



December 2025

In the last month of 2025, the city of Fort Lauderdale has launched two major projects that will serve residents for generations to come – the construction of a new city hall, and a new downtown YMCA that will include an emergency medical center owned and managed by Broward Health.

These two projects are defining moments for our city. They are commitments — deliberate, forward-looking investments in how Fort Lauderdale governs itself and how it cares for the people who live here.

Taken together, these projects tell a single, cohesive story: Fort Lauderdale is a growing and increasingly cosmopolitan community that is taking its place on the world stage as a great place to live and work.

The old City Hall was damaged beyond repair during the drastic flooding that occurred in April 2023. Built in the 1960s, it represented its era with the brutalistic architecture then common for government buildings and it served the city well for a long time before its demise.

Fort Lauderdale now serves almost 200,000 residents, with millions of visitors each year, a complex infrastructure network, and growing responsibilities tied to resiliency, public safety, housing, transportation and economic development.

Since the old City Hall was destroyed, we've undertaken an in-depth initiative to gauge what residents wanted in a new city hall and what would work best for the community as a whole.

For over the course of a year, we asked our Infrastructure Task Force, made up of community members who volunteered their time, and which hosted numerous outreach meetings, taking in the opinions of hundreds of neighbors on size, location, design and financing.

The City Commission has now chosen to enter a public-private partnership with a team led by Plenary Americas, Core Construction and Stiles Corp. to build the new campus. We received other amazing proposals, including one from the team that just expanded the county convention center and built its on-site Omni hotel.

The Plenary team stood above all others.

Their design, in particular, speaks to our future and to a city that is on the rise and a city on the precipice of great things. I think the design truly showcases our dynamism and our aspirations – creating a visual identity for us. It also further solidifies the remarkable transformation of our downtown and the wonderful public realm we are creating there. And, it re-enforces the idea that civic life belongs at the heart of the city.

George Hanbury, the city’s former manager and the recently retired president of Nova University, said it best when he called it “iconic and perfect for America’s Riveria.” We will now negotiate a contract with the Plenary team and look forward to them completing the architectural work and beginning construction. I’d like to move to the new City Hall by late 2028.

The new City Hall will help our government deliver on the expectations of our residents and businesses. As mayor, I hear a consistent message from residents across neighborhoods: they want a city government that is competent, transparent and responsive.

This building will be designed to consolidate city services in a modern, efficient, and resilient facility — one that supports collaboration among departments while making it easier for residents to engage with their local government.

That may sound basic, but it matters. When government functions well at the local level, it builds trust. When it doesn’t, frustration grows quickly. A well-designed City Hall shows through in its day-to-day performance.

It will also reflect what it means to govern in South Florida today. Resiliency is no longer optional given the growing patterns of extreme weather. It must be built to higher standards, with infrastructure that anticipates — not reacts to — the challenges ahead be that a major hurricane or a once-in-a-thousand-year flood.

If City Hall reflects how the city functions, the new YMCA at Holiday Park reflects why the city exists.

For generations, YMCAs across the country have served as anchors for youth development, wellness and community connection. The new Holiday Park YMCA will continue that tradition here on a grand scale.

This project is a \$50 million investment. The new facility will span 60,000 square feet, bringing together two trusted partners, the YMCA and Broward Health, under one roof.

The YMCA will continue its decades-long commitment to equity, healthy living and youth development.

When this building opens, it will serve more than 25,000 children and families each year through programs that nurture young people, support parents and strengthen our

community. The facility will offer a six-lane swimming pool and expanded programs focused on water safety, swim lessons, and education, a critical resource in a coastal city like ours.

The facility will also include a freestanding emergency department run by Broward Health. This is a vital investment in the surrounding community that will allow the delivery of fast, efficient, life-saving emergency services on site.

At the facility, Broward Health will offer the same level of care and expertise as a traditional hospital-based emergency center. There will be highly-skilled physicians and nurses and on-site imaging and lab services, with shorter wait times.

The Y is a great addition to Holiday Park, a central gathering place for our community.

The park's 90 acres include the newly reopened Jimmy Evert Tennis Center along with our now dedicated Chris Evert Stadium, the beautifully renovated Parker playhouse, the upgraded and reimagined War Memorial Auditorium and the Baptist Health IcePlex along with its walking trails, sport fields, dog park and pickleball courts. It is a gathering place for everyone.

Fort Lauderdale deserves great parks, great facilities, and opportunities that uplift every neighbor. Holiday Park is becoming even greater.

At first glance, a new City Hall and a new YMCA might seem unrelated. But cities are ultimately about people, and the spaces where people come together matter.

We are building for the next generation. Think of the generations ahead – residents who can go to City Hall and receive seamless, speedy service, children who can learn to swim at the Y and family members with a health crisis who can be helped at the Broward Health's facility.

We are strengthening the heart of our community at the same time. And as mayor, I am proud of the direction we are heading — together.

Yours,

Dean