

# USER'S GUIDE

This document is the final budget for FY 2015-2016 for the period beginning October 1, 2015 and ending September 30, 2016. The intent of this document is to provide the public with concise and readable information about St. Lucie County. It contains general information, analysis of revenues and expenditures, as well as a budget history.

## **SUMMARIES/ANALYSIS**

This section contains key information from subsequent sections in which the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has extracted and then presented in an understandable format. Staff recommends this section as an excellent starting point for review of the budget because it includes a discussion of the revenue sources. Summaries of the total county budget, each constitutional officer, and of the court and legal system are available to provide ease in understanding the budget. This section contains charts, graphs and spreadsheets showing the history of property values, tax millage rates, and the resulting revenues. This section also includes a personnel history report that shows the percent (%) change in personnel for each year.

## **BUDGET BY FUND**

This section begins with a listing of the numerous funds that make up the county budget along with fund definitions. This section categorizes each fund by type and briefly describes the sources of revenue and types of expenditures found in each fund. This list is followed by a three-year history of each fund showing the budget versus actual amounts. The history also shows the amount budgeted in the new fiscal year and the percent change from the previous year's budget. A section showing the estimated changes in fund balance is also included. The remaining portion of this section is comprised of charts and graphs of selected funds that reveal the amount of budgeted revenue sources and budgeted expenditures.

## **DEPARTMENTAL SUMMARIES**

This section contains budgetary information as it applies to each department. Each department includes an organizational chart, a four-year budget summary of each division located within the department along with the division mission, function, and goals. The divisions also list key indicators, which are used to measure how well each goal is being accomplished.

## **CAPITAL BUDGET**

The heart of this section is the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan. This plan is designed to address the foreseeable capital improvement

needs of St. Lucie County. This section also provides information on the planning and approval process involved in the development of the Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.

The Five-Year Capital Improvement Plans may include capital improvements affecting major infrastructure facilities such as roads, bridges, beach restoration / preservation, environmental lands, drainage and stormwater projects, port and airport facilities, parks and recreational facilities, libraries, general governmental buildings and correctional facilities, utilities and museums.

Each plan identifies the sources of funding and provides a detailed listing of projects and the estimated costs associated with each project.

### **DEBT SERVICE**

This section contains important information regarding outstanding debt issued by the County or, in the case of Community Development District Bonds and Industrial Revenue Bonds, in which the County has a vested interest. Some of the debt, such as the Port Interest & Sinking General Obligation Ad Valorem Bond, was issued as a result of a voter-approved referendum. Others were issued after the Board of County Commissioners approved the funding of improvements through debt financing. Still, the Board, on behalf of County utilities or a third party, issued other debts. The Office of Management and Budget carefully monitors the amount of debt the County issues in order to preserve its creditworthiness.

### **APPENDICES**

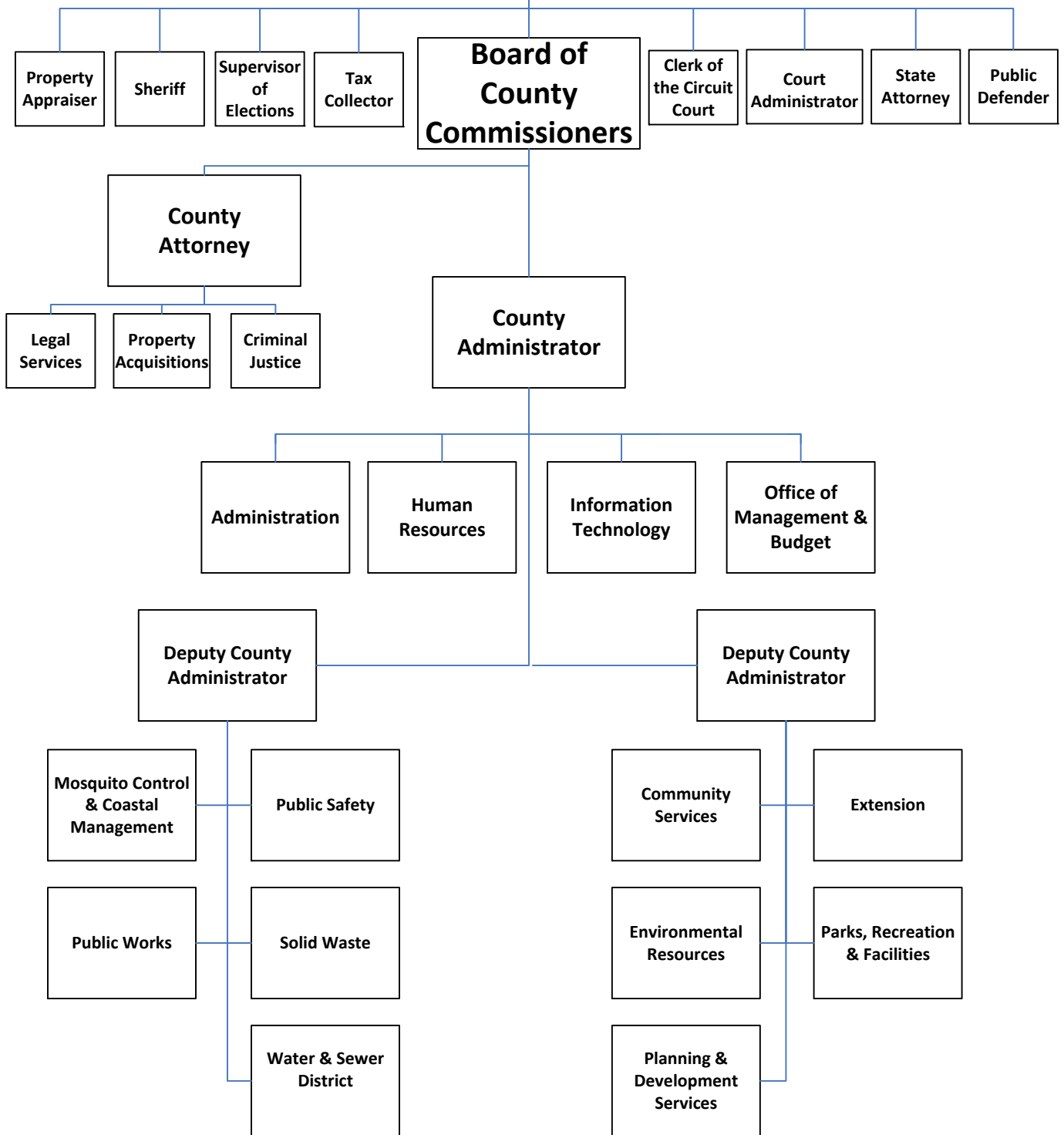
The Appendices Section includes a glossary for the definitions of terms and a section on acronyms.

For any additional information, contact our office:

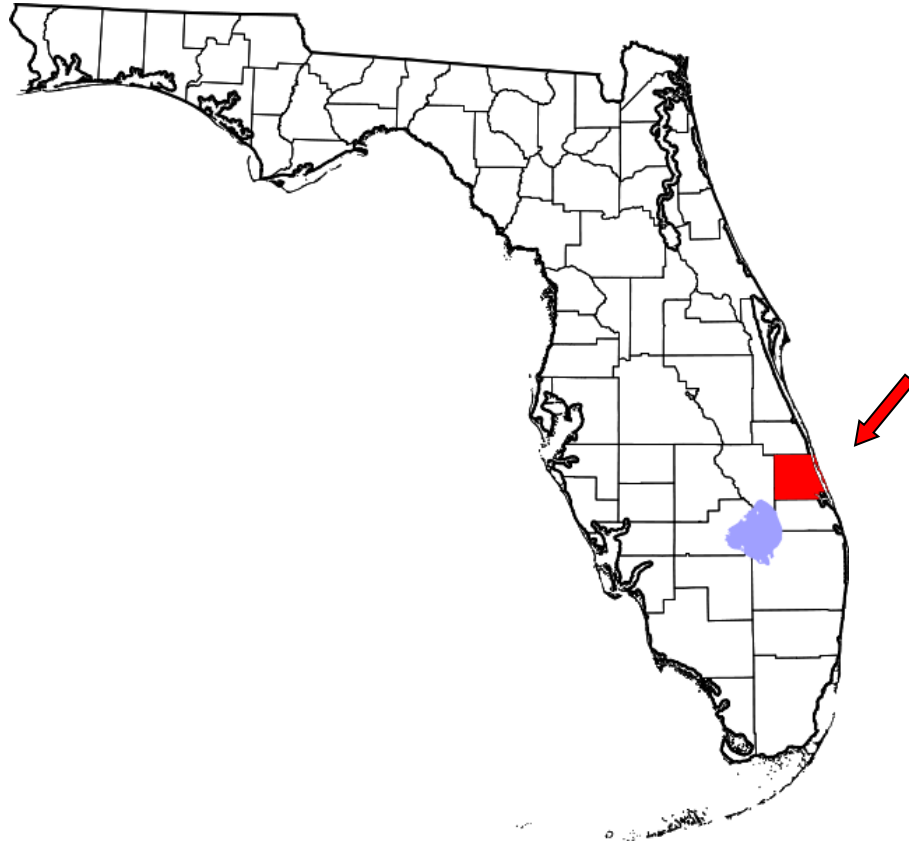
**ST. LUCIE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**  
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET  
2300 Virginia Avenue,  
Fort Pierce, FL 34982-5652  
Telephone (772) 462-1670 • Fax (772) 462-2117

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**ST. LUCIE COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
CITIZENS OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FLORIDA**



# ST. LUCIE COUNTY PROFILE



## HISTORY OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY

Archaeological research indicates that Florida had been inhabited for thousands of years before any European settlements. Of the many indigenous peoples, the largest known were the Ais, the Apalachee, the Calusa, the Timucua, and the Tocobago tribes. Along the east coast of Florida, from Cape Canaveral in the north to as far south as Fort Pierce, was the area of the Ais Indian settlement. Their lands extended westward to the St. Johns River, and encompassed the Indian River. There was little recorded about the Ais by the early explorers and mission priests. From the early 1500's to the late 1800's, the area was settled by Spanish explorers, Seminoles (Creek Indians from Alabama and Georgia), runaway slaves, and shipwrecked sailors.

According to historians, it is believed that the name "St. Lucie" was first given to this area by the Spanish when they began construction of a fort at the Jupiter Inlet in 1565. The garrison (a permanent military installation post) was established on December 13<sup>th</sup>, in honor of the feast day of the Roman Catholic Saint Lucia. Lucy's Latin name *Lucia* shares a root (*luc-*) with the Latin word for light, *lux*. "In 'Lucy' is said, the way of light". Prior to her execution, her eyes were gouged out, and thus she became the patron saint of those who are blind. She was born in Syracuse, Sicily, Italy, and executed in 304 AD for being a Christian.

## **HISTORY OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY – continued**

The area now known as the Town of St. Lucie Village has been inhabited for centuries, in part, because of its proximity to the Indian River Inlet, a natural inlet that was eventually closed north of the current Fort Pierce Inlet. The sixteenth century Spanish explorer Pedro Menendez, who founded St. Augustine, came through the inlet in 1565 while sailing to Cuba, and established a garrison among the Ais, in the Indian River area. Old Spanish maps identify the area between what is now known as Vero Beach to Stuart as “Santa Lucia”, which is where a Spanish colony was established circa 1567. Shortly after their first contact with the Ais, a war broke out with the Spanish, but peace was concluded later by 1570.

‘In 1763, France, Britain, and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris at the end of the French and Indian War. As part of the treaty, France gave up almost all of its land in North America and Spain gave up Florida. During the French and Indian War, Britain had captured Havana, Spain's busiest port. In exchange for Havana, the Spanish traded Florida to Britain, which in turn, Britain then divided Florida into two territories: East Florida and West Florida.’ Also known as the Floridas, the area known as East Florida consisted of entire peninsula and were bordered on the west by the Apalachicola River. The area known as West Florida, consisted of the land between the Mississippi River to the Apalachicola River, which includes parts of modern day Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana.

The Spanish never had a firm hold on Florida, and maintained tenuous control over the region by converting the local tribes, briefly with Jesuits and later with Franciscan friars. The local leaders demonstrated their loyalty to the Spanish by converting to Roman Catholicism and welcoming the Franciscan priests into their villages. The area of Spanish Florida diminished over time with the establishment of English colonies to the north and French colonies to the west. Spain regained the Floridas after Britain's defeat by the American colonies and the subsequent Treaty of Versailles on September 3, 1783.

The modern day Saint Lucie County was known as East Florida in 1810, and then in 1819, the Spanish lost their settlements when the United States effectively took control of East Florida. During 1821, the area was combined with other lands and renamed St. Johns County. In 1832, the U.S. territory of Florida was created by Congress, and during the Second Seminole War (1835-1842), the U.S. Army began setting up military posts throughout the state. In 1837 Col. Benjamin K. Pierce (brother to the future 14th President of the United States) sailed down the Indian River from St. Augustine. A year later, he built a fort out of palmetto trees near an Ais Indian mound, on what is now known as Old Fort Park on Indian River Drive, in Fort Pierce.

In 1840, St. Johns County was split into several counties, causing the St. Lucie area to become part of the newly formed Mosquito County. The Armed Occupation Act of 1842 provided for the settlement of the unsettled part of east Florida. In 1844, segments of Mosquito County were split off. One area became St. Lucia County and the other became Brevard County. On March 3, 1845, the territory of Florida became the 27<sup>th</sup> state of the United States of America. And on January 6, 1855, St. Lucia County was renamed St. Lucie County.

The Florida East Coast Railway's first steam locomotive came to Fort Pierce in 1894, and eventually Henry Flagler took his trains all the way down to Key West, before the onset of World War I. The railroad expansion helped create a population boom for the area, but it also brought in the importation of

## **HISTORY OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY – continued**

pineapples from Cuba. The pineapple imports, along with the frequent freezes and persistent disease to the area's existing pineapple groves, caused the collapse of the region's pineapple trade. Later, citrus and cattle would become the area's agricultural engine.

On July 1, 1905, the County's boundaries changed again, with St. Lucie County acquiring the southern part of Brevard County, which included the City of Fort Pierce. This newly created St. Lucie County included sections of modern day Indian River, Okeechobee, and northern Martin counties. However, there are some historians that believe the county was established on May 24, 1905, but the event was not celebrated until July 1<sup>st</sup>. Portions of land were stripped away over the years, first in 1917, when the western acres were taken away to become Okeechobee County. Then on May 30, 1925, a northern chunk of land was removed to become Indian River County, and Martin County was formed with land from the southern part of St. Lucie and a portion of northern Palm Beach County.

Now, 100 years later, St. Lucie County is approximately 600 square miles with a diverse population that includes two cities and one village: Fort Pierce, Port St. Lucie and St. Lucie Village. With 21 miles of unspoiled beaches, charming neighborhoods, progressive businesses and friendly people; St. Lucie County is truly the crown jewel of the Treasure Coast.

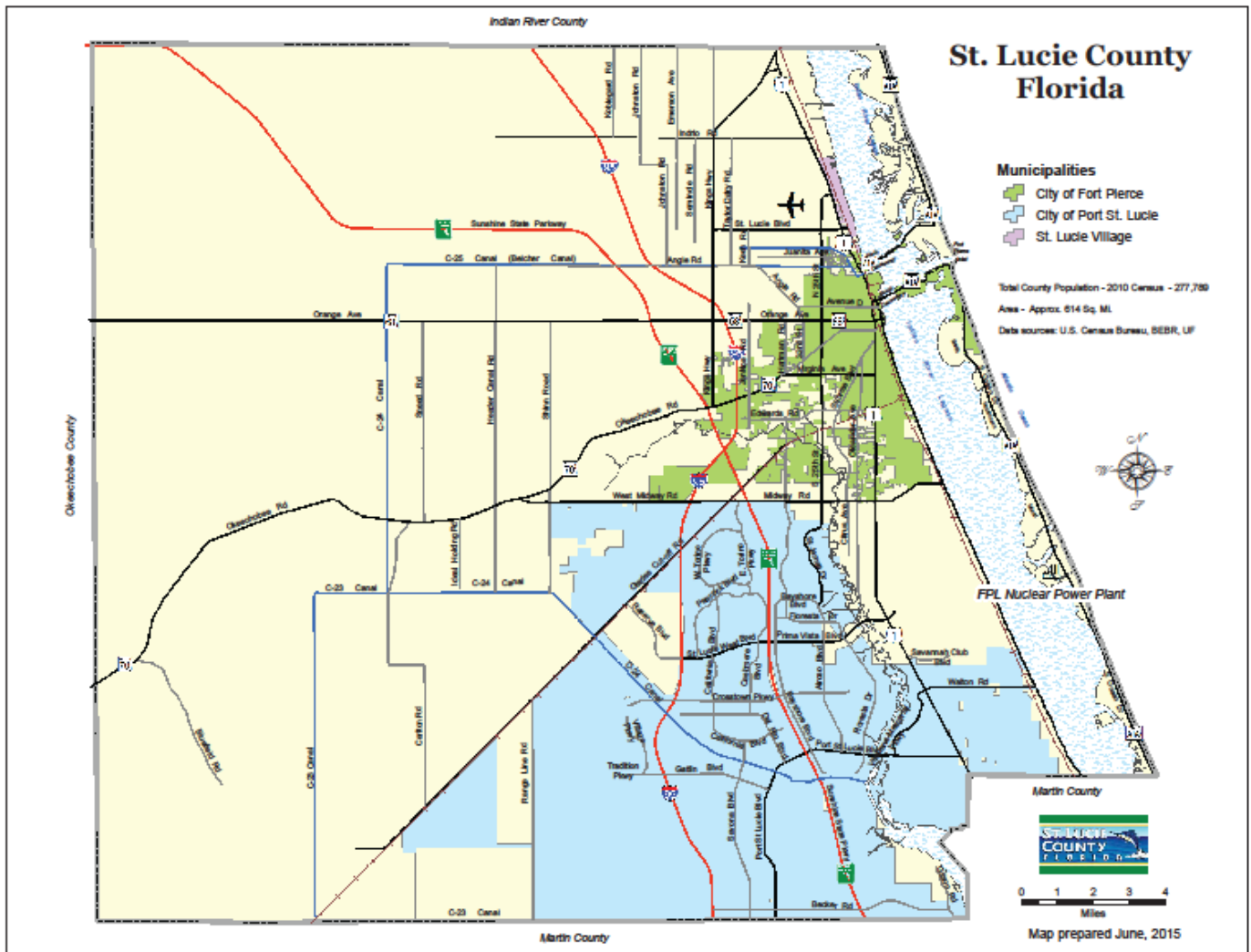
Sources: St. Lucie County website (<http://www.stlucieco.gov/media/history.htm>)  
St. Lucie County Historical Society (<http://www.stluciehistoricalsociety.org/>)  
St. Lucie County Historical Society (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flstluci/slchistory.htm>)  
Florida Counties Map ([http://www.floridacountiesmap.com/st\\_lucie\\_county.shtml](http://www.floridacountiesmap.com/st_lucie_county.shtml))  
Ancient Native Heritage of The Ancient Ones (<http://www.ancientnative.org/ais.php>)  
Spanish Contacts with the Ais (Indian River) Country (<http://www.treasurelore.com/florida/ais.htm>)  
Orlando: A Visual History: Mosquito County 1842 (<http://www.cfhf.net/maps/1839.htm>)  
Wikipedia website ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State\\_of\\_Florida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_of_Florida))  
Wikipedia website ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint\\_Lucie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Lucie))  
Wikipedia website ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian\\_River\\_County,\\_Florida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_River_County,_Florida))  
Exploring Florida: Social Studies Resources for Students and Teachers (<http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/lessons/trnsfer/trnsfer1.htm>)  
Maps Etc: Brevard County Maps (<http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/maps/galleries/County/stlucia/index.php>)

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

St. Lucie County is located on the eastern edge of the south-central coast of Florida in the heart of the Treasure Coast region. It is bounded on the north by Indian River County, the west by Okeechobee County, the south by Martin County and the east by the beautiful Atlantic Ocean. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the County has a total area of 688 square miles (1,782 km<sup>2</sup>), of which, 572 square miles (1,483 km<sup>2</sup>) of it is land and 116 square miles (299 km<sup>2</sup>) of water that merges with the Atlantic Ocean. The total area is 16.80% water. Between two cities and their major tourist attractions, the City of Fort Pierce is located approximately 60 miles north of West Palm Beach, and 100 miles southeast of the City of Orlando.

Source: Wikipedia ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St.\\_Lucie\\_County](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Lucie_County))

# MAP OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY'S MUNICIPALITIES



## **INCORPORATED MUNICIPALITIES**

St. Lucie County consists of three municipalities: the City of Fort Pierce (which is also the location of the County Seat), the City of Port St. Lucie, and St. Lucie Village.

### **Fort Pierce**

The City of Fort Pierce was named after Lt. Col. Benjamin K. Pierce, who established a U.S. Army fort there during the second Seminole War in 1838. But it would take more than 60 years for the area to officially become the City of Fort Pierce.

On Dec. 29, 1900, a notice was posted calling all registered voters to assemble at Davis Hall, Fort Pierce, Brevard County, Florida, on February 2, A.D. 1901, for the purpose of organizing a municipal government. On that date, 54 of the 66 voters who resided in the proposed village voted to incorporate. They elected A.C. Dittmar as mayor, appointed D.L. Alderman, A.Y.W. Hogg, P.P. Cobb, L.L. Carlton and F.M. Tyler as the City's five aldermen. H.I. Klopp was elected as city clerk and D.S. Carlton as marshal. Those 66 residents have now grown to more than 40,000.

Fort Pierce covers 21 square miles and serves as the county seat. The city's early economies were water transportation and fishing, along with the production of pineapple (a crop that was eventually replaced with citrus). Fort Pierce remains the commercial center of St. Lucie County, although it is smaller in population and land area than Port St. Lucie. The City of Fort Pierce is governed by a five-member city commission and employs a professional manager for the management of daily activities.

### **Port St. Lucie**

Its history may not be as old as Fort Pierce's, but the story behind Port St. Lucie is just as interesting.

In 1958, General Development Corporation purchased the River Park property as well as an adjoining 40,000 acres. A subsidiary of Mackle Co., General Development Corporation (GDC) had a budget of \$50 million to develop a new community on the North Fork of the St. Lucie River.

The population boom was on. Full-page ads drew the interest of retirees from the Northeast, offering them 80 x 125-foot lots for \$10 down and \$10 a month. Homes sold for as little as \$9,000. Soon ranchers began selling pasture land that they had purchased for just \$6 an acre for as much as \$225 per acre. At its sales office on U.S. 1 and Prima Vista, GDC sold as many as 300 lots a day.

The City of Port St. Lucie is the largest city both geographically and in terms of population in St. Lucie County. It covers 120 square miles. It was incorporated in 1961 as a residential community and was originally developed in large measure as a retirement community by the GDC. The City of Port St. Lucie is governed by a five-member city council and also employs a professional manager for the management of daily activities.



## **INCORPORATED MUNICIPALITIES - continued**

### **Town of St. Lucie Village**

The community's founding dates back to 1849, when a Seminole attack prompted the U.S. Government to build Fort Capron to protect skittish settlers. The homestead of Major James Paine, who settled there after completing his tour of duty at Fort Capron, his forty acres were along the west bank of the Indian River about one mile south of the fort. Major Paine's family joined him in 1857 and became neighbors with the Bell family around 1872, when Alexander Bell brought his family to the Village and homesteaded from Taylor Creek south. Over the next 20 years the area became known "Sportsman's Paradise", attracted visiting northerners and tourists, and enabled Paine to rent rooms to visitors for \$3.00 per day.

In the 1890's, Mathew Quay, a Republican Senator from Pennsylvania, built a large winter retreat near the Paine home, to which he added a private railroad siding to accommodate his friends' personal railroad cars. Ten of his political allies enjoyed the area so much they formed the St. Lucie Club and built a clubhouse in 1902. This became a center for national Republican politics.

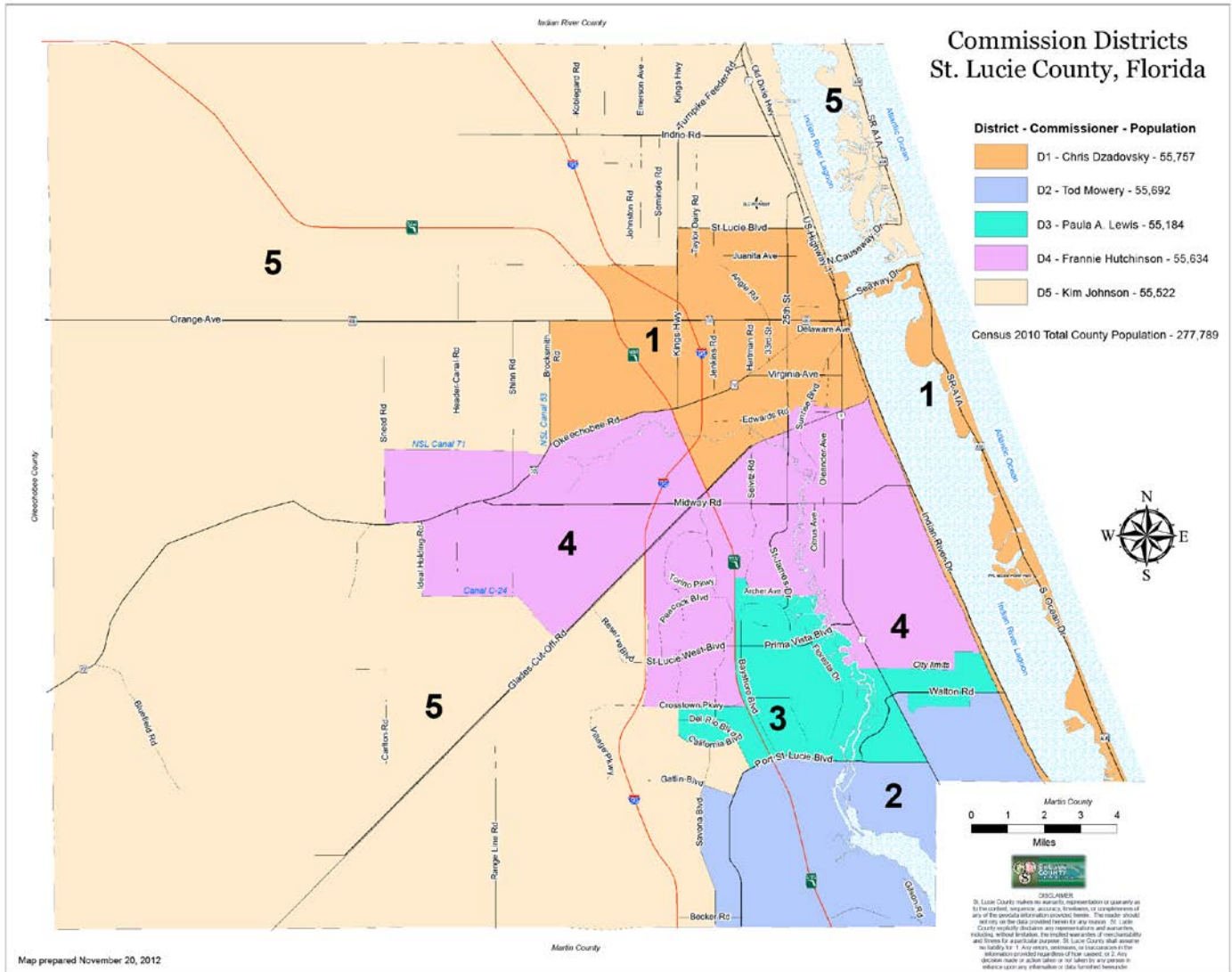
The Village has 36 historic structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a place where generations of some families have resided for a century or more. The roads remain narrow from the days when horse-and-buggy was the mode of transportation. Some of the Village's early economies were the production of pineapples and fishing the Indian River Lagoon for green turtles, oysters, large snook, goliath grouper, redfish, sawfish, mullet, and other various types of native fish.

The Town of St. Lucie Village is a small enclave covering 1.5 square miles of territory in North St. Lucie County located on the west side of the Indian River Lagoon. The village is about 4 miles north of Fort Pierce and 11 miles south of Vero Beach, and was incorporated in 1961. The village is governed by a five-member Board of Aldermen, and the mayor serves as the chief executive officer of the Town.

#### Sources:

- St. Lucie County website (<http://www.stlucieco.gov/media/history.htm>)
- Florida Counties Map ([http://www.floridacountiesmap.com/st\\_lucie\\_county.shtml](http://www.floridacountiesmap.com/st_lucie_county.shtml))
- St. Lucie County Historical Society (<http://www.stluciehistoricalsociety.org/>)
- St. Lucie County Historical Society (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flstluci/slchistory.htm>)
- Wikipedia ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St.\\_Lucie,\\_Florida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Lucie,_Florida))
- Florida Commission on Ethics (<http://www.ethics.state.fl.us/opinions/94/CEO%2094-008.htm>)
- Indian River Magazine ([http://indianrivermag.com/LIVE/index.php?module=pagemaster&PAGE\\_user\\_op=view\\_page&PAGE\\_id=174](http://indianrivermag.com/LIVE/index.php?module=pagemaster&PAGE_user_op=view_page&PAGE_id=174))
- St. Johns River Water Management District and the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program: Indian River Lagoon: An Introduction to a Natural Treasure ([http://sjr.state.fl.us/itsyourlagoon/pdfs/IRL\\_Natural\\_Treasure\\_book.pdf](http://sjr.state.fl.us/itsyourlagoon/pdfs/IRL_Natural_Treasure_book.pdf))

# MAP OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY COMMISSION DISTRICTS



## GOVERNMENT

St. Lucie County is a non-charter county governed by a Board of County Commissioners consisting of five-members. The commissioners are elected at large to serve a period of four years. Elections are staggered to provide continuity between boards. A professional administrator, who is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners, manages the County on a daily basis.

Some key facts about St. Lucie County are:

**POPULATION**

St. Lucie County’s population in 2014 is estimated to be 291,028.

2010 is estimated by the census at 277,789, an increase of 4,925 (+1.8%) persons from 2009’s population census estimate of 272,864. The population is largely concentrated in the eastern portion of the County within 5-10 miles of the Atlantic Coast. The current population has increased by 47.3% over the 2000 census population of 192,695 and a considerable 89.0% increase since 1990’s census population of 150,171.

For 2014, the County’s median age was 43.0 and the County was ethnically comprised of 59.5% white, 20.2% black, 17.6% Hispanic, 1.9% Asian, 0.6% American Indian and Alaskan Natives, and 0.1% Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders.

The County’s entire population of increased by 1.5% from 286,832 in 2013 to 291,028 in 2014. When looking at the 2014 population concentrations and the (+/- %) shifts in population throughout the County from 2013 to 2014, there is: 15.0% of the population in Fort Pierce (+1.22%); 59.8% in Port St. Lucie (+1.81%); 0.2% in St. Lucie Village (+0.83%); and 25.0% in Unincorporated (+0.79%).

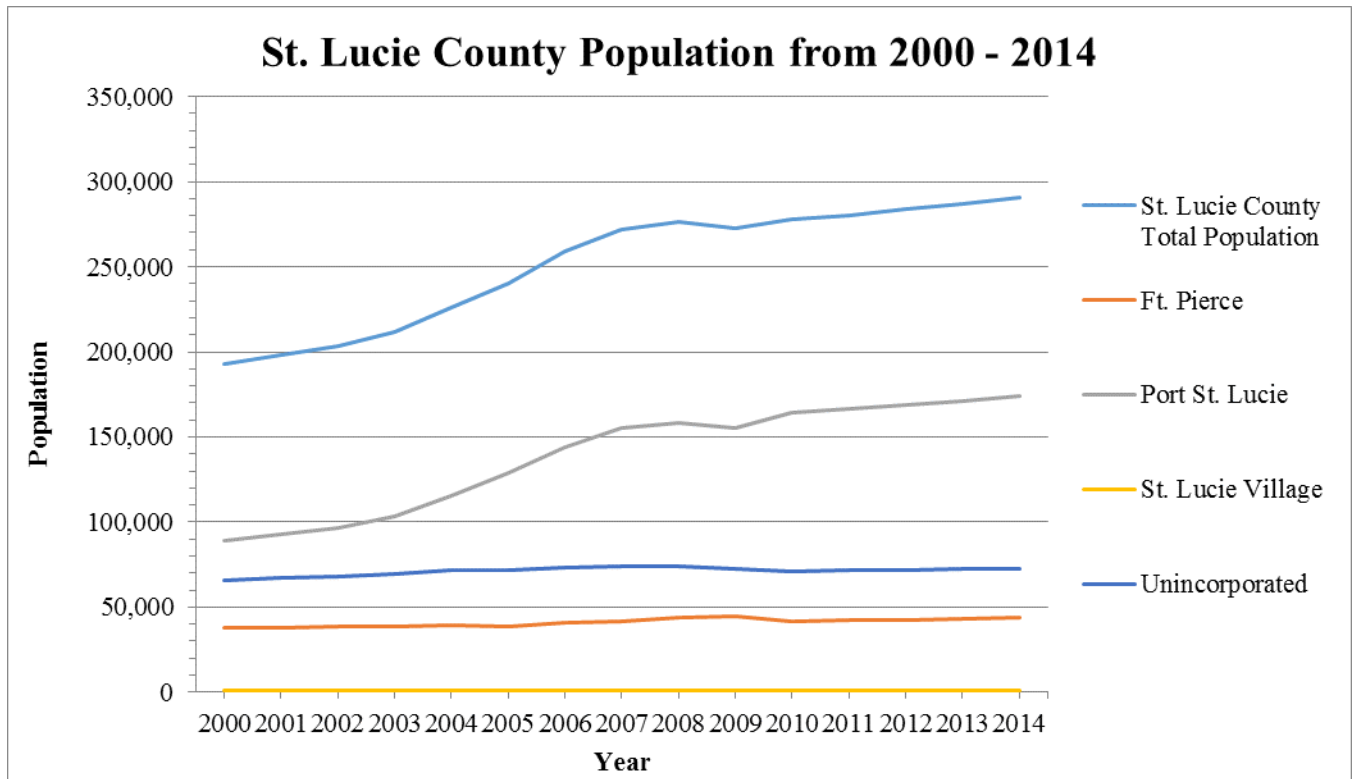
Since the year 2000, St. Lucie County has experienced incremental growth; and comparing 2014 to 2000, there has been a net growth rate of +51.0%.

<b>St. Lucie County</b>		
<b>April 1st of each Year</b>	<b>Total Estimated Population</b>	<b>(%) Growth Rate</b>
2000	192,695	
2001	198,253	2.9%
2002	203,360	2.6%
2003	211,898	4.2%
2004	226,216	6.8%
2005	240,039	6.1%
2006	259,315	8.0%
2007	271,961	4.9%
2008	276,585	1.7%
2009	272,864	-1.3%
2010	277,789	1.8%
2011	280,379	0.9%
2012	283,920	1.3%
2013	286,832	1.0%
2014	291,028	1.5%

Source:

United States Department of Commerce – U.S. Census Bureau – State and County Quick Facts  
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/12/12111.html>

The following graph illustrates the population growth of St. Lucie County along with the component populations of the County's three municipalities and unincorporated region.



Sources:

United States Department of Commerce – U.S. Census Bureau – State and County Quick Facts  
<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/12/12111.html>

United States Department of Commerce – U.S. Census Bureau – Population Estimates: City and Town Totals: Vintage 2014: All Incorporated Places and Minor Civil Divisions Datasets: County Resident Population Estimates: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014  
<http://www.census.gov/popest/data/cities/totals/2014/SUB-EST2014.html>

United States Department of Commerce – U.S. Census Bureau – Population Estimates: Population and Housing Unit Estimates: 2014 County Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin: County Characteristics: Vintage 2014: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States, States, and Counties: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014: July 1, 2014  
<http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=bkmk>

## **EMPLOYMENT**

Services, tourism, agriculture, construction and light manufacturing are the principal industries within the County. While St. Lucie County is poised to take advantage of its location, climate and abundant workforce, the growth in employment opportunities has not kept pace with the growth in population between 2000 and 2004. From 2005 to 2010, the St. Lucie County had been greatly affected by the economic downturn with rising unemployment rates. To counter, the County initiated an aggressive campaign to attract targeted businesses. From 2011 to 2013, the economic downturn is starting to show signs of a rebound as the County's unemployment rate declined.

In 2013, as the economic conditions started to turn around, the County's unemployment rate decreased by 1.50%, from 11.2% in 2012 down to 9.7%, and was matched by the State's unemployment rate experiencing a decrease by 1.60% from 8.8% down to 7.2%. The County's total population was 286,832, of which, there were 115,180 employed individuals (40.2% of the County population) and 12,443 individuals were unemployed (4.3% of the County's population).

In 2014, as the economic conditions continued to improve from the turn around, with the County's unemployment rate decreasing by 1.70%, from 9.7% in 2013 down to 8.0%, and was matched by the State's unemployment rate experiencing a decrease by 0.90% from 7.2% down to 6.3%. The County's total population was 291,028, of which, there were 120,555 employed individuals (41.4% of the County population) and 10,457 individuals were unemployed (3.5% of the County's population).

### **Labor Force Summary: Yearly Average of Unemployed Individuals in St. Lucie County, the State of Florida, and the United States from 2000 through 2014:**

<b>Year</b>	<b>St. Lucie</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Unempl. Rate (%)</b>	<b>Florida</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Unempl. Rate (%)</b>	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Unempl. Rate (%)</b>
2000	5,017	n/a	5.7%	300,284	n/a	3.8%	5,692,000	n/a	4.0%
2001	5,663	12.9%	6.2%	373,344	24.3%	4.7%	6,801,000	19.5%	4.7%
2002	6,632	17.1%	7.1%	462,419	23.9%	5.7%	8,378,000	23.2%	5.8%
2003	6,471	-2.4%	6.6%	433,253	-6.3%	5.3%	8,774,000	4.7%	6.0%
2004	6,427	-0.7%	6.2%	390,627	-9.8%	4.7%	8,149,000	-7.1%	5.5%
2005	5,294	-17.6%	4.7%	329,751	-15.6%	3.8%	7,591,000	-6.8%	5.1%
2006	4,831	-8.7%	4.1%	296,256	-10.2%	3.3%	7,001,000	-7.8%	4.6%
2007	6,878	42.4%	5.5%	366,749	23.80%	4.0%	7,078,000	1.1%	4.6%
2008	10,765	56.5%	8.7%	579,175	57.9%	6.3%	8,924,000	26.1%	5.8%
2009	16,320	51.6%	13.2%	944,608	63.1%	10.4%	14,265,000	59.8%	9.3%
2010	17,494	7.2%	14.0%	1,036,461	9.7%	11.3%	14,825,000	3.9%	9.6%
2011	16,122	-7.8%	12.9%	957,799	-7.6%	10.3%	13,747,000	-7.3%	8.9%
2012	14,267	-11.5%	11.2%	819,678	-14.4%	8.8%	12,506,000	-9.0%	8.1%
2013	12,443	-12.8%	9.7%	682,703	-16.7%	7.2%	11,460,000	-8.4%	7.4%
2014	10,457	-16.0%	8.0%	603,000	-11.7%	6.3%	9,617,000	-16.1%	6.2%

Source:

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (<http://www.floridajobs.org/labor-market-information/data-center/statistical-programs/local-area-unemployment-statistics>)

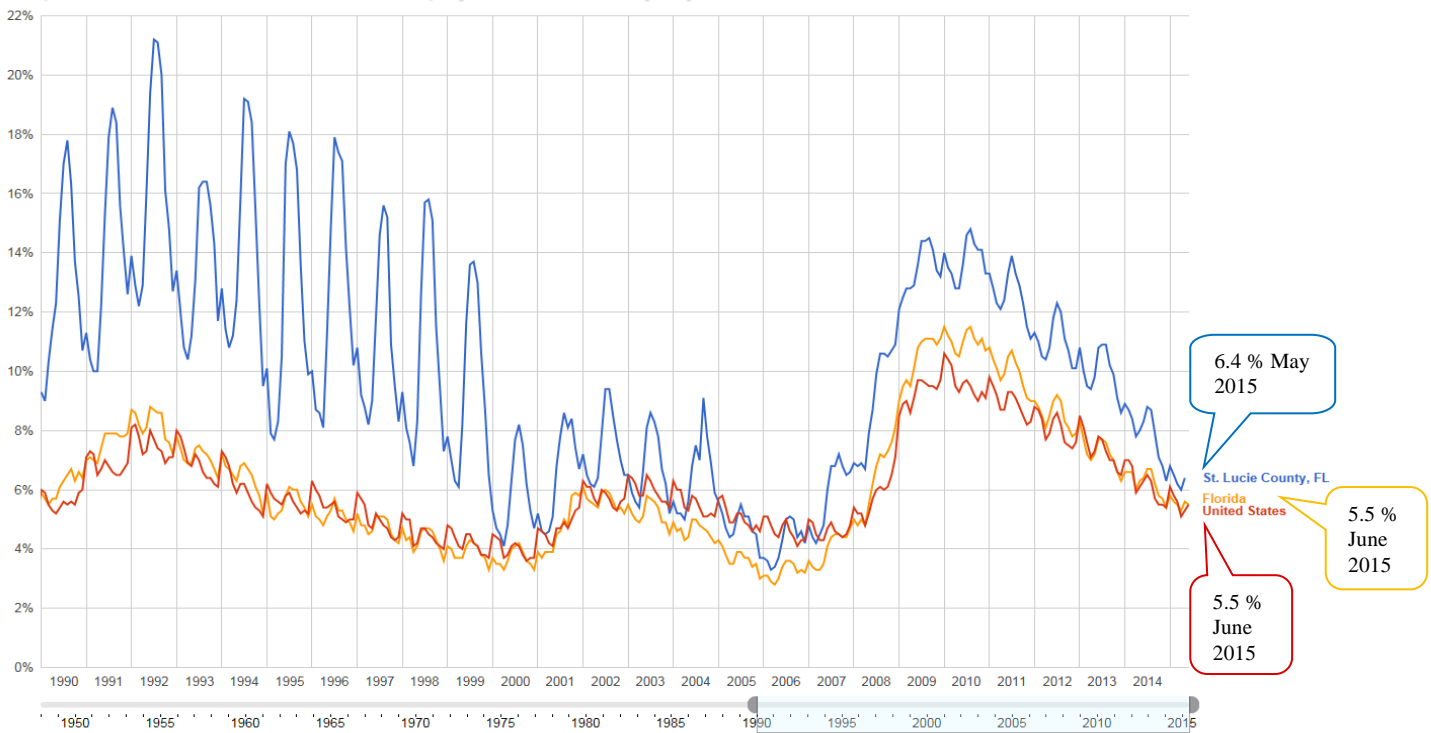


Sources:

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (<http://www.floridajobs.org/labor-market-information/data-center/statistical-programs/local-area-unemployment-statistics>)

### Unemployment rate

The percent of the labor force that is unemployed, not seasonally adjusted.



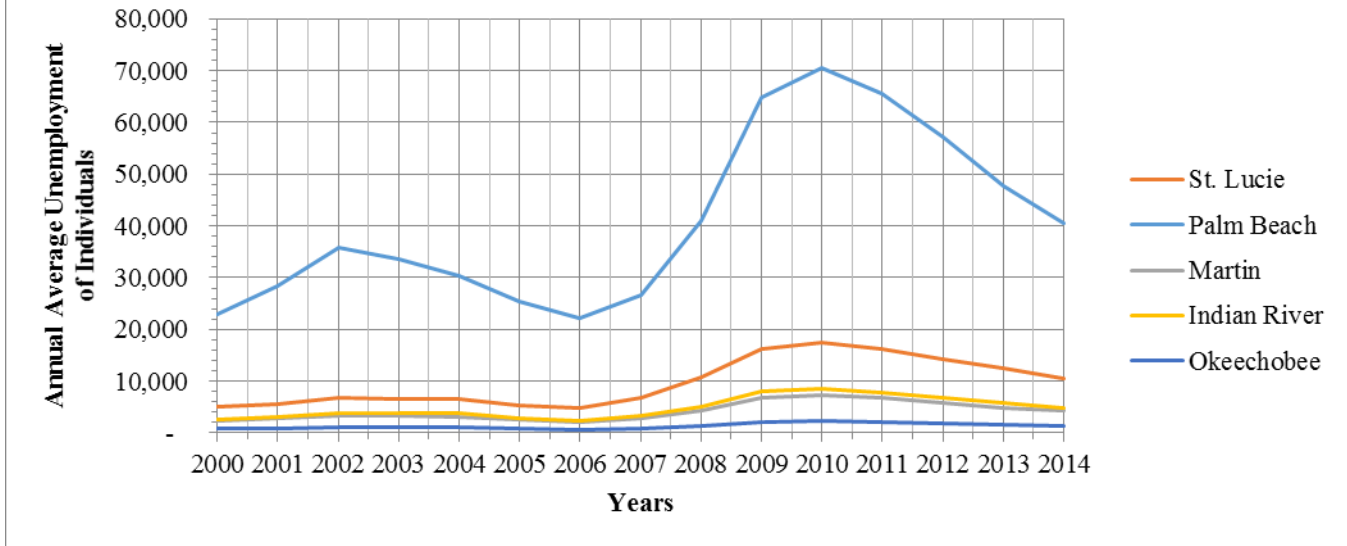
Data from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Last updated: Jul 27, 2015  
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Source:

Google Public Data

[http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=z1ebjgk2654c1\\_#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nslm=h&met\\_y=unemployment\\_rate&dim\\_y=seasonality:U&scale\\_y=lin&ind\\_y=false&rdim=country&idim=state:ST1200000000000&idim=county:CN1211100000000&idim=country:US&ifdim=country&tstart=619329600000&tend=1408248000000&hl=en\\_US&dl=en\\_US&ind=false](http://www.google.com/publicdata/explore?ds=z1ebjgk2654c1_#!ctype=l&strail=false&bcs=d&nslm=h&met_y=unemployment_rate&dim_y=seasonality:U&scale_y=lin&ind_y=false&rdim=country&idim=state:ST1200000000000&idim=county:CN1211100000000&idim=country:US&ifdim=country&tstart=619329600000&tend=1408248000000&hl=en_US&dl=en_US&ind=false)

## South East Florida Regional Labor Force Annual Unemployment



Source:

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (<http://www.floridajobs.org/labor-market-information/data-center/statistical-programs/local-area-unemployment-statistics>)

### The Major Industry Areas of Employment in the State of Florida Are:

Industry Descriptions	2012		2013		2014		2014 vs. 2012	
	Labor Force	% Labor Force	Labor Force	% Labor Force	Labor Force	% Labor Force	# Change in Growth	% Change in Growth
Agriculture, natural resources, & mining	173,961	1.7%	171,452	1.6%	181,390	1.7%	8,126	4.7%
Construction	487,130	4.9%	529,900	5.0%	568,848	5.2%	65,802	13.1%
Education and health services	1,328,910	13.3%	1,375,985	13.0%	1,412,365	12.9%	55,636	4.1%
Financial activities	1,151,273	11.5%	1,303,174	12.3%	1,339,734	12.3%	62,461	4.9%
Government	1,180,843	11.8%	1,162,725	11.0%	1,157,888	10.6%	(6,874)	-0.6%
Information	166,508	1.7%	169,850	1.6%	175,274	1.6%	6,057	3.6%
Leisure and hospitality	1,116,624	11.2%	1,210,192	11.5%	1,258,589	11.5%	92,211	7.9%
Manufacturing	340,267	3.4%	358,104	3.4%	372,681	3.4%	22,734	6.5%
Other Services	688,443	6.9%	714,375	6.8%	747,125	6.8%	47,798	6.8%
Professional and business services	1,581,576	15.8%	1,655,312	15.7%	1,729,946	15.9%	119,511	7.4%
Retail trade	1,115,158	11.1%	1,178,335	11.2%	1,222,447	11.2%	72,233	6.3%
Trade, transportation, and utilities	331,003	3.3%	362,029	3.4%	373,378	3.4%	21,720	6.2%
Wholesale trade	347,007	3.5%	364,649	3.5%	371,665	3.4%	12,288	3.4%
<b>Total Employment</b>	<b>10,331,627</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10,556,082</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10,911,330</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>579,703</b>	<b>5.6%</b>

Source:

US Department of Commerce - Bureau of Economic Analysis - Total Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by NAICS Industry (<http://www.bea.gov/iTable/iTable.cfm?ReqID=70&step=1>)

## COST OF LIVING

	St. Lucie County		Palm Beach County	Broward County	Miami-Dade County	Suffolk County	Cook County	San Diego County	U.S. Average
	Port St. Lucie	Fort Pierce	West Palm Beach	Fort Lauderdale	Miami	Boston	Chicago	San Diego	
<b>October 2014 Cost of Living</b>									
Overall	93	81	99	118	119	161	103	164	100.0
Grocery	102.2	102.2	108.4	111.3	107.6	116.5	103.7	112.1	100.0
Health	103	103	108	110	111	127	104	112	100.0
Housing	73	36	82	141	144	240	97	278	100.0
Miscellaneous	101	101	107	105	102	136	105	107	100.0
Transportation	103	103	109	110	112	108	112	113	100.0
Utilities	97	97	100	98	101	129	106	110	100.0
<b>Housing</b>									
Median Home Age	14	37	29	44	46	73	67	37	37
Median Home Cost	\$123,800	\$ 61,400	\$ 139,400	\$ 240,500	\$245,200	\$407,600	\$165,700	\$ 472,200	\$ 170,100
Property Tax Rates	\$ 15.54	\$ 15.54	\$ 13.58	\$ 13.35	\$ 13.47	\$ 8.74	\$ 21.50	\$ 8.03	\$ 12.07
Home Owned (%)	63.36%	33.47%	40.02%	42.54%	27.22%	31.24%	39.64%	44.44%	57.34%
Housing Vacant (%)	16.45%	29.61%	23.65%	22.40%	19.59%	8.76%	13.96%	8.01%	12.47%
Homes Rented (%)	18.19%	36.92%	36.33%	35.06%	53.19%	60.00%	46.40%	47.55%	30.19%
<b>Health</b>									
Air Quality (100 = best)	93.3	93.9	65.7	69.7	55.5	91.2	17.6	59.1	93.9
Water Quality (100 = best)	55	55	30	50	50	1	31	74	55
Physicians Per Capita	112	112	285	257	299	1,007	369	288	261
<b>Environment</b>									
Temperature - high / low	90 / 55	90 / 53.1	90 / 56.8	90 / 57.8	90 / 59.5	84 / 18.9	83 / 18.4	75 / 48	86.5 / 20.5
Rain - average annual (in.)	57.9"	53.6"	61"	63"	59.7"	45.3"	35.9"	10.2"	36.5"
Precipitation Days	134	129	132	128	131	120	124	42	100
Sunny Days	238	234	238	246	248	200	189	266	205
Comfort Index	27	26	28	28	30	51	47	45	44
UV Index	6.7	6.7	6.3	6.7	7.2	3.4	3.6	5.9	4.3
Elevation ft.	10	18	17	9	7	60	593	264	1,443

Source:  
 Sperling's Best Places (<http://www.bestplaces.net/find/>)



## **FINANCIAL HEALTH**

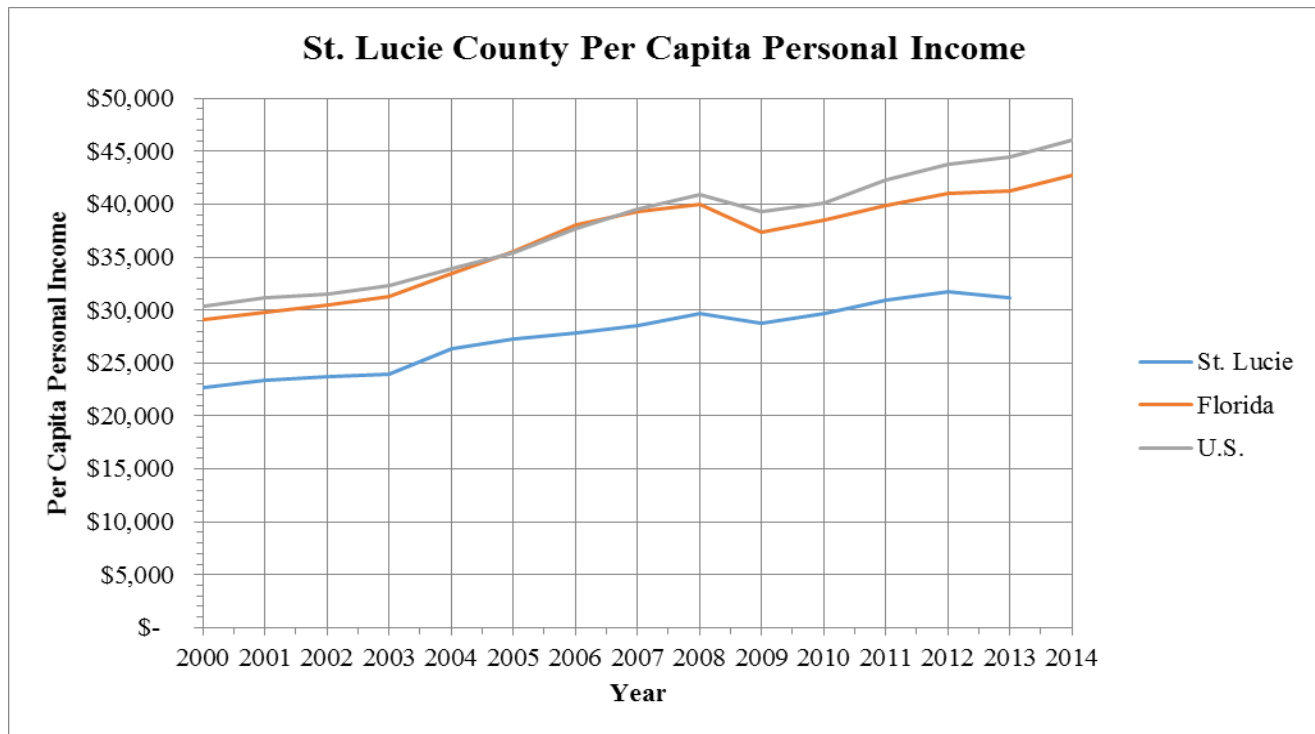
The Per Capita Personal Income from 2000 to 2014:

<b>Year</b>	<b>St. Lucie</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Florida</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>U.S.</b>	<b>% Change</b>
2000	\$ 22,645		\$ 29,079		\$ 30,319	
2001	\$ 23,405	3.4%	\$ 29,804	2.5%	\$ 31,157	2.8%
2002	\$ 23,664	1.1%	\$ 30,462	2.2%	\$ 31,481	1.0%
2003	\$ 23,999	1.4%	\$ 31,241	2.6%	\$ 32,295	2.6%
2004	\$ 26,309	9.6%	\$ 33,463	7.1%	\$ 33,909	5.0%
2005	\$ 27,249	3.6%	\$ 35,489	6.1%	\$ 35,452	4.6%
2006	\$ 27,900	2.4%	\$ 37,996	7.1%	\$ 37,725	6.4%
2007	\$ 28,568	2.4%	\$ 39,256	3.3%	\$ 39,506	4.7%
2008	\$ 29,691	3.9%	\$ 39,978	1.8%	\$ 40,947	3.6%
2009	\$ 28,792	-3.0%	\$ 37,382	-6.5%	\$ 39,357	-3.9%
2010	\$ 29,694	3.1%	\$ 38,493	3.0%	\$ 40,163	2.0%
2011	\$ 30,979	4.3%	\$ 39,896	3.6%	\$ 42,298	5.3%
2012	\$ 31,742	2.5%	\$ 41,012	2.8%	\$ 43,735	3.4%
2013	\$ 31,182	-1.8%	\$ 41,309	0.7%	\$ 44,438	2.4%
2014	N/A	N/A	\$42,737	3.5%	\$46,049	3.6%

Source:

Bureau of Economic Analysis (<http://www.bea.gov/iTable/iTable.cfm?ReqID=70&step=1&isuri=1&acrnd=5>)

State of New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (<http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/industry/incpov/pci.htm>)



Source:

Bureau of Economic Analysis (<http://www.bea.gov/iTable/iTable.cfm?reqid=70&step=1&isuri=1&acrnd=5>)

State of New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (<http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/industry/incpov/pci.htm>)

## FINANCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Household Income in the past 12 months (estimates in 2014 inflation-adjusted dollars):

Subject	St. Lucie County		State of Florida	
	Owner-occupied housing units	Renter-occupied housing units	Owner-occupied housing units	Renter-occupied housing units
Occupied housing units	80,545	28,226	4,693,821	2,634,225
Less than \$5,000	2.9%	6.4%	2.8%	6.0%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	0.5%	9.7%	2.4%	6.5%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	4.7%	11.6%	4.1%	7.9%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	7.1%	10.1%	4.7%	8.1%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	6.4%	7.14%	5.1%	8.1%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	13.4%	15.5%	10.1%	14.3%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	14.9%	16.7%	14.0%	16.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	23.8%	15.0%	19.4%	16.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,000	10.6%	4.0%	12.8%	7.3%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	10.7%	3.7%	13.8%	5.8%
\$150,000 or more	5.0%	0.4%	10.7%	2.6%
Median house hold income	50,065	29,175	57,358	33,949

Source:

United States Census Bureau: American Fact Finder: Financial Characteristics  
[http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_14\\_1YR\\_S2503&prodType=table](http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_S2503&prodType=table)

## HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Household Income in the past 12 months (estimates in 2014 inflation-adjusted dollars):

	St. Lucie County	State of Florida
Less than \$10,000	7,272	576,996
\$10,000 to \$14,999	7,075	402,879
\$15,000 to \$19,999	8,572	433,066
\$20,000 to \$24,999	7,125	452,545
\$25,000 to \$29,999	6,643	429,241
\$30,000 to \$34,999	8,571	422,766
\$35,000 to \$39,999	5,985	386,862
\$40,000 to \$44,999	5,630	381,870
\$45,000 to \$49,999	5,055	334,796
\$50,000 to \$59,999	11,725	621,055
\$60,000 to \$74,999	11,695	721,883
\$75,000 to \$99,000	9,652	793,770
\$100,000 to \$124,999	6,627	522,453
\$125,000 to \$149,999	3,015	277,082
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1,920	275,212
\$200,000 or more	2,209	295,570
<b>Total</b>	<b>108,771</b>	<b>7,328,046</b>

Source:

United States Census Bureau: American Fact Finder: Financial Characteristics  
[http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_14\\_1YR\\_B19001&prodType=table](http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_B19001&prodType=table)

## **HOUSING**

### **Residential Housing Trends in St. Lucie County:**

	<b>2003 Q1</b>	<b>2004 Q1</b>	<b>2005 Q1</b>	<b>2006 Q1</b>	<b>2007 Q1</b>	<b>2008 Q1</b>
Average Sale Price	\$ 142,500	\$ 176,600	\$ 221,600	\$ 265,100	\$ 224,000	\$ 172,800
# Homes on the Market	1,060	1,663	3,466	6,382	9,014	8,072
# Homes Sold	834	1,206	767	1,071	728	651
# New Homes Built	557	1,113	2,040	1,778	282	103
Average # Days on Market	75	70	59	88	139	135

	<b>2009 Q1</b>	<b>2010 Q1</b>	<b>2011 Q1</b>	<b>2012 Q2</b>	<b>2013 Q1</b>	<b>2014 Q1</b>
Average Sale Price	\$ 118,300	\$ 103,600	\$ 112,000	\$ 110,700	\$ 119,537	\$ 135,586
# Homes on the Market	4,399	3,145	3,291	2,686	1,781	2,179
# Homes Sold	1,037	1,334	955	975	1,193	734
# New Homes Built	41	46	34	44	26	19
Average # Days on Market	112	108	142	102	82	59

Note: Q1 is for first quarter of each year and Q2 is for the second quarter of each year.

Sources:

Regional MLS (<http://www.rmlsfl.com/downloads/Stats.php>)

Team Treasure Coast: Quarterly Market Summary – Q1 2015: Single Family Homes: St. Lucie County  
(<http://teamtreasurecoast.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/q1-2015-rapb-market-stats-st-lucie-county-summary.pdf>)

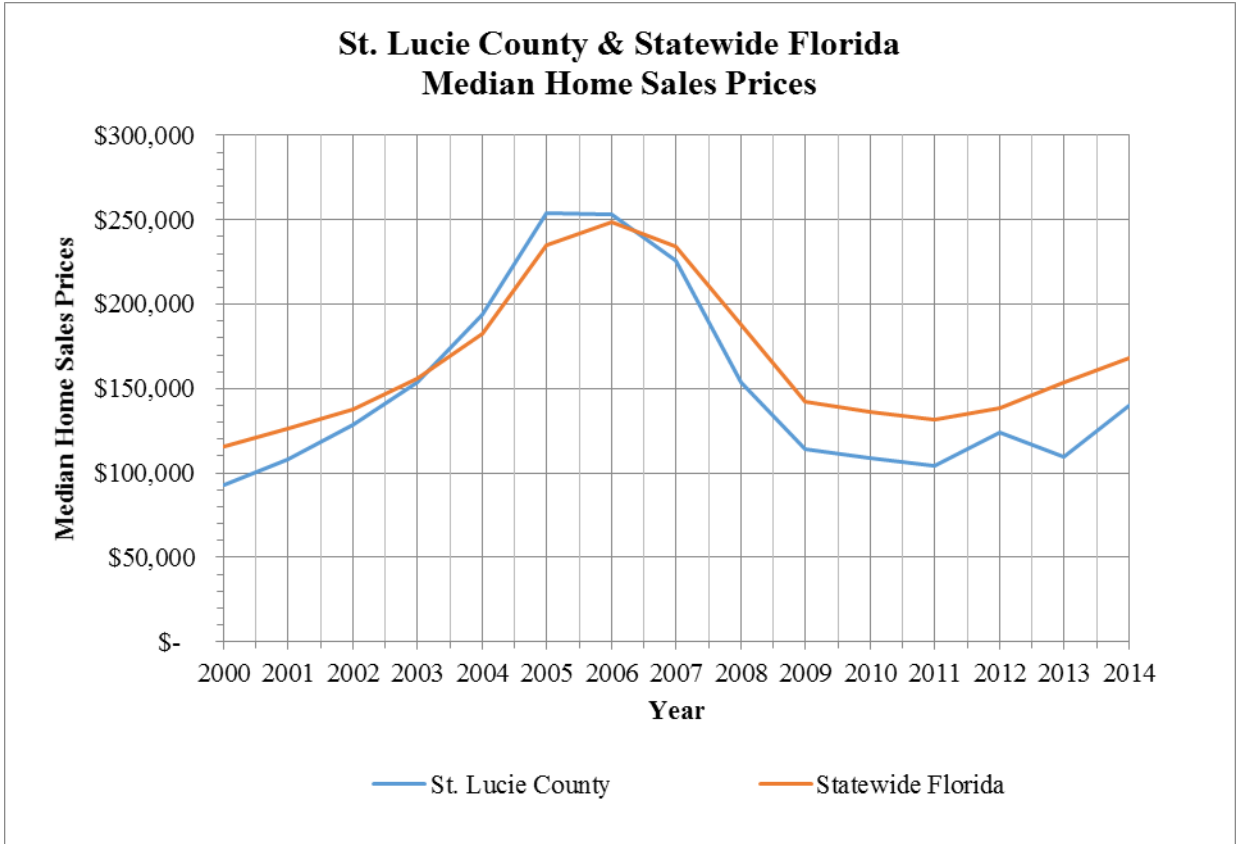
### **The Median Home Sales for St. Lucie County and the State of Florida:**

<b>Year</b>	<b>St. Lucie County</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Statewide Florida</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>St. Lucie County</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>Statewide Florida</b>	<b>% Change</b>
2000	\$ 93,100		\$ 115,900		2008	\$ 153,600	-32.1%	\$ 187,800	-19.8%
2001	\$ 108,200	16.2%	\$ 126,600	9.2%	2009	\$ 114,500	-25.5%	\$ 142,600	-24.1%
2002	\$ 128,300	18.6%	\$ 137,800	8.8%	2010	\$ 108,500	-5.2%	\$ 136,500	-4.3%
2003	\$ 153,900	20.0%	\$ 155,800	13.1%	2011	\$ 104,000	-4.1%	\$ 131,700	-3.5%
2004	\$ 193,900	26.0%	\$ 182,400	17.1%	2012	\$ 124,163	19.4%	\$ 138,600	5.2%
2005	\$ 254,000	31.0%	\$ 235,200	28.9%	2013	\$ 109,900	7.6%	\$ 154,000	14.1%
2006	\$ 253,200	-0.3%	\$ 248,300	5.6%	2014	\$ 139,900	7.7%	\$ 168,000	9.1%
2007	\$ 226,100	-10.7%	\$ 234,300	-5.6%					

Source:

Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County ([http://www.youredc.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/St.-Lucie-County\\_Single-Family-Homes\\_2014-Q1\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.youredc.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/St.-Lucie-County_Single-Family-Homes_2014-Q1_Summary.pdf))

Florida Realtors (<http://media.floridarealtors.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/1Q-2014-Fla-MSA-summary.pdf>)



Source:

Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County ([http://www.youredc.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/St.-Lucie-County\\_Single-Family-Homes\\_2014-Q1\\_Summary.pdf](http://www.youredc.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/St.-Lucie-County_Single-Family-Homes_2014-Q1_Summary.pdf))

Florida Realtors (<http://media.floridarealtors.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/1Q-2014-Fla-MSA-summary.pdf>)

## EDUCATION

The public school system is countywide and is governed by the School Board consisting of five members each elected for a four-year term. The school system is comprised of 19 elementary schools (grades K-5), 12 schools that combine grades K-8, three middle schools (grades 6-8) and six high schools (grades 9-12). Of the total 40 schools in St. Lucie County, there are Charter Schools; and five Magnet Schools, that consist of: three elementary (K-5), one combined (K-8), and one high school.

Higher educational resources within the County include: Indian River State College (IRSC) (formally Indian River Community College), Keiser University, and the extension campuses of Florida Atlantic University, University of Florida, Nova Southeastern University, Barry University, and Strayer University. These prestigious schools enable an individual to obtain two and four-year degrees without having to leave the area.



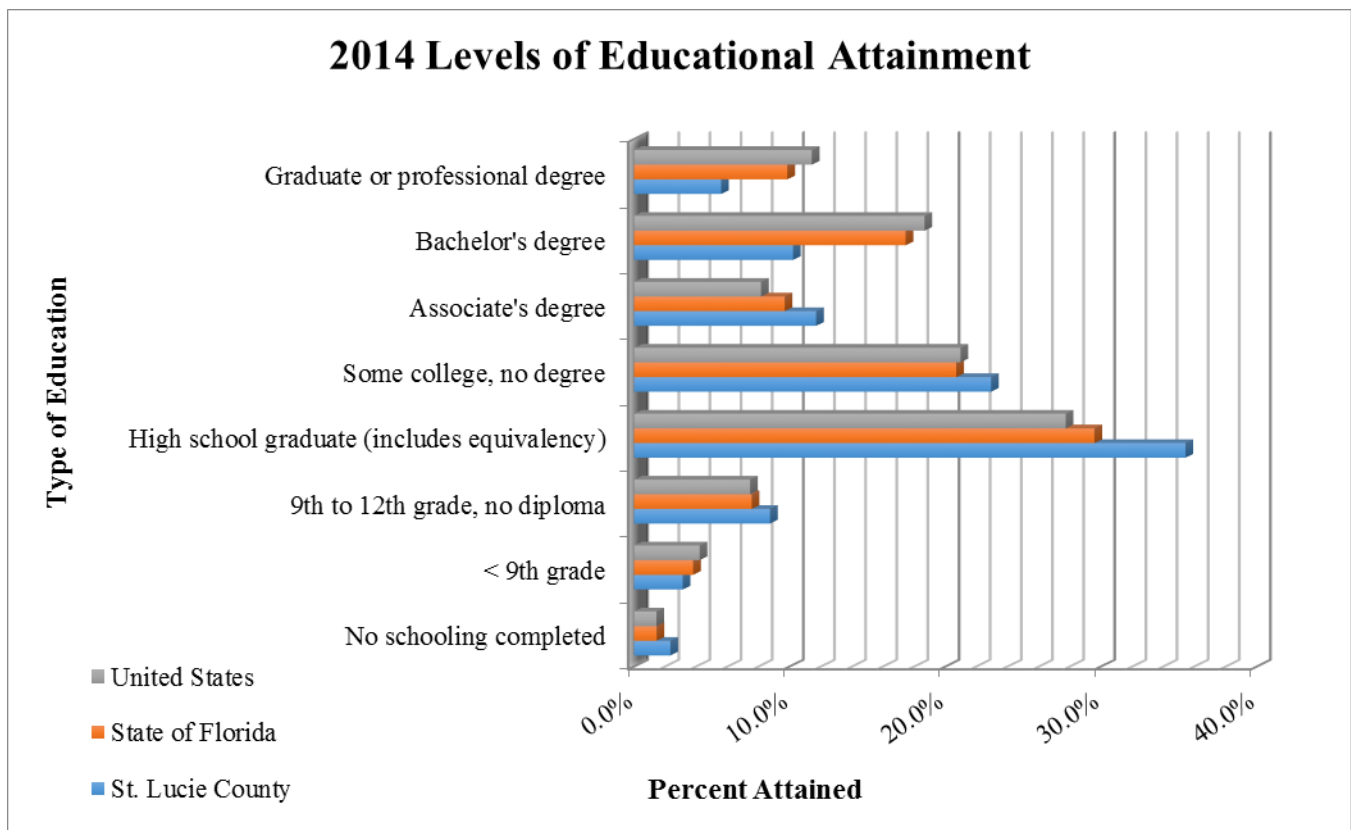
Source:

Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County (<http://www.youredc.com/html/education.asp>)

## Educational Attainment Rates in St. Lucie County, the State of Florida, and the United States

### 2014 Levels of Educational Attainment:

	St. Lucie County		State of Florida		United States	
No schooling completed	4,836	2.3%	202,674	1.4%	3,069,662	1.4%
< 9th grade	6,484	3.1%	532,539	3.8%	8,994,202	4.2%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	18,149	8.7%	1,060,480	7.6%	15,928,170	7.5%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	73,641	35.4%	4,151,300	29.6%	59,249,552	27.7%
Some college, no degree	47,672	22.9%	2,905,454	20.7%	44,799,481	21.0%
Associate's degree	24,313	11.7%	1,358,245	9.7%	17,429,531	8.2%
Bachelor's degree	21,220	10.2%	2,448,663	17.4%	39,864,014	18.7%
Graduate or professional degree	11,621	5.6%	1,381,841	9.8%	24,391,012	11.4%
<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	<b>207,936</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>14,041,196</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>213,725,624</b>	<b>100%</b>



Sources:

US Census Bureau - Educational Attainment - Population 25 Years and Over - 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates ([http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_14\\_1YR\\_B15003&prodType=table](http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_B15003&prodType=table))

## **QUALITY OF LIFE:**

### ***Points of Interest:***

- Nature Preserves – Ft. Pierce & Port St. Lucie
- Wildlife Eco Tours – Ft. Pierce & Port St Lucie
- Oxbow Eco-Center
- FPL’s Energy Encounter – Hutchinson Island
- Fort Pierce City Marina – Ft. Pierce
- Harbortown Marina – Ft. Pierce
- Ocean Discovery Center, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution – Ft. Pierce
- Heathcote Botanical Gardens – Ft. Pierce
- Port St. Lucie Botanical Gardens – Port St. Lucie
- Hallstrom Planetarium – Ft. Pierce
- National Navy UDT-SEAL Museum – Ft. Pierce
- PGA Museum of Golf – Port St. Lucie
- Manatee Observation & Education Center – Ft. Pierce
- St. Lucie County Aquarium – Ft. Pierce
- St. Lucie County Regional History Center – Ft. Pierce
- P.P. Cobb Building – Fort Pierce
- Zora Neale Hurston Dust Tracks Heritage Trail – Ft. Pierce
- The Highwaymen Heritage Trail – Ft. Pierce
- McCarty Ranch – Port St. Lucie
- Seven Gables House Visitor Information Center – Ft. Pierce



### ***Recreational Opportunities:***

- 21 miles of Beaches
- Boating
- Diving at Natural & Artificial Reefs
- Kayaking, Stand Up Paddle Boarding, Surfing and other Water Recreation
- Fishing
- Tennis Courts
- Horseback Riding at Frederick Douglass Beach & at designated Nature Preserve Trails
- 3 State Parks
- 3 County Pools
- 38 Parks
- 23 Ballfields
- 19 Beach Access Sites
- 1 Skate Park
- 6 Dog Parks and 1 Beach Dog Park



### ***Golf Courses:***

- Fairwinds – Ft. Pierce
- Ballantrae – Port St. Lucie
- Gator Trace – Ft. Pierce
- Club Med Sandpiper – Port St. Lucie
- Indian Hills – Ft. Pierce
- Island Pines – Ft. Pierce
- Meadowood – Ft. Pierce
- PGA Golf Club, Dye Course – Port St. Lucie
- PGA Golf Club, Wanamaker Course – Port St. Lucie
- PGA Golf Club, Ryder Course – Port St. Lucie
- St Lucie Trail – Port St. Lucie
- St. James – Port St. Lucie
- The Saints – Port St. Lucie



### ***Cultural Events / Festivals:***

- Events at St. Lucie County Fairgrounds, Event & Equestrian Center – Year Round
- Havert L. Fenn Center – Year Round
- Professional Bull Riding Event – January
- St. Lucie County Fair – February / March
- Food Truck Frenzy – 1st & 3rd Friday / month
- New York Mets Spring Training – Feb-Apr
- St. Lucie Mets – June-Sept
- Art Walk in Historic Downtown Fort Pierce – 2nd Wednesday / month
- Friday Fest in Historic Downtown Fort Pierce – 1st Friday / month
- Italian Festival – January
- Pelican Yacht Club Billfish Tournament – January
- Party in the Park – February
- Greek Festival – February
- Highwaymen Festival – February
- Taste of Seafood & Sandy Shoes Festival – March
- Taste of St. Lucie – March
- Bonsai Ball – March
- Cracker Trail Ride – March
- FIHA Pow Wow – March
- Hooked on Music Festival – April
- South Florida Wingfest – April
- Adams Ranch Rodeo – April
- Oyster & Seafood Festival – April
- Fishing Frenzy – May
- Turtle Walks – June
- Freedom Fest – July
- Stars Over St. Lucie – July
- Chili Cook Off – July
- Indian River Lagoon Science Festival – September



- Oktoberfest – October
- Ghost Walk Tours – October
- National Navy SEAL Museum’s Annual Muster Event – November
- Treasure Coast Beer Fest – November
- Christmas Boat Parade – December
- Raid on Fort Pierce Civil War Reenactment – December



***Galleries:***

- A.E. “Bean” Backus Museum & Gallery – Ft. Pierce
- Art Munco – Ft. Pierce
- IRSC’s Art Gallery – Ft. Pierce
- Art Mundo – Ft. Pierce
- Port St. Lucie Civic Center Art Gallery – Port St. Lucie

***Theater Companies:***

- Club Med, Port St. Lucie
- McAlpin Fine Arts Center, IRSC – Ft. Pierce
- Pineapple Playhouse – Ft. Pierce
- Sunrise Theater & Black Box Theatre – Ft. Pierce

***Symphony Orchestras:***

- Fort Pierce Jazz Society
- Treasure Coast Symphony at IRSC’s McAlpin Fine Arts Center – Ft. Pierce

***Medical Services:***

- Lawnwood Regional Medical Center & Heart Institute
- Martin Health Systems
- Savannas Hospital
- St. Lucie Medical Center
- Tradition Medical Center

For more information, visit <http://www.visitstluciefla.com/>. For information on the Arts and Cultural Alliance of St. Lucie County, visit <http://www.artsinstlucie.org/>

Sources:

- St. Lucie County Tourism (<http://www.stlucieco.gov/departments-services/a-z/administration/tourism>)
- Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County ([http://youredc.com/regional\\_data/things\\_to\\_do](http://youredc.com/regional_data/things_to_do))
- St. Lucie County website (<http://www.stlucieco.gov/parks/index.htm>)
- Wikipedia ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St.\\_Lucie\\_County](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Lucie_County))

## **OTHER RESOURCES**

St. Lucie County is situated in an area where the Florida Turnpike, Interstate 95, US Highway 1, the St. Lucie County International Airport, the Port of Fort Pierce, and the Florida East Coast Railway system are in close proximity to each other. This provides for easy access to County amenities as well as commercial opportunities.

The County is also the home of two prestigious research facilities -- Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute and the Smithsonian Marine Station, Fort Pierce. Additionally, The University of Florida has established an agricultural research center in the County, and the United States Department of Agriculture has selected St. Lucie County as a location for a research facility.

The St. Lucie County Sports Complex is the site of many public events and includes a modern baseball stadium and practice fields that serve as the spring training home of the New York Mets baseball team. It is also home of the St. Lucie Mets, a local farm club that provides near major league quality baseball action for fans at a very affordable rate.

Three local law enforcement departments serve the County. The St. Lucie County Sheriff's Department services primarily the unincorporated area. The Fort Pierce Police Department and the Port St. Lucie Police Departments service their respective cities. The three departments work closely to ensure that St. Lucie County is a safe place to work and live.

# FINANCIAL POLICY

## FISCAL POLICY STATEMENT

St. Lucie County has an important responsibility to its citizens to correctly account for public funds, to manage county finances wisely and to plan for adequate funding of services desired by the public. St. Lucie County needs to ensure that it is capable of adequately funding and providing local government services needed by the community.

Sound fiscal policies that are realistic and consistent provide useful guidance for the long-term programming of services and facilities. They also provide a set of assumptions under which budget and tax decisions should be made. While established for the best management of government resources, generally accepted fiscal policy also helps set the parameters for government's role in the broader economy of the community. The following fiscal policies set a framework to guide the operations of the County.

## FINANCIAL STRUCTURE

All operations of St. Lucie County are accounted for by the use of fund accounting, in order to provide proper accountability for the different kinds of resources. Various funds have been established to track transactions. Funds with similar objectives, activities and legal restrictions are placed in one the following three groups:

**Governmental Funds** - These funds account for general governmental functions, such as the court system and law enforcement. They use a spending measurement focus; which means that only current assets and liabilities are generally included on the fund types' balance sheets, and the difference between these assets and liabilities is classified as fund balance. Governmental Funds types are classified into four generic fund types as follow:

- X **General Fund** is used to account for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in a specific fund. Most countywide activities are accounted for in this fund.
- X **Special Revenue Funds** account for proceeds of specific revenue sources that legally restricted to expenditures for specified purposes.
- X **Debt Service Funds** are used to account for the accumulation of resources for and the payment of general long-term debt principal, interest and other costs associated with long-term debt.
- X **Capital Project Funds** are used to account for the purchase or construction of major capital facilities, such as buildings, infrastructure and lands.

**Proprietary Funds** - These funds are used to account for governments' ongoing activities that are similar to those of private enterprise. They are accounted for on a cost of service basis. There are two types of Proprietary Funds:

- X **Enterprise Funds** are used to account for the provision of public services that are similar to services provided by business enterprises. Operating costs of such funds are paid from user

charges or other non-governmental revenue.

- X **Internal Service Funds** is the financing of goods or services provided by one department to other departments within the same government on a cost reimbursement basis.

**Fiduciary Funds** - These funds account for assets belonging to others, held by a government in a trustee capacity or as an agent. Agency and expendable trust funds are accounted for like governmental funds. Non-expendable trusts are accounted for in the same manner as proprietary funds. Fiduciary Funds consists of two groups:

- X **Expendable Trust Funds** account for assets held by the County in trust for administration and disbursement for specific purposes.

- X **Agency Funds** account for assets belonging to others, which are held pending disposition.

### **BUDGETARY BASIS**

**Modified Accrual Basis for Governmental Funds** - All Governmental Funds (General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Debt Service Funds, Capital Project Funds), Expendable Trust Funds and Agency Funds are maintained on the modified accrual basis of accounting. Modified accrual is essentially accrual accounting, modified to recognize the governmental environment and unique accounting measurement objectives. Revenues are generally recognized during the fiscal year when they are quantifiable, measurable and there is a reasonable expectation that they will be collected during that period. In most cases, expenditures are recorded when the good or service is actually delivered, regardless of when the funds are disbursed. As a budgetary control measure, the funds are encumbered or "reserved" when the good or service is ordered.

**Accrual Basis for Proprietary Funds**- Proprietary Funds include the Internal Service Funds and the Enterprise Funds. Under the Accrual basis revenues are budgeted based on the measurable amount expected to be "earned" during the fiscal year. Expenditure estimates are developed for all expenses anticipated to be "incurred" during the fiscal year. Revenue is recognized when earned and expenditures are recognized when incurred. Transactions are recorded when they occur - regardless of when cash is received or disbursed. This is essentially the same method used in the private sector; however there are a few differences:

1. Capital expenditures and debt principal are budgeted as appropriations
2. Compensated absence accruals are not budgeted

**Fund Balance** - Fund balance is the result of the previous fiscal year's beginning cash balance plus revenues received minus actual expenditures. It includes unallocated resources that may be used to fund new projects/programs as well as unspent allocated funds, which will be carried forward to fund those existing projects/programs. Fund balance is adjusted for inventory and other non-cash assets and liabilities.

**Depreciation** - For budget purposes, depreciation is recognized in a designated reserve only to the extent that it is funded.

## **GRANTS BUDGETING**

Grants are funds awarded to St. Lucie County by the federal government, state agencies, or other organizations to finance projects such as capital improvement, cultural and educational activities, environmental projects, economic development, planning and research, etc. Grant revenues are received into governmental or proprietary funds related to the project. Each grant is individually budgeted as a sub-fund subordinate to its hierarchy governmental or proprietary fund. Transfers of grant local matches, interest monies and residual cash between a grant and its hierarchy fund are permitted without Board approval.

## **CAPITAL BUDGETING**

St. Lucie County maintains a Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), which covers a five-year period and is updated annually. The Office of Management and Budget determines the amount of funds available for capital projects. Proposed projects are prioritized and the available funds are allocated accordingly. A separate section of this document is designated for the CIP projects detail. Projects in the CIP this fiscal year are funded; however out years are estimated needs and may exceed future available revenues.

The capitalization threshold is \$25,000 for buildings or infrastructure with a life span of more than one year. Budgets for buildings and infrastructure under \$25,000 are reflected in the County's operating budget instead of the Capital Improvement Program.

## **GENERAL BUDGET POLICY**

1. The operating budget authorizing expenditure of County money will be adopted annually by the Board at the fund level.
2. The budget shall reflect the estimated beginning balances of all funds and all planned revenues or receipts for each fund for which the County must maintain accounts. Once the annual audit is completed, staff may prepare a Budget Resolution to adjust the beginning balances from the estimated to the actual.
3. No monies shall be expended or disbursed from accounts of the Board of County Commissioners except pursuant to authorization reflected in the adopted budget. The Clerk of Courts shall advise the Board of any exceptions to this policy required by law or generally accepted accounting practice.
4. Florida law states that a county must have a balanced budget. Therefore, the budgeted expenditures and reserves of each fund (including reserves for contingencies, cash flow and all other purposes) will equal the sum of projected fund balance at the beginning of the fiscal year and all revenues and receipts which reasonably can be expected to be received during the fiscal year.
5. Reserves:
  - a. A reserve for contingency may be budgeted in each of the funds. At the Board's discretion, these funds may be allocated as needed during the year to fund unexpected operations or events.

- b. In line with GFOA guidelines, an allocation of 12.5% of annual operating revenues, which is an amount equal to \$16.5 million and would be used for storm events and emergencies/issues that aren't anticipated in normal budget development.
- c. One year of budget stabilization, which if we take our most critical year in 2010, equals 14 million.
- d. An allocation of \$6 million in a transportation infrastructure reserve as our current repaving cycle is not sustainable.

6. Transfers:

- a. Transfers to reserve accounts may be made during the fiscal year by the County Administrator or the Management & Budget Director as required for proper management of the budget.
  - b. Transfers among expenditure or revenue accounts may be made during the fiscal year by County Administration and/or the Office of Management & Budget, if re-allocations within a fund are determined to be needed. Additional procedures will be established by the County Administrator. No transfers having an impact on capital facility improvement will be made without Board authority.
  - c. No transfer affecting the total allocations to a Constitutional Officer may be made without Board approval.
  - d. No transfer may be made between funds if the result of such transfer will be to change the adopted total budget of a fund, except pursuant to a public hearing and Board action to amend the adopted budget.
  - e. Transfers from reserves for contingency will require approval of the Board.
7. Changes in the adopted total budget of a fund will be made only with Board approval of a budget amendment resolution.
8. To provide information to the Board on budget and financial operations the Office of Management & Budget will prepare quarterly analyses of financial condition.
9. The operating budget will reflect programmatic expectations of the Board and County Administrator for each department. The budget will emphasize the relationship between financial and managerial (operations) planning.
10. For purposes of budget preparation, in the event policies or stated desires of the Board regarding appropriations or service levels prove to be incompatible with forecasted revenues or revenue policies, these conflicts will be resolved in favor of the revenue policy.
11. The Capital Improvement Budget showing estimated annualized costs of capital projects will be updated on an annual basis.

## **REVENUE POLICY**

1. The use of general ad valorem tax revenues will be limited to the General, Law Enforcement & Courts (Fine & Forfeiture), MSTU Funds, and dependent special districts, unless required in other funds by bond indenture agreements or by the terms of municipal service taxing units ordinance.
2. The use of ad valorem tax revenues based on millage levied for the Mosquito Control, and Erosion Control Special Districts will be limited to those districts.
3. The use of gas tax revenues will be limited to the Transportation Trust and Transportation Projects Funds, unless required in other funds by bond indenture agreements.
4. The use of sales tax revenues will be limited to the General and Law Enforcement & Courts (Fine & Forfeiture) funds except when allocated to debt service funds to meet non-ad valorem debt service requirements.
5. Pursuant to Ordinance, Tourist Development Tax proceeds will be appropriated as follows:
  - a. 20% for tourist advertising and promotion within St. Lucie County.
  - b. 40% for stadium expenses.
  - c. 33.40% debt service for stadium renovations.
  - d. 6.60% for capital facilities that promote tourism in the Fairgrounds and the area north of Midway Road.
6. The use of revenues pledged to bondholders will conform in every respect to the bond covenants committing those revenues.
7. Periodic cost studies of all County services for which user fees are imposed will be prepared, and proposed fee adjustments will be presented for Board consideration. Fee revenues will be anticipated for purposes of budget preparation using fee schedules, which have been adopted by the Board.
8. County staff will continue to aggressively pursue grant funds. For purposes of preparing the annual budget, revenues will be budgeted at actual award levels when known, and at anticipated grant award levels for continuing grants. Other grants will be budgeted upon notice of award.
9. Ad valorem taxes will be anticipated for purposes of operating budget preparation at 95% of the final assessed taxable value as determined by the Property Appraiser.
10. Millages for Debt Service will be established at the amounts, which will generate sufficient revenue, to make all required payments plus any reserve amount deemed prudent by the Office of Management and Budget or prescribed by covenant or ordinance.
11. All revenues, which are reasonably expected to be unexpended and unencumbered at the end of the fiscal year, will be anticipated as "fund balance" in the budget of the following fiscal year.

## **DEBT POLICY**

1. Neither the Florida Constitution, Florida Statutes, nor the Board of County Commissioners place a limit on the amount of debt the voters may approve by referendum. However, as a practical matter, debt is limited by the availability of revenue streams to pay debt service, by market factors, and by Board/voter discretion.
2. In concert with the County Administrator and the County Finance Team, and to facilitate better short-term decisions, the Office of Management and Budget creates an annual debt schedule to the Board, which lists current debt and projects debt requirements.
3. The County will not fund operations or normal maintenance from the proceeds of long-term financing and will confine long-term borrowing and capital leases to capital improvements, projects, or equipment that cannot be financed from current or projected financial resources. To conserve debt capacity as well as maintain a high bond rating the County will utilize pay-as-you-go financing to the maximum extent possible.
4. Notwithstanding extenuating circumstances, the County's debt capacity will be maintained within the following generally accepted benchmarks:
  - Direct debt per capita shall remain below four hundred dollars (\$400.00). Direct debt includes general obligations and governmental fund bond debt.
  - Direct debt per capita as a percentage of income per capita should not exceed 2%.
  - Direct debt as a percentage of the final assessment value of taxable property as provided by the Office of the Property Appraiser shall not exceed 1%.
  - The ratio of direct debt service expenditures as a percentage of general governmental expenditures will not exceed 10%. General governmental expenditures are considered General Fund expenditures, Fine and Forfeitures Fund expenditures plus transfers to the Constitutional Officers, the Airport, the Port and all transfers to Internal Service Funds.
5. The County strives to maintain a minimum underlying bond rating equivalent to 'Upper Medium Grade' (Moody Rating Service A or Standard & Poor's A). The County shall request an evaluation of their underlying rating every five years or as deemed necessary by the Board.
6. The County shall strive to keep the average maturity of general obligation bonds at or below fifteen (15) years.
7. When financing capital projects or equipment by issuing bonds, the County will amortize the debt over a term not to exceed the useful life of the project or piece of equipment.
8. Each year the County will review its outstanding debt for the purpose of determining the feasibility of refunding an issue.
9. To the maximum extent possible, the County will use special assessment (i.e. Municipal Services Benefit Unit) or self-supporting bonds (i.e. Revenue Bonds) in lieu of general obligation bonds so that those benefiting from the improvements will absorb all or part of the project costs.



## **APPROPRIATION POLICY**

1. Fund appropriations of the Board will be allocated to departments, divisions, programs, organization codes, projects, and line item object codes as deemed appropriate by the Management & Budget Director, with the approval of the County Administrator, to facilitate managerial control and reporting of financial operations.
2. Each year, before Department Directors and Division Managers begin to prepare operating budget requests, the Office of Management & Budget will issue budget preparation instructions. These instructions will take into consideration: 1) County financial policies; 2) The expressed desires of the Board and County Administrator for changes in service or service levels; 3) Projected costs of authorized services; 4) Forecasted revenues. County managers will prepare annual budget consistent with these instructions.
3. The County, in conjunction with an independent consultant, will prepare and maintain an indirect cost allocation plan, which conforms to federal guidelines for grant reimbursement of administrative costs. Managers will bill and collect indirect cost charges to eligible grant projects, enterprise funds, and other funds as appropriate.
4. The budget requests of County agencies will include itemized lists of all desired operating equipment, and of any equipment in inventory for which replacement is being requested. Purchase of equipment valued in excess of \$1,000 not on the approved budget list will require approval by the County Administrator or the Board on a case-by-case basis.
5. Each year the County will prepare a comprehensive five-year capital improvement program identifying needed public facilities by service type and geographic area for approval by the Board.
6. The annual budget will contain appropriations to fund capital projects identified by Departments for the purpose of completing the first year of the five-year capital improvement program. Operating budget implications of these capital projects will be identified; such expenses for the first (budgeted) year of the capital plan shall be funded.

**BUDGET PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION CALENDAR**

**Date: 2014**

**ACTIVITY**

*October*

- The new 2014/2015 fiscal year begins on October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Implementation of the FY 2014/2015 adopted budget.
- Prepare Truth In Millage (TRIM) compliance packet for Florida Department of Revenue.
- Comply with GFOA requirements for submission for the budget awards program.
- Monitor FY 2014/2015 beginning year activity.
- Prepare any needed budget amendments.
- Begin policy planning for FY 2015/2015.

*November*

- Close out FY 2013/2014.

*December*

- Adjust prior year estimates to unaudited actual.
- The FY 2014/2015 final budget book is printed and uploaded to the County's website.

**Date: 2015**

**ACTIVITY**

*January*

- Citizens Budget Committee elects chair and vice chair members and schedules meeting dates for the calendar year.

*February*

- Work on payroll projections and Department's approved positions.
- OMB calculates preliminary fund balance estimates.

**Date: 2015**

**ACTIVITY**

*March*

- Distribute budget preparation guidelines to departments.
- OMB opens Banner — enabling departments to input requested budget data.
- Banner & Microsoft Office training for Budget Coordinators as needed.
- Departments prepare budget requests.
- Provide budget assistance to Departments. Department Directors review budgets.
- Update audited carryover amounts.
- Make preliminary revenue, expense, and Fund Balance Forward estimates.

*April*

- Departmental budget packages and Capital Improvement Plans due to OMB.
- Departmental Banner input completed.
- Analyze budget requests.
- Balance Funds.
- Make preliminary revenue, expense, and Fund Balance Forward estimates.
- OMB conducts technical budget reviews with departments.
- Judges, Court Administrator, Public Defender, State Attorney, Guardian Ad Litem and Medical Examiner budgets are due.

*May*

- County Administrator's budget review with Departments.
- Work with Departments and enter the County Administrator's budget changes into Banner's recommended phase of the FY 2015/2016 budget.

**Date: 2015**

**ACTIVITY**

***May***

- Clerk of Court, Sheriff, and Supervisor of Elections budgets are due.
- Complete recommended phase budget changes.
- If necessary, rebalance Funds from applied recommended budget changes.
- Update the preliminary revenue, expense, and Fund Balance Forward estimates.

***June***

- Compile the tentative budget packets for the Board's review in July.
- Property Appraiser's budget and Property Value Estimates are due.
- Distribute budget summaries to Departments for review.

***July***

- Property Appraiser certifies property values to the BOCC (DR420's).
- Distribute budget to the Commissioners.
- The County Administrator presents the proposed budget to the BOCC.
- Conduct the BOCC Budget Review Workshops.
- The BOCC sets the proposed millage rates to be advertised in the Notice of Proposed Property Taxes.
- Enter the BOCC's budget changes into Banner's tentative phase of the FY 2015/2016 budget.
- Complete tentative phase budget changes.
- OMB returns completed DR420's to Property Appraiser.

**Date: 2015**

**ACTIVITY**

***August***

- Tax Collector's budget is due on August 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Prepare and print the tentative budget book.
- Departments turn in their purchase order roll-over requests for FY 2015/2016 to OMB.
- Property Appraiser distributes TRIM notices to all property owners. The TRIM notice notifies property owners of the 1<sup>st</sup> public hearing for the tentative budget and millage.
- Prepare for public hearings.

***September***

- The BOCC holds the 1<sup>st</sup> public hearing of the FY 2015/2016 budget in September and tentatively adopts the budget and millage rates.
- The County advertises in newspapers the 2<sup>nd</sup> public hearing for the adoption of the final budget and millage.
- The BOCC holds the 2<sup>nd</sup> public hearing of the FY 2015/2016 budget in September and adopts the final budget and millage rates.
- Certify final millage with the Property Appraiser and State of Florida Department of Revenue within 3 days of final adoption.
- The 2014/2015 fiscal year ends on September 30<sup>th</sup>.