

# 2025 REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS FOR OCALA & THE VILLAGES, CENTRAL FLORIDA



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# MARKET OUTLOOK REPORT:

## 2025 REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS FOR OCALA & THE VILLAGES, CENTRAL FLORIDA

### Executive Summary

Central Florida, particularly Ocala and The Villages, is poised for continued growth in 2025, presenting robust opportunities for land development, multifamily investments, and commercial ventures. With rising population levels, economic diversification, and supportive regional incentives, the area is ideal for strategic investment. This report outlines key trends and investment opportunities for the coming year.

### Market Overview

#### Ocala

Ocala has experienced a population increase of 19.64% from 2010 to 2022, growing at a rate of 1.81% annually—154% faster than the national average. This growth has bolstered demand across residential, industrial, and commercial real estate sectors. Major employers like Ocala Health, Amazon, and FedEx provide economic stability, while its strategic location along Interstate 75 enhances its appeal as a logistics and business hub. The region is less than 60 minutes to Orlando and the East Coast ports, and 75 minutes to Tampa, which offers both an international airport and a deep-water port. The area is also 60 minutes south of Gainesville and 60 minutes to Jacksonville. Strategically located halfway between Atlanta and Miami, the region provides seamless access to key markets across the Southeast.

#### The Villages

The Villages remains a leading destination for retirees, driven by its extensive amenities and active lifestyle offerings. With a growing 55+ population, demand for healthcare services, recreational opportunities, and age-restricted housing is increasing. Pro-growth policies and infrastructure expansion are facilitating additional residential and mixed-use developments, with land currently being prepared for 14,000 new homes. The Villages has a population of approximately 150,000 and includes 40 golf courses, 12 country clubs, as well as access to quality healthcare, shopping, entertainment, and dining options.

## Land and Development Trends

The surge in population and demand for modern amenities has created significant opportunities:

- Residential Land: High demand in Ocala for single-family homes, townhomes, and multifamily developments, especially along SR 200 and I-75.
- Industrial Land: Prime parcels near I-75 are essential for logistics and e-commerce developments, catering to tenants like Amazon and FedEx.
- Mixed-Use Land: The Villages offers potential for innovative mixed-use projects combining retail, office, and residential spaces.
- Agricultural Land: Ocala's equestrian culture remains strong, with land transitioning to estates or eco-tourism projects.
- Equestrian Land: Ocala is recognized as the "Horse Capital of the World," home to the largest concentration of thoroughbred horse farms and training facilities globally.

## Multifamily Market Analysis

- Affordability: The average home price in Ocala remains 21% below the national average, driving demand for rentals.
- Strong Rent Growth: Rents have grown by 82.65% over the past decade, nearly double the national average.
- Investor Opportunity: Limited inventory and consistent demand make multifamily properties a high-potential asset class.

## General Commercial Market Dynamics

- Industrial Real Estate: Continued e-commerce expansion ensures strong demand for warehouses and distribution centers in Ocala.
- Retail Evolution: Mixed-use developments and experiential retail will dominate, especially in The Villages' town square areas.
- Healthcare Growth: Increasing retiree populations necessitate expanded medical and assisted living facilities.

# INVESTMENT INSIGHTS

## 1. Strategic Land Acquisition

- **Key Opportunities:** Secure parcels in high-growth areas such as Ocala's I-75 corridor and The Villages' expansion zones.
- **Focus Areas:** Industrial-zoned parcels for logistics, residential lots for subdivisions, and mixed-use zoned land for innovative developments.

## 2. Multifamily Developments

- **Target Demand:** Invest in Class B and C properties for value-add opportunities in Ocala or build new, amenity-rich apartments to attract younger demographics.

## 3. Logistics and Industrial Projects

- **Prime Locations:** Develop build-to-suit warehouses near I-75 to meet demand from e-commerce companies.

## 4. Mixed-Use Developments in The Villages

- **Lifestyle-Centered Design:** Develop projects combining retail, dining, and residential components to meet retiree expectations for convenience and entertainment.

## 5. Healthcare Facilities

- **Addressing Needs:** Invest in outpatient medical centers, senior living communities, and specialty healthcare spaces to serve the growing retiree population.

# 2025 MARKET PREDICTIONS

## Population and Demographics

- **Sustained Growth:** Ocala's population will grow by 2% annually, attracting families, professionals, and retirees.
- **Demographic Shifts:** A younger population moving to Ocala for job opportunities will complement the retiree-driven growth in The Villages.

## Real Estate Market Trends

### 1. Land Development:

Rising land prices, particularly near I-75 and SR 200 in Ocala, will challenge developers to secure parcels early.

Agricultural land in Ocala will see continued transitions to equestrian estates and boutique developments.

In The Villages, zoning and density restrictions will require innovative approaches to maximize returns.

### 2. Multifamily Properties:

Ocala will see rental demand grow by 5-7%, driven by affordability and a growing workforce.

Limited multifamily development in The Villages will focus on townhomes and age-restricted housing due to zoning constraints.

### 3. Commercial Real Estate:

Industrial properties in Ocala will maintain low vacancy rates (under 5%) and experience rent growth of 4-6%.

Retail in The Villages will evolve towards experiential and mixed-use formats, catering to retiree lifestyles.

### 4. Healthcare Expansion:

Both markets will experience increased development of outpatient centers, assisted living facilities, and specialty care services.

## Economic Highlights

- Logistics and healthcare sectors will drive job growth.
- Opportunity Zones in Ocala and streamlined permitting in The Villages will attract investors and developers.





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## Conclusion

As we look toward 2025, Ocala and The Villages present compelling opportunities for real estate investors and developers. Population growth, economic diversity, and evolving market trends make the region a prime target for investments in land development, multifamily housing, and commercial real estate.

With the right strategy and market insights, investors can position themselves for strong returns in this thriving Central Florida market. David Bryant, CCIM and the team at RE/MAX Commercial are ready to provide tailored guidance to help you succeed in this market.

**For more details, property recommendations, or site-selection strategies, please reach out to him directly at [www.TheLandman.co](http://www.TheLandman.co).**

# BROUGHT TO YOU BY: **DAVID BRYANT, CCIM**



David Bryant, "The Land Man," is the name you need to know for commercial real estate & land sales in Central Florida.

As the Director of Commercial Real Estate at RE/MAX Premier, David is the go-to advisor for landowners, business owners, local developers, and international investors across Marion, Sumter, Polk, and Lake counties. With approx. four decades of real estate sales and development experience, David has become known as a dealmaker throughout the Southeast, from Florida to Texas.

He has an extensive background in international real estate marketing and sales. He has clients in 40 states and 25 countries, and has personally developed properties in 10 states. With a database with just under a million contacts, including builders and developers, investors, realtors, and international buyers. David's reach spans buyers from all 50 states and 7 continents, making him a valuable asset for sellers.

David's career includes instrumental roles in a wide range of projects, including land, housing developments, apartments, retail spaces, hotels, and strip centers. His extensive experience in international marketing and development underscores his ability to manage complex deals and deliver outstanding results.





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