamic, business-friendly environment that fosters sustainable growth.

Business owner feedback is important to us. Help us shape the future of Fort Lauderdale. We are expecting the Annual Business Survey to be released in early/mid-April 2025 for your valuable input.

▶ ftlcity.info/business-survey



Fort Lauderdale Honors Outstanding Educators with New

"Teachers of the Year" Celebration

A new tradition has begun in Fort Lauderdale to recognize outstanding educators in our community. This year, the City's inaugural "Teachers of the Year" celebration was held to honor the incredible impact these teachers have on our students and schools. The event was organized by the City of Fort Lauderdale's Administrative Division of the City Manager's Office.

The celebration took place during a special reception at the February 4, 2025, City Commission Meeting, where exceptional teachers were presented with awards and certificates for their outstanding contributions to the profession and investment in education within Fort Lauderdale.

The process for selecting these honorees is thorough and rigorous. Teachers are nominated through a vote by their school's faculty, ensuring that those who receive the title of Teacher of the Year truly embody the dedication and passion that define excellence in teaching. Each honoree also has the opportunity to apply for the prestigious Broward County Public Schools' Teacher of the Year award, a challenging process that includes submitting a resume, three letters of reference, and five writing prompts.

These remarkable teachers don't just teach, they equip their students with the tools, knowledge, and strategies to succeed in life. Their influence is profound, leaving a lasting legacy that will continue to shape our community's future.

"As a Fort Lauderdale native, who raised children who still reside in our Fort Lauderdale home, I've always felt a need to make an impact in my city and community," said Nicole L. Thomas, Teacher of the Year at Dillard 6-12. "I consider it a great honor to serve my community and be honored."

The City of Fort Lauderdale is proud to celebrate these Teacher Leaders of Learning, acknowledging their dedication, passion, and the lasting difference they continue to make in the lives of their students and the wider community.

Kassandra Burton
Walker Elementary



Maritza Canon Reyes
North Side Elementary
Tiqua Carty
Riverland Elementary

Marsha Chamberlain
Whiddon-Rogers Education Center



Mary Chee
Harbordale Elementary
Kimberly Coombs
New River Middle School

Rondy Desravines
Dillard Elementary



Sarah Donaldson
Stranahan High
Kimberly Fort
Atlantic Technical College

Rohan Hanslip
Westwood Heights Elementary



Kevin Hellberg
Bennett Elementary
Kuristan Jackson
William Dandy Middle School

Elaindra Julme
Croissant Park Elementary



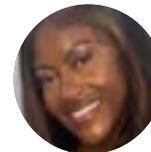
Lena Leon
Stephen Foster Elementary
Vanessa Liburd
Fort Lauderdale High

Yvonne Moniz
Virginia Shuman Young Elementary



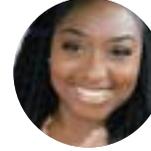
Anthony J. Schmieder
Seagull Alternative High
Natalie Smith
Floranada Elementary

Shawanna Taylor
Rock Island Elementary



Nicole Thomas
Dillard 6-12
Lourdely C. Villock
Wingate Oaks Center

Shirlee Voltaire
Sunland Park Academy



Shawntil Williams
North Fork Elementary

Stephanie Witt
Bayview Elementary



Crystal Wright
Sunrise Middle School

No Photo Available

Theresa Lockhart
Thurgood Marshall Elementary

Navelly McKain
Broward Estates Elementary

Henry Michaud
Sheridan Technical College

A Message From the CITY MANAGER



It is a tremendous honor to serve as city manager of Fort Lauderdale. I am immensely grateful to the mayor, city commission and our residents for their trust and support.

Over the past several weeks, before officially stepping into this role, I've taken time to learn more about our city, the organization and the dedicated people who keep Fort Lauderdale running. One thing has become clear: our City staff are deeply dedicated and passionate public servants, working every day to improve the lives of those who live, work and visit here. I look forward to working with our talented team as we push forward with key initiatives.

The City is focused on major infrastructure upgrades, including the accelerated Fortify Lauderdale stormwater improvement projects, an upcoming smart water meter program and mobility improvements such as those along NE 15th Avenue. All of these improvements are highlighted in this issue of FTL Connect. We are committed to keeping you informed and fostering a culture of collaboration, where your voices help guide our priorities.

One way to make your voice heard is to participate in the budget process. Right now, we're planning for the upcoming fiscal year with a focus on efficiency and innovation. Your input is essential. Get involved by reaching out to the mayor or your city commissioner, attending a Budget Advisory Board meeting or sending us your feedback directly. Visit fortlauderdale.gov/budget for more public engagement options.

Together, we're building a bright future for Fort Lauderdale. Together, we are FTL!

Sincerely,
Rickelle Williams
City Manager



► fortlauderdale.gov/budget



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

We're Hiring

**If you love living and playing in Fort Lauderdale,
you can love working here too!**

Check out our job opportunities at ftlcity.info/jobs.



Got

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MAKE A PLAN



KNOW YOUR RISK



ASSEMBLE A DISASTER SUPPLY KIT



GET AN INSURANCE CHECKUP



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS ARE YOU READY?



STRENGTHEN YOUR HOME



KNOW YOUR EVACUATION ROUTES



HAVE SEVERAL WAYS TO RECEIVE ALERTS



KNOW WHAT TO DO BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER A STORM

BE PREPARED!

Visit fortlauderdale.gov/hurricane to learn about preparing an emergency plan; assembling a disaster supply kit; steps to take before, during and after a storm; preparations to protect property, boats, and pets; generator safety; procedures for those with special needs; and much more.



STAY INFORMED!

Get notifications from the City right to your phone via, text, call, or email. Sign up for ALERT FTL at fortlauderdale.gov/alertftl or contact our Customer Service line at 954-828-8000.

