

2024 Legislative Priorities

We are proud to support priorities that are important to our CEP members and help create a business-friendly climate for our local community and state.

Workforce Education

U.S. News and World Report ranked Ocala #7 as the fastest growing city in the country in 2023-2024. The Ocala Metro CEP supports workforce education projects that will help our community with job retention and create more jobs as our community grows.

1. College of Central Florida:
 - a. Expansion of Health Science Programs: Radiography and Physical Therapist Assistant
 - b. Property Acquisition and Development for Criminal Justice, EMS & Truck Driving
2. Marion County Public Schools:
 - a. Expansion of Marion Technical College to provide programs that align with our workforce needs: CNA, Electrical Apprenticeship, HVAC, Phlebotomy, Plumbing, Welding
 - b. Milage at 2.0 mils- reinstated (includes charter schools)



Transportation Infrastructure

In 2023 the Florida legislature and Governor DeSantis championed transportation infrastructure with an investment of \$14.8 billion to fund essential projects. The Ocala Metro CEP supports this continued investment that will assist with congestion issues within Marion County on I-75.

Marion County has two requests supported by the Ocala Metro CEP:

1. Section A: 3.4-mile portion of NW 49th St. from NW 70th Ave to NW 44th Ave
2. Section B: 2-mile portion of SW 80th Ave from north of SW 38th St through SR 40



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Tourism Development

Between April 2022-March 2023, tourism in Ocala/Marion County supported 11,041 local jobs and visitors spent \$736,250,900 on accommodations, restaurants, groceries, transportation, attractions, entertainment, and shopping. The Ocala Metro CEP supports tourism projects that will continue to grow the economic growth and jobs for our community.

1. Allow visitors to swim at Silver Springs State Park, a priority of Marion County.
2. Support funding to expand Ft. King National Historic Landmark, a priority of the City of Ocala and Marion County.



Affordable Housing

Thank you for your support of the Live Local Act last session. However, Affordable Housing continues to serve as an issue not just in Marion County but throughout Florida.

The cost of housing makes it difficult for employers to attract and retain workforce. 54% of cost burdened renters spend over half of their income on housing in Marion County. 41% of cost burdened homeowners are spending over half of their income on housing in Marion County.

The Ocala Metro CEP supports strategic initiatives to increase the availability of affordable housing.

