



OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

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September 8, 2025

To: City Council Members and Staff

From: Kevin Carrico, President Jacksonville City Council

Re: 20250908 Renewal and Expansion of the Charge for the Special Committee on the Future of Downtown

Background: In Spring 2024, amid questions about the pace and impact of Downtown redevelopment, then-City Council President Dr. Ronald Salem convened the Special Committee on the Future of Downtown. Its initial focus was to evaluate the Downtown Investment Authority (DIA) and determine whether structural changes were needed to better support revitalization goals.

Chaired by Council Member Kevin Carrico, the Special Committee reviewed the DIA's authority, operations and impact. Members engaged City staff, developers, nonprofits, peer cities and the public. What emerged was a series of recommended changes designed to expand the DIA's autonomy while strengthening accountability and speeding up project timelines. These included allowing the DIA to manage staffing and budgets more directly, authorizing the DIA to introduce legislation without additional administrative review, requiring the DIA to annually submit a five-year capital improvement plan to assist the City Council in making budget decisions for the DIA and the Community Redevelopment Areas it oversees, and making the DIA Chief Executive Officer subject to Council confirmation and removal. The Special Committee also called for reforms to how development proposals are reviewed and determined an extension of REV grant eligibility and more transparent budgeting better aligned with the Business Investment and Development Plan.

Ultimately, the Special Committee's work signaled a renewed commitment to strengthening the tools of Downtown governance and to building a foundation for a more vibrant, efficient and responsive redevelopment strategy.

Present-Day Purpose: Recognizing that the future of Downtown Jacksonville depends on more than any one agency or initiative, I am hereby renewing and expanding the charge of the Special Committee on the Future of Downtown. The Special Committee should focus on researching and streamlining the systems, processes and partnerships that shape the Downtown experience. This begins with mapping the roles of public, private and nonprofit entities involved in public space management, culture, development, infrastructure and safety and providing recommendations with respect to changes to current roles the involved entities may fulfill, guardrails or changes to current public space management structures and/or processes, and recommendations for expansion or reduction of current programs or initiatives. The Special Committee should also evaluate how development priorities are set, how incentives are used and how coordination across departments and authorities can be improved. The goal is to build a clearer, more effective framework for how Downtown is supported and sustained so that it can thrive for years to come.

Charge: The renewed charge of the Special Committee on the Future of Downtown is to strengthen how Jacksonville plans for, governs and invests in its urban core. This includes mapping and aligning the roles of all public space stakeholders and agencies, reviewing the City's strategy for CRA development and project negotiations, and evaluating the impact and structure of existing incentive programs. Together, these focus areas will inform a clearer, more coordinated, and future-ready approach to Downtown revitalization.

1. *Public Space Stakeholders and Agencies: Mapping, alignment and recommendations for changes or improvements*
2. *CRA Development strategy and process review and recommendations for changes or improvements*
3. *Incentive Program impact and policy review and recommendations for changes or improvements*

In addition to the above charge of the Special Committee, the Chair may introduce and invite other topics to be heard and discussed as needed.

Members:

Councilmember Joe Carlucci - Chair
Councilmember Ron Salem - Vice Chair
Councilmember Raul Arias
Councilmember Matt Carlucci
Councilmember Jimmy Peluso

Deadline: The City Council Special Committee on the Future of Downtown is tasked to report its findings and recommendations on these matters on or before June 30, 2026. I am hopeful that the expanded charge of this Special Committee will be extended by the next City Council President.

cc: Council Members and Staff
Jason Teal, Director/Council Secretary
Bernadette Smith, Chief, Legislative Services Division
Yvonne Mitchell, Chief, Administrative Services Division
Colleen Hampsey, Chief, Research Division
Teresa Eichner, Chief, Public Information
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