

THE CORRIDOR REPORT



Florida's corridor, decoded every week.

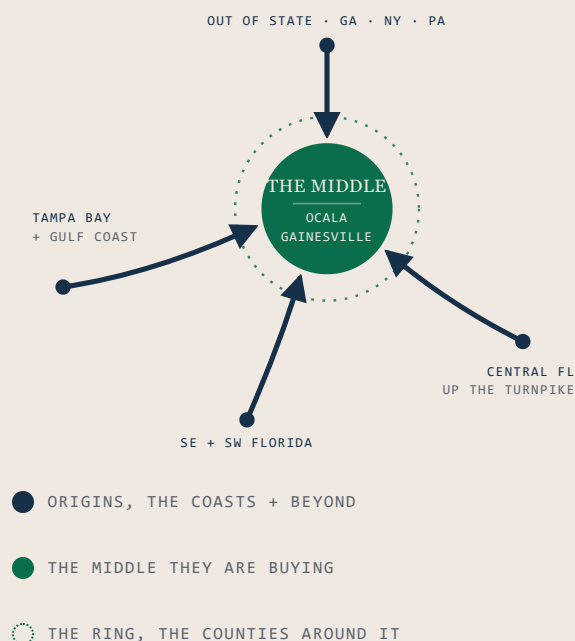
Expert weekly intelligence on the North Central Florida corridor, the booming interior between the coasts, and the trends, money, and risk reshaping it. Kane Brooks, Keller Williams Gainesville.

THE LEAD • WHAT MOVED THE CORRIDOR THIS WEEK

Marion locked its door on the data centers.

The migration to the middle

Coastal Florida, the Turnpike, and out-of-state movers, converging on Alachua, Marion, and the ring.



The ring is Columbia, Levy, Sumter, Suwannee, Gilchrist, and Lake, the six counties the middle is spilling into.

365

days Marion would stop accepting any data center application while it studies the water.

SOURCE • FL OIR / COUNTY RATE FILINGS • 2026

On **August 31** Marion County's Planning and Zoning Commission voted unanimously to recommend a **365-day moratorium** on new data center and crypto mining applications, and commissioners have directed staff to draft it. Residents filed **6,194 petition signatures** ahead of the hearing. During the pause, staff would study groundwater withdrawals, water supply, wastewater capacity, grid load and springs hydrogeology with the water management districts. The county that leads the nation in population growth is moving to stop one kind of growth, and water is the stated reason.

SOURCES • FL OIR / COUNTY RATE FILINGS 2026 • REDFIN 2026 • FAU CLIMATE SURVEY 2026

6,194

The signatures that landed first

Residents filed 6,194 petition signatures backing the pause ahead of the August 31 hearing. The planning board then voted unanimously to recommend it, and commissioners told staff to start drafting.

Source • 352today / Marion County, 2026

92 to 16

Tallahassee handed counties the pen

SB 484 cleared the House 92 to 16 and the Senate 31 to 6, and took effect July 1. It preserves local zoning authority over large load customers and bars utilities passing their costs to households.

Source • The Florida Senate, SB 484

Almost none

The job count that flipped the room

A University of Florida presentation told Levy County that data centers produce minimal permanent employment, need noise mitigation and should not sit near homes. Every corridor county now hears that.

Source • WCJB / Univ. of Florida, 2026

THE READ THIS WEEK *"The county that grows fastest just picked what it will not take."*

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What changed this week.

Four sourced developments moving the corridor, and why each bends the migration inland.

A Gulf island is not hardening its water plant, it is moving the whole thing

THE CLIMATE

Levy County has asked the state for **\$1.5 million** to buy mainland land and move Cedar Key’s drinking water facilities off the island entirely, plus \$1.7 million for engineering. One hurricane cut the island’s water for two weeks, and saline intrusion keeps degrading quality. The finished move needs more than \$10 million. It is the clearest case of coastal infrastructure retreating inland.

Source • Main Street Daily News / Levy County • 2026

The latest on rates: the 15-year just crossed back above 6 percent

THE MONEY

Freddie Mac’s September 3 survey put the 30-year fixed at **6.71 percent**, up from 6.66 the prior week, and the 15-year at 6.04 percent, up from 5.98. A year ago those same terms were 6.50 and 5.60 percent, so the 15-year now costs **44 basis points** more than it did last fall. The gap is widening, not closing. Buyers waiting for this fall to beat last fall are still waiting.

Source • Freddie Mac • Sep 3 2026

The university town is now the slow half of the corridor

ON THE GROUND

Redfin has the Gainesville median sale price at **\$318,500** in August, with homes taking **82 days** to sell against 69 a year earlier. Marion County, the market carrying the softening story all summer, is running 62 days. The corridor’s slower half is now the one with the university and the hospital, not the one with subdivisions. A seller pricing off last year’s Alachua is pricing a market that moved.

Source • Redfin • Aug 2026

Marion is getting a new I-75 interchange, and the anchor tenant is a gas station

THE DRIVERS

The county approved an FDOT agreement to advance a **diverging diamond interchange** at I-75 and NW 49th Street: ramps, drainage, sidewalks and signals. It is being built in step with a Buc-ee’s of roughly 80,000 square feet carrying about 120 fueling positions and 28 EV chargers. Both break ground in late 2026 for a 2028 opening. A new interstate access point predicts where land values move next.

Source • 352today / WCJB / FDOT • 2026

WHAT TO WATCH

- **September 15.** The moratorium ordinance gets its second public hearing at the Marion County Commission, with a data center workshop following on September 21.
- **September 21.** That workshop sets direction, and the options staff put on the table run from size and siting rules in the land code all the way to a permanent ban.
- **Late September.** Models have wind shear stiffening through late September and October, the same weeks that carry insurance renewals and the fall closing calendar.

BY THE NUMBERS

6.71% 30-YR FIXED Up again from 6.66%. A year ago 6.50%. 15-year 6.04% against 5.60%. Freddie Mac • Sep 3 2026	266,093 CITIZENS POLICIES IN FORCE A fresh all-time low, down from 278,662 in June as carriers take risk back. Citizens Property Ins. • Aug 2026	\$425,000 FL SINGLE-FAMILY MEDIAN Up 3.7%, on 4.5 months of supply and an 11th straight month of sales gains. Florida Realtors • Jul 2026
\$318,500 GAINESVILLE MEDIAN 82 days on market against 69 a year ago. Marion is selling in 62. Redfin • Aug 2026	\$4,974 OCALA HOME INSURANCE Gainesville \$4,259, against \$16,123 in Miami, same policy. MoneyGeek • 2026	\$3.83 FL AVERAGE GAS Regular unleaded statewide, a live line item on any commute. AAA • Aug 2026

THE FEATURE • ON THE GROUND

The quiet exit is building a job base.

While Marion argues over what it will not allow, the corridor's most overlooked I-75 county is quietly assembling the water, road and rail that decide where employers land.

The Mega Industrial Park ITS OWN TREATMENT PLANT

\$30M **60 ac** **Q3 2027**

WASTEWATER PLANT

SOLD TO A SUPPLIER

RAIL CONSTRUCTION

The park opened in November 2025 with AgroLiquid as its first tenant, backed by a purpose-built **\$30 million** wastewater treatment plant. A wholesale building supplier has since bought 60 acres. The Parkway West entrance road targets late 2026, a \$5 million water mainline June 2027.

Source • Columbia County EDO • Aug 2026

The Busy Bee at Ellisville THE EXIT GETS REBUILT FIRST

\$80M **200** **\$40M**

PRIVATE INVESTMENT

JOBS AT OPEN

FDOT WORK ON I-75

A 75,000 square foot travel center is going up at Ellisville, an **\$80 million** private build carrying about 200 jobs and due early 2027. It is paired with a \$5 million state grant for Highway 441 and about \$40 million of FDOT work on I-75. The exit is rebuilt, then the rooftops follow.

Source • Columbia County EDO • Aug 2026

The rentals and the hospital A COUNTY PAYING FOR ROOFTOPS

120 **\$45M** **36**

ATTACHED RENTAL UNITS

REHABILITATION HOSPITAL

BEDS, NOW OPEN

Columbia County has approved **120 duplex and townhouse units** through residential tax rebates, alongside a 36-bed, \$45 million ClearSky Health rehabilitation hospital that is now open. A county subsidizing rentals is a different signal than one fighting rooftops.

Source • Columbia County EDO • Aug 2026

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THE READ

One county said no. Another said yes.

THE READ • BY KANE BROOKS

Marion County is moving to stop taking data center applications for a year, and the reason on the record is water. I want to be careful how that gets read. This is not the fastest-growing county in America deciding it is finished growing. It is a county deciding it will not trade the Silver Springs springshed for a project that produces almost no permanent jobs. **6,194** people signed their name to that before the board voted.

Ninety miles north, Columbia County is doing the opposite math. Lake City built a **\$30 million** wastewater plant to land industrial tenants, is watching an \$80 million travel center go up at Ellisville, and is paying rebates to get duplexes built. One county is deciding what it will refuse. The other is deciding what it will pay for. Both are choices about the same interstate.

The week's two numbers cut against the easy story. The 15-year is back above **6 percent** and costs 44 basis points more than last fall, so nobody is getting rescued by rates before the Fed meets on the 16th. And Gainesville now takes **82 days** to sell a house while Marion takes 62. The market everyone calls soft is the faster one right now.

Kane Brooks

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

If you're buying

Buyer: the 15-year at 6.04 percent is 44 basis points worse than last fall, so waiting has cost money two years running. If you are shopping Alachua, 82 days on market is your leverage, use it.

If you're selling

Seller: if your house is in Gainesville, price to a market taking 82 days, not to the one you remember. Marion is moving faster right now, at 62 days on a \$279,000 median.

If you own here

Investor: a new I-75 interchange at NW 49th breaks ground late 2026. Price that catchment before the shovels. To the north, Columbia County is subsidizing the rentals its own job base will fill.

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SOURCES & DATA VINTAGE

U.S. Census Bureau • FHFA House Price Index (through Q3 2025) • NAR / MLS Campus 2026 forecast • Longyield 2026 • Florida OIR / industry insurance filings 2026 • FL SB 4-D • FL DOR (Save Our Homes) • 352today 2026 • KeyCrew 2026 • UF / IFAS • Bosshardt 2026 • Redfin 2026 • FAU climate survey 2026 • Pegasus 2026. Rates, corridor median / DOM / supply, gas, commute, and weather refresh each issue from the named source; no unsourced figure ships.

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