

THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET

Jacksonville,
Florida
2022-2023

JACKSONVILLE
**COMMUNITY
ACTION
COMMITTEE**
COMMUNITY CONTROL
OF THE POLICE



WHO WE ARE

The Jacksonville Community Action Committee (JCAC) is a Black-led, grassroots organization fighting for police accountability in Jacksonville, Florida. JCAC believes in investing in our community and uplifting community members that have been most impacted by state-sanctioned violence.

For any questions, or to learn how you can get involved with us, please visit jaxtakesaction.org or email us at jaxcommunityaction@gmail.com.



VISION STATEMENT

Reinvesting in Jacksonville

The JCAC seeks to reinvest in our communities as a way to garner social change. The City of Jacksonville continues to disproportionately fund the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office (JSO). JSO currently makes up 33% of the city's overall budget, yet communities have not witnessed a sizable decrease in crime. As a result of JSO's overinflated budget, other community programs have suffered budgetary decreases. We believe that fully resourced communities are safe communities, and we reject the notion that cities can "out-police crime."

JCAC's "People's Budget" caps JSO's budget at 25% and reallocates the remaining \$120+ million into creating a safer, more resourced community. This document outlines the possibilities for Jacksonville if community care and crime prevention are prioritized. This budget concentrates on funding for: Mental health services, crime reduction strategies, small Black/minority-owned businesses, and the Office of Tenant Advocacy (which will enforce the Tenants Bill of Rights).



SPENDING IN CONTEXT

Does JSO need more funding?

Budgetary Breakdown

- In 2021-2022, the city budget allocated **\$502,000,000** to JSO.
- In 2022-2023, JSO is requesting a **\$37,000,000** budgetary increase.
- If JSO's request is approved, they will have an approximate budget of **\$540,000,000**.
- \$540,000,000 is 36% of the city's *overall* \$1.5 billion budget.

Performance Breakdown

- Detectives have solved *approximately* only 29% of cases according to recent data.
- There have been 71 *murders* (not including non-murder homicides) according to the JSO website.
- There have been 7 *officer-involved shootings as of August 2022*.
- 7 officers have been *arrested*; 2 of whom were arrested for **sexually harassing** children according to the JSO website.

Based on JSO's overall job performance and management of funds, it would be irresponsible to grant them a budgetary increase.

THE HOUSING CRISIS

Establishment of an Office of Tenant Advocacy and a Tenants Bill of Rights

Establishment of an Office of Tenant Advocacy

As drafted by Florida Rising and Miami Work Center

Using money from the inflated police budget, council can create a fully staffed Rental Housing Assistance Unit within the Jacksonville Housing Authority. This unit will serve as a permanent voice for residents within the City and ensure compliance with tenant's rights. It will include an elected position – Tenant Housing Advocate – to represent the interests of Jacksonville tenants.

Tenants have the right to relocation assistance from the City in the event of a forced move based on displacement on the basis of uninhabitable conditions.

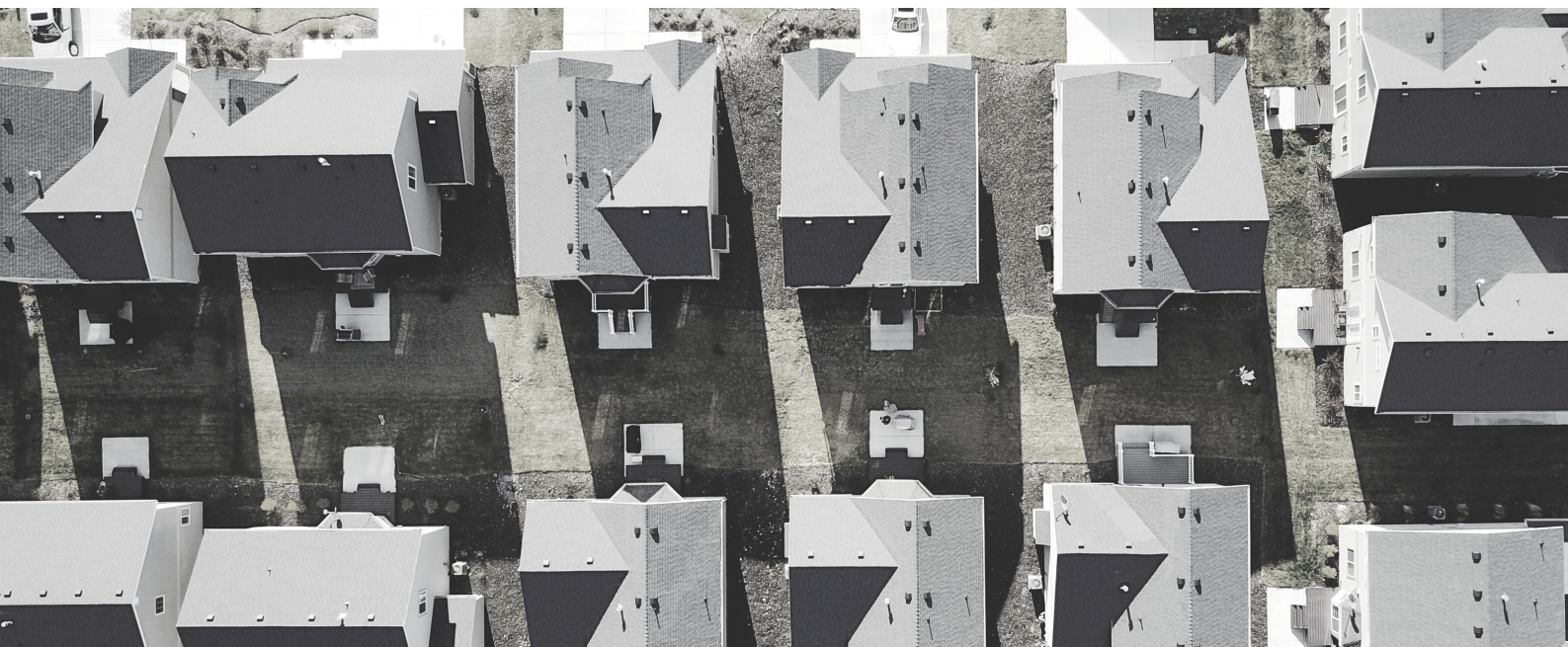
There will be substantial public housing spread throughout the city to accommodate all who qualify. If permanent housing is unavailable, then the city will provide temporary housing until said time that a unit becomes available. Criminal and Eviction history will not preclude anyone from being provided public housing. After its creation, this office will fund itself with fines collected from landlords who violate the Tenants Bill of Rights.

THE HOUSING CRISIS

Declaration of a Housing State of Emergency

There has been substantial evidence to suggest Jacksonville is now in a state of emergency regarding affordable rent for residential and business tenants. Declaring a state of emergency allows the question of rent control to be on the ballot for voters to have a voice in the future of our home security.

There have been 1,235 eviction filings in the month of July 2022 alone and 20,825 total filings since March 2022. The city is facing a housing crisis--not a crime crisis. Jacksonville citizens need resources distributed to meet their most immediate needs, and this must take priority over JSO's desire for \$37 million worth of new technology. (Data from evictionlabs.org)



PEOPLE'S LEGISLATION

Neighborhood Bill of Rights

In 1995, the city of Jacksonville Florida passed City Ordinance 95-247-106, the Neighborhood Bill of Rights (NBR). Given the large area and diversity of residents in Jacksonville, the NBR was meant to guarantee residents and neighborhood organizations clear and reliable means to contact their city representatives regarding matters of public infrastructure and budgeting concerns. The NBR includes :

- “A timely personal response from its district councilperson or that councilperson's aide to questions directed to the City Council office.”
- “Opportunity for formal input into the annual budget process, including the opportunity to express preferred City government priorities...”
- Opportunity to “suggest capital improvement projects and other statements that fairly represent the opinion of a majority of the neighborhood's residents.”
- “The opportunity to participate in the design of publicly funded projects within or adjacent to the neighborhood...”
- Along with various other provisions related to communication with city officials and other means of citizen engagement.

Community members have expressed significant concerns about City Council's inaccessibility surrounding decisions about Jacksonville's future. This inaccessibility is particularly evident during the yearly budget cycles. Codifying the Neighborhood Bill of Rights into the City Charter would allow community members a greater voice in city decision making. Local organizations like the Jax Urban League have led the calls on this legislation.

PEOPLE'S LEGISLATION

Public Safety Oversight Committee (PSOC)

The creation of a PSOC would be made up of everyday, working-class people within the Jacksonville community. The committee would be tasked with reviewing complaints made against JSO. Following this review, the committee would recommend the appropriate disciplinary consequences for the respective officers along with policy recommendations to the Sheriff, Mayor, and City Council.

Similar committees exist in cities across Florida, yet Jacksonville does not have such oversight. Because of this, JSO acts with impunity, and the community has little recourse. JCAC has been proposing this sort of committee for years with little avail from City Council and other elected officials. Due to city leadership's inaction, the JCAC and community partners are working to put PSOC on the ballot in 2024.

Decriminalize Marijuana possession and Other Victimless offenses

Jacksonville has a mass incarceration issue. JSO arrested 4% of the entire city population in 2018, and the jail is constantly overcrowded.

Decriminalization of marijuana and other victimless offenses would save taxpayer money and ensure that JSO's focus is on solving homicides and sexual assaults - not petty drug busts and other victimless offenses. We stand with the demands of community orgs like ICARE who have called for the issuing of civil citations for low level, non violent offenses, as a means of reducing mass incarceration.



PEOPLE'S LEGISLATION

Creation of the Urban Core Development Authority & supporting small black/minority-owned businesses

Addressing Socioeconomic, Poverty and Other Disparities in Jacksonville

Jacksonville Charter Revision Commission

From the recommendation of the Jacksonville Charter Revision Commission, we support the creation of an Urban Core Development Authority to implement a master plan and coordinate public and private resources to address poverty, socioeconomic issues, and other disparities within the designated area. This Authority board would be chosen by the District representatives of that area, not the Mayor, operating with a budget created from the reallocation of proposed JSO funding.

We call for the City of Jacksonville to stop the barriers on all City, State, and Federal contracts that are granted to the exclusion of Black/African American owned Businesses, Contractors, and Vendors. The amount of city contracts going to Black owned firms, non profits and vendors should reflect the city demographics.



PEOPLE'S LEGISLATION

Mental Health Resources & Crime Reduction

Investing in public works projects, public transportation/infrastructure, mental health resources, and safe alternatives to crime reduction

- We recommend the City install adequate lighting and safety alarms in all parks, as well as reinstate/rehire full-time Park Managers who can provide adult supervision and activities designed to protect, promote, and provide safety to our youth.
- We recommend the creation of a Homelessness Elimination Initiative Program that other cities have done successfully
- Funding should be reallocated to the construction and maintenance of new homeless shelters in order to reduce overcrowding in existing shelters, as well as raise wages for existing case managers and recruit more shelter employees.
- Additional funding should be reallocated to the Division of Mental Health Services to improve access to quality mental health services for the people of Jacksonville. This includes investment in affordable behavioral health services through alternative governmental or non-governmental agencies.
- Further legislation reallocating increased JSO funding to clergy and non profit organizations that are tackling crime reduction efforts should be proposed and passed



PEOPLE'S LEGISLATION

Strengthening Organized Labor

Implementation of a union neutrality ordinance for all private contractors getting city contracts, meaning employers must not interfere with workers who work for firms and non profits that get city contracts who wish to collectively bargain.

Equitable Methods to Raise Revenue

As a means of raising total revenue, we are proposing a mileage rate increase on commercial properties valued at \$1.5 million or higher. Additionally, historically neglected neighborhoods designated as economic opportunity zones would qualify for a millage rate freeze to incentivize development in those areas. This must also be accompanied by strong rent control legislation to protect residents of these areas as business expands, as well as legislation prioritizing a 1 to 1 ratio of Black/minority contractors to nonblack/minority contractors so residents can have the opportunity to serve their community before outside developers are considered for publicly funded projects.



PEOPLE'S LEGISLATION

Investigation Into JSO Misconduct Around the George Floyd Protests, Reinstatement of the Safer Together Committee

The City of Jacksonville paid out over \$100,000 to peaceful protestors in August 2020 following JSO misconduct and false arrests amidst the George Floyd protests. We are calling for a city council investigation, initiated by the incoming City Council President, regarding the violent response from JSO following the civil unrest. We also call for the reinstatement of the Safer Together Committee, formed after 2020 protests to increase communication between JSO, City Council and the people of Jacksonville.

Protect the Community from COVID-19

Many in our community are still suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic. We are calling for unused CARES ACT funds, not spent by the City, to be distributed towards direct assistance to the unemployed and underserved of Jacksonville, not towards benefiting JSO's artificially inflated overtime budget. ARP funds must all be distributed in an equitable way to assist those communities who need it.





Enact a People's Budget Now!

Follow us on social media @JaxTakesAction
Visit our Website: JaxTakesAction.org
Email us @ JaxCommunityAction@Gmail.com