



February 17, 2022

Sandra Wilson, City Manager
City of Ocala

Reference: Fort King National Historic Landmark
Reconstruction of Blacksmith Shop

Dear Mrs. Wilson:

In 2017, the City of Ocala and the Fort King Heritage Foundation completed phase I reconstruction of historic Fort King (1837). This project included informative archaeological work and construction of the palisade walls and two block houses. The Fort King Heritage Foundation provided almost \$80,000 in cash, secured over \$80,000 in donated services, and facilitated another \$235,000 in funding from a Felburn Grant and a TDC Grant. The City was gracious enough to advance the funds for the project which allowed the Foundation to continue its fundraising efforts during the construction phase.

The Blacksmith Shop is the next component of the larger Fort King reconstruction. In 2020-21, the Fort King Heritage Foundation funded the archaeology work associated with this project in the amount of \$42,750. That work is now complete.

The City of Ocala recently issued a Request for Proposals for design/build of the Blacksmith Shop. The selection committee met to review the proposals and selected a contractor. The estimated project cost is \$135,000 (final total pending completion of negotiations). The Foundation has secured \$80,000 in funding to offset this cost and is pursuing the balance of the funds needed to support the total cost.

The Foundation requests the City of Ocala to once again advance the funds needed to award the contract and begin the project and allow the Foundation to raise the balance of the funds while construction is underway. This will allow us to expedite construction.

Please allow this letter to confirm the Fort King Heritage Foundation's commitment to supporting the cost of the Blacksmith Shop construction estimated to be \$135,000.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Bill Tucker

President

Fort King Heritage Foundation, Inc.