

THE CORRIDOR REPORT



Florida's corridor, decoded every week.

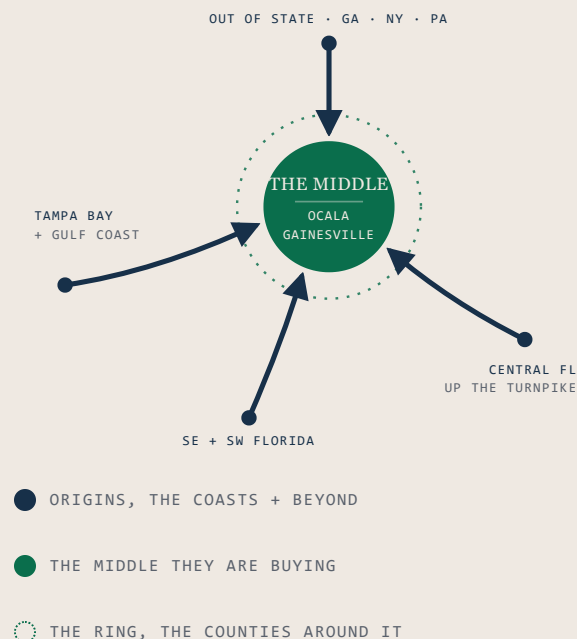
Expert weekly intelligence on the North Central Florida corridor, the booming interior between the coasts, and the trends, money, and risk reshaping it. Kane Brooks, Keller Williams Gainesville.

THE LEAD • WHAT MOVED THE CORRIDOR THIS WEEK

No to 71 homes in December. Yes in October.

The migration to the middle

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



● ORIGINS, THE COASTS + BEYOND

● THE MIDDLE THEY ARE BUYING

○ THE RING, THE COUNTIES AROUND IT

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

71

Homes Marion rejected in December 2025, now headed to staff review under state law SB 686.

SOURCE • ONLY IN OCALA, OCT 10 2026

On October 6 Marion County commissioners voted **4-0** to certify a **19.75-acre** horse farm at 7317 and 7325 SW 80th Street, half a mile west of SR 200, as the county's first agricultural enclave under SB 686, a state law in effect since July 1. On December 16, 2025 the same board had rejected the same **71-home** Capozzoli Hills plan over SR 200 traffic. Staff and the county attorney found the farm met every test in the law; Only in Ocala reported a no vote would likely have lost in court. The homes now go to staff review with no second public hearing. Qualifying farms have until January 1, 2028 to use the law.

SOURCES • ONLY IN OCALA • MARION COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS • FLORIDA SB 686

180 days

A state deadline, and a \$10M lawsuit

Tara Forest LLC sued the City of Alachua on October 7: its 58.3-acre Interstate 75 site was deemed complete in February 2022 and never got a hearing, though state law requires a decision in 180 days.

Source • Alachua Chronicle, Oct 7 2026

75.18%

Voters said yes twice. A court said no.

Gainesville voters backed dissolving the state-created GRU Authority with 72.56% in 2024 and 75.18% in 2025. On October 7 the 1st District Court of Appeal ruled a charter amendment cannot do it.

Source • Alachua Chronicle, Oct 7 2026

1,200

A magistrate's yes, ahead of the vote

A special magistrate recommended Wildwood approve a master plan for up to 1,200 homes on 828 acres near Middleton, west of the Turnpike. A City Commission vote was expected later in October.

Source • Villages-News, Oct 6 2026

THE READ THIS WEEK *"What a state override of a county no means near SR 200."*

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What changed this week.

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

An Ocala drive-in is for sale: 11.6 acres on US 441, listed at \$1,799,900

THE INVESTOR

The Ocala Drive-In at 4850 S. Pine Avenue, one of Florida’s last drive-in theaters, is listed at **\$1,799,900**, about \$155,164 an acre, with more than 920 feet of US 441 frontage and public water and sewer. Its B-4 heavy regional business zoning allows retail, self-storage, warehouses, multifamily and mixed use. The site still runs double features and a weekend flea market.

Source • Ocala-News.com, Oct 15 2026

Ocala moves to repeal its business tax: \$374,000 a year, over \$100,000 to run

THE MONEY

Ordinance 2027-1 would repeal Ocala’s business tax receipt, which raised **\$457,000** in 2022 and **\$374,000** in 2025 from 4,462 active receipts. Staff estimate the real count of operating businesses at double or more, and full program cost above \$100,000 a year. Staff asked council to refund 2026-27 payments, though the adopted budget counts on \$426,000. The final vote is set for October 20.

Source • Only in Ocala, Oct 9 2026

The latest on the springs drought: twice normal October rain, and the order stands

THE CLIMATE

The Suwannee River Water Management District recorded **5.7 inches** of rain in the first 11 days of October, against an October average of about 2.8, after a September 29 percent below normal. The 12-month deficit improved to **15.11 inches** from 16.85, but the aquifer sat near the 24th percentile, and the water shortage order stays in place through December 31.

Source • SRWMD, Oct 14 2026

Marion paid \$1.28 million for two Silver Springs Boulevard motel lots. No plan yet

ON THE GROUND

In 2024 Marion County paid **\$900,000** for a 1.5-acre motel site at 5401 East Silver Springs Boulevard and \$379,550 for 0.37 acres at 5550. On October 20 the Community Redevelopment Agency discusses a transfer to the CRA or a parking lease to the neighboring Event Warehouse. In September, Chick-fil-A paid \$1.8 million for 2.38 vacant acres at 4639, with no restaurant announced.

Source • Only in Ocala (Marion CRA agenda), Oct 18 2026

WHAT TO WATCH

- **October 19–November 1.** Alachua early voting, wider than the state’s October 24–31 window, with a new Newberry site. A Mason-Dixon poll put Amendment 3 at 55% yes; it needs 60%.
- **October 26.** The City of Alachua’s final vote on a 12-month data center moratorium, after Marion and Levy counties. A commissioner confirmed no application is on file.
- **January 1, 2028.** Deadline for qualifying farms to use SB 686’s agricultural enclave rule, the law behind Marion’s first certification on SW 80th Street.

BY THE NUMBERS

7.40% 30-YR FIXED Unchanged a second week. 15-year 6.71%. A year ago 6.27%. Freddie Mac • Oct 15 2026	\$415,000 FL SINGLE-FAMILY MEDIAN About six months of supply statewide; inventory down 13% in a year. FL Realtors • Aug 2026	\$290,000 MARION SINGLE-FAMILY MEDIAN 4.8 months of supply, 61 days to contract. FL Realtors / OMCAR • Aug 2026
\$318,500 GAINESVILLE MEDIAN SALE PRICE 82 days on market, against 69 a year earlier. Redfin • Aug 2026	\$1,020 ALACHUA CITIZENS PREMIUM Marion \$1,263, Levy \$1,385, Sumter \$1,728. Statewide average \$1,843. Citizens / FL OIR • Apr 2026	7.9% WILDWOOD-VILLAGES JOBLESS RATE The state’s worst metro rate. Gainesville 5.4%, Florida 4.5%. FloridaCommerce • Aug 2026

THE FEATURE • THE DRIVERS

Hospitals, horses, and asphalt.

Three corridor drivers reported in October: a hospital system that now reaches the Atlantic coast, a county moving five years of paving into one budget, and the yearling sale that serves as a read on Marion's horse economy. Each moved in a different direction.

UF Health SEVEN HOSPITALS, ONE SYSTEM

7 **12,900** **\$6.5B+**
LICENSED HOSPITALS EMPLOYED IN ALACHUA COUNTY ANNUAL NET REVENUE

With the 99-bed Durbin Park Hospital in St. Johns County opening September 22, UF Health runs **seven** licensed hospitals, including Leesburg and The Villages. Its Alachua County payroll stands near **12,900**, up from about 10,300 in September 2021. Experts quoted by the Alligator split on whether that scale lowers costs or raises prices.

Source • The Alligator, Oct 12 2026

Alachua County roads FIVE YEARS OF PAVING, MOVED UP

\$144M **3-0** **\$9M**
ADDED TO FY2027 ROAD WORK COMMISSION VOTE, OCT 13 FOR POTHOLES OVER 3 YEARS

On October 13 commissioners voted 3-0 to appropriate **\$144 million** in FY2027 for paving scheduled for FY2028 to FY2032, and let staff pursue bond financing; any debt returns for a vote. The total includes \$9 million for potholes, \$3 million a year for three years. A commissioner called the roads a rapidly deteriorating situation.

Source • Alachua Chronicle, Oct 15 2026

Ocala Breeders' Sales FEWER HORSES, FIRMER PRICES

267 **\$25,376** **26.2%**
YEARLINGS SOLD, FROM 309 AVERAGE PRICE, FROM \$24,303 NOT-SOLD RATE

The October Yearling Sale on October 6 and 7 sold **267** yearlings for \$6,775,500, down from 309 and \$7.51 million in 2025. The average rose to \$25,376 and the median to \$17,000 from \$15,000. The not-sold rate ticked up to 26.2 percent, and the top price fell to \$190,000 from \$275,000.

Source • Only in Ocala (OBS results), Oct 7 2026

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THE READ

When the county loses the vote.

THE READ • BY KANE BROOKS

The vote that stuck with me this cycle was Marion saying yes to **71 homes** it had said no to ten months earlier. Same 19.75-acre horse farm off SW 80th Street, same SR 200 traffic, same board. What changed was a state law. SB 686 took effect July 1, and once staff and the county attorney found the farm qualified, the commissioners did not have a real choice.

It is turning into a pattern. Gainesville voters said twice they wanted their utility back, and a court said the vote cannot do it. A developer in Alachua is suing over a hearing that never came, citing a 180-day state clock. The corridor still argues about growth at the county dais, but more of the answers are being written in Tallahassee.

For anyone buying, selling or holding land near SR 200, that is the practical point. The no on December 16 felt final. It was not. With the 30-year at **7.40 percent** and Amendment 3 on the November 3 ballot, read the state rules as closely as the county agenda.

Kane Brooks

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

If you're buying

Buyer: 71 homes are moving ahead on a horse farm half a mile from SR 200, with no second public hearing. If you are shopping near SW 80th Street, ask about the road plan before you write an offer.

If you're selling

Seller: own a farm near SR 200? A 19.75-acre parcel just cleared for 71 homes, and SB 686 runs to January 1, 2028. Get a land-use opinion before you price it as pasture.

If you own here

Investor: a 4-0 vote reversed a December no on the same 71-home plan. Rural-edge parcels that qualify under SB 686 may carry entitlement value a county cannot easily deny. Underwrite the law, not the last vote.

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SOURCES & DATA VINTAGE

Only in Ocala • Marion BOCC • Alachua Chronicle • Villages-News • Ocala-News • The Alligator • SRWMD • WUFT • NBC Miami/Mason-Dixon • Freddie Mac • FL Realtors/OMCAR • Redfin • Citizens/OIR • FloridaCommerce. Aug–Oct 2026 unless noted. Rates, corridor median / DOM / supply, gas, commute, and weather refresh each issue from the named source; no unsourced figure ships.

Kane Brooks, Licensed Real Estate Sales Associate • Keller Williams Gainesville. • kanebrooks@kw.com • The Read is the author's analysis; data is attributed inline.