FROM THE DESK OF COMMISSIONER BRUCE G. ROBERTS

Budget: As you probably know by now, this Commission has passed the 2012 budget. For the third consecutive year, we have not raised the millage rate or the fire assessment fee. Our mileage rate is the 2nd lowest among Florida's twenty largest cities. We have the lowest water/sewer rate in Broward County. In the past three years, we have reduced the General Fund Operating budget by $15 million. We have eliminated approximately 200 personnel positions. Our new City Manager, Lee Feldman, has reduced the number of City Departments from sixteen (16) to nine (9), and he is in the process of developing the initiatives necessary to shrink government while delivering the expected vital services. This reorganization included the creation of the new Department of Transportation and Mobility. In our future newsletters, I hope to include a segment on each Department.

Projects: Several major projects continue to be developed within the City of Fort Lauderdale. The Sistrunk Boulevard improvements should be completed in the Spring. The parties affiliated with Bahia Mar and the Boat Show are continuing their negotiations and we hope to have that concluded within the next few months. You may recall that this agreement must be in place within in a few more months before the City itself negotiates its final agreement with the developer. Likewise, negotiations between the City, the FAA, School Board and Schlitterbahn are progressing for the development of a water theme park with hotel rooms at Executive Airport's old Oriole Stadium. Lockhart Stadium would be incorporated into the park and enhanced as an athletic facility. Lastly, we are moving in the direction of an affordable renovation of the Aquatic Complex and International Swimming Hall of Fame, which will, among many new features, add an aquatic theater and a physical therapy pool.

Visioning Process: The City of Fort Lauderdale recently launched a visioning initiative, "Fort Lauderdale – Our City, Our Vision," to craft a vision for the future that reflects input from the entire community. The public input will help identify community priorities that will provide direction for future policy and decision-making. The citywide program kicked off with a series of Open House Meetings in early October. The open house meetings provided an opportunity for neighbors to share ideas and learn the critical role the public will play throughout the process.

To stay current and continue to participate in the visioning initiative:
* Visit the Visioning website at www.fortlauderdalevision.org
* Like us on Facebook: Fort Lauderdale Visioning
* Follow us on Twitter: @OurVisionFTL
* Sign up to receive blast emails from the City at www.fortlauderdale.gov

Sign Action Plan: Beginning August 6, 2011, the Code Enforcement Division implemented rotating schedules for code inspectors to allow for Saturday/Sunday coverage. A top priority will be to address the proliferation of signs that are placed out on weekends, illegal vendors and illegal "weekend" businesses. A citywide sign action plan was initiated on February 21, 2011 focusing on the main arteries within the City. The purpose of this action plan was twofold. First, to educate business and property owners about the 20-month pilot sign ordinance drafted by Planning and Zoning and adopted by the City Commission on December 7, 2010, and second, to address any types of signs on private property prohibited under our sign ordinance. The pilot ordinance was adopted to address concerns of businesses that have been impacted by the economic downturn. Basically, it allows business owners to obtain permits for banner or sandwich board signs, subject to certain safety and aesthetic criteria. While the pilot ordinance is beneficial to certain businesses that meet the criteria, most of the signs that Code Enforcement is addressing are not permitted under our existing sign ordinance or the pilot ordinance. To be consistent and fair to all businesses, our division has initially used an education approach, even if a given business with signs were in

violation and did not fall within the criteria for a permit. We provide businesses with a packet on information as to whether they may be able to have a temporary sign if they meet the criteria of the pilot ordinance. If a business fails to obtain the required permit, or remove non-permitted signs, an inspection report (violation notice) is issued. If non-compliance continues, a final notice is issued and subsequently followed by a notice of hearing to appear before the Special Magistrate.

Landscaping Along Oakland Park Blvd.:   Eighty (80) new trees were planted along Oakland Park Blvd. from Federal Highway to the Bridge. They are being watered manually by our water truck until they are established which should take approximately 6-8 months. We owe A BIG thank-you to our Parks and Recreation staff for this project.

Sun Trolley New Expanded Beach Route: Beginning July 1, Sun Trolley expanded its current A1A and Galt service. The current Galt Route served the neighborhoods of Galt Ocean Mile with connection to Coral Ridge Mall and Holy Cross Hospital. This service expanded with the addition of a second trolley and southbound service to The Galleria Mall on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30am – 4:30pm. At The Galleria, Galt residents are able to connect to the A1A trolley on Mondays and Fridays. The A1A route (Harbor Shops to The Galleria Mall) expanded service from 2 trolleys to 3, significantly reducing wait time for passengers. Beach visitors and local residents alike simply need to wave at the trolley driver, who will stop to pick them up along either route. The two routes intersect at The Galleria Mall, where Galt riders can hop on the A1A trolley to reach beach hotels or Harbor Shops to the south. Sun Trolley is managed by the Downtown Fort Lauderdale Transportation Management Association (TMA) and is the community bus service of the City of Fort Lauderdale. Besides managing five different routes, TMA oversees a carpooling service with incentives for employees who elect to carpool, connects Fort Lauderdale neighborhoods to Broward County Transit and TriRail, and coordinates employee transit programs in local businesses. TMA has served residents and tourists to the Fort Lauderdale area since 1993.

Social Fusion Fort Lauderdale: You may be aware of electronic coupon offerings such as Groupon and LivingSocial that have been generating a lot of interest lately. Social Fusion Fort Lauderdale is a locally developed system of quality products and services by Chamber of Commerce members, which will be delivered to over 150,000 consumers. Social Fusion Fort Lauderdale allows you to enjoy select products and services that you otherwise might have missed at discounts of up to 50% to drive growth and new customers to those merchants. The great part of this Chamber-centric model is that it keeps the money local to reinvest in our community and will help support our regional free enterprise system. Now more than ever we need to continue to aggressively pursue quality programs that maintain and enhance our South Florida business environment. If you are curious go to www.socialfusionfortlauderdale.com.

Abandoned Residential Property Registration - Code Amendment: Commission and staff are working on a proposed ordinance that would require any bank and/or lender (mortgagee) who files for lis pendens and/or action for foreclosure upon a mortgaged residential property, to be responsible for registering any such property that is vacant with the City and for maintenance pursuant to applicable City Ordinances. Establishing a registration program for these types of residential properties will provide the City a mechanism to protect neighborhoods from becoming blighted due to lack of adequate maintenance and security of abandoned properties that are under foreclosure action. This program will place the responsibility for maintenance on the mortgagee during the period of time the property remains vacant and in foreclosure. The maintenance responsibility would only shift from the mortgagee once the property is sold or transferred to a new owner, or the foreclosure action is dismissed. Holding the mortgagee accountable and subject to punitive penalties will serve to promote a more proactive approach by the mortgagee's in the proper maintenance of vacant properties. A review was conducted of existing registration ordinances that are in effect in the City of Coral Springs, City of Palm Bay and Miami-Dade County. Feedback from

these agencies was positive as to the effectiveness of adopting this type of ordinance as well as generating revenue.

Advisory Boards/Committees: We have several vacancies that need to be filled. Please note that you do not have to be from your own District to apply. We have an application book of all applications turned in that Commissioners look at when there is a vacancy (also if it is a consensus appointed vacancy). For your interest you can always go to http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/clerk/boards.htm to see what is available, what qualifications there are for that vacancy, and to fill out an application. We appreciate your interest.

Pre-Agenda Meetings: A reminder that our meetings are always on the Monday before a Commission Meeting (unless that Monday is a holiday). The agenda is discussed, as well as any other topics that may arise. The first Monday of the month is at the Beach Community Center, and the third Monday of the month is at Imperial Point Hospital (south entrance) – always at 6p.m. Please call the office if you have any questions or need more information.

Office Contact: Robbi Uptegrove – 954-828-5033; email: ruptegrove@fortlauderdale.gov.   In addition to hosting the 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. If you would like to be on our email list to receive information, notifications or general information, please email and you will be added.