



POLK
COUNTY

2022

Polk Profile



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
330 W. Church Street
PO Box 9005
Bartow, FL 33831-9005

Contents

About Polk County
Our Structure
Charter Government
Constitutional Officers
Annual Review
Trends and Issues



Crooked Lake West

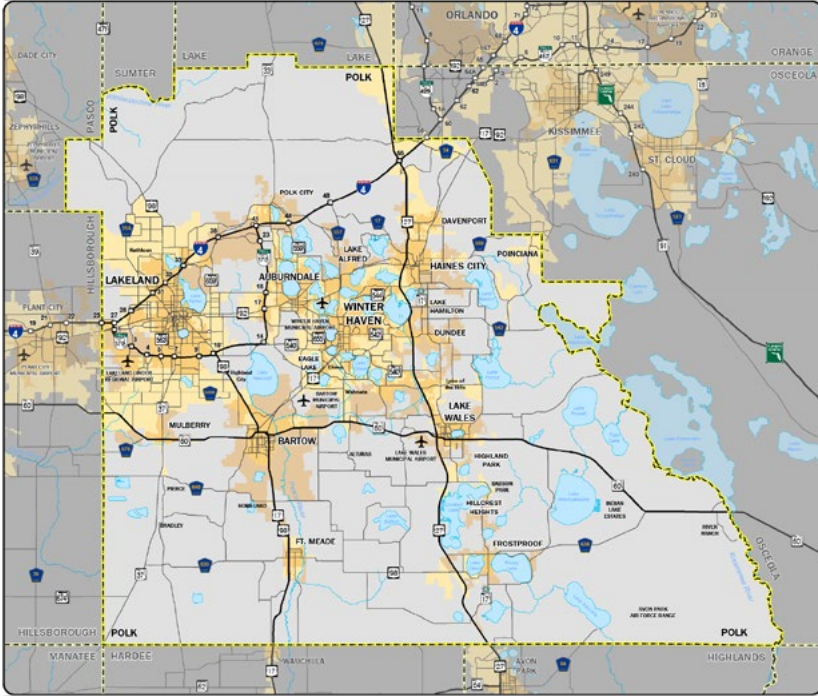


Mission:

We enhance the quality of life
for people throughout Polk County.



About **POLK**



Population - 753,520 (2021 U.S. Census)

Employed Population 16+ - 327,500 (US Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Median Age - 40.2

Median Household Income - \$51,535

- Polk County represents three percent of the total population of Florida
- Ten million people and a workforce of 3.5 million are within a 100-mile radius of Polk County
- Polk County has six traditional colleges/universities, including the newest state university, Florida Polytechnic University. Combined, these institutions enroll more than 19,000 students

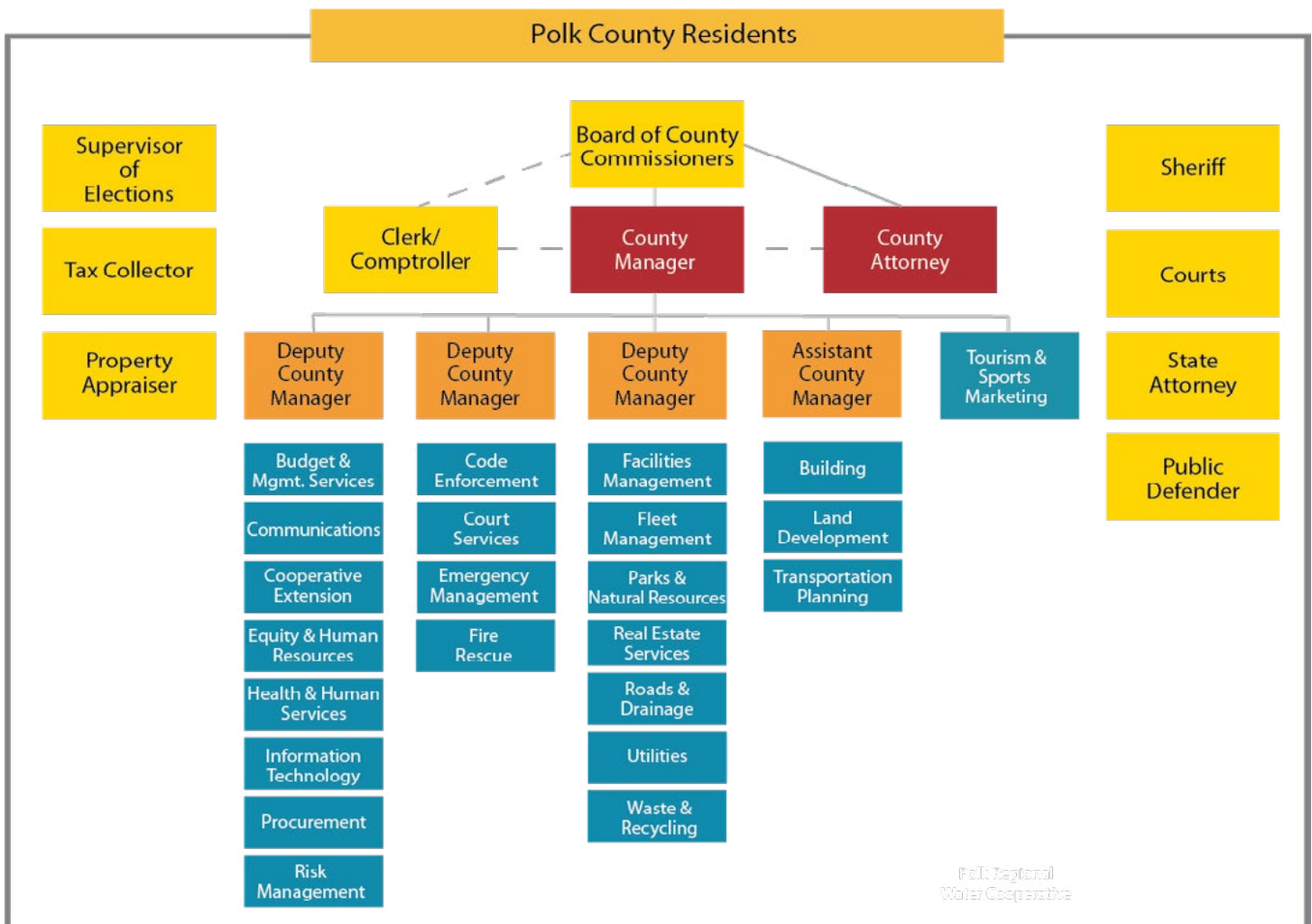
Total Square Miles - 2,011

Square Land Miles - 1,798

Square Water Area - 213

- Polk County is Florida's fourth largest county and is larger than the State of Rhode Island
- The county has 17 municipalities, the largest being Lakeland and the second being Winter Haven. Other municipalities include Auburndale, Bartow, Davenport, Dundee, Eagle Lake, Fort Meade, Frostproof, Haines City, Highland Park, Hillcrest Heights, Lake Alfred, Lake Hamilton, Lake Wales, Mulberry and Polk City.

Our STRUCTURE



Polk County Government...

- Provides fire protection and ALL ambulance services
- Coordinates emergency evacuations
- Enforces housing codes and regulations
- Determines land use and zoning
- Facilitates garbage and recycling collection
- Issues building permits
- Operates county landfill
- Administers affordable housing programs
- Provides health and welfare programs
- Preserves natural ecosystems
- Builds, resurfaces and maintains roads
- Assists in developing small businesses
- Supplies drinking water
- Minimizes mosquito population
- Produces Government television (PGTV)
- Builds and maintains parks
- Preserves wildlife
- Provides wastewater collection/treatment
- Stimulates economic development
- Reviews development construction plans
- Offers agricultural education programs
- Initiates countywide clean-up projects
- Recruits sporting events and promotes tourism
- Plans transportation to accommodate growth
- Maintains more than 12,500 street signs each year
- Monitors criminals who are on probation
- And much more!

Charter Government



Polk County has a charter government authorized by the Florida Constitution. It may only be amended by a vote of the local registered voters. It is a means by which local control, home rule and citizen input are enhanced. A county charter is a written document defining the powers, structure and functions of the county. The charter acts as a “mini-constitution” for the people of Polk County.

County government is granted all home rule powers of self-government as approved by the local voters that are consistent with state law.

Some of the key provisions of the Charter:

- Requires that candidates for County Commission reside in the district in which they are running at

the time that they qualify for office, in addition to maintaining residency after being elected

- Ordinances and charter amendments can be proposed by petition of the voters
- Members of the County Commission and the Constitutional Officers may be recalled from office in accordance with state law and the Governor retains the right to suspend or remove any county official from office
- Constitutional officers are non-partisan.

The Charter does not affect city governments. It is not a form of annexation or consolidation. It does not affect the powers or duties of the Constitutional Officers or the School Board.

The State Legislature is the only governing body with the power to create, abolish or consolidate counties. A county cannot change its form of government, such as combining city and county governments, without a referendum.

Board of County Commissioners

The Board of County Commissioners is the governing body of Polk County. Each commissioner is elected by a countywide vote to a four-year term. In the November 2018 election, the Polk County Charter was amended to limit the number of terms to three consecutive four-year terms.

Each of Polk County's five commissioners represents a county district and must reside in his/her district. Commissioners from districts one, three and five are elected in Presidential election years; districts two and four are elected in the intervening years.

In November, a chairman and vice chairman are elected by the members of the County Commission. The board selects committee chair/liaisons who, in turn, work with the county manager and staff to establish Board policies in specific focus areas, such as tourism, community outreach and legislative issues.

They also select residents to serve on a variety of commissions, boards and councils.

Duties

The Florida Constitution and Chapter 125 of the Florida Statutes authorize the Board of County Commissioners to exercise all powers not prohibited by law. This includes levying taxes, distributing tax monies through budgeting and appropriations, constructing and maintaining roads and bridges, providing health and welfare services, managing all county-owned property, and providing supervision of all county functions and services. County taxes support many of the activities and services of county government, including the justice system, the sheriff, circuit and county court.

The Board meets the first and third Tuesday of the month in the Boardroom of the Administration Building in Bartow. Florida's "Government in the Sunshine" law requires that all county government business takes place in public meetings and the public be given adequate notice of such meetings. The Board's agenda is posted before each meeting and is available on the county's website at www.polk-county.net. Meetings are also televised by PGTV and can also be viewed on the internet at the county's website.

County Manager

The Board of County Commissioners hires the county manager who is responsible for all the divisions within the county commission, except for the County Attorney's Office, which answers directly to the Board. The county manager serves as the budget officer and selects, employs and supervises county personnel. In FY 22/23, the county will employ about 2,251 people.

Advisory Groups

Advisory groups play a critical role in Polk County government. State law created some groups, the BoCC created others as advisors in specific areas. County residents are encouraged to participate by expressing a desire to be appointed to these groups or make recommendations for appointments.

Constitutional Officers

Tax Collector
Joe Tedder



Supervisor of Elections
Lori Edwards



Sheriff
Grady Judd



Property Appraiser
Marsha Faux



Clerk of the Courts
Stacy Butterfield





Fire Rescue Services (September 2022)

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Stations | 46 |
| Employees (Full-time) | 605 |
| Assist to Outside Agencies | 34 |
| Citizen Assist/Service Calls | 3,409 |
| Fire Alarm | 1,837 |
| Fire Calls | 1,168 |
| Hazardous Conditions | 871 |
| Medical Calls | 84,986 |
| Other | 439 |
| Rescue Call Special Detail | 110 |
| Technical Rescue | 69 |
| Traffic/Transportation Incidents | 11,331 |
| Total | 104,323 |

Source: Polk County Fire Rescue Division



Police Protection-Sheriff (FY 2021/22)

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Employees (total) | 1,816 |
| Sworn | 720 |
| Certified | 365 |
| Civilian | 731 |
| Total Crimes in Polk County | 5,645 |
| Marine/Agriculture Calls for Service | 2,454 |
| 911 Calls for Service | 312,772 |
| Traffic Crashed Investigated | 8,367 |
| Calls for Animal Control | 16,342 |
| Daily Average Jail Population | 2,790 |
| Jail Bookings | 21,406 |

Source: Polk County Sheriff's FY 2021/22 Strategic Plan and Budget



Water and Wastewater Utilities

Water (September 2021)

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------|
| Plants | 31 |
| Connections | 77,658 |
| Average Daily Flow Pumped (mgd) | 18.08 |
| Average Daily Flow Permitted (mgd) | 31.903 |

Wastewater

| | |
|---|--------|
| Wastewater Facilities | 8 |
| Pumping Stations | 359 |
| Connections | 59,418 |
| Average Daily Treatment (mgd) | 8.429 |
| Averaged Permitted Daily Capacity (mgd) | 14.109 |

Public Access Reclaimed Water

| | |
|---|--------|
| Facilities | 3 |
| Connections | 14,874 |
| Average Daily Reuse Flow (mgd) | 7.876 |
| Average Daily Rescue Flow Permitted (mgd) | 10.332 |

Source: Polk County Utilities Division

Annual Review FY 21/22

County Parks

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| Regional Parks | 6 |
| Specialty Parks | 52 |
| Neighborhood Parks | 28 |
| Community Parks | 16 |
| Park Acres | 3,863 |
| Lighted Ballfields | 87 |
| Lighted Multi-purpose Fields | 44 |
| Boat Ramps | 51 |
| Boat Ramp Lanes | 59 |
| Docks | 24 |

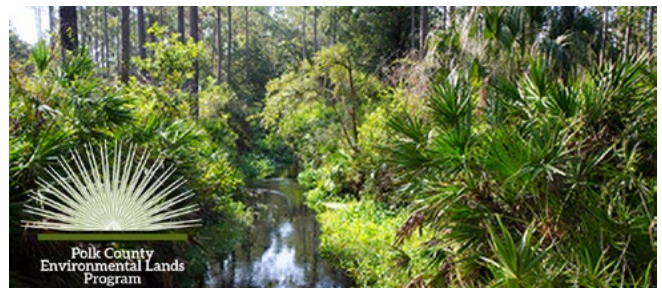
Source: Polk County Parks and Natural Resources Division



Environmental Lands

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Acres Acquired | 26,774 |
| Land Acquisition Cost | \$111,738,738 |
| Acquisition Partners | \$79,413,108 |
| 18 of 32 properties | |
| County's Land Acquisition Cost | \$31,505,591 |
| Savings % to county from partners | 72% |
| Cost of Land Sold to State | \$1,788,965 |

Source: Polk County Parks and Natural Resources Division



Public Works (September 2022)

| | |
|--|------------|
| Tons of Solid Waste disposed at Landfill* | 737,664.61 |
| Annual Collections per Household (three weekly)* | 52 |
| Households Serviced* | 151,147 |
| Annual Curbside Waste Pickups* | 7,859,644 |
| Cost per Pick-Up* | \$1.00 |
| Street Miles-Center Lane** | 2,713 |
| Traffic Signs** | 89,291 |
| Sidewalk Miles** | 474 |

Sources: *Polk County Waste & Recycling Division

**Polk County Roads & Drainage Division



Number of Libraries

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Library Materials | 713,236 |
| Annual Circulation | 2,015,025 |
| Registered Borrowers | 485,497 |

Source: Polk County Library Cooperative



Polk County Trends & Issues

It has been nearly 15 years since Polk County has seen new construction fueled by a robust economy like we have in the past two years. Through good fiscal management, the county is well-positioned to manage this growth, create a positive atmosphere for economic development and provide services to our residents that ensures a comfortable quality of life in Polk.

Data released by the U.S. Census and the Central Florida Development Council shows that Polk County is now the fastest growing county in

Florida and fifth in the United States, averaging about 65 people a day moving into the county.

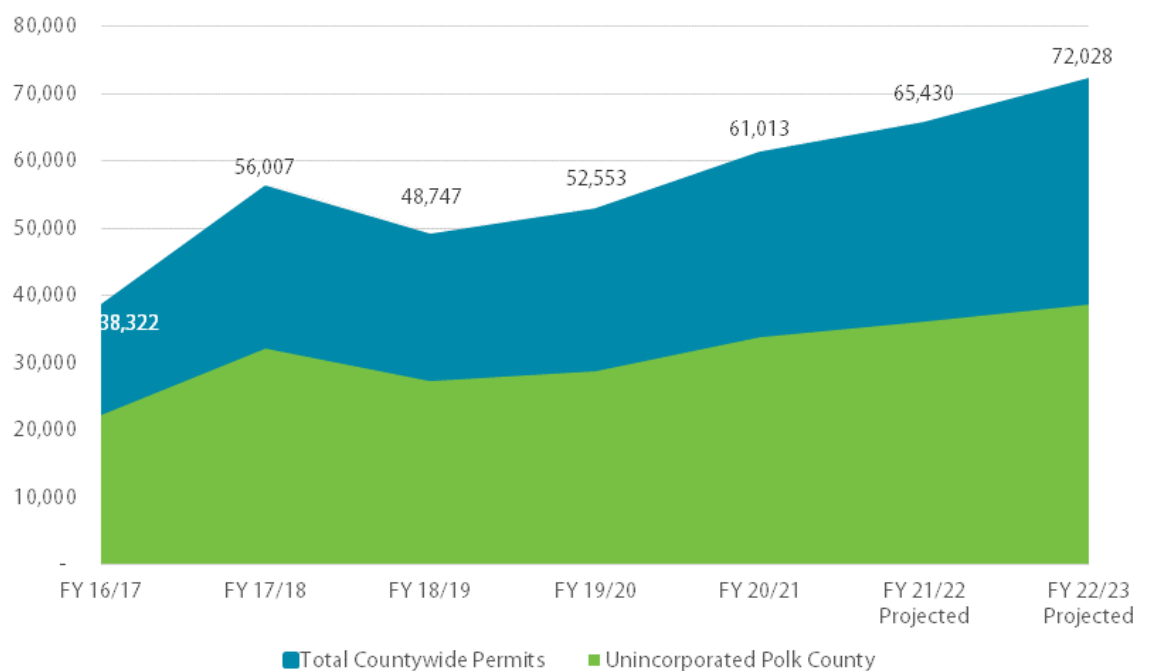
Polk County's overall economic health remained strong through the pandemic, but consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to threaten Florida's vibrant economy. Inflation is approaching levels not seen in nearly 40 years, high fuel prices, ongoing supply chain disruptions and labor shortages are affecting the county employee's workloads and delaying capital project milestones and completion.

Seven Key Trends

Seven key trends exist which represent challenges and opportunities for Polk County Government. These trends drive more specific challenges. Understanding these trends is critical for developing effective strategies. Trends include:

- *Urbanization and Population Growth*
- *Revenue Growth*
- *Limitations on Revenue Options*
- *Cost of Operating Government*
- *Rising Costs to the Public*
- *Competition for a Skilled Workforce, and*
- *Leadership Transitions*

Total Building Permits Issued Countywide



Polk County's Work Force

3RD

FASTEST ANNUAL
JOB GROWTH RATE
IN THE STATE

IN TRADE, TRANSPORTATION AND
UTILITIES INDUSTRIES, FLORIDA DEO



3.7% UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Top Employers

| Employer | Employees |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Publix Super Markets | 13,701 |
| Polk County Public Schools | 13,363 |
| Lakeland Regional Health | 5,888 |
| Walmart | 5,523 |
| Amazon.com | 5,000 |
| Geico | 3,700 |
| City of Lakeland | 2,800 |
| BayCare | 2,614 |
| Advent Health | 2,466 |
| Board of County Commissioners | 2,251 |
| Watson Clinic | 1,857 |
| Polk County Sheriff's Office | 1,774 |
| Legoland | 1,500+ |
| CEMEX | 1,500 |
| Mosaic | 1,450 |
| GC Services | 1,450 |
| Polk State College | 1,200 |

Billions \$70

Countywide Assessed & Taxable Values

\$60

\$50

\$40

\$30

\$20

\$10

\$-

FY 09/10 FY 10/11 FY 11/12 FY 12/13 FY 13/14 FY 14/15 FY 15/16 FY 16/17 FY 17/18 FY 18/19 FY 19/20 FY 20/21 FY 21/22 FY 22/23

Countywide Final Taxable Value Countywide Final Assessed Value

| | Population* | Square Miles** | 2021 Tax Rolls Taxable Values*** | % of Change |
|---------------------|-------------|----------------|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Auburndale | 17,412 | 23.1 | \$1,918,316,501 | 23.59 |
| Bartow | 20,257 | 52.5 | \$980,404,847 | 16.7 |
| Davenport | 10,953 | 4.1 | \$765,144,021 | 40.28 |
| Dundee | 5,616 | 11.8 | \$313,312,919 | 25.67 |
| Eagle Lake | 3,158 | 4.3 | \$163,287,076 | 26.94 |
| Fort Meade | 6,257 | 8.5 | \$167,014,235 | 12.45 |
| Frostproof | 3,273 | 19.1 | \$185,491,518 | 18.24 |
| Haines City | 29,070 | 23.8 | \$2,195,834,902 | 29.36 |
| Highland Park | 264 | 1.1 | \$15,459,676 | 8.52 |
| Hillcrest Heights | 312 | 8.7 | \$19,043,940 | 11.69 |
| Lake Alfred | 6,507 | 13.1 | \$310,605,138 | 20.57 |
| Lake Hamilton | 1,599 | 4.1 | \$115,581,429 | 18.69 |
| Lake Wales | 16,759 | 21.0 | \$1,062,074,168 | 19.61 |
| Lakeland | 115,685 | 75.0 | \$9,471,770,632 | 14.92 |
| Mulberry | 4,192 | 7.1 | \$288,344,154 | 15.69 |
| Polk City | 2,943 | 5.1 | \$228,790,462 | 17.43 |
| Winter Haven | 52,710 | 41.0 | \$3,701,496,184 | 21.16 |
| Unincorporated Polk | 456,553 | 1,687.7 | \$30,188,002,130 | 16.78 |

* Population Source: 2021 US Census

** Polk County Information Technology Division

*** 2022 Polk Property Appraiser Tax Rolls