

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-1174**

**A Resolution of the City Commission of the City of Gainesville, Florida, to designate and dual-name NE 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue between N Main Street and Waldo Rd as “Charles S. Chestnut III Avenue”; and affirming its support for and requesting action by the Florida Legislature to name a section of NW 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue (SR 20) between NW 6<sup>th</sup> St and N Main Street in memory of Charles S. Chesnut III; and providing an effective date.**

**WHEREAS**, Charles Sumner Chestnut III was born in 1940 in Gainesville, Florida to Charles Chestnut, Jr. and Doris Chestnut; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Chestnut attended segregated schools in Alachua and Marion counties before enrolling in what is now Bethune-Cookman University and graduating from Eckels School of Mortuary Science in Philadelphia; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Chestnut for six decades was the head of Chestnut Funeral Home at 18 Northwest 8th Avenue, a Black business owned and operated by generations of the Chestnut family since 1914 and honored in 2014 with a State of Florida historic marker; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Chestnut led the Gainesville Civil Rights movement as president of the Alachua County NAACP Youth Council and in 1963 coordinated sit-ins to integrate the whites-only counters at local drugstores and secure equal access to public accommodations for the Black residents of the county; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Chestnut next directed an effort to expand voters’ rights across Alachua County with a campaign to help Black residents register to vote; and,

**WHEREAS**, in 1976 Mr. Chestnut was elected as the first Black member of the Alachua County School Board, a seat he held for 16 years while working to represent all students and families because, in his words, “there are problems shared by all races”; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Chestnut was chosen as president of the Florida School Boards Association in 1987 and was named to the Florida Council on Educational Management by then Governor Bob Graham; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Chestnut was elected to the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners in 1992 and served eight years, “speaking for the human and civil rights of all people, and especially the African American society”; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Chestnut was among the 22 original members of the Beta Pi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, chartered in Gainesville, Florida on May 1, 1972; and,

**WHEREAS**, Mr. Chestnut was a lifetime member of the NAACP, a loyal lifetime member of Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church, and honored recipient of the NAACP Leadership Award, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Hall of Fame Award, the Drum Major for Justice Award, the United Negro College Fund Salute to Leadership Award, and the Community Legacy Award.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA:**

**Section 1.** NE 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue between N Main Street and Waldo Rd is dual-named as “Charles S. Chestnut III Avenue” so that his contribution to the community will always be remembered; and

**Section 2.** The City Commission of Gainesville, Florida hereby requests supportive action by the Florida Legislature for the memorial designation of NW 8th Avenue between Northwest 6th Street and Main Street (SR 20) in the City of Gainesville Florida as “Charles S. Chestnut III Avenue” to allow the erection of suitable markers and signage proclaiming the designation; and

**Section 3.** A copy of this Resolution shall be provided to the Florida Department of Transportation; and

**Section 4.** This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 7<sup>TH</sup> day of December 2023.

---

Harvey L. Ward, Jr.  
Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

---

Kristin J. Bryant  
Interim City Clerk

---

Daniel M. Nee  
City Attorney