



Task Force on Consolidated Government
Jacksonville City Council
Council Member Lori Boyer, Chair

The following answers were given by Mayor John Delaney, on September 9th, 2013, in response to follow up questions posed by Task Force member Kay Ehas after Mayor Delaney's panel presentation before the Task Force on September 6th, 2013.

Question 1

Q: Can you recommend any structural or organizational changes to address the fact that Jacksonville's neighborhoods are not being served well by consolidation?

A: I created a Neighborhoods Department and consolidated neighborhood functions under this umbrella. We set up a professional call center so that we responded quickly to calls from the neighborhoods—for example we pledged to fix every pothole within 24 hours of a call.

Mayor Austin created what was called CPAC's. I think that stood for Citizen's Planning Advisory Councils. The city was divided into 6 areas, and each one had a CPAC, or citizen's board. This was to help feed up to City Hall the requests from the populous.

And we then created a program that we called Intensive Care for targeted neighborhoods. We had 6 areas that we concentrated efforts on for those neighborhoods: police, infrastructure, social services, etc. The idea was to help these particularly poor neighborhoods, selected by evaluating the neighborhoods through a series of screens. I believe that these programs have been terminated by subsequent Administrations based on their priorities.

Question 2

Q: Does the majority of city monies go to new development in the suburbs? If so, how can we more balance the needs of the entire city?

A: City spending is pretty diverse in terms of where it goes. Keep in mind that developers pay for their own infrastructure. But there is probably more police presence in the areas that are high crime. Fire is pretty spread out. Social spending is probably concentrated in the poorer communities. In short, I don't see this as an issue.

Question 3

Q: Jacksonville seems woefully behind in the area of mass transit. Do you think having a transportation authority that is not under the city government umbrella has any bearing on our lack of progress? Do you think there is a better structure?

A: I think that the JTA has operated very well within its resources. There has been little interference by City Hall. The problem with mass transit in Jacksonville is that we are so spread out. In old days, "everyone" worked and shopped downtown, so all the buses could go from the neighborhoods like bicycle spokes to the downtown. But with the development of shopping malls and office parks, and suburban housing developments, downtown is no longer the destination. So people are washing around everywhere. Finally, mass transit is very expensive, and Americans in non-intensively urbanized areas love their cars!