

**CITY COUNCIL RESEARCH DIVISION
LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY**



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Bill Type and Number: Ordinance 2022-29

Introducer/Sponsor(s): Council President at the request of the Mayor

Date of Introduction: January 11, 2022

Committee(s) of Reference: NCSPHS, F, R

Date of Analysis: January 13, 2022

Type of Action: Appropriation; approval of grant agreement; waiver of full-service grocery store program criteria; designation of oversight agency

Bill Summary: The bill appropriates \$600,210.98 from the Northwest Jacksonville Economic Development Fund's Contingency Account to the Subsidies and Contributions to Private Organizations account. It approves a Full-Service Grocery Store Improvement Program grant to Lift Jax, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$650,000 for the acquisition, renovation and expansion of a historic building to be operated as a grocery store on Florida Avenue in the Eastside neighborhood. The bill waives the established criteria for use of the Full-Service Grocery Store Program funds to permit use on a building with a smaller square footage than what is required by the program. The Office of Economic Development is designated as the City's oversight agency for the project.

Background Information: Lift Jax, Inc. has requested City financial assistance to purchase a 1913 two-story building long used as a grocery store (the former Debs Store) at 1478 Florida Avenue in the Eastside for renovation and expansion into a larger, modernized grocery store. The organization is partnering with Goodwill Industries to use the upper floor of the building as a job training/education space, and Goodwill will help to operate the store on the ground level. The overall project cost is estimated at \$2.3 million, of which \$1.6 million is for construction and furnishings for the grocery store. The City grant would provide 40% of the grocery store renovation costs. The Full-Service Grocery Store Program normally requires a 10,000 square foot store to qualify for City assistance, but the waiver to permit a 2,500 square foot facility is being requested in light of the historic nature of the building and its previous use a grocery store in this neighborhood for over 90 years.

Policy Impact Area: Food desert remediation

Fiscal Impact: The bill makes a \$650,000 grant from the Northwest Jacksonville Economic Development Fund for the project.

Analyst: Clements