

## MARCH/APRIL 2016 - DISTRICT 1 NEWSLETTER COMMISSIONER BRUCE G. ROBERTS



**FORBES NAMES FORT LAUDERDALE ONE OF 2016'S BEST BUY CITIES:** If you are looking to finally purchase a home in 2016, Fort Lauderdale is not a bad place to buy. In fact, it might be one of the best. Forbes Magazine released its 2016 list of Best Buy Cities last week, and Fort Lauderdale was named among them as the eighth best housing market in the country. To determine the top 20 housing markets, Forbes partnered with Local Market Monitor, a North Carolina based data company. The firm considered average home prices and local economic factors, as well as other characteristics that make for good investments, in the 100 largest metropolitan areas. Each city boasts healthy job growth, strong population growth, and anticipated home price appreciation. With a 20 percent home price growth forecast over the next three years, 3.2 percent annual jobs growth (contributing to Fort Lauderdale also being named one of the best cities to find a job in 2016), and 4.5 percent three-year population growth rate, shopping for a home in the Venice of America sure does sound like a good idea. With seven cities on the list, Florida, as a whole proved to be providing buyers good value. The six other cities were Orlando (No. 2), Cape Coral (No. 10), North Port (No. 12), Tampa (No. 14), Jacksonville (No. 18) and West Palm Beach (No. 19). The state's representation on the list may be credited to the national economic recovery and retirees' or vacationers' renewed interest in Florida, according to Local Market Monitor founder Ingo Winzer. He also stated that the national economy has stabilized and is growing again (the factors that prompt people to go to Florida have recovered).

**DEMONSTRATED SAVINGS FROM PENSION OBLIGATION BONDS:** Addressing unfunded liability is a monumental challenge for most local governments. Instead of ignoring the issue, the City has taken the initiative to meet this challenge. On October 3, 2012, the City issued Pension Obligation Bonds (POB's) totaling \$337,755,000. The proceeds were used to reduce the Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability (UAAL) of the General Employees and Police and Firefighters' Retirement Systems by 75% each. The remainder is being amortized over a 28 year period in the General Employee Retirement System and 20 years in the Police and Firefighters' Retirement System. With the interest earned by the plans versus the interest paid on the bonds, the estimated savings over the past three years amounts to \$38.7 million. Additionally, the City gained savings estimated at \$72.6 million from the UAAL reduction. The estimated cumulative savings over the past three years amounts to \$111.3 million in both plans. Liability Reduction: Using the POB's as a tool, the City has achieved the following results (based on the last audited financial statements for period ending 9/30/14):

- For Police and Firefighters' Retirement System, the estimated net pension liability is \$19.7 million. Without the POB's, the net pension liability would have been \$192.9 million for a difference of \$173.2 million.
- For the General Employees Retirement System, the estimated net pension liability is \$700,000. Without the POB's, the net pension liability would have been \$150.1 million for a difference of \$149.4 million.

**CUSTOMER SERVICE RIBBON CUTTING:** Last month, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held to officially open the City's new 24-Hour Customer Service Call Center. This marked the first internal renovation project to be designed and constructed by our Community Builders from the Public Works Utility Crews and Call Center Staff. Extensive thought and planning on this initiative resulted in a more sustainable workspace with numerous safety and technology upgrades. Clear panels on cubes allow natural light to filter through the space and LED lighting and light sensors will help reduce energy use. A keypad entry system keeps the center secure and a new phone system allows the center to become portable and operate out of the Emergency Operations Center, if needed. The facility is ADA accessible and can accommodate more staff than the previous location, in order to maintain quality service for our growing community. During 2015, your City staff handled 150,000 service calls. The 24-hour customer service number is 954-828-8000.

**VISION PROGRESS NOW SHOWN ONLINE:** The City's [2035 Vision Scorecard](#) is up and running on the website. [Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale: Our City, Our Vision 2035](#), was developed to thoughtfully chart a course for our future based on what our highly active and invested community imagined Fort Lauderdale would look like in 2035. The

Vision Scorecard is a clear and simple depiction of the high-level key performance indicators that track our progress toward achieving the goals encompassed in each Vision category. The categories were determined based on the collective values and aspirations that were expressed by a diverse cross-section of our neighbors during the two-and-a-half year citywide Visioning initiative. These indicators will take time to move, but through the thoughtful implementation of **Press Play**, our strategic plan, working with our partners, and continued collaboration and dedication from our Community Builders, we will surely Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale into the future! I invite you to explore the scorecard and consider how your role contributes to making Fort Lauderdale the "**City You Never Want to Leave!**" Web page: <http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/departments/city-manager-s-office/structural-innovation-division/vision-scorecard>

**20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY FOR BRYANT PENEY:** As many of you know, a devastating tragedy struck our community two decades ago. Fort Lauderdale Police Officer Bryant Peney was gunned down as he pursued a man he observed hiding behind bushes on Federal Highway. Suddenly, he ran from the scene. Officer Peney pursued him on foot. Moments later, the culprit turned around and fired a handgun at Officer Peney, who was struck in the chest. He was rushed to Broward General where he succumbed to his injuries. Bryant was a model officer who received numerous commendations from the department and the public. He had earned the respect of both his peers and City residents in his six short years on the force. A portion of SE 15 Street and the park at 2100 SW 4th Avenue were renamed in his honor. On January 6, 2016, a public ceremony took place at Lauderdale Memorial Park to honor Officer Peney and the sacrifice he made for our community 20 years ago. I am sure we all recognize the outstanding service that the men and women of our Fort Lauderdale Police Department provide each and every day, and the risks they are willing to take on behalf of people they may not even know, when they put themselves in harm's way to protect our neighbors and keep our community safe. Please keep our Officers and their families in your prayers.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

**Yellow Dot Decal Program:** This information was sent out to our email list; however, I felt I should also put in the newsletter. The Fire Rescue Department will be participating in Broward County's Yellow Dot Decal program, which is designed to assist Ft. Lauderdale Firefighters/Paramedics and first responders in the event of an automobile crash or other medical emergency involving the participant's vehicle. The program can help save lives during critical moments after an accident by improving communication at a time when accident victims may be unable to communicate for themselves. Displayed on the car's rear windshield or in a clearly visible location on a motorcycle, the Yellow Dot decal alerts emergency responders to look for the Yellow Dot pamphlet in the vehicle's glove compartment or in a compartment attached to a motorcycle. The pamphlet will contain specific details, such as drug allergies, medical conditions, current medications, emergency contact, etc. Enrollment in the program is completely voluntary, quick and easy, and free of charge. Yellow Dot pamphlets and decals are available at Ft. Lauderdale Fire Rescue Station 35, located at 1969 East Commercial Blvd. and online at [www.Broward.org/YellowDot](http://www.Broward.org/YellowDot).

**PulsePoint Respond:** PulsePoint Respond is a pre-arrival smartphone app designed to support public safety agencies working to improve cardiac arrest survival rates through improved bystander performance and active citizenship. PulsePoint Respond empowers everyday citizens to provide life-saving assistance to victims of sudden cardiac arrest. Application users who have indicated they are trained in CPR and willing to assist in case of an emergency can now be notified if someone nearby is having a cardiac emergency and may require CPR. If the cardiac emergency is in a public place, the location-aware application will alert trained citizens in the vicinity of the need for bystander CPR, while simultaneously dispatch crews to the medical emergency. The application also directs these citizen rescuers to the exact location of the closest publicly accessible Automated External Defibrillator (AED). User notification only occurs after the 9-1-1 system has been activated. You can download the app in either the Apple App Store or on Google Play by simply searching for "PulsePoint." Once the app is downloaded, select **Fort Lauderdale** (there are two options, either one will work). We believe PulsePoint will be a powerful tool in our efforts to increase survival rates in our community. In addition to the life-saving CPR notifications, the application provides a complete virtual window into our emergency communication center. PulsePoint AED (yellow icon) can be downloaded to your smartphone and lets you report and update AED locations within the City. <http://www.pulsepoint.org/>

**PERMISSIBLE LIVING AREAS IDENTIFIED:** Our number one responsibility to our community is to maintain public safety. Thanks to the Geographic Information System (GIS) Division of the Information Technology Services Department, we now have another tool that will help us keep our neighbors safe. GIS developed a new app that identifies where sex offenders can live in the City of Fort Lauderdale. There are several rules in Chapter 16 of our Code of Ordinances that dictate where sex offenders can reside, and those restrictions can become confusing. The GIS app takes the guesswork out of determining permissible areas. Someone simply needs to enter a street address into the app, and it will tell them if the address is a permissible or not permissible area. Our police officers have been using the tool for a few months, and have found it to be extremely helpful in quickly identifying areas where sex offenders are permitted to reside, as well as those areas that are off limits. This is a great example of how we can be innovative and use technology to provide services and improve the quality of life in our community.

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In addition to hosting two pre-agenda meetings twice a month, I am also available to attend your HOA meetings to update your neighborhood on what is going on in the City as well as answer any questions/concerns you may have. Please contact Robbi to schedule.

**EMAIL LIST:** If you would like to be on our email list so that you receive information pertaining to the City – especially District 1 (i.e. news releases, meeting notices, events), please let Robbi know and she will add you.