

RESOLUTION NO. 160146

PASSED: _____

A resolution of the City of Gainesville, Florida, providing that all surcharges collected on water and wastewater connection charges incurred beyond the municipal boundaries shall fund the ConnectFree Program to assist certain projects, as identified and prioritized in this resolution, with the extension, construction, and connection to the City's water, wastewater, and reclaimed water systems.

WHEREAS, the City of Gainesville owns, operates, and maintains a utility system that provides electric power, water, wastewater, natural gas and telecommunication services to a region within and beyond the municipal boundaries of the City; and

WHEREAS, the City of Gainesville, in accordance with Sections 27-128 and 27-169 of the Code of Ordinances, imposes a 25 percent surcharge on water and wastewater connection charges incurred beyond the municipal boundaries of the City; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, the City created the ConnectFree Program (Resolution No. 030223, as amended by Resolution Nos. 050601, 130718, and 140313), which was funded by surcharges collected on water and wastewater connections, to assist with the extension, construction, and connection to the City's water, wastewater, and reclaimed water systems; and

WHEREAS, after the City Commission in 2014 discontinued the surcharges on water and wastewater connections (Ordinance No. 140171) and the ConnectFree Program (Resolution No. 140313), the City Commission on May 7, 2015, voted to reinstate the ConnectFree Program (Legislative File No. 140680) and reinstated the surcharges with the adoption of Ordinance No. 150246 on September 17, 2015; and

WHEREAS, this resolution reestablishes the ConnectFree Program and directs the expenditure of ConnectFree Program funds.

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

1. **Source of Funding.** All surcharges collected on water and wastewater connection charges incurred beyond the municipal boundaries in accordance with Sections 27-128 and 27-169 of the Code of Ordinances shall be used to fund the ConnectFree Program, which shall be administered in accordance with this resolution.
2. **ConnectFree Program Criteria.** The City Manager or designee(s) shall identify and prioritize projects to receive ConnectFree Program funding in accordance with the following:

- a. The ConnectFree Program shall provide grant funding to assist with the payment of costs associated with the extension, construction, and connection to the City’s water, wastewater, and reclaimed water systems throughout the entire Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) service area. In addition to the aforementioned assistance, the ConnectFree Program shall provide grant funding to assist income eligible households with the costs of on-site plumbing modifications needed to extend, construct, or connect to the City’s water, wastewater, or reclaimed water systems. Income eligible households are those that meet the criteria for low income, very low income, or extremely low income as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- b. Projects that receive ConnectFree Program funding shall be limited to: 1) owner-occupied or rental residential dwellings, and 2) facilities that are owned and operated by nonprofit organizations or government entities to benefit special needs populations in the community. Special needs populations include but are not limited to: elderly persons; disabled persons; homeless persons; veterans; persons with chronic illnesses; at-risk youth; survivors of domestic violence; and persons with addictions.
- c. ConnectFree Program funds should be allocated on an annual basis as follows, but may be reallocated by the City Manager or designee(s) based on actual needs:
 - i. **60% - Single Units/Neighborhood Extensions** – Owner-occupied/rental and non-profit/government individual properties;
 - ii. **15% - Affordable Housing (minimum \$37,500)** – Local government contribution to affordable housing development projects leveraged with federal/state low-income housing tax credits;
 - iii. **10% - Public Health, Safety, Environmental (minimum \$25,000)** – Projects to address public health, safety or environmental welfare; and
 - iv. **15% - Program Delivery (minimum \$37,500)** – Costs for administering the ConnectFree Program.
- d. Funding priorities:

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Low-Income Area or Household AND Public Health/Safety/Environmental	X		
Low-Income Area or Household Public Health/Safety/Environmental		X	
Non-Profit/Government		X	
Non-Low-Income Area or Household			X

- e. The maximum funding provided for an extension to an individual structure shall be \$10,000 for water facilities and \$25,000 for wastewater facilities, which shall be in addition to any applicable on-site plumbing modifications and connection charges/surcharges also paid by the ConnectFree Program. Neighborhood extensions to serve more than one structure shall meet one of the following: 1) all structures are participating and each individual structure receives funding at or below the maximum funding limit set forth in this section, or 2) at least 60% of the total number of structures is participating and each of the individual structures, whether participating or not, receives a funding benefit at or below the maximum funding limit set forth in this section.
- f. The City Manager or designee is authorized to administer the ConnectFree Program and disburse all funding in accordance with this resolution. Any projects receiving \$50,000 or greater require approval by the City Commission.

3. **Effective Date.** Upon adoption, this resolution shall become effective immediately and supersedes and replaces Resolution No. 140313.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2016.

 Lauren Poe
 Mayor

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

 Kurt Lannon
 Clerk of the Commission

 Nicolle M. Shalley
 City Attorney