



May 1, 2025

The Honorable Kathy Bryant  
Chair, Board of County Commissioners  
Marion County  
601 SE 25th Avenue  
Ocala, FL 34471

RE: City Comments on Proposed EMS Impact Fee

Dear Chair Bryant,

On behalf of the City of Ocala, I thank you and the Board of County Commissioners for your leadership in addressing the growing demand for emergency services. We recognize the critical need to expand EMS capacity to meet current and future needs and appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the proposed EMS impact fee.

After reviewing the EMS Impact Fee Study, the City supports the County's efforts to adopt the new fee as an essential step toward strengthening public safety infrastructure. We endorse the proposed improvements, including:

- Funding for new EMS stations in high-demand areas near Ocala.
- Expanding the ambulance fleet and medical equipment inventory.
- Hiring additional EMTs and paramedics to increase staffing.
- Ensuring backup units are available during peak call times.

These measures will improve coverage and response times for day and nighttime populations.

However, because the study does not explicitly provide data showing how improvements would impact response times and the increased call volumes – particularly within the City and the surrounding urban area – we propose the development of a benefit district encompassing Ocala and the broader urban service area. This would better allocate EMS resources to areas with the greatest need and promote faster, more equitable service.

In addition to our position that Marion County would be better served by the development of such a benefit district, I can advise you that we would likely support an interlocal agreement for the collection of the proposed EMS impact fee conditioned upon the following agreements by the County:

1. The transparent allocation of EMS impact fee revenues;
2. Coordination with the City on the identification of EMS capital projects within or adjacent to city limits and the related, transparent allocation of capital projects within the City limits;
3. Sharing detailed data on response times and performance metrics; and
4. Regular updates throughout the implementation process, ensuring clear communication with community stakeholders.

We also recommend establishing a timeline for collaboration between the City and County, particularly regarding the benefit district and service tracking. We look forward to working through an interlocal agreement to advance these goals and ensure the EMS system evolves to meet the needs of all Marion County residents.

Thank you again for your leadership on this critical issue. Please let us know if you would like to schedule a meeting to discuss next steps.

Sincerely,



Peter A. Lee  
City Manager