



**CENTRAL FLORIDA**  
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Polk County's  
Economic Development  
Partnership

# FLORIDA *within* REACH

2016-17 ANNUAL REPORT



### REGIONAL Access



9

**MILLION  
PEOPLE**

WITHIN 100 MILES



3

**DEEPWATER  
SEAPORTS**

WITHIN 75 MILES



2

**INTERNATIONAL  
AIRPORTS**

WITHIN 60 MILES

**OUR MISSION**

Building *partnerships*  
and *pathways* for  
economic development  
in Polk County.

**STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS**

 Promote Polk County as a  
Premier Business Destination

 Advocate for Key  
Business Issues

 Facilitate  
Global Trade

 Foster Collaborative  
Partnerships

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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*Madrid Engineering Group*

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**SECRETARY/TREASURER**

Major General  
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*USAF (Retired) • Two Blue Aces*

**COUNTY MANAGER DESIGNEE**

Bud Strang  
*Six/Ten, LLC*



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COUNTY PARTNER



SOUTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

INNOVATOR



CONNECTOR



Bartow Regional Medical Center  
Winter Haven Hospital



Century Residential LLC



J. Everett Allen & Sons



Lakeland Regional Health



MUNICIPAL PARTNERS



# Development Project Highlights



**BEVOLUTION** | A leading manufacturer of shelf-stable and frozen food service beverage products, Bevolution chose Frostproof for the expansion of their production plant and office after shuttering their New York facility. Favorable income taxes and property taxes, lower utility rates and lower water and wastewater fees played a significant role in their decision to expand in Frostproof over expanding in Chicago, Illinois.

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Partners on the project include Enterprise Florida, the Polk County BOCC and the City of Frostproof.

**PUBLIX** | Publix considered adding a new commissary operation in Alabama and Georgia but ultimately chose Lakeland for the new addition. The commissary will manufacture grab-and-go items such as sandwiches, leafy salads and wraps, and meal sub kits that will be distributed to retail stores. Publix currently produces these items in-store and feels that by producing the items at the commissary, the retailers will be able to spend more time with their customers.

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Partners on the project include Enterprise Florida, the Polk County BOCC, the City of Lakeland and the Lakeland Economic Development Council.

**GEICO** | Geico, owned by Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway, had considered relocating to another undisclosed county but the Polk County Board of County Commissioners and the City of Lakeland offered incentives for them to stay and expand in Lakeland. With the addition of the new jobs, Geico will employ nearly 3,300 people making them the third largest employer in the Lakeland area behind Publix Super Markets Inc. and Lakeland Regional Health Medical Center.

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Partners on the project include Enterprise Florida, the Polk County BOCC, the City of Lakeland and the Lakeland Economic Development Council.

COMPANY	INDUSTRY	LOCATION	NEW JOBS	JOBS RETAINED	CAPEX
ArrMaz	Manufacturing	Mulberry	25	-	\$6.4M
Aldi, Inc.	Distribution	Haines City	205	220	\$22M
Bevolution Group	Manufacturing	Frostproof	13	-	\$8.2M
Empire Company	Distribution	Lakeland	5	-	\$6M
Publix Super Markets	Manufacturing	Lakeland	194	-	\$10.3M
Geico	Business Services	Lakeland	500	-	\$11.9M
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>942</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>\$64.8M</b>

**ARRMAZ** | To support their focus on global growth through innovation, ArrMaz is expanding its research development and engineering capabilities with a new R&D center at their Mulberry facility. ArrMaz is a manufacturer of specialty chemicals for the mining, fertilizer, phosphate, industrial ammonium nitrate, asphalt, and oil and gas industries. Mulberry is home to ArrMaz's international headquarters and a place they can showcase the new research and development center to customers who come in from all over the world. ArrMaz has customers on all continents and in more than 70 countries.

Partners include the Polk County BOCC and Enterprise Florida.

**ALDI** | When Aldi holds a job fair at its Haines City distribution facility, they have to hire policemen to direct traffic as cars are lined up for miles. Named to Forbes' list of America's Best Large Employers, Aldi offers industry-leading compensation and generous benefits packages to its workers. One of the two 100,000 s.f. warehouses will be for cold storage items while the other will house general products for distribution to Aldi retailers throughout the state of Florida. Aldi was seriously considering the City of Jacksonville for its expansion but ultimately chose to build the warehouses on 4.6 acres that they own in Haines City.

Partners include the Polk County BOCC, the City of Haines City and the Haines City Economic Development Council.

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

Economic Impact



**NOTABLE SUCCESS**

Bevolution Group

Favorable income taxes and property taxes played a significant role in their decision to expand in Frostproof.

**OUTREACH**

# Business Development Events and Missions

Area Development  
Consultant Forum  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Area Development  
Consultant Forum  
New Orleans, LA

Canadian  
Conference Expo  
Fort Lauderdale, FL

Colombia Expo  
Miami, FL

Colombia  
Exploration Visit  
Bogota', Dosquebradas  
and Pereira, Colombia

E-Commerce and Home  
Delivery Show  
Atlanta, GA

Enterprise Florida  
Consultant Mission  
New York, NY

Enterprise Florida  
Consultant Mission  
Atlanta, GA

Enterprise Florida  
TPC Sawgrass Consultant  
Event  
Ponte Vedra, FL

Industrial Asset  
Management Council's  
Spring Forum  
Tampa, FL

MRO America's  
Orlando, FL

Paris Air Show  
Paris, France

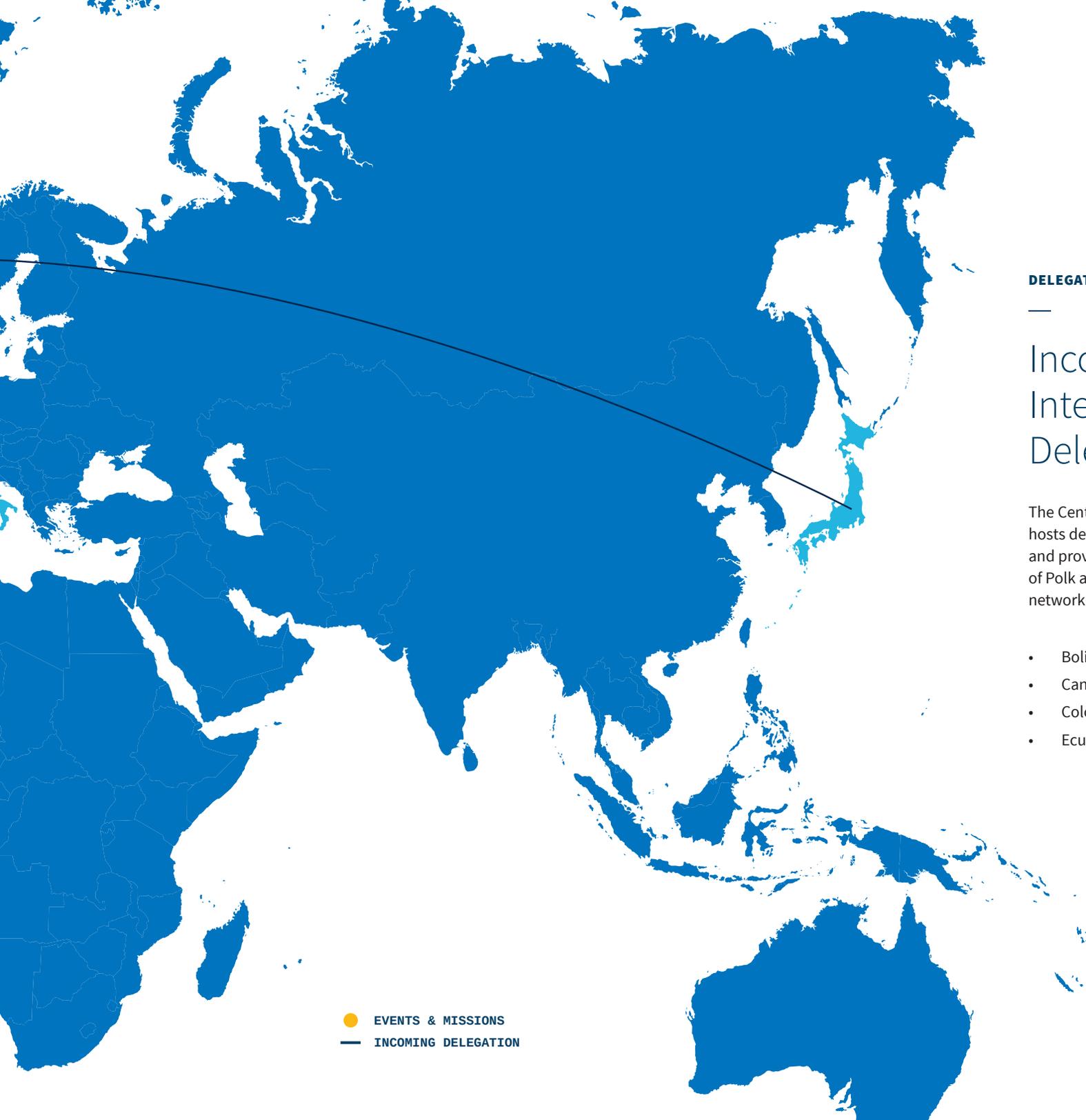
Select USA  
Washington, DC

Shared Services and  
Outsourcing Week  
Orlando, FL

Sun n' Fun Fly-In  
Lakeland, FL

Team Tampa Bay  
Consultant Mission  
New York, NY





## DELEGATIONS

# Incoming International Delegations

The Central Florida Development Council hosts delegations from around the world and provides visitors with an overview of Polk and regional assets as well as networking opportunities.

- Bolivia
- Canada
- Colombia
- Ecuador
- Italy
- Japan
- Mexico
- Spain

● EVENTS & MISSIONS  
— INCOMING DELEGATION

# — Launching Our Future



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

—  
The future is *exciting and bright*, and I can't think of a region more poised to embrace that future.

Captain Winston Scott

The Central Florida Development Council held its 2017 Annual Meeting in October at the newly opened Polk County event venue, Haus 820 in Lakeland. During the meeting, attendees heard about Polk County's business growth over the last year, as well as an inspiring and entertaining address from keynote speaker, Captain Winston Scott.

CFDC was pleased to again honor businesses with the prestigious George Harris, Jr. Economic Development Award to those who have helped shape the future of Polk County through expansion or job growth activities. The awards, Success in Small Business and Success in Large

Business, honors companies for their positive impacts on the economy and their promotion of free enterprise, community service, economic stability and quality growth.

The nominees for the Success in Small Business category included DSM Technology Consultants for technology projects in Central Florida; Six/Ten, LLC for Winter Haven development projects; and The Lunz Group for the architectural design of the NOAA facility. The winner, Six/Ten, LLC, was presented the award by Miss Florida. Bud Strang, CEO of Six/Ten, offered his gratitude stating, "It is truly an honor to receive this award. Polk County and Winter Haven are

our passions at Six/Ten. Reinvesting in the place we call home is important to us.”

For the Success in the Large Business category, there were six nominees: Aldi for their facility expansion in Haines City, Arr-Maz for their facility expansion in Mulberry, Crown Linen for their facility expansion in Haines City, Florida Southern College for their campus expansion in Lakeland, Florida’s Natural for being a leader in the citrus industry, and Tucker Paving for construction projects in Central Florida.

Out of this impressive list, Florida Southern College took home the honor. “This award is especially meaningful to us because of our connection to Mr. Harris, Jr.,” said Robert H. Tate, vice president of External Relations. “On behalf of all of us at Florida Southern College, thank you.”

Keynote speaker, Captain Winston Scott, a former NASA astronaut, spoke about the great possibilities ahead for Central Florida. After his service with NASA and the Navy, he served as associate dean at FAMU-FSU College of Engineering, and executive director of the Florida Space Authority. Currently, Captain Scott works as Senior Vice President for External Relations and



Economic Development at the Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne.

“Polk County is an incredible place with diverse industries, and where the quality of life is good,” said Capt. Scott. “I urge all of you here tonight to collaborate on the possibilities,” Capt. Scott said. “The future is exciting and bright, and I can’t think of a region more poised to embrace that future.”

It was an exciting evening for all those in attendance, as the fruitful works of the Central Florida business community were celebrated while hearing the stirring words of Capt. Scott. CFDC President and CEO Sean Malott said, “In the next year, we will remain committed to recruiting new businesses to the region and helping current Polk County businesses expand.”

#### AWARDS CEREMONY

Polk County and Winter Haven are our passions at Six/Ten. *Reinvesting in the place we call home* is important to us.

Bud Strang  
CEO OF SIX/TEN

#### HONORS

## George Harris, Jr. Economic Development Awards



#### SUCCESS IN SMALL BUSINESS

Six/Ten, LLC

#### NOMINEES

DSM Technology Consultants  
The Lunz Group



#### SUCCESS IN LARGE BUSINESS

Florida Southern College

#### NOMINEES

Aldi  
Arr-Maz  
Crown Linen  
Florida’s Natural  
Tucker Paving

**INSIGHTS**

# Polk County at a Glance

**PREPARED BY**

Jim Farrell PH.D., CFA

*Florida Southern College*

Polk County saw significant private sector employment growth from Q1 2013 through Q1 2017, adding more than 19,000 jobs (11.6 percent growth) during the period. This is particularly strong when compared to the national growth of 8.8 percent. The difference in growth between the nation and county accounts for more than 4,700 jobs locally. In addition, Polk County’s labor force was 293,853 in 2017 an increase of 5,968 employees, up 2.1 percent over the prior year.

Employment conditions in Polk County continue to improve with the unemployment rate at 4.3 percent as of November and employment up or even in each of the industry sectors year-over-year as of September.

The largest gains have come from Professional and Business Services, which is needed given the county has yet to fully recover the jobs lost during the recession from this sector and they are typically higher paying. Mining, logging and construction continue to trend upward as construction returns to the county. Additional gains can be found within trade, transportation and utilities, leisure/hospitality and financial activities.

## POPULATION

Polk County continues to outpace the state and nation in population growth since the last census, growing 10.6 percent as compared to 9.6 percent and 4.7 percent for the state and nation, respectively. Within the cities, growth is being led by Auburndale (15.1 percent) and Winter Haven (15.0 percent). The steady population growth should continue to support our economic growth through demand for housing and job creation. The uneven growth around the county has the population proportions shifting from Lakeland and into the cities in Eastern Polk County.

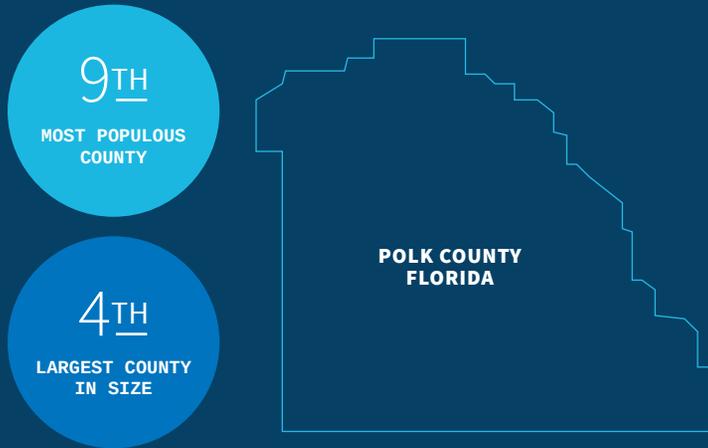
## AGE

The county’s age distribution reflects a larger portion of younger people (under 18) and a larger population of older people (65+) than both the state and the nation. This negatively impacts our economy as it results in a smaller population of working age people. The cities with higher population growth are, not surprisingly, the cities that also have smaller proportions of 65+ populations. This may be caused by a combination of internal growth (more young families having children) and external growth (attractive characteristics to newcomers).

## HOUSEHOLDS

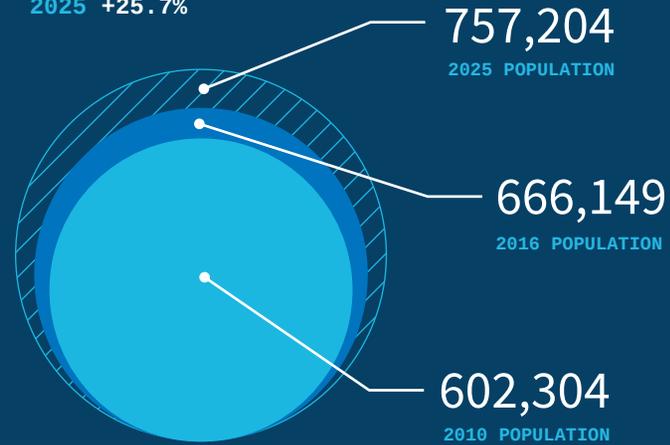
Polk County continues to have higher than average homeownership and lower than average costs for both homeowners and renters. The lower property values during the survey years (2011 – 2015) are reflective of a housing market that had yet to fully recover and disproportionately impacted Polk County. There is a wide range in average home values across the county with a low of \$67,800 in Fort Meade to a high of \$118,700 in Auburndale.

Polk’s collaborative efforts to improve educational attainment, to strengthen the skills of the local labor force along with efforts to target above-median wage jobs should continue to help improve the County’s economic condition.



**ESTIMATED POPULATION GROWTH**

2016 +10.6%  
2025 +25.7%



**FASTEST GROWING INDUSTRIES**

	Professional & Business Services	+5.9%
	Financial Services	+3.1%
	Trade, Transportation & Utilities	+2.0%

**UNEMPLOYMENT & WAGES**

<b>UNEMPLOYMENT RATE</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>
<b>AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGE</b>	<b>\$39,963</b>	<b>+13.6%</b>

**POPULATION PROPORTION BY CITY**

	2010	2016
Auburndale	2.24%	2.33%
Bartow	2.87%	2.93%
Fort Meade	0.94%	0.91%
Haines City	3.42%	3.52%
Lake Alfred	0.83%	0.87%
Lakeland	16.18%	15.98%
Lake Wales	2.36%	2.38%
Winter Haven	5.63%	5.85%
Other	65.53%	65.24%



**CENTRAL FLORIDA**  
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Polk County's  
Economic Development  
Partnership

📍 5908 Hillside Heights Drive  
Lakeland, FL 33812

☎️ (863) 937-4430  
🌐 [cfdc.org](http://cfdc.org)