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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Jacksonville Civic Council  
Endorses Mayor Curry's Funding Proposal**

**Jacksonville FL, January 27, 2016:** Since 2013, the Pension Task Force of the Civic Council has actively examined the critical issues arising from the City of Jacksonville's significantly underfunded Police and Fire Pension Plan ("PFPP"). Today we endorse the funding proposal recently advanced by Mayor Curry and affirmed unanimously by the Jacksonville City Council.

The City Council made great strides in 2015 by passing pension benefits reform that substantially lowered pension costs going forward. The remaining issue, however, remains how to pay for the unfunded pension liability and still provide for effective operation of the City.

Mayor Curry's proposal to enact a new sales tax upon expiration of the current Better Jacksonville Plan sales tax is a thoughtful, creative proposal with several benefits:

1. It legislatively enacts a new source of taxpayer funding without the economic detriment of expanding current tax rates and assessments;
2. It provides a stable source of recurring revenue;
3. It seeks to address unfunded liabilities in all three of the City's pension plans General Employees, Corrections and Police and Fire, not just the Police and Fire Pension Fund;
4. It enables the City to consider longer-term pension issues, such as possible adoption of a less risky defined contribution benefit structure;
5. It provides needed financial breathing room to address other city financial issues; and
6. It puts the ultimate decision on how to pay for pension reform in the hands of Jacksonville citizens, where it rightly belongs.

We commend Mayor Curry and the Council for developing the plan. We strongly and respectfully urge the Florida Legislature to pass HB 2016-1297 and SB 2016-1652 to allow the City of Jacksonville and its citizens decide our fate and make thoughtful decisions about the future of our city.

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*The mission of the Jacksonville Civic Council is to promote a fiscally responsible, economically vibrant, thriving community, that offers opportunity for all its residents.*

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