



**Position Statement**  
**Camp Margaritaville Resort Orange Lake**

Horse Farms Forever® **OPPOSES** the application by 8M Holdings, LLC to re-zone their 141-acre parcel located at 18365 NW 45th Avenue Road in Citra from an RV park with amenities reserved for the RV guests to an RV/themed park with amenities open to the public daily for a fee.

This change of use from a quiet RV park with amenities for the RV users to a Margaritaville themed RV park with extensive water rides, restaurant, bar, live entertainment and daily admission, in addition to the RV users, is incompatible with the rural community of Orange Lake, surrounding horse farms, and the Farmland Preservation Area.

**The Application - Proposed Zoning Change**

In February of 2019, 8M Holdings purchased the 141-acre vacant parcel adjacent to an existing RV park and a closed sports facility located off County Road 318 in Citra. Unlike most parcels in the Farmland Preservation Area, this parcel has a Future Land Use of **Commercial** and a Zoning classification of **Planned Unit Development (PUD)** which was reauthorized in 2017 for an **RV park with private amenities** and a 2022 Phase 1 site plan and a 2024 Phase 2 site plan approval.

**The Potential Threat & Why it Matters**

The rezoning is a request to revise the 2017 PUD to make available the SUPER-SIZED themed recreation amenities for public use with a day-pass admission fee. Further, this change requires converting RV parking spaces to general vehicle parking. As stated in the Marion County Growth Services Staff Report:

*"The PUD Plan proposes text changes that will enable non-RV user day-use operations of the RV Park amenities (themed recreation area – pool, bar/restaurant, play facilities, etc.) at the determination of the developer/operator. Such use will provide for additional potential traffic generation from non-RV users."*

**The Process – What is Missing?**

There is a process to amend any existing PUD (Land Development Code Section 4.2.31.K – PUD Amendments) which states that changes which will modify or increase the density or intensity of a development, or change the intent and character of the development, shall be subject to review and approval by the Board through the PUD rezoning application process.

8M Holdings has built SUPER-SIZED amenities (themed RV park with extensive water rides, restaurant, bar, live entertainment) that far exceed the needs of the traditional RV park model. The applicant now wants to make the recreational amenities available to the public for a daily admission fee, and to convert RV parking spaces into day-use vehicle parking.



In effect, the SUPER-SIZED amenities will become a Margaritaville themed RV park with daily admission to the public. Thus, the density and intensity and the intent and character of the development are substantially changed and therefore require the approval of the Board of County Commissioners. See if you agree that the statements below show a change in intent and character of the RV park:

The RV Resort at Orange Lake was originally advertised on their website as offering the following experience.

*"If peace and tranquility are what you're after, then look no further. The RV Resort at Orange Lake is far from the noise of I-75 and the only sounds you'll hear will be the sounds of nature all around you."*

Subsequently, a massive water park was added and described on the same website as follows.

*"It wasn't merely enough to create a luxury RV park and boat dock access to a beautiful lake known for prestigious bass fishing competitions, Shawn wanted to add something special that's not available anywhere else in North Central Florida. He wanted to create a special added bonus which will have people traveling from miles around to experience...yet exclusive to our seasoned Resort guests."*

Now, the project is rebranded as Camp Margaritaville Resort Orange Lake and described on that website as follows.

*"Camp Margaritaville Resort Orange Lake is the perfect place to set up camp and relax under the palms. It's all here: from live entertainment and local attractions to our on-site Fins Up Falls Water Park, Barkaritaville Dog Park, and an always-full calendar of events."*

### **The Comprehensive Plan & Land Development Code**

The Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Codes make protecting and preserving the rural and equestrian character of the Farmland Preservation Area a priority. The 8M Holdings rezoning application fails to clear these required hurdles:

1. Compatibility - Which is defined as a condition in which land uses or conditions can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion over time such that no use or condition is unduly negatively impacted directly or indirectly by another use or condition.
  - The private property that 8M Holdings, LLC purchased in 2019 is entitled to the land use and zoning that came with the parcel, Commercial and PUD with an approved site/use plan. The neighbors to the south, east and west who purchased land bordering or near a parcel with an approved PUD for a quiet RV park with private amenities are entitled to an expectation that it would remain as such. The role of land use and zoning is to provide predictability.
2. Consistency - In Florida, all land development regulations, zoning codes, and development orders must be consistent with the local government's adopted Comprehensive Plan, as mandated by Florida Statutes. This ensures development aligns with long-term goals for land use, transportation, infrastructure, and conservation.



- The site is in the Farmland Preservation Area. Therefore, this application is subject to the FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT OBJECTIVE 3.3 FARMLAND PRESERVATION AREA and specifically Policy 3.3.1: ELEMENTS OF RURAL CHARACTER which states:
  - The County shall preserve and protect rural and equestrian/agricultural character within the Rural Lands, specifically the Farmland Preservation Area, by requiring that all appropriate future development activities within this Area preserve, support, and enhance the fundamental elements of rural character set forth below, and further requiring that all Zoning Changes and Special Use Permits within the Farmland Preservation Area be consistent with and preserve, protect, support, and enhance the rural, equestrian, and farmland character of the Farmland Preservation Area. Reference: Marion County Ordinance No. 22-09
- Enabling the use of the site's SUPER-SIZED amenities as a Margaritaville themed RV park for non-RV park users through a day-pass admission fee does not “preserve, protect, support, and enhance the rural, equestrian, and farmland character of the Farmland Preservation Area.”

### **The Role of Land Use, Zoning and Private Property Rights**

The role of the County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code is to ensure a well-planned community by reducing land use conflicts. Land use and zoning classifications are critical components that inherently protect private property rights. They do so for the greater common good to efficiently plan for growth and the related infrastructure needs.

Horse Farms Forever asks our County Commissioners to say **NO** to this application and **YES** to preserving and protecting the Farmland Preservation Area.

### **Horse Farms Forever® Mission**

The mission of Horse Farms Forever® is to inspire conservation of horse farms through education, awareness, and idea exchange so as to preserve the character and culture that horses and the Farmland Preservation Area make unique to Marion County. We are watchful of government and others to preserve and protect horse farms and farmland for future generations, especially in the Farmland Preservation Area. We are neither anti-growth nor anti-development, rather encouraging urban growth to remain inside the Urban Growth Boundary.

Horse Farms Forever® is registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as a charitable organization and approved as a tax-exempt 501 (C) (3) corporation by the Internal Revenue Service. Horse Farms Forever does not have a political mission. Our status as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization does not allow us to participate or intervene in political activities. The organization will neither advocate on behalf of political candidates nor advocate for the passage of legislation.