

THE CORRIDOR REPORT



Florida's corridor, decoded every week.

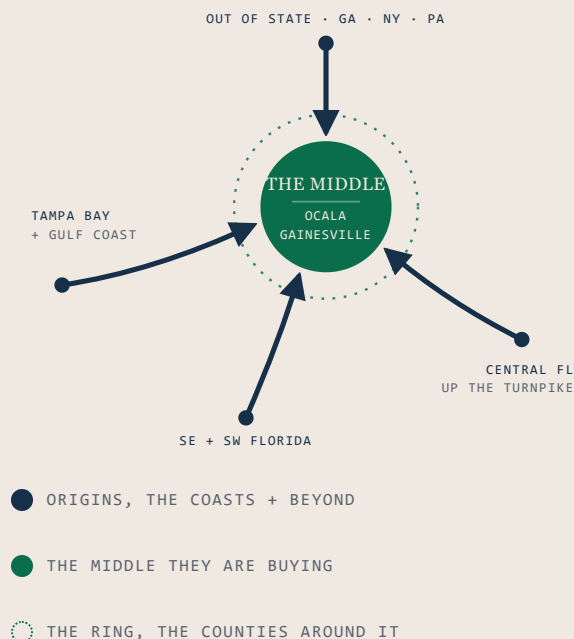
Expert weekly intelligence on the North Central Florida corridor, the booming interior between the coasts, and the trends, money, and risk reshaping it. Kane Brooks, Keller Williams Gainesville.

THE LEAD • WHAT MOVED THE CORRIDOR THIS WEEK

\$16.5 million for 19.6 acres off CR 484.

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.

\$842,000

Per acre Walmart paid for land at SW Highway 484 and SW 57th Avenue Road, by Marion Oaks.

SOURCE • ONLY IN OCALA (COUNTY RECORDS), OCT 2026

Wal-Mart Stores East LP paid **\$16,513,300** in April 2026 for 19.6 acres at SW Highway 484 and SW 57th Avenue Road, outside Marion Oaks and about 3.5 miles west of Interstate 75 Exit 341, roughly \$842,000 an acre. The county site plan shows a **170,995-square-foot** main building plus a liquor store and a fuel stop on a 34.58-acre site, about 186,000 square feet in all. Only in Ocala, which reported the plan October 12, found no building permit or opening date on file. The site sits on the Marion Oaks side of the county, outside the City of Ocala.

SOURCES • ONLY IN OCALA • MARION COUNTY SITE PLAN AND PROPERTY RECORDS

128,660 sq ft

A second Target plan, and no announcement

Marion's review committee approved 5-0 on August 24 a 128,660-square-foot store on 17.6 acres at 9479 SW 80th Avenue, on OTOW Communities land. Target had not announced it as of October 11.

Source • Only in Ocala (Marion DRC), Oct 12 2026

\$17M

An ER patients can reach by golf cart

HCA's 11,000-square-foot freestanding ER at 8231 SW State Road 200, at the On Top of the World gate, will have 11 exam rooms and CT. Its cost rose from \$15 million in May to \$17 million by August.

Source • Only in Ocala (HCA), Oct 20 2026

\$10.71M

Bought as dirt, sold 15 months later

A buyer paid \$9,658,000 for 2.47 vacant acres at CR 462 and US 301 in Wildwood in April 2025, built a 7-Eleven, car wash and fuel canopy, and sold it July 16 for \$10,710,000, per county records.

Source • Villages-News (Sumter records), Oct 15 2026

THE READ THIS WEEK *"Where the big-box money is landing, and what it prices in."*

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What changed this week.

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

HCA opened a Gainesville hospital with no patients, built to staff six others

THE DRIVERS

HCA’s North Central Florida Center for Clinical Advancement opened **October 15** with simulated operating rooms and ICUs, and mannequins that breathe and bleed. It trains technicians, LPNs, RNs and nurse practitioners for **six** HCA hospitals from Putnam to Marion County; HCA calls it its 21st such center. Statewide, health care led Florida’s job gains, adding 40,300 jobs over the year to September.

Source • WCJB, Oct 15 2026; FloridaCommerce

The latest on insurance: Florida carriers ask to cut home rates 4.8% on average

THE MONEY

On September 23 the Office of Insurance Regulation approved four more homeowners decreases averaging **7 percent** on about 62,000 policies, led by One Alliance and Vyrd at 10.4 percent each. Pending requests average **4.8 percent** lower, ranging from 0.3 to 19.7. The regulator says deeper cuts are coming in 2027. Citizens held 266,231 policies in August, from 1.4 million in 2023.

Source • Insurance Journal (FL OIR), Sep 23 2026

The latest on the jobless gap: Wildwood–The Villages at 7.6%, still Florida’s worst

THE NUMBERS

In September the Wildwood–The Villages metro rate eased to **7.6 percent** from 7.9 in August and still led every Florida metro. Gainesville fell to **4.9 percent** from 5.4. Florida’s rate fell a fourth straight month to 4.4 percent, with about 489,000 unemployed, 28,000 more than a year earlier. Metro rates are not seasonally adjusted; Miami posted the lowest, 3.2 percent.

Source • FloridaCommerce via WUSF and WLRN, Sep 2026

Marion votes November 3 on up to \$140 million in park and conservation bonds

THE BALLOT

The question allows up to **\$140 million** in bonds repaid within 20 years, at a ceiling of 0.35 mills, up to \$35 per \$100,000 of taxable value. At least 70 percent goes to new parks and trails and 10 to 20 percent to buying farms, forests and open land. Projects include waterfront work at the Ocala Boat Basin. Amendment 3, on the same ballot, would shrink the tax base the bonds draw on.

Source • Central Florida Public Media, Oct 14 2026

WHAT TO WATCH

- **November 3.** Amendment 3 needs 60%. Newberry has already voted 3-2 to draft a flat road fee of about \$1.2 million a year against \$2.3 million in property tax at risk.
- **November 12.** NOAA’s next El Niño discussion, after October’s reading of 83% odds that the peak tops every event since 1950.
- **Through 2027.** SR 200 widening near SW 80th Avenue, the stretch where Target’s approved site plan and HCA’s spring 2027 ER sit.

BY THE NUMBERS

7.40% 30-YR FIXED Flat since October 8. 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, from 71. 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. Citizens / FL OIR • Apr 2026	\$87.7M MARION AMENDMENT 3 LOSS ESTIMATE Over FY2027/28 and FY2028/29, about 28% of expected property tax. Marion County • Oct 20 2026

A strong El Niño, a late hurricane.

Three climate readings arrived in October: a Pacific El Niño on track to rank among the strongest since 1950, a winter outlook favoring a wetter South, and the latest first Atlantic hurricane on record, which came ashore more than 250 miles west of Ocala.

El Niño NEAR RECORD STRENGTH

+2.1°C

NIÑO-3.4 ANOMALY, OCT 8

83%

ODDS PEAK TOPS ALL SINCE 1950

Jan–Mar

2027, STRONG EVENT LIKELY

NOAA's October 8 ENSO discussion put the Niño-3.4 region at **plus 2.1 degrees Celsius**, with 83 percent odds that the October to December peak beats every El Niño since 1950. It says a strong to very strong event is likely through January to March 2027.

Source • NOAA CPC, Oct 8 2026

NOAA winter outlook A WETTER SOUTH, DEC-FEB

Dec–Feb

OUTLOOK WINDOW

Wetter

THAN AVERAGE, SOUTH AND EAST

9+ in.

NORTHERN OCALA RAIN, 5 DAYS

NOAA's Winter Outlook, released October 16, favors **wetter than average** conditions across the South for December through February, with near normal temperatures for parts of Florida, and says Southeast drought could improve or end. Northern Ocala took more than 9 inches of rain in five days in early October.

Source • NOAA via FOX 5 DC, Oct 16 2026

Hurricane Isaias RECORD-LATE FIRST HURRICANE

Oct 7

FIRST ATLANTIC HURRICANE

105 mph

WINDS AT DESTIN LANDFALL

448,000

FL ACCOUNTS WITHOUT POWER

The season's first hurricane formed **October 7**; the previous latest was Gustav, September 11, 2002. Isaias came ashore near Destin as a Category 2 on October 9. The governor's emergency order covered Columbia, Suwannee and Gilchrist, not Alachua, Marion or Levy.

Source • News4JAX / NWS Mobile, Oct 10 2026

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THE READ

Where the big boxes are landing.

THE READ • BY KANE BROOKS

The number I keep coming back to is **\$842,000 an acre**. That is what Walmart paid for 19.6 acres on CR 484 outside Marion Oaks, for a store, a liquor store and a fuel stop. Retailers that size study rooftops for years before they spend that kind of money, and they spend ahead of the crowd, not behind it.

And it is not one bet. A second Target plan is approved on SW 80th Avenue, HCA is putting a \$17 million ER at the On Top of the World gate, and in Wildwood a corner bought as dirt for \$9.66 million sold with a 7-Eleven on it for \$10.71 million fifteen months later. The south side of the corridor is where commercial money is landing, even with Wildwood and The Villages carrying the worst jobless rate in Florida.

Here is how I read it for clients. Commercial capital follows households that are already there or already permitted. With the 30-year at **7.40 percent** and Amendment 3 on the November 3 ballot, the south side of Marion is where I would watch values first.

Kane Brooks

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

If you're buying

Buyer: shopping Marion Oaks? A 186,000-square-foot Walmart plan sits 3.5 miles west of I-75 Exit 341, with no permit or opening date yet. Price the home on what is open now, and treat the store as upside.

If you're selling

Seller: near CR 484 and SW 57th Avenue Road? Walmart paid \$842,000 an acre nearby. Mention the planned store in your listing, but quote the county site plan, since no opening date is set.

If you own here

Investor: \$16.5 million for 19.6 acres, and a \$10.71 million exit on a Wildwood corner. Retail is pricing the corridor's south side. Underwrite land near the anchors, but at 7.40 percent, model the hold without them.

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SOURCES & DATA VINTAGE

Only in Ocala • Marion County • Villages-News • WCJB • Insurance Journal/FL OIR • FloridaCommerce/WUSF/WLRN • Central FL Public Media • NOAA/CPC • News4JAX/NWS • FOX 5 DC • Freddie Mac • FL Realtors/OMCAR • Redfin • Citizens. 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.

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