



## City of Gainesville Agenda Item Report

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**File Number:** 2024-774

**Agenda Date:** October 17, 2024

**Department:** Department of Housing & Community Development

**Title:** 2024-774 ConnectFree Funding for Jessie's Village (B)

**Department:** Housing & Community Development

**Description:** Request for the City Commission to increase the award of ConnectFree assistance to subsidize the development of a new affordable housing project to be known as Jessie's Village.

**Fiscal Note:** In FY 2025, approximately \$1.5 million is available in the ConnectFree Program for this initiative.

**Explanation:** On September 7, 2023, the City Commission adopted Resolution #2023-806, which clarified how ConnectFree funds can be used to support new affordable housing projects.

Since then, staff has developed a new application process for this funding. Both the ConnectFree Resolution and the application stress that the use of ConnectFree Program funds is limited to the payment of costs associated with the following:

- The engineering design and construction to extend Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) water and wastewater facilities to the property;
- Meter Installation Charges; and
- Connection Charges.

In February 2024, the Hutchinson Foundation Inc. applied for \$32,000 in ConnectFree funding for the Jessie's Village residential complex. At that time, the Hutchinson Foundation envisioned Jessie's Village to be a 22-unit, mixed-income, rental housing project. The developers planned for 8 of the 22 units (36.4%) to be affordable. On April 4, 2024, based on that information, the City Commission approved the Hutchinson Foundation's request for \$32,000 in ConnectFree funding for Jessie's Village.

Since then, the developers have revised their plans and now intend for all 22 units to be affordable. For that reason, they have requested, and are eligible for, additional ConnectFree funds for the project. Based on GRU's Online Water and Wastewater Fee Estimator Tool, the applicant estimates that meter installation and connection charges

will be \$87,706.

Details and analysis about this project and the developer are included in the backup for this agenda item. That backup consists of the following items:

1. An introductory slide presentation;
2. The application for additional ConnectFree funding;
3. The ConnectFree Resolution;
4. GRU's Online Water and Wastewater Fee Estimator Tool; and
5. The City Commission's April 4, 2024 Approval of the applicant's request for \$32,000.

**Strategic Connection:**

- Goal 1: Equitable Community
- Goal 2: More Sustainable Community
- Goal 3: A Great Place to Live and Experience
- Goal 4: Resilient Local Economy
- Goal 5: "Best in Class" Neighbor Services

**Recommendation:** The City Commission 1) award up to \$87,700 in ConnectFree funds to Jessie's Village; and 2) authorize the City Manager or designee to execute any documents necessary to such funding, subject to the City Attorney approval as to form and legality.