

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2016 - DISTRICT 1 NEWSLETTER
COMMISSIONER BRUCE G. ROBERTS



FORT LAUDERDALE NAMED 2015 DIGITAL CITY: The City achieved a top-ten ranking in the 2015 Digital Cities Survey, a program of the Center of Digital Government. Every city, town, village and consolidated city/county government in the U.S. is invited to participate in this annual survey, which examines an organization's comprehensive use of technology programs. Ft. Lauderdale ranked eighth overall among communities throughout the nation with a population between 125,000 and 250,000. The City was recognized for its innovative uses of data and technology to promote civic engagement, support citywide policy, and operate efficiently. Cited initiatives that enhance open government and facilitate community collaboration include the Granicus Legistar System and the e-comments tool, citywide telephone town hall meetings, Property Reporter, EthicsTrac, financial transparency portal and the Lauderserv customer service application. The information Technology Security Division's recent organization-wide employee training initiative demonstrated proactive efforts to maintain a secure network infrastructure. Also, through our comprehensive Strategic Management System and diligent performance measurement in Clearpoint, we were recognized as a proven results-oriented organization that monitors progress on the collective goals through the City's Vision and Strategic Plans. Kudos to our full team of Community Builders for their efforts in using technology to drive innovation and enhance services!

WINTERFEST BOAT PARADE: We are pleased to announce the Winterfest Boat Parade made the list for the ***10Best and USA TODAY's Readers' Choice contest for Best Holiday Festival.***

FORT LAUDERDALE AMONG TOP CITIES FOR REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT IN Q4: Grand Rapids, Mich., topped the Best Markets Top 10 List, with Orlando second. Texas cities remain strong, with San Antonio #3, Dallas #4 and Austin #5 rounding out the top five. "In the last year, prices in all of the top 10 housing markets have increased by at least 6 percent," said HomeVestors co-President [David Hicks](#). The fourth-quarter 2015 Best Markets Top 10 list for real estate investing includes (in order from 1-10): Grand Rapids, MI; Orlando; San Antonio, TX; Dallas, TX; Austin, TX; Portland, OR; Seattle, WA; Charlotte, N.C.; Salt Lake City, UT; and **Fort Lauderdale**.

VOLUNTARY PILOT PROGRAM ENCOURAGING NEIGHBORS/VISITORS TO NOT SMOKE IN CERTAIN CITY PARKS: It is recommended that your City Commission adopt a resolution encouraging neighbors and visitors not to smoke in certain parks by participating in a voluntary pilot program with the American Lung Association (ALA) and authorize acceptance of \$1,000 from the ALA for the purchase of signs which will be designed by the City, to be displayed encouraging neighbors and visitors not to smoke. Four civic associations have passed resolutions requesting to participate: Imperial Point - Dottie Mancini Park; Tarpon River – Hardy Park; Victoria Park – Holiday Park; and Middle River Terrace – Middle River Terrace Park. City parks attract individuals and families who enjoy and engage in healthy recreational programs and activities. In addition, there are strong environmental reasons to encourage patrons not to smoke. The trash that is created by cigarette butts tossed on the ground is a significant environmental issue.

FLPD PARTNERS WITH THE REALITY CHECK PROGRAM: The Reality Check Program – founded by Larry Lawton – is designed to prevent teens and young adults from making bad choices by providing a first-hand account of the consequences and results of poor decisions. The Fort Lauderdale Police Department has recently acquired 10,000 Reality Check video gift cards, through the use of Law Enforcement Trust Funds. These video gift cards will be carried by our officers so that they are readily available to the community as officers encounter teens, young adults and parents who might benefit from hearing about the realities of a life of crime or bad conduct. The gift card gives viewers access to a video that can be viewed on any computer, smart phone or tablet. The video covers topics such as choice making, consequences of being arrested and avoiding and dissolving bad associations. The FLPD believes

knowledge is power. We hope that as our community youth hear the experiences of someone who has been exposed to the criminal justice system, they will understand that the choices they make today have the potential to affect the rest of their lives. The FLPD is committed to our community, and this partnership between them and The Reality Check Program is a positive step for our community youth.

NATIONAL TERRORISM ADVISORY SYSTEM BULLETIN: We are in a new phase in the global threat environment, which has implications on the homeland. Particularly with the rise in use by terrorist groups of the Internet to inspire and recruit, we are concerned about the “self-radicalized” actor(s) who could strike with little or no notice. Recent attacks and attempted attacks internationally and in the homeland warrant increased security, as well as increased public vigilance and awareness. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the FBI are providing additional guidance to state and local partners on increased security measures. The public should expect an increased presence of law enforcement across communities in the weeks ahead. More stringent security should also be anticipated at public places and events. This may include a heavy police presence, additional restrictions and searches in bags and the use of screening technologies. There are 3 types of Advisories: **BULLETIN:** Describes current developments or general trends regarding threats of terrorism. **ELEVATED ALERT:** Warns of a credible terrorism threat against the U.S. **IMMINENT ALERT:** Warns of a credible, specific and impending terrorism threat against the U.S.

How You Can Help: Community leaders, co-workers, friends and family can help by recognizing signs of potential radicalization to violence. For more information visit: <https://nsi.ncirc.gov/>

-Report threats or suspicious activity to the FBI or your local authorities. FBI field offices can be found at <http://www.fbi.gov/contact-us/field>

Be Prepared: Expect increased security across most U.S. cities and plan ahead to anticipate delays and restricted/prohibited items.

-In populated places, be responsible for your personal safety. Make a mental note of emergency exits and locations of the nearest security personnel. Keep cell phones in your pockets instead of bags or on tables so you don't lose them during an incident. Carry emergency contact details and any special needs info with you at all times. For more visit: <http://www.ready.gov>

Stay Informed: The U.S. Government will provide additional information about any emerging threat as additional information is identified. The public is encouraged to listen to local law enforcement and public safety officials.

-We urge Americans to continue to travel, attend public events and freely associate with others but remain vigilant and aware of surroundings while doing so, particularly during the holidays.

If you see something, say something,..report suspicious activity to local law enforcement or call 911.

VACATION RENTAL REGISTRATION PROGRAM UPDATE: On 11/1/15, the City's Ordinance C-15-29 which governs the registration of vacation rentals became effective. 50 applications were received prior to that deadline date. Since the ordinance became effective, 76 properties have registered as vacation rentals. Three of the registered properties have been awarded a Certificate of Compliance. Summary as of 12/18/15: 76 vacation rental applications received; 3 certificates of compliance issued; 31 applications determined to be complete and ready for inspection; 42 vacation rental applications incomplete and require additional information; the 76 applications received will generate \$68,970 in registration (\$750) and business tax (\$157.50) fees, of which \$45,375 has been collected to date. The registration process is completely paperless. Applicants are able to view legislation regarding the program and submit applications, payments and complaints electronically. To date, staff has received 50 complaints regarding properties that may be operating illegally. Of those, three of the properties reported have submitted applications and are actively involved in the registration process. The remaining 47 properties are under investigation.

PORT EVERGLADES DEVELOPMENT: Port Everglades broke its own world record for the most cruise passengers to embark and disembark in a single day with 53,485 guests. The Port hosted eight cruise ships on December 20, 2015, including Carnival Cruise Line's *Carnival Conquest*, Celebrity Cruises' *Celebrity Silhouette*, Holland America Line's *Eurodam* and *Nieuw Amsterdam*, Princess Cruises' *Regal Princess* and *Royal Princess*, and Royal Caribbean International's *Allure of the Seas* and *Navigator of the Seas*. And Port Everglades welcomes back Costa Cruises to Broward County. An Italian cruise line owned by Carnival Corporation, Costa Cruises has sailed from Port Everglades since the 1960s and is returning for the winter season following a four-year hiatus.

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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.