Southwest-Central Florida Connector

Study Area Considerations

August 27, 2019
9 Counties, 36 Cities and Towns

- **Counties:** Polk, Hardee, DeSoto, Highlands, Charlotte, Glades, Lee, Hendry, & Collier

**Land Area:** 9,511 square miles

**Inland area known as “The Florida Heartland”**

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; usa.com
Current Population by County

Statewide Total: 21,299,325

Source: Census Bureau, 2019
Projected Population Growth

Future Growth by County

Sources: Census Bureau, 2019; and Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR), University of Florida, 2019

* Bureau of Economic and Business Research Medium Projections Medium Projections Used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Absolute % Growth 2018-2045</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collier</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeSoto</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glades</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardee</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hendry</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlands</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polk</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Lee County growth estimate includes the city of Fort Myers. Population in thousands.
Florida is 3rd largest State in the U.S. by population

Florida is 2nd fastest growing State in the U.S.

Population:
- 2018 Current – 21.3 million
- 2070 Future – 33.7 million

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; University of Florida Geo Plan, 1000 Friends of Florida, Florida Department of Agriculture
High School Graduation Rate

Statewide Average: 88%

Charlotte County: 90%, Lee County: 88%, Collier County: 87%, Polk County: 86%, Highlands County: 84%, Glades County: 84%, Hardee County: 73%, DeSoto County: 72%, Hendry County: 70%, Florida: 65%

Source: Florida Economic and Demographic Research, 2019
Bachelor’s Degree Attainment Rate

Statewide Average: 29%

COLLIER COUNTY: 34%
LEE COUNTY: 29%
CHARLOTTE COUNTY: 27%
POLK COUNTY: 22%
HIGHLANDS COUNTY: 19%
DE SOTO COUNTY: 17%
GLADES COUNTY: 11%
HARDEE COUNTY: 10%
HENDRY COUNTY: 8%

Source: Florida Economic and Demographic Research, 2019
Current Median Household Income

Statewide Average: $50,883

Source: Florida Economic and Demographic Research, 2019
Current Unemployment Rates

Statewide Average: 3.1%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Unemployment Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FLORIDA \nLEE COUNTY</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIGHLANDS \nHARDEE COUNTY</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLADES \nHENDRY COUNTY</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLK \nPOLK COUNTY</td>
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<td>CHARLOTTE \nHIGHLANDS COUNTY</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>COLINER \nDE SOTO COUNTY</td>
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<td>FLORIDA \nFLORIDA</td>
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Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, 2019
Percent of Population Below Poverty Line

Statewide Average: 14.1%

Source: Florida Economic and Demographic Research, 2019
Employment by Industry

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2019
Existing Land Use

Source: Florida Department of Revenue; County Property Appraisers; University of Florida GeoPlan Center
Preservation Sites

National Register of Historic Places/Historic Sites:
- Clewiston Inn
- Seaboard Coast Line Railroad Depot
- Sanibel Lighthouse and Keeper’s Quarters
- Arcadia Historic District

Archeological Sites:
- Hinson Mounds
- Pine Level Archeological District
- Pineland Archeological District
- Galt Island Archeological District
- Big Mound Key - Boggess Ridge Archaeological District

Cultural Locations/Cemeteries:
- Paynes Creek Massacre/ Fort Chokonikla Site
- Oak Hill Cemetery
- Red Barn

Source: www.nps.gov; fortmyers-sanibel.com; visithardee.com; visitdesoto.com
Wetlands

Wetland Types

- Lakes
- Freshwater
- Marine & Coastal
- Uplands
- Subtropical

Source: www.Paradiseoast.com; soils.ifas.ufl.edu; nps.gov
Aquatic Preserves

Source: floridade.gov
Outstanding Florida Waters

- Cape Romano - Ten Thousand Islands Aquatic Preserve
- Myakka River
- Highlands Hammock State Park

Source: floridadep.gov
Environmental Protection

Study Area Highlights

**Wildlife Corridors**
- Big Cypress – Caloosahatchee
- Caloosahatchee - Kissimmee

**Conservation Lands**
- Everglades National Park
- Babcock Ranch Preserve
- Charlotte Harbor Estuary

**Aquifer Recharge Areas**

Source: Environmental Protection Division Region 4 Ecoregions; Floridawildlifecorridor.org
Florida Forever Lands

- Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem
- Bombing Range Ridge
- Panther Glades
- Blue Head Ranch
- Half Circle L Ranch
- Belle Meade
- Devil’s Garden

Source: fws.gov; 2019 Florida Forever Priority Project List – Board of Trustees Approved List
Threatened & Endangered Species

Other Study Area Federal & State Listed Species

Mammals
- Florida Bonneted Bat
- Puma

Birds
- Red Knot
- Cape Sable Seaside Sparrow
- Everglade Snail Kite
- Florida Grasshopper Sparrow
- Ivory-billed Woodpecker
- Kirtland’s Warbler
- Piping Plover
- Red-cockaded Woodpecker
- Whooping Crane

Reptiles
- American Alligator
- Bluetail Mole Skink
- Eastern Indigo Snake
- Sand Skink
- Gopher Tortoise

Fish
- Gulf Sturgeon
Other Transportation Modes

Shared-Use Trails  
Public Transit  
Freight and Passenger Rail

Source: railstotrails.org, leempo.com
Emerging Technologies

- Autonomous, Connected, and Electric
- Smart Roads & Bridges Infrastructure
- Broadband Infrastructure
Congestion

Transportation Reliability

Commuter Time

Quality of Life

Future Congestion (2040)
- Congested Road
- Uncongested Road
- Study Area

10 Miles
Interstate Supply vs. Demand Growth

Florida Highway Statistics 2009 - 2018

- Interstate Lane Miles Added
- Volume of Vehicles (DVMT)
- Tourism

Tourism Increased 54%
Daily Volume Increased by 23%
Interstate Lane Miles Increased 2%

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Highway Statistics
Trade & Logistics

Air Freight

Rail Freight

Port Freight

Truck Freight
Public Engagement

Task Force Engagement
- Task Force Meetings
- Community Open Houses
- Community Workshops
- Briefings
- Website

Project Development Engagement
- Public Information Meetings
- Public Workshops
- Press Releases
- Public Hearings
- Website

Photos: HDR
Here is your **canvas**

**YOU** are the artist,

Your brushes:

- **Avoid**
- **Minimize**
- **Mitigate**
- **Enhance**