



## OFFICE OF MAYOR ALVIN BROWN

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September 30, 2014

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The Honorable Clay Yarborough, City Council President  
c/o Legislative Services  
117 West Duval Street, Suite 430  
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Dear President Yarborough:

Enclosed are Ordinances 2014-466-E, 2014-467-E, 2014-468-E, and 2014-469-E, all of which have been signed.

I proposed a budget that recommended key investments in Downtown revitalization such as renewal of the Jacksonville Landing, economic development through JAXPORT, the new Office of International Trade, and small business assistance, and quality of life by enhancing public safety, parks, and summer jobs. My proposed budget represented a clear vision with strategic long-term investments in Jacksonville to encourage job creation and continue our city's great momentum – with a clear return on investment for hard-working taxpayers.

However, I respect City Council's role and the time Council members invest in the annual budget process. Even when we have disagreements – such as last year when I opposed increasing the millage rate and this year over proposed investments – the final budget is a product of both sides working together to set a fiscal plan for the City of Jacksonville.

What matters now is that we cooperate to resolve the single biggest challenge facing the City of Jacksonville: our ever-escalating City pension contributions. Until we address that stubborn problem, our collective ability to make necessary investments in Jacksonville's future will be limited.

In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 budget that I proposed just two weeks after taking office in July 2011, our City's contribution to the Police and Fire Pension Fund was \$79 million. In the FY 2015 budget that takes effect tomorrow, that contribution will be \$153 million. If we do nothing, our annual payment could grow to \$469 million by FY 2036.

I did not create this pension challenge. Neither did the current City Council. But we have a responsibility to solve it for both current and future taxpayers. As City Council takes up the proposed agreement with the Police and Fire Pension Fund (2014-386) in October, I am eager to work with Council members to enact retirement reform. The sooner we act, the sooner we can provide the fiscal stability that hard-working Jacksonville taxpayers deserve.

Please let me know if you have any questions. As always, thank you for your service to Jacksonville.

Sincerely,

  
Alvin Brown

Cc: Jacksonville City Council members