

City of Gainesville

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY

ConnectFree Program for Affordable Rental Housing Projects

The City of Gainesville (City) is seeking eligible applicants to participate in the ConnectFree Program to develop and/or rehabilitate affordable rental housing projects. The purpose of the ConnectFree Program for Affordable Rental Housing Projects is to provide financial assistance for the cost of extension and connection to Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) water and wastewater systems to eligible properties located within the GRU service area. **If funds are available, the City proposes to fund Local Government Contributions to Affordable Rental Housing Projects that intend to apply to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation for financial assistance through the following programs:**

- **9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (RFA 2025-201, Local Government Area of Opportunity Goal); and**
- **State Apartment Incentive Loans (RFA 2025-205, SAIL).**

Consistent with City Resolution Number 2023-806, the ConnectFree Program provides financial assistance for the development and/or rehabilitation of affordable rental housing projects that utilize the 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program, the State Apartment Incentive Loans (SAIL) Program, and other similar programs. To be eligible for financial assistance through the ConnectFree Program, an affordable housing project must meet certain program criteria such as, providing rental housing units to low-income households (as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development), and demonstrating financial capacity to develop and manage the rental housing projects. Other eligibility criteria may apply, as determined by the City.

The City will accept application packets for ConnectFree funding for Affordable Rental Housing Projects beginning **Monday, September 8, 2025. All application packets must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. (local time), on Thursday, September 18, 2024. Late application packets will not be accepted. Application packets will be accepted only by email** in the form of full color PDFs to wachteljs@gainesvillefl.gov. The City **WILL NOT** accept application packets submitted by mail or FAX. **All attachments files must be properly titled and labeled.**

In addition to the application packet, applicants must complete and submit the online project summary (JotForm) which can be accessed by clicking the following link: <https://form.jotform.com/252455219220046>. This online form will be sent directly to the City. **The City reserves the right to reject any and all applications.** To request additional application forms, or if you have any questions, please contact John Wachtel at (352) 393-8565, or by email at wachteljs@gainesvillefl.gov.

Applicants for this funding may be required to present the project (in-person) to the City's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee on Wednesday, October 1, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.; and to the Gainesville City Commission on Thursday, October 23, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. (meeting dates and times are subject to change). **Funding awards may be subject to approval by the City Manager or the City Commission, and are based on funding availability.**

The City of Gainesville is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity/Drug Free Workplace Employer. The City of Gainesville is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination in all City programs, services and activities, and will provide reasonable accommodations upon request. Persons needing a special accommodation to participate in any proceeding should contact the Office of Equity and Inclusion at (352) 334-5051 at least two business days in advance. TTY (Text Telephone Telecommunication Device) users please call 711 (Florida Relay Service). For Speech to Speech (STS) relay, please call 1-877-955-5334. For STS Spanish relay, please call 1-877-955-8773. For STS French Creole relay, please call 1-877-955-8707.

FAIR HOUSING/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/DISABILITY ACCESS JURISDICTIONS

