WHEREAS, Jo Ann Smith was born on March 4, 1949 in Champaign, Illinois where she participated in ballet and gymnastics, graduated from Champaign High School in 1967, landed her first job at Robeson’s Department Store designing window displays, and later studied art at the University of Illinois; and

WHEREAS, After relocating to Fort Lauderdale in 1975, Jo Ann Smith married George Smith, her second husband who she has been married to for 42 years, and they raised their three daughters, the late Lynn Smith, Stephanie Fenton, and Tina Smith; and

WHEREAS, Jo Ann Smith’s 44-year commitment to volunteerism in South Florida and the City of Fort Lauderdale began with her work at Mondessa Fashions, where she as an assistant to Mondessa, the first designer to introduce color fashion at the storied Wimbledon tennis tournament. While at Mondessa, Jo Ann Smith supported charity tennis tournaments to benefit cerebral palsy and the Adam Walsh Child Resource Center; and

WHEREAS, As a Fort Lauderdale resident, Jo Ann Smith is deeply ingrained in the betterment of her neighborhood. She worked hand-in-hand with her neighbors and the City to improve the quality of life in South Middle River and led the development of South Middle River Park and the neighborhood’s master plan, which lays out a long-range vision for the area’s future; and

WHEREAS, Jo Ann Smith, who is a Master Gardener and Master Naturalist, was instrumental in leading the effort to revitalize Stranahan Park in downtown Fort Lauderdale by cleaning up the area and transforming it into a beautiful botanical garden. She organized the 100th Anniversary Celebration of the Fort Lauderdale Woman’s Club, and the renovation of its historic clubhouse which received numerous Community Appearance Awards from the City; and

WHEREAS, Without ever asking for praise, Jo Ann Smith has dedicated herself to serving the City of Fort Lauderdale in a variety of capacities including as president of the South Middle River Civic Association; a member of the City’s Parks, Recreation, and Beaches Board, president of Fort Lauderdale Woman’s Club, and for 10 years, on the board of the Episcopal Church of the Intercession where she helped run the local food bank. Jo Ann Smith also serves on the City of Fort Lauderdale Citizens Volunteer Corps and the St. Patrick’s Parade Festival Planning Committee, is a Citizens on Patrol officer, and is a member of Broward County’s Certified Emergency Response Team; as well as a volunteer for countless Riverwalk events; and

WHEREAS, For her selfless compassion, kindness, and naturally giving nature, Jo Ann Smith has received numerous accolades and awards including Volunteer of the Year by Hands On Broward, Woman of the Year by the Fort Lauderdale Woman’s Club, and a NatureScape Broward Emerald Award for outstanding achievement in naturescape and landscaping at Stranahan Park. The City of Fort Lauderdale recognized her extraordinary volunteer efforts by naming November 6, 2012 as Jo Ann Smith Day in the City of Fort Lauderdale; and

WHEREAS, Jo Ann Smith unequivocally exemplifies the power to make a difference through thoughtful, selfless, kind-hearted deeds. Her unbounding energy, passion, and commitment to volunteerism embodies the heart and humanity of our City and will continue to have a positive, far-reaching impact on our future, making Jo Ann Smith one Fort Lauderdale’s greatest ambassadors.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA:

Section 1: That Jo Ann Smith is hereby selected and honored as Citizen of the Year of the City of Fort Lauderdale for 2018 in recognition of her many accomplishments and valuable contributions to the City of Fort Lauderdale and that the City Commission of the City of Fort Lauderdale hereby publicly recognizes and acknowledges these achievements and contributions and does hereby express its heartfelt appreciation to Jo Ann Smith.

Section 2: That a keepsake honoring Jo Ann Smith as Citizen of the Year of the City of Fort Lauderdale for 2018 shall be presented to her, and her portrait shall hang in City Hall.

Section 3: That a copy of this proclamation recognizing Jo Ann Smith as the 2018 Citizen of the Year shall be presented to her as a further token of the sincere gratitude and appreciation of the City of Fort Lauderdale.

DATED this, the 28th day of February 2019,

Mayor Dean J. Trantalis