

FW: City Letter

From Janiece Lucky <JLucky@ocalafl.gov>
Date Tue 3/3/2026 11:36 AM
To Emily W. Johnson <ewjohnson@ocalafl.gov>
Cc Endira Madraveren <emadraveren@ocalafl.gov>

Good morning,

Please see the letter below.

JaNiece N. Lucky

Associate Planner

City of Ocala Growth Management Department

201 SE 3rd Street, 2nd floor, Ocala, FL 34471

Office: 352-629-8344



From: mayme fisher <mbfisher94@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 1, 2026 2:45 PM
To: Janiece Lucky <JLucky@ocalafl.gov>
Subject: Fwd: City Letter

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March 1, 2026

City of Ocala Department of Growth Management

Planning & Zoning

RE: Case # FLUP25-0001 / PD25-0001

Dear City Officials,

I am writing to respectfully but firmly voice my opposition to the proposed amendment to the City's Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan, specifically the deletion of Policy 18.13 and Policy 18.24, which set development conditions for the properties located in the 3000, 4000, and 4300 blocks of SW 43rd Court.

I have been a resident of Bear Track Ranch for 46 years. I raised my family here, served this community as a nurse, and welcomed countless neighbors who, like me, chose this neighborhood because of its larger lots, natural surroundings, and peaceful character. Bear Track Ranch remains one of the last areas in Ocala where residents can still enjoy open space without feeling crowded by overdevelopment.

The proposed changes would erase the natural wooded buffer behind our community and replace it with dense townhomes and apartments. This would not only disrupt the quiet character of Bear Track Ranch, but it would also destroy valuable wildlife habitat. For decades, that wooded area has provided a home for countless species. Removing it will force displaced wildlife into neighboring yards and busy roads, creating avoidable and unnecessary human-wildlife conflicts.

When the previous developer engaged with our community, they at least considered adjustments — placing parking lots closer to their side rather than homes and preserving a meaningful buffer of woods and landscaping between subdivisions. The current proposal shows no such willingness to address residents' concerns. Without adequate buffers or fencing, our privacy, safety, and property values will be directly impacted. Residents from the new development would have direct access to our backyards, an unacceptable intrusion into our homes and daily lives.

I understand that Ocala is growing. Growth itself is not the issue — unchecked and poorly planned growth is. Within a 10-mile radius, there are already numerous new apartment and townhouse developments, many of which still have significant availability. Timberline, Carlton Arms, and both Pointe Grand complexes are examples of projects that have ample capacity for new residents.

In addition, the 38th Avenue Apartments include 476 units, with approximately 100 currently open and 50 available now, with additional availability expected by the

end of the year. There are also approximately 700 new units under construction near West Marion Hospital that are nearing completion and expected to open this year.

The need for yet another high-density development in this specific location has not been clearly demonstrated.

All we are asking for is respect for the existing community. Ocala's history is rooted in beautiful properties, farmland, and open space. It is heartbreaking to see that heritage diminished by overbuilding and short-sighted planning. At the very least, this project should include substantial wooded buffers, fencing, and protective measures for existing homeowners. Ideally, the City should deny this amendment altogether to preserve the character and livability of Bear Track Ranch.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the concerns of a resident who has proudly called Ocala home for nearly half a century. I urge you to carefully weigh the long-term consequences of this amendment and protect both the natural environment and the established community that already exists.

Warm regards,

Mayme Fisher