

MARION COUNTY

Board of County Commissioners

Opportunity Zone 2.0

Supporting Document

Census Tract 2.01

North Marion (US 441/301 Corridor & Orange Lake)

GEOID: 12083000201

Prepared by Marion County Board of County Commissioners

April 2026

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Section 1: Census Tract Background

Overview

Census Tract 12083000201 is located in Marion County, Florida. The tract encompasses 16.16 square miles in unincorporated Marion County.

This document provides supporting information for Marion County's nomination of Census Tract 12083000201 under the Opportunity Zone 2.0 program, as authorized by Rev. Proc. 2026-12. The information presented herein demonstrates the tract's eligibility, economic development potential, and alignment with state, regional, and local planning goals.

Economic Distress and Market Conditions

Tract 2.01 is the most geographically expansive of the proposed tracts at 16.16 square miles, with the lowest population density (155 people per sq mi). Commercial activity is confined to US 441 and US 301 frontages, and the distance from major employment centers drives a 9.73% unemployment rate and a 31.6-minute mean commute. Manufactured and mobile homes (24 permits) reflect aging housing stock and limited investment. Orange Lake and surrounding natural areas create environmental planning considerations.

The tract presents the following indicators of economic distress: Other -- High poverty level (21.23%).

Strategic Assets and Competitive Advantages

The following existing assets provide a foundation for investment and development within the tract: Proximity to major highways/interstate access; Energy/Electric Utilities; Water/Wastewater Utilities; Broadband; Military Bases.

Tract 2.01 has 27 plans on file covering several large-acreage parcels -- including a 117-acre property and a 70.3-acre parcel currently in review -- that represent meaningful development opportunity. The tract's rural character, Orange Lake proximity, and position along US 441 and US 301 support eco-tourism, agribusiness, rural workforce housing, and highway-corridor commercial uses. The 25 new single-family residences and 24 manufactured/mobile home permits confirm active residential demand. OZ designation would provide the capital incentive needed to activate large-parcel development in this dispersed rural environment.

Development Momentum and Investment Pipeline

4 active projects | 264 permits (239 residential, 10 commercial, 9 ROW utility) | 27 plans filed 2023-2026. Work classes include 25 new single-family residences, 24 manufactured/mobile home permits, and 10 demolition permits. Plans include large-acreage parcels: 117-acre (Plan #30349), 70.3-acre (Plan #32529 -- In Review as of early 2026), 30.19-acre, and 6.79-acre properties.

Opportunity Zone Investment Potential

Project Readiness: Exploratory.

Capital Investment: Development pipeline includes large-acreage parcels in active review: a 117-acre property (Plan #30349) and a 70.3-acre parcel currently In Review (Plan #32529). 264 permits filed 2023-2026 include 25 new single-family residences, 24 manufactured/mobile home permits, and 10 commercial permits. These large parcels represent significant capital investment opportunity for agribusiness, eco-tourism, and rural residential development. NOTE: MFI ratio (124.28%) must be re-verified before submission.

Business/Developer Interest: Emerging. 4 active projects and 27 plans on file, including large-acreage parcels (117 acres and 70.3 acres), indicate developer interest in large-scale rural development. 264 permits including 25 new single-family residences and 24 manufactured/mobile home permits confirm active residential development. The rural character and dispersed settlement pattern require targeted investment incentives -- which OZ designation provides -- to attract commercial development along the US 441 and US 301 corridors.

Investor Interest: Emerging. Large-acreage parcels in the planning pipeline (117 acres, 70.3 acres) may attract rural residential, agribusiness, and eco-tourism investors. Military Base proximity is an asset for defense-sector investors. Orange Lake provides a natural amenity for recreation-oriented investment. The tract's high fertility rate (26.5% of women 15-50 gave birth in the past year -- more than double the county average) signals a young, growing family population that will generate sustained demand for housing, childcare, and services.

Stakeholder Engagement

Marion County coordinates development review. Given the tract's proximity to the Marion/Alachua County border and Orange Lake, regional environmental and water management agencies are relevant stakeholders.

Risks and Barriers

Low population density (155/sq mi) makes infrastructure investment less cost-efficient. Environmental constraints related to Orange Lake. Distance from major employment centers limits near-term commercial viability. Dispersed rural settlement pattern requires strategic targeting of investment along US 441/301 corridors.

Community Benefits and Strategic Alignment

Expected community impacts include: Job creation, Housing access, Infrastructure investment, Business formation. Marion County coordinates development review. Community engagement limited by low population density and dispersed settlement pattern. Aligns with Marion County Comprehensive Plan. Orange Lake may present environmental planning considerations consistent with state natural resource management goals.

Section 2: Economic Distress Qualification

Economic Distress Indicators — ACS 5-Year Estimates					
Geography	Population	Poverty Rate	Median Family Income	MFI % of Area Median	Unemployment Rate
United States	332,143,258	12.1%	\$101,265	—	4.6%
Florida (Statewide)	22,898,322	12.0%	\$93,615	—	4.6%
Census Tract 12083000201	2,501	21.23%	\$91,324	124.28%	9.73%

This tract qualifies on the poverty test: poverty rate of 21.23% exceeds the qualifying threshold.

Sources: ACS 2024 5-Year Estimates (Census Reporter, tract-level); ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates S2301 (unemployment, Tracts 8.03 and 13.01). National and statewide figures from ACS 2024 1-Year Estimates.

Section 3: Supporting Documents

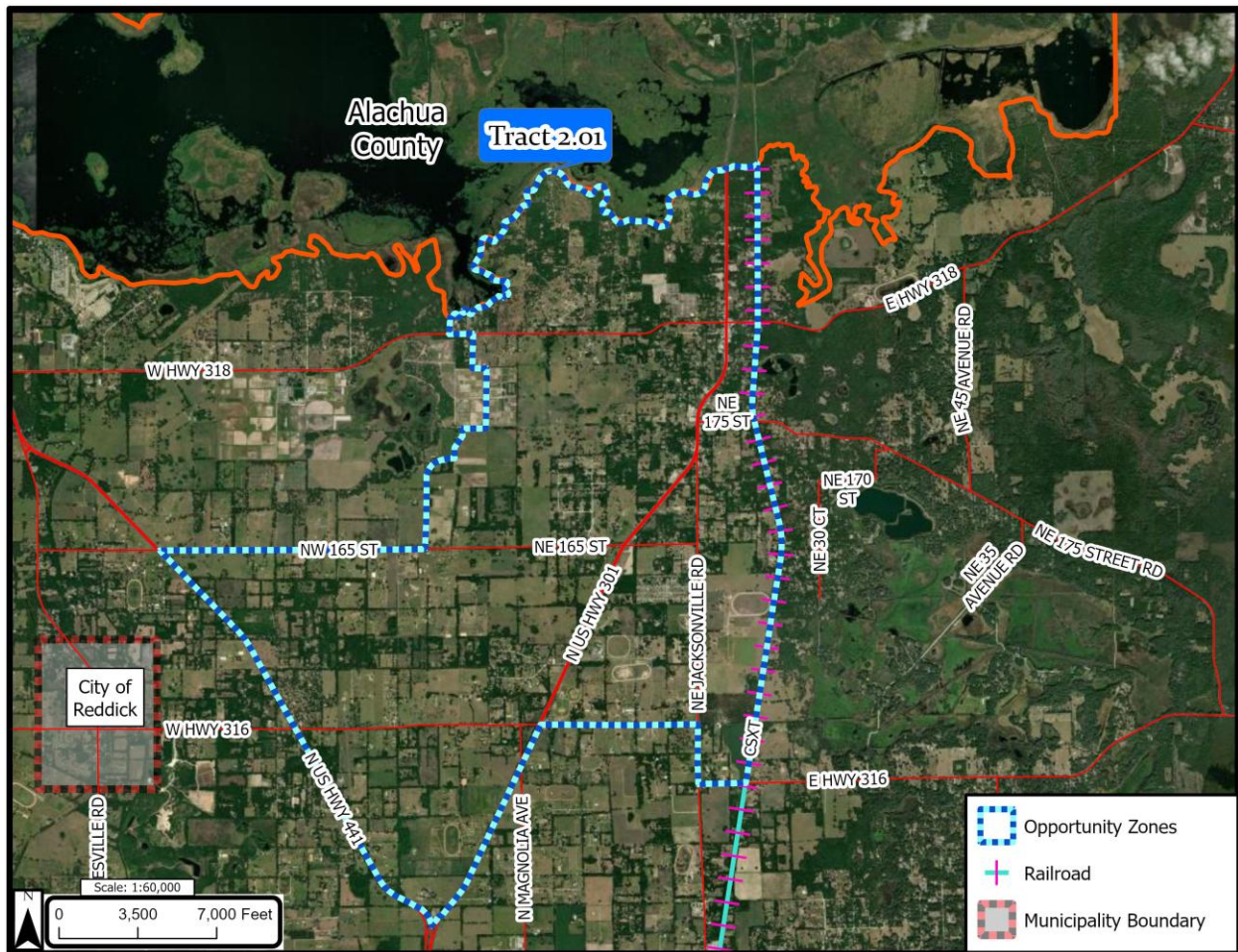
Ref.	Document Name	Description / Source
1	Marion County Comprehensive Plan	Establishes land use policy and development standards for Marion County Available from Marion County Growth Services
2	TPO 2025 List of Priority Projects (LOPP)	Adopted transportation priority list for FY 2027-2031 covering projects in and around the tract www.ocalamariontpo.org/priority-project-list
3	Letter of Support -- Senator Stan McClain, FL Senate District 9	Letter supporting Marion County OZ 2.0 tract designations, dated April 29, 2026 See Exhibit F
4	Letter of Support -- Representative Ryan Chamberlin, FL House District 24	Letter supporting Marion County OZ 2.0 tract designations, dated April 30, 2026 See Exhibit F

Exhibit Reference Table

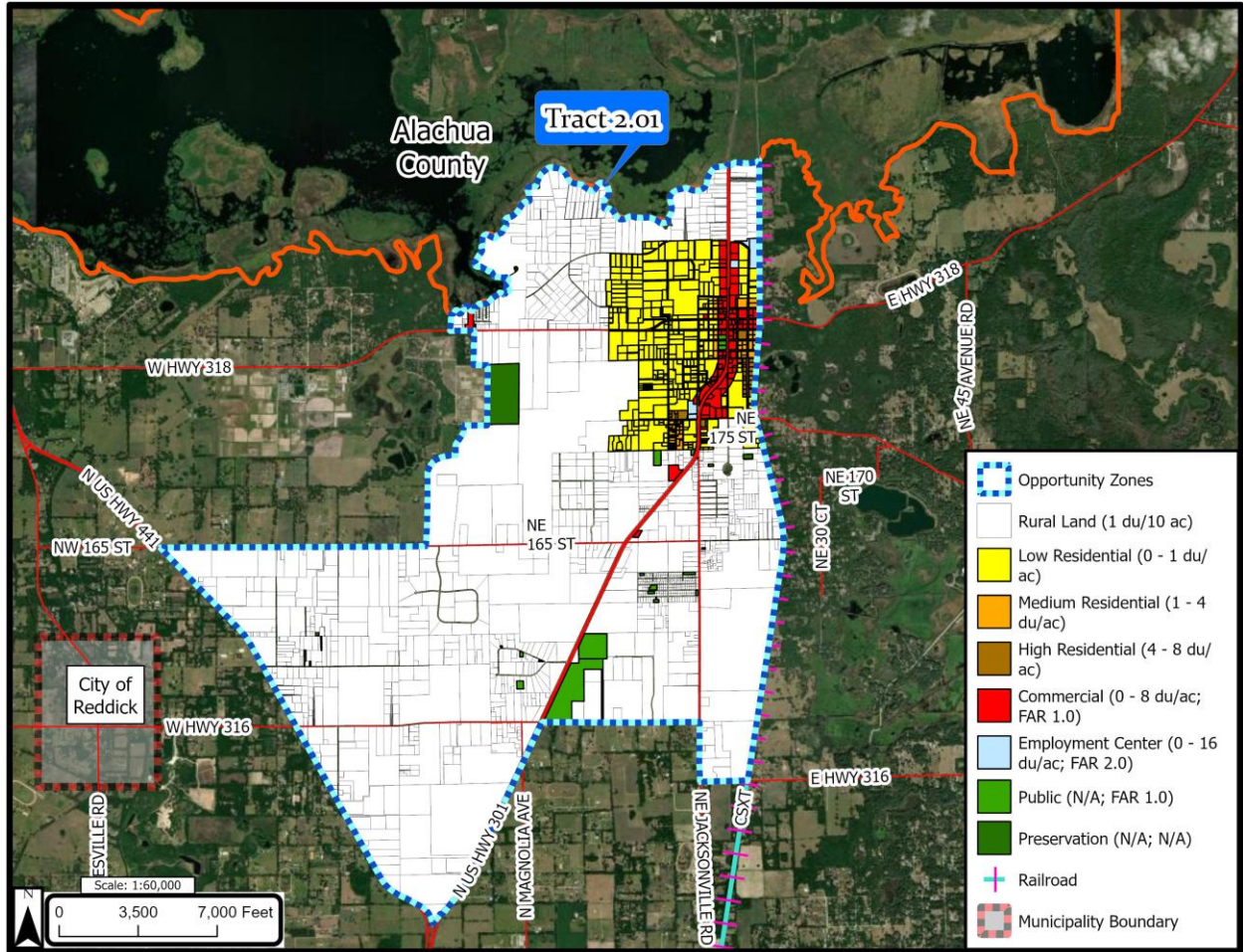
Exhibit	Document Name
A	Maps — Aerial, FLUM, Zoning, Vacant Land, Development Activity
B	Census Tract Data Summary
C	Development Activity (2023-2026) — EPL Data
D	Land Use and Zoning Analysis
E	TPO 2025 List of Priority Projects
F	Letters of Support

Exhibit A: Maps

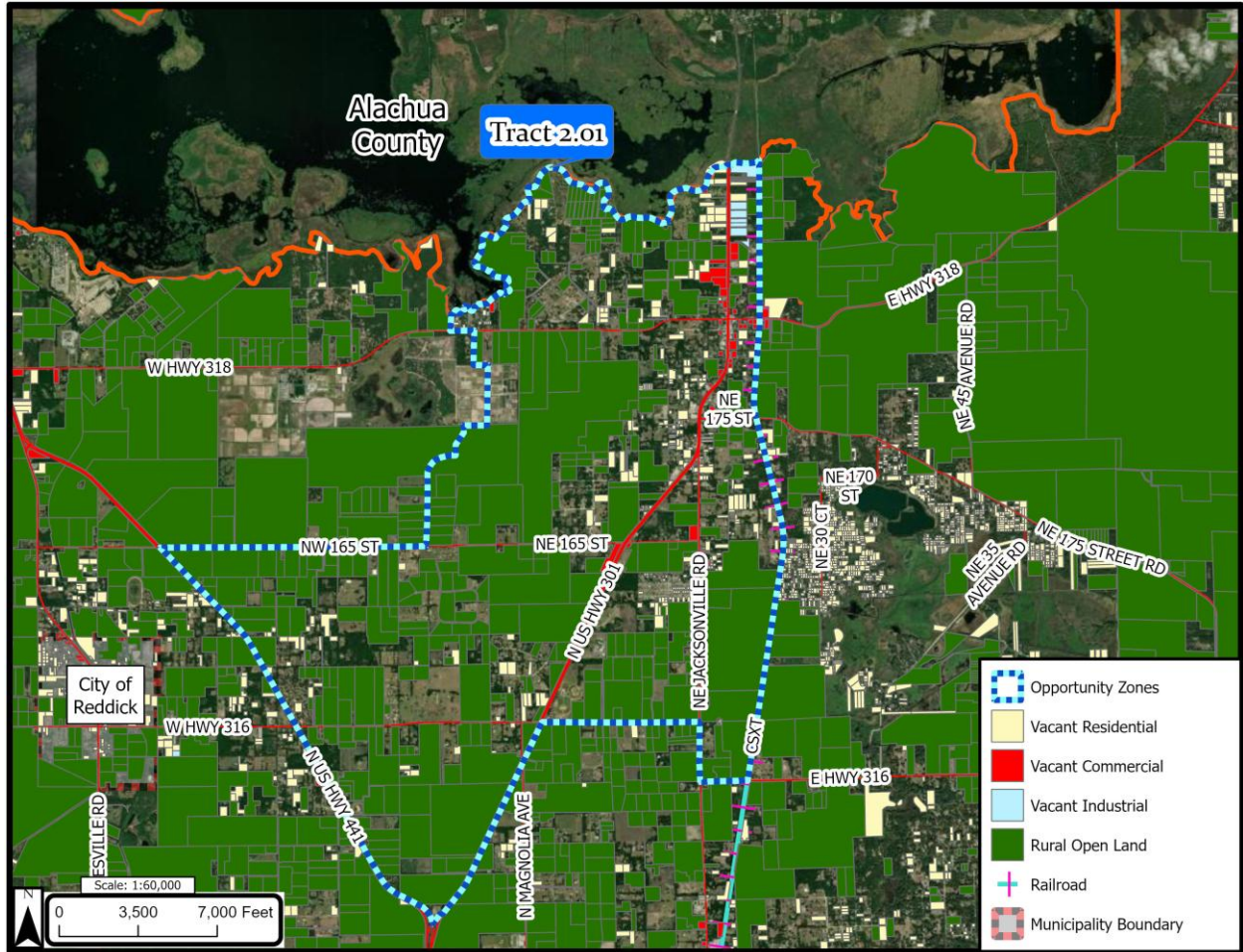
Census Tract 2.01 -- Aerial Boundary Map



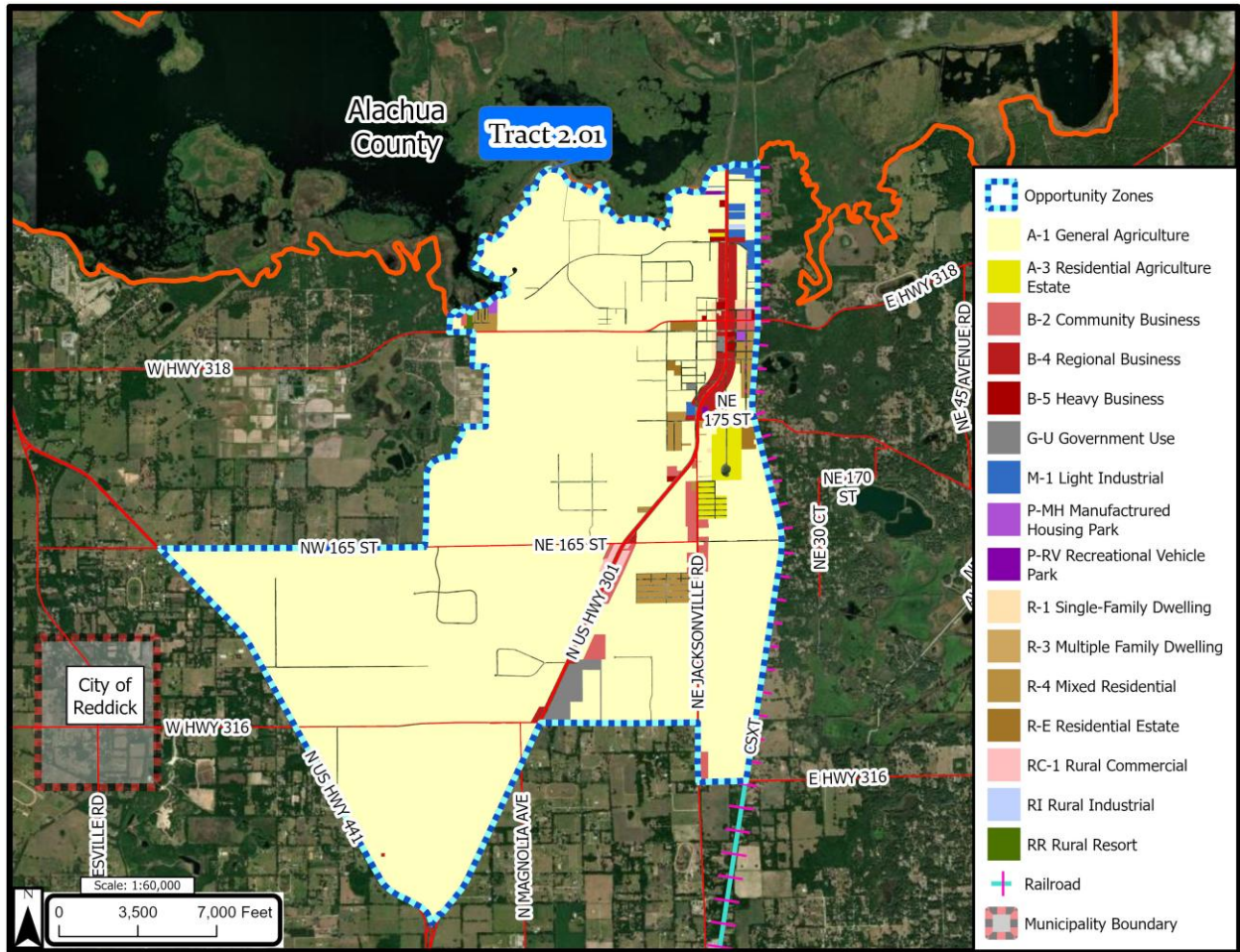
Census Tract 2.01 -- Future Land Use Map (FLUM)



Census Tract 2.01 -- Vacant and Rural Land



Census Tract 2.01 -- Zoning Map



Census Tract 2.01 -- Developments Started Since 2023

Census Tract 2.01 : Developments Started Since 2023

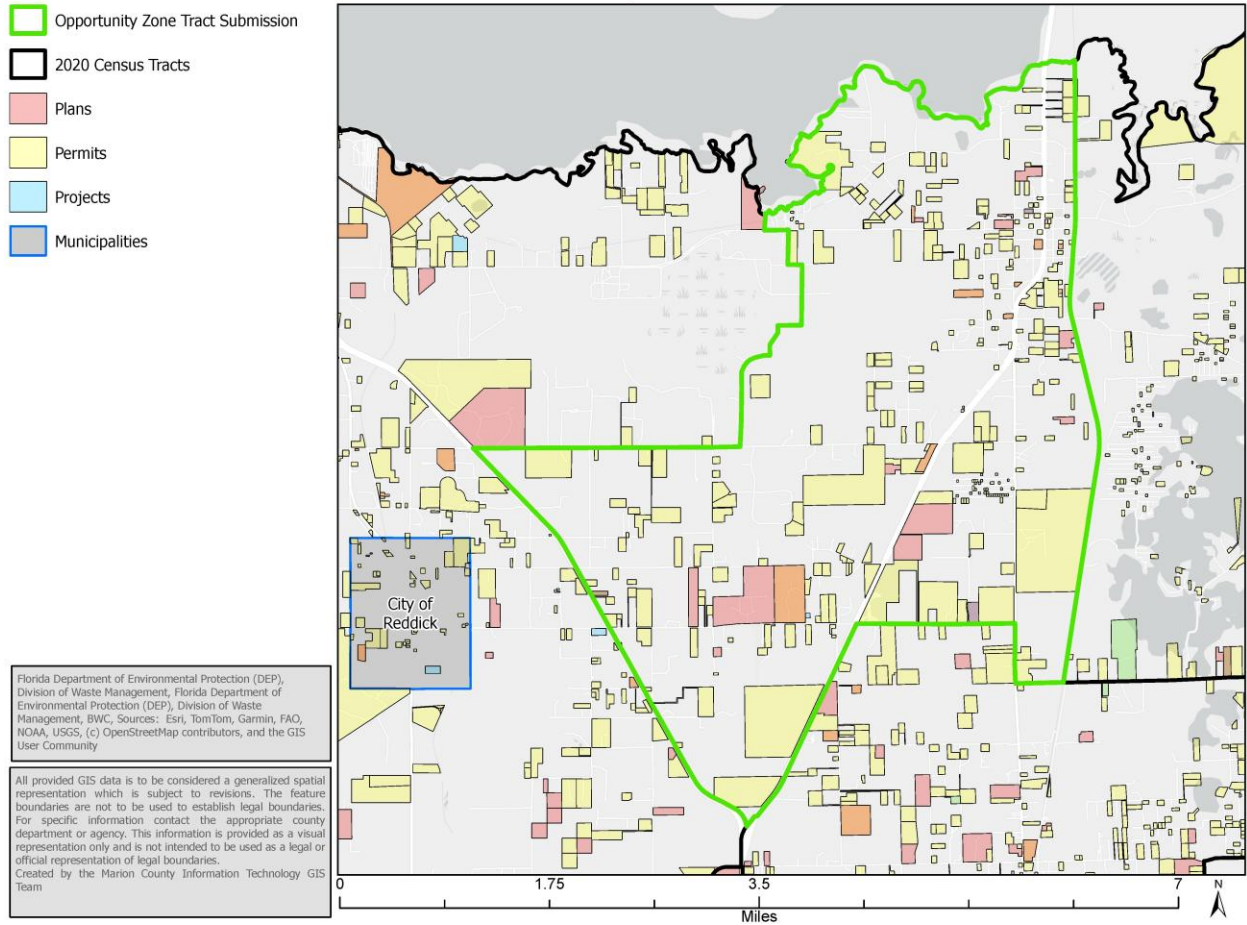


Exhibit B: Census Tract Data Summary

Source: ACS 2024 5-Year Estimates (Census Reporter). Unemployment rate for Tracts 8.03 and 13.01 from ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates S2301.

Indicator	Tract 12083000201	Florida Statewide
Population (Estimated)	2,501	22,898,322
Median Age	43.8	42.1
Per Capita Income	\$29,371	\$37,534
Median Household Income (MHI)	\$46,964	\$77,735
Median Family Income (MFI)	\$91,324	\$93,615
MFI as % of Area Median	124.28%	—
Poverty Rate	21.23%	12.0%
Unemployment Rate	9.73%	4.6%
Tract Area (sq. mi.)	16.16	—
Previously Designated OZ	No	—

Exhibit C: Development Activity (2023-2026)

Source: Marion County Growth Services EPL System (2023-2026). Data reflects activity within the census tract boundary.

EPL Activity Summary (2023-2026)			
Category	Projects	Permits	Plans
Census Tract 12083000201	4	264	27

4 active projects | 264 permits (239 residential, 10 commercial, 9 ROW utility) | 27 plans filed 2023-2026. Work classes include 25 new single-family residences, 24 manufactured/mobile home permits, and 10 demolition permits. Plans include large-acreage parcels: 117-acre (Plan #30349), 70.3-acre (Plan #32529 -- In Review as of early 2026), 30.19-acre, and 6.79-acre properties.

Exhibit D: Land Use and Zoning Analysis

Source: Marion County GIS — Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and Zoning classifications. Vacant parcel data from Marion County Property Appraiser (MCPA).

Future Land Use (FLUM)

FLUM Category	Acreage
Rural Land (RL)	8,465.4 ac
Low Residential (LR)	879.8 ac
Commercial (COM)	152.1 ac
Public (P)	126.1 ac
Preservation (PR)	87.8 ac
Medium Residential (MR)	51.0 ac
High Residential (HR)	29.6 ac
Employment Center (EC)	22.9 ac

Zoning Classifications

Zoning Classification	Acreage
A-1 General Agriculture	9,089.3 ac
R-4 Mixed Residential	151.1 ac
B-2 Community Business	131.4 ac
B-4 Regional Business	125.3 ac
A-3 Residential Agriculture Estate	105.8 ac
G-U Government Use	80.0 ac
M-1 Light Industrial	52.6 ac
RC-1 Rural Commercial	16.9 ac

Vacant Land Inventory (MCPA)

Vacant Residential: 313 parcels | Vacant Commercial: 46 parcels | Vacant Industrial: 7 parcels

Exhibit E: TPO 2025 List of Priority Projects

Source: Ocala-Marion Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) 2025 List of Priority Projects (LOPP), adopted June 23, 2025, covering Fiscal Years 2027-2031. Projects listed below are adjacent to or serve Census Tract 12083000201.

Rank/Type	Project Name / Limits	Description	Phase	Funding
Non-SIS Rank 10	US 441 from Sumter County to CR 42	Widening to six lanes	TBD	TBD
Non-SIS Rank 22	US 301 from north of CR 42 to SE 142nd Place	Widening to four lanes	TBD	TBD

Exhibit F: Letters of Support

The following letters of support were provided by members of the Florida Legislature in support of Marion County's Opportunity Zone 2.0 nominations.

Letter of Support — Senator Stan McClain, Florida Senate District 9



SENATOR STAN MCCLAIN
9th District

THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

COMMITTEES:
Community Affairs, *Chair*
Appropriations
Appropriations Committee on Agriculture,
Environment, and General Government
Appropriations Committee on Transportation,
Tourism, and Economic Development
Commerce and Tourism
Governmental Oversight and Accountability
Transportation

SELECT COMMITTEE:
Joint Select Committee on Collective Bargaining

JOINT COMMITTEE:
Joint Legislative Auditing Committee

April 29, 2026

Secretary Alex Kelly
Florida Department of Commerce
107 East Madison Street
Caldwell Building
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-4120

Dear Secretary Kelly,

I am writing to express my strong support for Marion County's recommendations regarding the designation of five census tracts as part of Opportunity Zone 2.0.

I support the County's recommended tracts, as they reflect a thoughtful, countywide approach to economic development. These selections include areas within the City of Ocala, the City of Belleview, and unincorporated Marion County, each presenting meaningful opportunities to catalyze private investment, create jobs, and expand economic activity.

Census Tract 12083001500

Located in northwestern Marion County, this tract benefits from strong regional connectivity via Interstate 75 and U.S. Highways 441 and 301. Despite these advantages, the area continues to experience underutilization and limited commercial development. The tract is well-positioned for transformative investment, with active and proposed projects including a 450,000-square-foot manufacturing facility representing approximately \$30 million in investment and 300+ jobs, additional industrial development projected at \$50 million supporting 500 initial jobs with long-term expansion potential, and the tract will also be the future home of a Buc-ee's location.

Census Tract 12083001211

This southeastern Marion County tract consists primarily of established residential and retirement communities, with limited commercial activity concentrated along the Maricamp Road corridor. While the area provides access to essential services, the lack of employment centers presents a clear opportunity for targeted investment to strengthen the local economic base.

REPLY TO:

- 315 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, Florida 34471 (352) 732-1249
- 5700 SW 34th Street, Suite 225, Gainesville, Florida 32608 (352) 264-4040
- 312 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5009

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

BEN ALBRITTON
President of the Senate

JASON BRODEUR
President Pro Tempore

Census Tract 12083001102

Located within the City of Belleview, this tract includes a mix of residential neighborhoods, mobile home communities, and rural land uses. Anchored by State Road 484 and U.S. Highway 441, and supported by rail access, the area has strong infrastructure assets but continues to experience dispersed economic activity and limited business development.

Census Tract 12083000201

Situated in northern Marion County, this predominantly rural tract includes agricultural land and small unincorporated communities. Economic activity is largely confined to highway corridors, and the area's distance from major employment centers has constrained growth. Opportunity Zone designation would help unlock targeted investment and improve access to jobs and services.

Census Tract 12083002607

This western Marion County tract is characterized by rural residential development and agricultural uses, with limited commercial infrastructure. Although anchored by U.S. Highway 41 and State Road 40, the area has not experienced sustained economic investment. Strategic designation would support new development opportunities and enhance economic accessibility for residents.

Census Tract 8.03

This census tract in southeastern Marion County is characterized by a mix of established residential areas, rural homesteads, and lake-oriented communities. The area is anchored by corridors such as U.S. Highway 441 and State Road 25/25A, though commercial activity remains limited and primarily concentrated along these roadways. Much of the tract consists of dispersed housing patterns, natural features, and smaller neighborhood clusters, with residents often relying on nearby areas for employment, retail, and services. The combination of low-density development, environmental constraints, and limited commercial infrastructure presents opportunities for targeted investment to improve connectivity, expand services, and support economic activity.

Census Tract 13.01

This census tract in northeastern Marion County is characterized by a mix of suburban residential neighborhoods, rural land uses, and pockets of agricultural activity. The area is anchored by major corridors such as U.S. Highway 441 and State Road 326, which provide regional connectivity, though commercial development remains limited and largely corridor-focused. Interior portions of the tract consist primarily of residential development and open land, with limited employment centers and supporting services. The combination of growing residential areas and constrained commercial infrastructure presents opportunities for targeted investment to enhance economic development and improve access to jobs and amenities.

REPLY TO:

- 315 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, Florida 34471 (352) 732-1249
- 5700 SW 34th Street, Suite 225, Gainesville, Florida 32608 (352) 264-4040
- 312 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5009

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

BEN ALBRITTON
President of the Senate

JASON BRODEUR
President Pro Tempore

In summary, these recommended designations represent a balanced and strategic approach to economic development—one that aligns with the goals of the Opportunity Zone program and positions Marion County for long-term growth and investment.

I respectfully urge your support for these recommendations. Thank you for your continued leadership and commitment to strengthening Florida's communities.

Sincerely,



Stan McClain, *Senator*
Senate District 9: Marion, Levy Counties and Part of Alachua

REPLY TO:

- 315 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, Florida 34471 (352) 732-1249
- 5700 SW 34th Street, Suite 225, Gainesville, Florida 32608 (352) 264-4040
- 312 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5009

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

BEN ALBRITTON
President of the Senate

JASON BRODEUR
President Pro Tempore



Florida House of Representatives
Representative Ryan Chamberlin
District 24

District Office:
315 SE 25th Ave
Ocala, FL 34471
(352) 635-0450

Tallahassee Office:
1401 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 717-5024

Email: ryan.chamberlin@FLhouse.gov

April 30, 2026

Secretary Alex Kelly
Florida Department of Commerce
107 East Madison Street
Caldwell Building
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-4120

Dear Secretary Kelly:

I write to offer my strong support for Marion County's proposed census tract designations under Opportunity Zone 2.0.

The County's recommendations reflect a comprehensive and well-coordinated approach to economic development, incorporating areas within the City of Ocala, the City of Belleview, and unincorporated portions of Marion County. Each of the identified tracts presents a unique opportunity to attract private investment, expand employment opportunities, and strengthen the local economy.

Census Tract 12083001500

This tract, located in northwestern Marion County, benefits from direct access to Interstate 75 and U.S. Highways 441 and 301. While these transportation assets provide a strong foundation, the area remains underdeveloped. The tract is positioned for significant economic impact, with planned and proposed projects including a 450,000-square-foot manufacturing facility representing approximately \$30 million in investment and more than 300 jobs, additional industrial development projected at \$50 million supporting 500 initial jobs with long-term expansion potential, and a future Buc-ee's location.

Census Tract 12083001211

Located in southeastern Marion County, this tract is largely comprised of established residential and retirement communities, with limited commercial activity concentrated along the Maricamp Road corridor. The absence of major employment centers highlights the need for targeted reinvestment to support long-term economic sustainability.

Census Tract 12083001102

Situated within the City of Belleview, this tract includes a mix of residential neighborhoods, mobile home communities, and rural land uses. Despite access to key corridors such as State Road 484 and U.S. Highway 441, along with nearby rail infrastructure, economic activity remains dispersed and underdeveloped.

Census Tract 12083000201

This northern Marion County tract is predominantly rural, consisting of agricultural lands and small unincorporated communities. Economic activity is largely limited to roadway corridors, and the distance from major employment hubs continues to constrain growth and investment.

Ways & Means Committee, Economic Infrastructure Subcommittee, Human Services Subcommittee, Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee, Justice Budget Subcommittee, Select Committee on Property Taxes



Florida House of Representatives
Representative Ryan Chamberlin
District 24

District Office:
315 SE 25th Ave
Ocala, FL 34471
(352) 635-0450

Tallahassee Office:
1401 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 717-5024

Email: ryan.chamberlin@FLhouse.gov

Census Tract 12083002607

Located in western Marion County, this tract is characterized by rural residential patterns and agricultural uses with minimal commercial infrastructure. Although it is served by U.S. Highway 41 and State Road 40, the area has not seen sustained economic development, presenting an opportunity for strategic investment.

Census Tract 8.03

This tract in southeastern Marion County includes a mix of established residential areas, rural homesteads, and lake-oriented communities. While it benefits from access to U.S. Highway 441 and State Road 25/25A, commercial activity remains limited and concentrated along these corridors. The area's dispersed development pattern and environmental features highlight the need for investment to improve connectivity and expand access to services.

Census Tract 13.01

Located in northeastern Marion County, this tract consists of suburban residential neighborhoods, rural land uses, and agricultural areas. Anchored by U.S. Highway 441 and State Road 326, the tract has strong regional connectivity, though commercial development remains limited. Additional investment would help support economic growth and improve access to jobs and services.

In closing, these recommended tracts represent a strategic and balanced selection that aligns with the objectives of the Opportunity Zone program and supports long-term economic advancement across Marion County.

I respectfully encourage your favorable consideration of these recommendations. Thank you for your continued leadership and dedication to strengthening Florida's communities.

Kindest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Chamberlin".

Representative Ryan Chamberlin
House District 24

Ways & Means Committee, Economic Infrastructure Subcommittee, Human Services Subcommittee, Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee, Justice Budget Subcommittee, Select Committee on Property Taxes