

RESOLUTION 2021-12-03

A RESOLUTION OF THE DOWNTOWN INVESTMENT AUTHORITY (“DIA”) IN SUPPORT OF CREATING A VIBRANT AND PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE DOWNTOWN RIVERFRONT BY PRIORITIZING RIVERFRONT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND IMPLEMENTING THE IDENTIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JESSIE BALL DUPONT FUND RIVERFRONT PARKS ACTIVATION PLAN; INSTRUCTING ITS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS TO EFFECTUATE THE PURPOSE OF THIS RESOLUTION; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution 2021-04-07 adopted on April 21, 2021, the Downtown Investment Authority contributed funds to support the Jessie Ball duPont Fund’s Riverfront Parks Activation Plan (the “Activation Plan”) in an effort to develop a comprehensive program and strategy to activate Jacksonville’s Downtown Riverfront parks and public spaces; and

WHEREAS, the Jessie Ball duPont Fund and its project partners conducted extensive community and stakeholder engagement to understand the needs and wants of the public and integrated the public input to develop its Activation Plan; and

WHEREAS, after eight months, the Jessie Ball duPont Fund completed its Riverfront Parks Activation Plan for Jacksonville’s Downtown riverfront and presented its findings and recommendations to the public on October 25, 2021, and to the Downtown Investment Authority Board on November 22, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Activation Plan focuses on creating a vibrant and inviting Riverfront that provides fun, flexible, accessible, and recreational opportunities for all types of visitors; and

WHEREAS, the Activation Plan identifies that investment in waterfront activations and public space improvements can spur new development, improve quality of life, create higher-paying jobs, attract new talent and business, and generate compelling return on investments for the city; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Investment Authority supports a holistic approach to transform the Downtown Riverfront into a world-class destination that thoughtfully plans for vibrant public spaces and parks with strategically integrated private development; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Investment Authority concurs with and supports implementation of the Activation Plan principles, strategies and conclusions identified on Exhibit A attached hereto and made a part hereof; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown Investment Authority is in the process of completing its 5-year update to the adopted BID and CRA plan for Downtown and staff is directed to incorporate the Activation Plan recommendations into the BID and CRA Plan; and

WHEREAS, to fully capitalize on the unprecedented momentum of growth and opportunity in Downtown Jacksonville, the Downtown Investment Authority encourages the City Council and Mayor's Office to prioritize the completion of several Downtown Riverfront Capital Improvement Projects that will further support the economic redevelopment of Downtown and the quality of life for visitors and residents of the City at large; and

WHEREAS, in alignment with the Activation Plan, the Downtown Investment Authority supports the timely implementation and funding of a dispersed sites activation pilot program;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Downtown Investment Authority:

Section 1. The principles, strategies and conclusions of the Activation Plan identified on Exhibit A attached hereto are hereby adopted and staff is directed to incorporate those terms into the updated BID and CRA plan.

Section 2. The DIA staff is directed to include in the BID and CRA update, and specifically in the CRA master plan, the location of the various riverfront park parcels which have been identified in the Activation Plan and/or the City's Capital Improvement Program.

Section 3. The City is urged to accelerate funding for design and construction of Liberty Basin Marina, Riverfront Plaza, Northbank Riverwalk Extension, Downtown Bulkhead replacements, Metropolitan Park renovations, and Southbank Riverwalk extension, and to seek other public funding opportunities to assist therewith, in order to capture the current market cycle and coordinate such public infrastructure with adjacent private redevelopments.

Section 4. The DIA staff is directed to work with Jessie Ball duPont Fund and the City Department of Parks and Recreation to begin implementation of the dispersed sites implementation strategy of the Activation Plan activation within this fiscal year.

Section 5. The DIA authorizes its Chief Executive Officer to take all necessary actions to effectuate the purpose of this Resolution.

Section 6. This Resolution shall become effective on the date it is signed by the Chair of the DIA Board.

WITNESS:

DOWNTOWN INVESTMENT AUTHORITY




W. Braxton Gillam, Chairman

12/15/21
Date

VOTE: In Favor: 8 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0

Exhibit A to Resolution 2021-12-03
Key Activation Plan principles, strategies, and conclusions

1. The entire Riverfront of Downtown should be planned holistically to include public spaces designed for and accessible to all residents of Jacksonville, as well as Downtown residents, employees, and visitors.
2. The riverfront should include a connected system of ample parks and public spaces of high-quality design.
3. The riverfront will include a mix of public spaces and private uses, with private development playing a key role in funding and activation.
4. The riverfront should include Connections with Nature and Water, Educational Opportunities and Celebrate Diverse Cultures and History.
5. A variety of food options and other entertainment, including year-round activities, will be essential.
6. The Riverfront should be Fun and Functional
7. The riverfront should be a gathering place for Community.
8. The following Social & Cultural Principles will be applied when developing park and public space designs and programs:
 - a. Welcoming and Accessible to all
 - b. Diversity of Audience and Experience
 - c. Flexible
 - d. Fun and Functional
 - e. Promoting Wellness
9. The following Waterfront Public Realm Principles will be applied when designing Riverfront park and public space- both new and renovated:
 - a. Ecology
 - b. Multiple connected paths
 - c. Framed View Corridors
 - d. Variety
 - e. Great Streets
10. In light of current population growth and demographic trends, the time for investment in waterfront public infrastructure is now—to spur new private redevelopment in the current market cycle, to attract talent and businesses, and to improve quality of life.
11. While the investment of General Fund dollars now is needed, the ROI generated is compelling and real estate value capture, donations, and earned income will help fund lasting success
12. A concerted and strategic effort should be made to seek additional resources such as federal and state grants and philanthropic and private donations to fund development and programming of public riverfront parks and spaces.
13. An activated program should include:
 - a. Public green space
 - b. Opportunities for active recreation and sports
 - c. Opportunities to enjoy arts and culture
 - d. Commercial and retail venues
 - e. Community gathering spaces and opportunities for services

14. Partnerships and community ownership will be instrumental to consistent and varied programming
15. Adopt two-year overarching themes for programming
16. Establish a framework of daily weekday program themes
17. Implement a riverfront toolkit of Walk elements, Cue elements, Mobile Units, Pocket Elements and Hubs that create a sense of place and unify the Riverwalk experience; begin with a Dispersed Activation Scenario and work to implement this year