



NEWS RELEASE

LENNY CURRY, MAYOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“GANGS CAN’T HAVE OUR KIDS!”

Mayor proposes funding to meet unmet afterschool programming needs

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., August 18, 2017 – Following continued discussions and collaborations with Duval County Public Schools, city council members, and providers, Mayor Lenny Curry has announced his commitment to supporting the unmet afterschool programming needs facing numerous communities. With his proposed recommendation to City Council of \$2.69 million in additional funds, 21 sites throughout Jacksonville could now open, serving approximately 1,720 additional children. City Council (District 10) and Finance Committee member Reggie Brown plans to introduce an amendment at the proper time during the budget process to appropriate the funds.

“We are making every effort possible to maximize resources to meet the needs of at-home children in our community,” said Mayor Curry. “When kids leave school campuses, they should be able to go to a community center or site to participate in recreational and enrichment activities. Gangs can’t have our kids! As I’ve stated many times before, government has a role to play in making sure at-home kids do not fall through the cracks. If there are ways for us to improve the lives of children, we’re going to do that responsibly and orderly with proper vetting and appropriate budgeting.”

Afterschool programs provide youth with opportunities for personal development, academic support, and positive character-building activities that minimize opportunities for them to engage in violent, criminal and other troubling behaviors. Following a shortfall of summer camp and afterschool funding earlier this year, the Curry administration researched opportunities to shift funding to support additional summer camp and afterschool sites. With the approval of the Jacksonville City Council, additional dollars were re-appropriated to expand youth programs at sites previously unfunded. However, several sites remained unfunded. Upon further research and review led by Mayor Curry and Councilman Brown, the administration was able to re-appropriate additional funding to support afterschool programming at numerous sites including services provided by Communities in Schools of Jacksonville, and the Boys and Girls Club of Northeast Florida.

“I am truly pleased that the mayor’s administration, City Council and community partners have continued to work together to ensure we are doing what is best for our children,” said Councilman Brown. “Many of our youth have

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been exposed to hardships, violence and other adversities. Afterschool programs give them the very hope they need to overcome those challenges and build their confidence to pursue their dreams.”

The funding proposed today would bring the City’s investment in quality afterschool programs to nearly \$13 million with services to more than 8,000 children.

“Working so closely with Jacksonville youth each day, our team of educators and mentors see first-hand the value afterschool programs bring to not only the children, but our city,” said Boys and Girls Club of Northeast Florida President Paul Martinez. “We have an obligation to give them a chance to succeed. I am grateful that the Mayor and City Council of Jacksonville stand behind the work we do, and have provided the support necessary for our afterschool programs to continue.”

About the City of Jacksonville

The City of Jacksonville is the largest city by land mass in the continental United States, serving approximately 850,000 residents. Located in Duval County, City of Jacksonville leadership includes the mayor and a 19-member City Council. To learn more about the City of Jacksonville, visit COJ.net.

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