



Mayor Alvin Brown

“City of Opportunity”

Proposed Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget

In his annual budget address, Mayor Alvin Brown outlined a series of strategic priorities to boost job creation and economic development, revitalize Downtown, support public safety and enhance our quality of life.

These priorities are included in the Mayor’s proposed Fiscal Year 2014-15 balanced budget and the capital improvement plan submitted to City Council on Monday, July 14. Copies of the budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will be available on coj.net.

While Jacksonville has reached a crucial moment where investment is needed, the City continues to face financial challenges.

Though revenues improved this year, mandatory expense increases such as pension contributions (\$11 million), workers’ compensation (\$4.5 million), election administration (\$3.1 million), venue utility costs (\$2.7 million), juvenile detention (\$2.6 million) health care (\$1.8 million), and contractual economic development grants (\$1.7 million) consume the revenue increases.

Given the need to invest in key priorities that will help to grow the revenue base and make a positive, lasting impact on Jacksonville for years to come, the mayor’s general fund budget includes a one-time use of \$16.8 million, or approximately 1.6% of the proposed budget, from the City’s financial reserves.

Reflecting Mayor Brown’s vision and priorities, key areas of investment in both the general fund budget and CIP include:

Revitalizing Downtown Jacksonville

The Jacksonville Landing: As part of revitalization plans, the City of Jacksonville will invest \$11.8 million in public infrastructure through the CIP to support the first phase of improvements, including a wider plaza along the Northbank Riverwalk, public space and broader access at Hogan Street. Demolition of existing structures is included. The vision for reinvigorating the Jacksonville Landing includes new retail, housing and event space.

The Shipyards: Mayor Brown has made redeveloping the Shipyards a major priority to continue investment in Downtown. To activate environmental remediation efforts, the CIP makes an initial investment of \$1.25 million.

Former Duval County Courthouse: To continue efforts to upgrade Downtown, the former county courthouse will be demolished to provide new opportunities for public or private development. The CIP invests \$4.2 million.

Metropolitan Park: The capital improvement plan invests \$250,000 to begin the design of a new Metropolitan Park that maximizes its role as an entertainment venue.

Downtown Streets: To continue making Downtown the best experience possible, the City will invest \$1 million through the CIP to design the transition from unwieldy one-way streets to more user-friendly two-way streets.

Downtown Lighting and Signage: Both Mayor Brown and the DIA have made enhancing the experience of visiting Downtown a priority. Lighting and signage will be improved through an investment of \$1.5 million in the CIP.

Northbank Riverwalk: Mayor Brown supports upgrades of \$3 million through the CIP to continue maximizing the potential of the pedestrian park along our river.

Downtown Investment Authority: Mayor Brown proposes providing \$1.21 million in annual funding for the DIA through the general fund to finance non-capital projects that will spur interest and investment in Downtown.

FC Armada: As previously announced, the City will partner with new North American Soccer League (NASL) team FC Armada to hold its games in the Baseball Grounds of Jacksonville for the next three years. Through the general fund, the City will cover up to \$700,000 in operational expenses and make a one-time capital investment of \$300,000.

Main Library: The general fund budget would restore hours at the Main Library in Downtown Jacksonville, while the CIP would invest in public spaces at the Main Library.

One Spark: To increase Jacksonville's role and success in this signature, destination creator festival, Mayor Brown supports doubling the City's direct investment to \$100,000, with a similar amount available through in-kind contributions of City services.

Boosting Economic Development

International Trade: Mayor Brown's general fund budget would fund the recently approved Office of International Trade to support the growing role of exports and trade in Jacksonville, particularly at JAXPORT.

Small and Emerging Businesses: The mayor's budget invests in mentoring and bonding assistance to support the development of growing small companies.

Northwest Jacksonville Economic Development Trust Fund: Mayor Brown proposes to enhance the program to support investment and jobs, especially among small businesses, in Northwest Jacksonville.

Five Points: The mayor's CIP includes \$750,000 to support the first phase of upgrades to the Five Points district in Riverside to make it more accessible and friendly for businesses and pedestrians.

Enhancing Public Safety

Jacksonville Sheriff's Office: To support effective public safety and Operation Ceasefire, Mayor Brown and Sheriff John Rutherford have agreed to add 40 new police officers and 40 community service officers.

Jacksonville Fire-Rescue: Mayor Brown's budget invests in new safety equipment through the CIP.

Quality of Life

Jacksonville Public Library: Mayor Brown supports initial funding in support of the Fund the Future program to increase access to city libraries. His general fund budget would invest \$500,000 to help the libraries acquire updated materials and \$302,000 to restore hours at the Main Library. Additionally, the Mayor's CIP invests in public library space upgrades and proposes to provide land at Sheffield Park in lieu of purchasing land for the library's proposed new Oceanway branch.

Jacksonville Children's Commission (JCC): Mayor Brown supports an additional \$665,000 million to provide more opportunities for summer camps, summer jobs and programs for our young people through the JCC.

Environmental Quality: Recognizing the critical importance of preserving the health of the St. Johns River, Mayor Brown's proposed Stormwater CIP budget will increase the City's investment in phasing out septic tanks by 50% from Fiscal Year 2013-2014. It will also make a \$5 million capital investment in other water quality projects.

Water Service Enhancements: The proposed CIP provides investments in extending water infrastructure to neighborhoods in Jacksonville that were long ago promised access to City water but have never received it. This includes the U.S. 1 corridor and Robinson's Addition neighborhood.

Senior Centers: With the senior population growing and playing valuable roles in Jacksonville, Mayor Brown's CIP will invest \$1.1 million for renovations at five senior centers: Charlie T. Joseph; Longbranch; Mary Singleton; Riverview; and Moncrief.

Nonprofit Organizations: Through additional support of \$669,000 to the Public Service Grant Program, the City would strengthen its partnership with nonprofit organizations that serve Jacksonville families and individuals in need.

Cultural Organizations: Through additional support of \$136,000 to the Cultural Service Grants program, the City would strengthen its partnership with cultural organizations that help make Jacksonville distinct.

Jacksonville Area Legal Aid: The City would enhance citizen access to the justice system, regardless of income, by providing funding up to \$443,000 to match private donations raised by Jacksonville Area Legal Aid.

UF Health Jacksonville: To ensure that Jacksonville's only public hospital has the financial stability to provide necessary medical care to Jacksonville residents, the City would invest an additional \$2.5 million in support through the general fund budget.

Parks: Through the CIP, Mayor Brown proposes to invest not only in countywide parks maintenance but also in specific park initiatives at sites such as Huguenot Memorial Park, Baker-Skinner Park, Blue Cypress Park, Touchton Park, Hammond Park, and the Jacksonville Equestrian Center.

Effective and Efficient Government

Municipal Cemeteries: Mayor Brown's general fund budget invests \$500,000 to ensure care and maintenance at previously private cemeteries turned over to the City.

Public Works: Through the CIP, Mayor Brown proposes investments in critical public works functions such as roadway resurfacing, public buildings, ADA compliance, bulkhead replacement, and sidewalk improvement.

Vehicle Replacement: To replace outdated vehicles, Mayor Brown recommends capital investments in vehicles at the Sheriff's Office, Fire-Rescue and Public Works.