



## Memorandum

### Memorandum 24-126

**Date:** August 26, 2024

**To:** Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Commissioners

**From:** Susan Grant, Acting City Manager *Susan Grant*

**Re:** Emergency Purchase –Third-Party Inspection and Engineering Services –  
Police Headquarters

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On May 8, 2024, an Emergency Purchase Memo was certified by the Acting City Manager that approved the need for third-party inspection and engineering services to be rendered by Lakdas/Yohalem Engineering Services (LYE). These services included structural engineering services to assess, analyze, test and provide recommendations regarding the roof beam deflection at the Fort Lauderdale Police Headquarters Project as confirmed between the City of Fort Lauderdale staff, AECOM (Architect of Record) staff, and Engineering firm Thornton Tomasetti (Engineer of Record) on March 25, 2024.

City staff shared the series of events with the City Commission who provided feedback on the work done to address this issue, which included bringing LYE onto this project to work with the Engineer of Record on a consensus approach on structural enhancements to address the deflection issue. The City Commission expressed concern that an additional peer review should take place, not only in the area of deflection, but also that a peer review of the remaining structure should be performed to help ensure the proposed solution submitted by AECOM/Thornton Tomasetti and LYE will ensure the building is structurally sound and safe to occupy with no defects that will cause maintenance issues in the future, on completion.

City staff (including representation from the City's development team, Fort Lauderdale Police Department, and the City Manager's Office) underwent interviews of engineering firms that would meet both the qualifications and provide an unbiased assessment of the recommended structural enhancements and to confirm the design revisions and calculations to correct the deflection are accurate.

After interviewing four engineering firms, the city is recommending that Wiss, Janney, Elster Associates (WJE) as its selected engineering firm to provide the additional third-party assessment. WJE has extensive specialized experience performing peer review of various structural issues. The following is a short summary of experience and projects:

- WJE - Established 65 years ago, with offices nationwide, including in Fort Lauderdale
- Rickards Middle School – Investigation of roof collapse, structural peer review of existing structure, and peer review of remaining building.

- Champlain Towers South (Surfside) - Progressive collapse failure investigation, coordination of experts and parties, forensic review of building design, and subsequent repairs.
- Alcatraz Cellhouse (San Francisco, CA) - Structural stabilization and seismic strengthening.
- FIU Pedestrian Bridge - Collapse investigation, forensic review of bridge structural design, and full-scale laboratory load testing.
- Washington Monument (Washington, D.C.) - Structural evaluation and repair following earthquake.
- Metropolitan Highway System (Boston, MA) - Stem-to-stern structural evaluation, safety review, and subsequent structural repairs.

This purchase is in line with the emergency corrective measures to ensure the correction of the active deficiency is pursuant to Section 287.055(3)(a). Florida Statutes and that said deficiency outlined in this memo constitutes a valid public emergency. The onboarding of WJE will expedite and validate the corrective measures being prepared by the Engineering of Record and the City's existing third-party (LYE), ensuring the accuracy of the corrective design and ensuring no other structural deficiencies exist. The proposal from WJE is broken into two phases. Phase 1 will focus on the area of the deflection with phase 2 focusing on the remainder of the building.

Staff received an estimate from the selected firm and the total cost for the third-party structural engineering firm will be \$93,000. Based on recommendations from the City Attorney's Office, the cost of this work will be paid by the City to WJE and reimbursed through the claim process to AECOM, who has stated they will cover the costs.

I appreciate the support of the City Commission in the completion of this emergency request. If you require any additional information, please contact Anthony Fajardo at (954) 828-5758 or [afajardo@fortlauderdale.gov](mailto:afajardo@fortlauderdale.gov).

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