



September 8, 2025

The Honorable Donna Deegan, Mayor of the City of Jacksonville
City Hall at St. James Building
117 West Duval Street, Suite 400
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Honorable Kevin Carrico, City Council President
Honorable City Council Members
117 West Duval Street, Suite 425
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Subject: Jacksonville Civic Council Urges Fiscal Prudence in Face of Long-Term Challenges

Dear Mayor Deegan, Council President Carrico, and Honorable City Council Members,

The [Jacksonville Civic Council](#) commends the joint efforts of the City Council and Mayor in advocating for key initiatives to move our city forward, including investing in public safety, the University of Florida graduate campus, and the renovated stadium. These initiatives, along with the ongoing upgrades and improvements to our city's infrastructure, are essential for our community's growth and continued prosperity.

However, it is important to recognize that with these forward-thinking investments come necessary commitments to maintain and consistently improve the city's overall level of service and quality of life for our citizens. The Jacksonville Civic Council's recent review of municipal finances shows the city faces serious long-term challenges. Jacksonville invests about half as much per resident in services and infrastructure as peer Florida cities, while maintaining the lowest millage rate among them. Revenue from other fees has also declined in recent years, adjusted for inflation, weakening the city's long-term fiscal health.

Since 2020, city revenues have grown by just \$16 per capita after accounting for inflation and population growth. Gains from property tax growth have been offset by a per capita decline in other revenues and annual deficits in business-type services such as stormwater, solid waste, parking, and other fees.

At the same time, the city has made costly but necessary investments in public safety, reflecting Jacksonville's shared priority of keeping our citizens safe. More than \$1 billion (55%) of the city's budget now goes to public safety, and the City Council recently passed more than a \$100 million increase in salaries and pension benefits. A new jail is also urgently needed, with estimated costs of \$1 billion. These commitments – along with critical investments in the stadium, UF campus, and other transformative projects – carry real and growing costs. A token millage rate rollback questions the sustainability of these projects over time.



The Civic Council urges policymakers to be thoughtful and act with prudence. Reducing revenue at this time is inconsistent with maintaining public safety, ensuring quality of life, and managing growth. Jacksonville's long-term fiscal health is at stake. We urge our elected officials to choose sound fiscal policy over political expedience.

Sincerely,

Gary Chartrand, Chairman	Dennis Whittle, CEO & President	Steve Halverson, Co-Chair, JCC Municipal Finance Committee	John Peyton, Co-Chair, JCC Municipal Finance Committee	Kevin Hyde, Co-Chair, JCC Municipal Finance Committee	Russell Beard, Co-Chair, JCC Municipal Finance Committee
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Cc:

The Honorable Ken Amaro
The Honorable Mike Gay
The Honorable Will Lahnen
The Honorable Joe Carlucci
The Honorable Michael Boylan
The Honorable Jimmy Peluso
The Honorable Reggie Gaffney Jr.
The Honorable Tyrone Clark-Murray
The Honorable Ju'Coby Pittman
The Honorable Raul Arias
The Honorable Randy White
The Honorable Rory Diamond
The Honorable Rahman Johnson
The Honorable Terrance Freeman
The Honorable Ronald B. Salem
The Honorable Nick Howland
The Honorable Matt Carlucci
The Honorable Chris Miller