



Polk Transportation
Planning Organization

State of the Transportation System Report 2026

A description of the Transportation System that supports
the movement of people and goods in Polk County.



WHO WE ARE: POLK TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (TPO)



Polk Transportation
Planning Organization

The Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) serves as Polk County's lead transportation planning agency. By ensuring federal and state funds are allocated to local transportation projects through a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive planning process, the organization helps to create safe, reliable travel for all users of the transportation system. Polk TPO works closely with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and local governments to address the diverse transportation needs of the community.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE REPORT

The State of the Transportation System Report is the Polk TPO's annual review of how Polk County's transportation network is performing. It describes the system in detail and organizes information into measures that explain different aspects of mobility and freight movement. Key measures include:

Roadway Network Database

provides inventory of major roads, tracking traffic volumes, crash data and the presence of sidewalks and transit service.

Roadway Performance

measures congestion and reliability using Vehicle Miles Traveled and Level of Service.

Traffic Growth

shows changes in travel demand over time and forecasts where congestion is likely to increase.

Regional Comparison

places Polk's traffic growth and roadway use alongside nearby counties to see how we measure up.

Roadway Safety

reviews crash data to identify where serious accidents happen most often and where improvements are needed.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

summarize the miles of sidewalks and bike facilities available and highlight gaps in the network.

Transit

examines ridership and service provided by Citrus Connection, including fixed route and paratransit trips.

Goods Movement

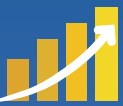
describes freight corridors, truck traffic, rail and industrial land uses that make Polk a hub for logistics.

POLK COUNTY

FLORIDA



874,790
POPULATION AS OF 2025



20.7%

population growth since 2020

FLORIDA'S **9TH** MOST POPULATED COUNTY



17 Incorporated
municipalities

2,011
Square Miles

Polk County spans more than 2,000 square miles and includes over 5,000 miles of roads that serve more than 800,000 residents. The Polk TPO's mission is to partner with the community to plan and fund transportation projects and programs that provide safe, reliable travel for all users, whether driving, walking, biking, riding transit or moving freight.

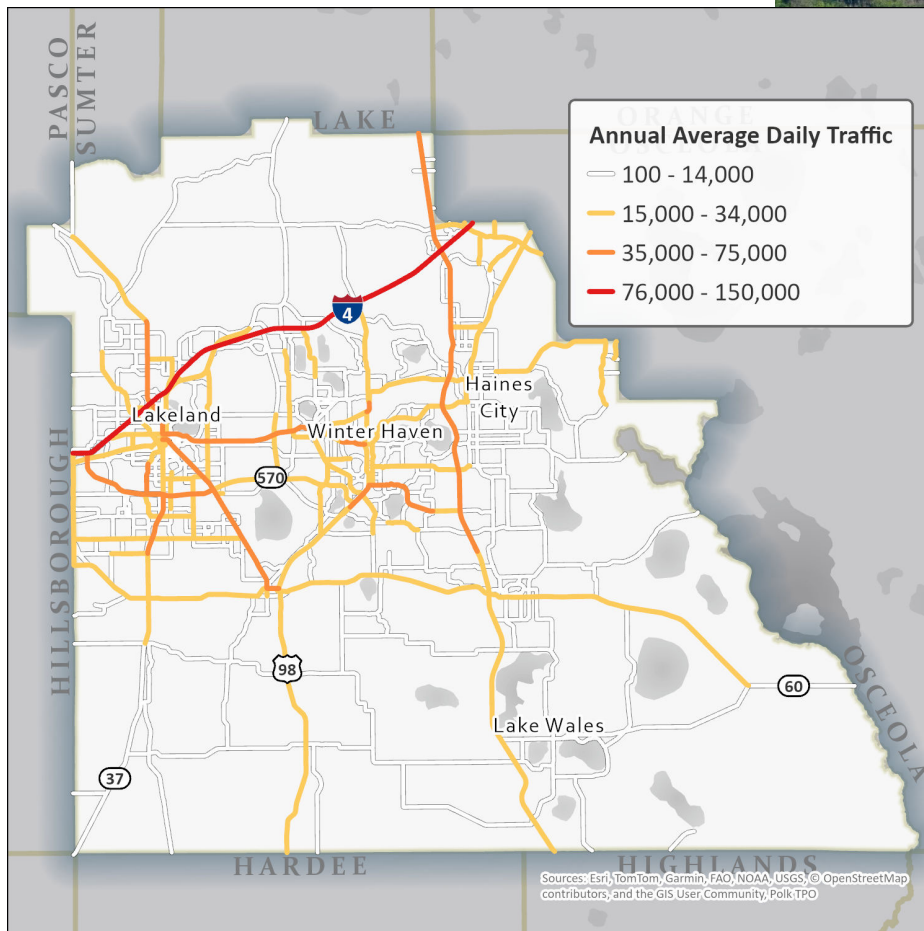
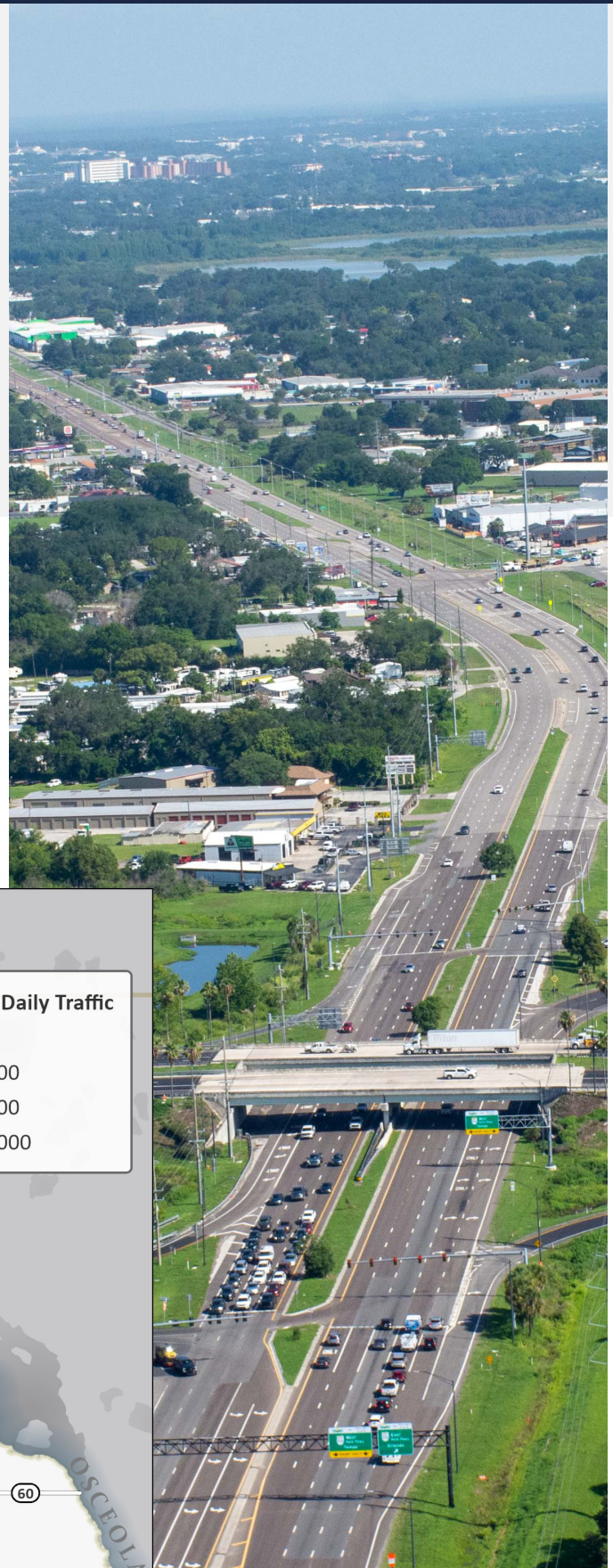


ROADWAY NETWORK DATABASE (RND)

Updated annually, the information reported in the RND allows planners to track attainment of transportation performance measures and targets.

The RND includes system performance information such as roadway capacity, traffic volume, level of service, and crash rate. The RND also reports physical information such as the presence of transit services, sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

The RND includes current roadway performance data for **1,375 miles** of state, county and city-maintained major roads in Polk County, FL.



ROADWAY PERFORMANCE

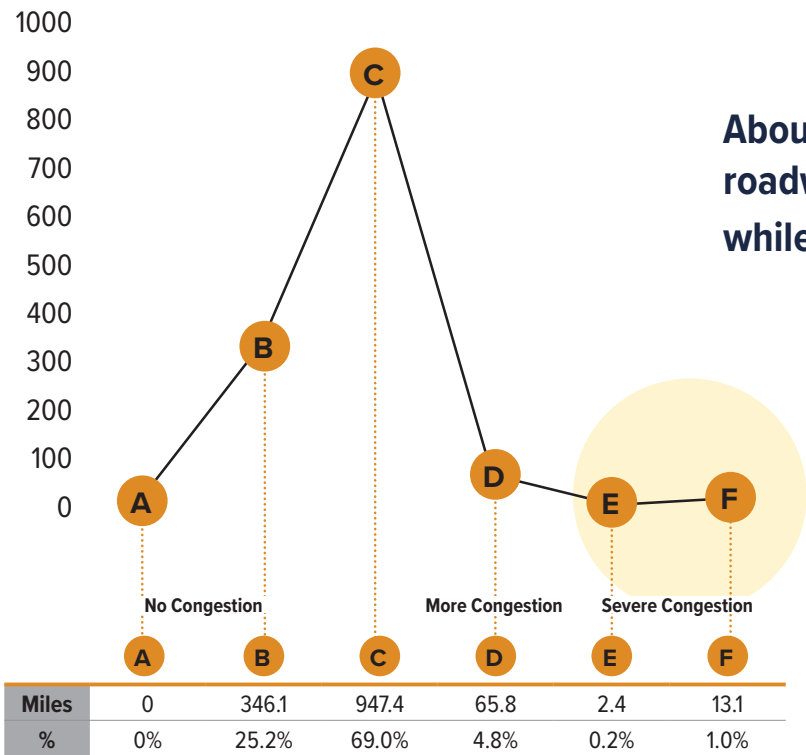
Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and roadway Level of Service (LOS) are used in the RND to measure existing traffic volume and congestion experienced by motorists traveling along Polk County’s major roadways. VMT is a traffic metric that measures the total number of miles driven by vehicles in a specified area and time period. LOS standards assess road performance according to a scale of “A” (least congested) through “F” (most congested).



On average over **20,100,000** vehicle miles are driven on Polk County’s major roadways each day with almost half of those miles being on the five major facilities shown below.



2026 ROADWAY NETWORK DATABASE LOS SUMMARY



About **90%** of Polk County’s major roadways operate at LOS C or better while **1%** operate at LOS F

ROADS WITH FAILING (LOS F) LEVEL OF SERVICE IN 2026	
Marigold Avenue from Poinciana Pkwy to Palmetto Street	
Pine Tree Trail from Ernie Caldwell Blvd to CR 54	
Poinciana Pkwy from US 17/92 to Osceola Co/L	
US 27 from CR 17 to Bates Rd	
US 27 from Bates Rd to CR 547	
US 27 from CR 547 to I-4	

TRAFFIC GROWTH

The year over year growth in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) on the major roadways is shown below with some interesting fluctuations. Volume-to-Capacity (V/C) Ratio measures how full a road is compared to how much traffic it can comfortably handle. A V/C ratio below 1.0 means the road has room to spare, while a ratio above 1.0 means more vehicles are trying to use the road than it can efficiently accommodate.



Total daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) on the network increased by 3.5% from 19,448,000 in 2024 to 20,136,000 in 2025.

RECENT TRAFFIC GROWTH (2024 - 2025) ON POLK COUNTY’S MAJOR ROADWAYS



3,778,000 (2025) ↑
3,583,000 (2024) 5.4%



2,005,000 (2025) ↓
2,109,000 (2024) -5.1%



1,706,000 (2025) ↑
1,680,000 (2024) 1.8%



1,227,000 (2025) ↑
1,215,000 (2024) 1.1%



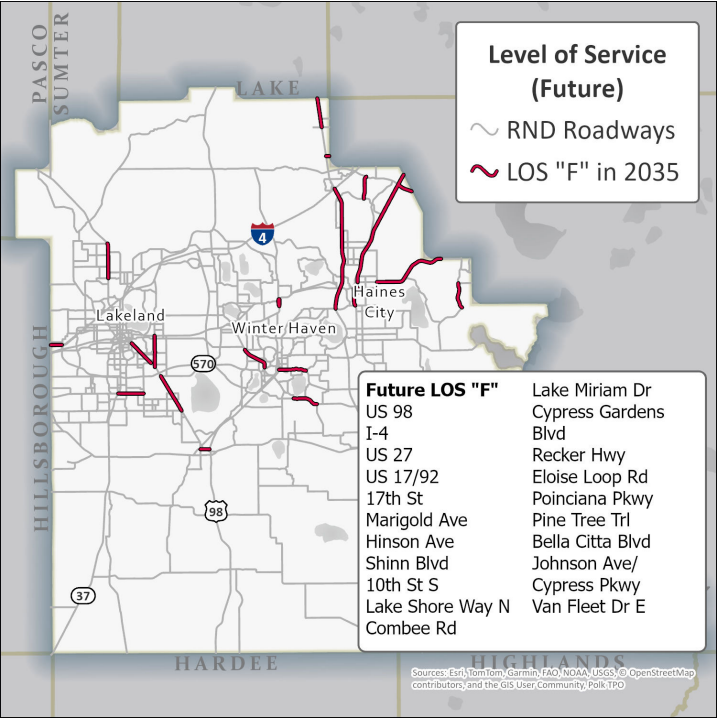
577,000 (2025) ↓
652,000 (2024) -12.4%

CONGESTED MILES (2031 Volume to Capacity Ratio)

Road Type	None (<0.9)	Light/Mild (0.9 - 1.1)	High/Severe (>1.1)
Local	269 mi	0 mi	0 mi
Collector	1,516 mi	27 mi	9 mi
Arterial	677 mi	77 mi	45 mi
Interstates/Expressway	84 mi	34 mi	0 mi
Total	2,545 mi	138 mi	54 mi

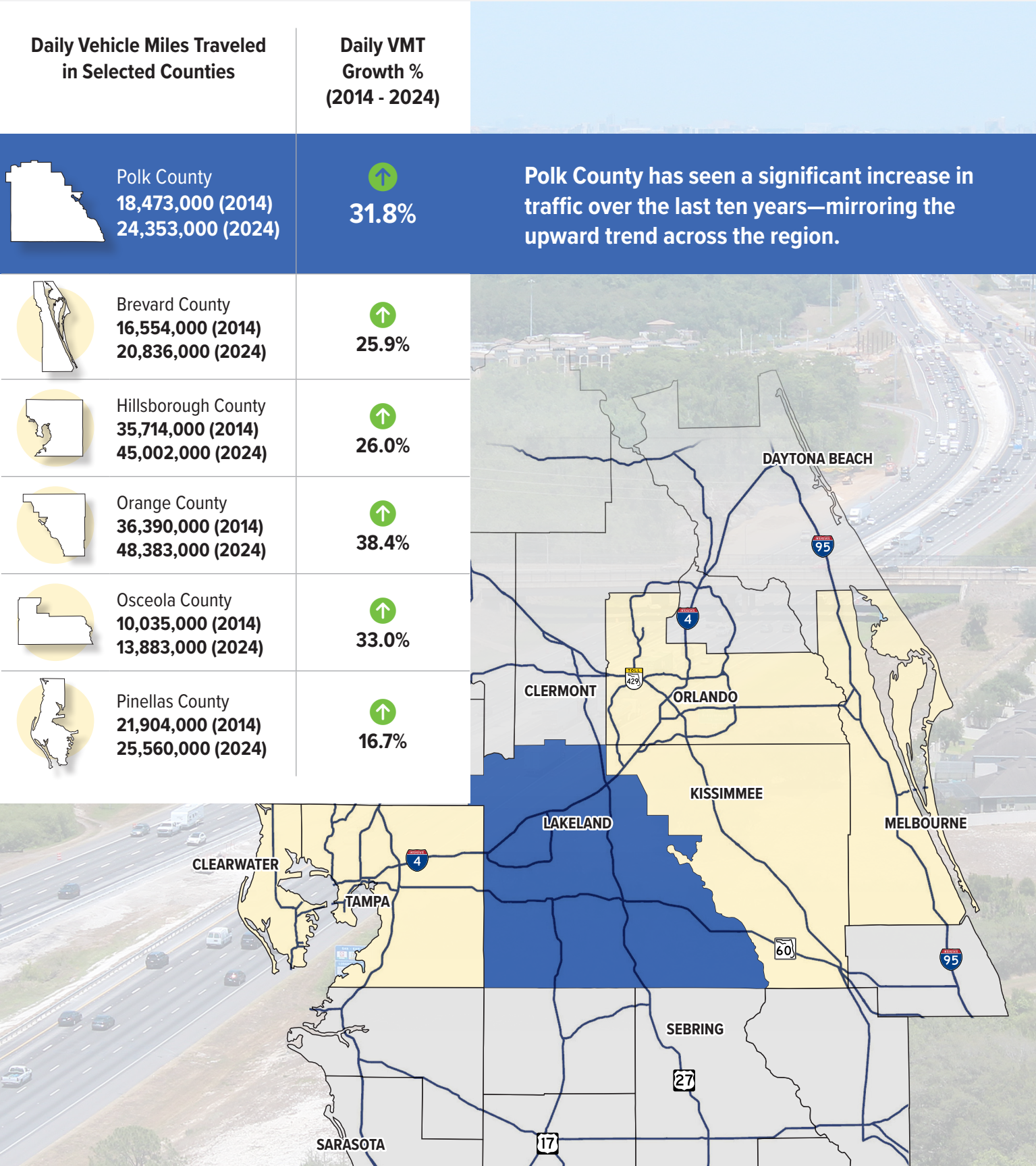
Source: 2026 RND (5-Year V/C Ratio)

FUTURE TRAFFIC GROWTH ON POLK COUNTY’S ROADS



REGIONAL COMPARISON

2014 – 2024 Regional Comparison of Traffic Growth



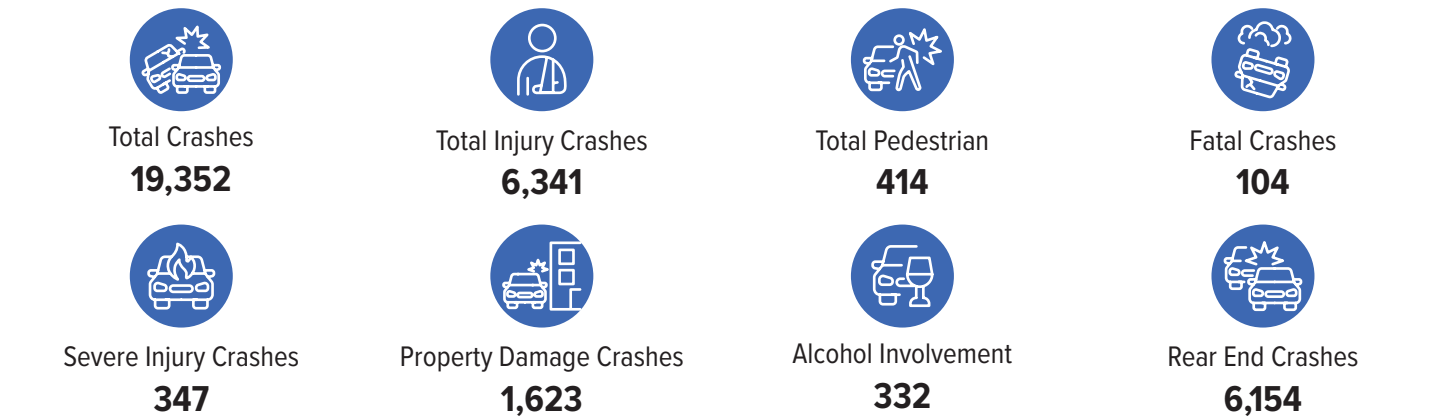
ROADWAY SAFETY

The crash data presented below were obtained from Signal4 Analytics and reflect crashes that occurred in Polk County in 2025. The Polk Vision Zero Action Plan, launched in 2025, highlights county roadways with the highest concentrations of serious crashes. A high injury network identifies which corridors have the highest rate of serious accidents to prioritize safety related solutions.

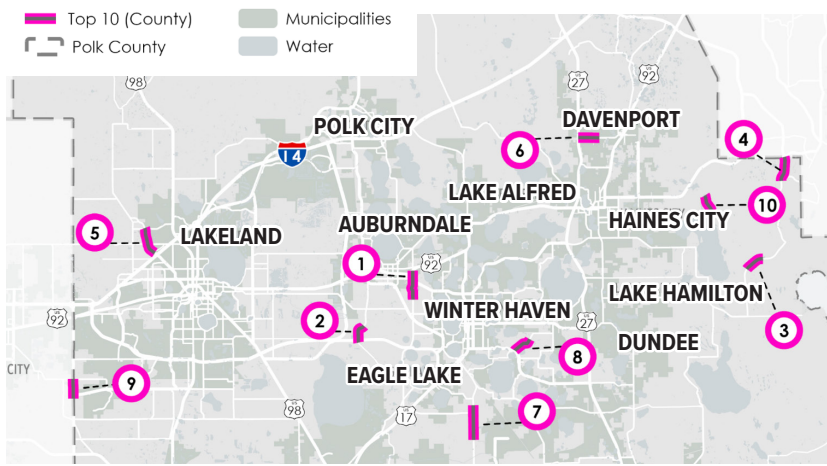


On average, every week in Polk County **2 people die** in traffic crashes and **6 people suffer serious injuries**.

2025 POLK COUNTY CRASHES*



HIGH INJURY NETWORK**



The **Top 10** County maintained roadways with the highest rate of serious crashes include:

- 1 42nd St/Charlotte Rd from Ave O NW to US 92
- 2 Thornhill Rd from Mondovie Dr to Quailwood Dr
- 3 Marigold Ave from Lake Marion Creek Rd to Laurel Ave
- 4 Marigold Ave from Bell Tower Crossing to Cypress Parkway
- 5 Kathleen Rd from I-4 to Sleepy Hill Rd
- 6 CR 547 from US 27 to San Pablo Cir
- 7 CR 655 from Wahneta Palms Dr to 10th Wahneta St W
- 8 Overlook Dr from SR 540 to Orchid Springs Dr
- 9 County Line Rd from just South of W Pipkin Rd to Medulla Rd
- 10 Lake Marion Creek Rd from Wild Turkey Tr to Canal Rd

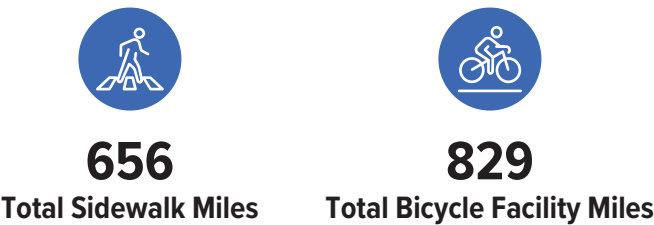
*Source: Signal 4 Analytics. 2025 crash data is preliminary and subject to revision.

**Source: Polk Vision Zero Action Plan

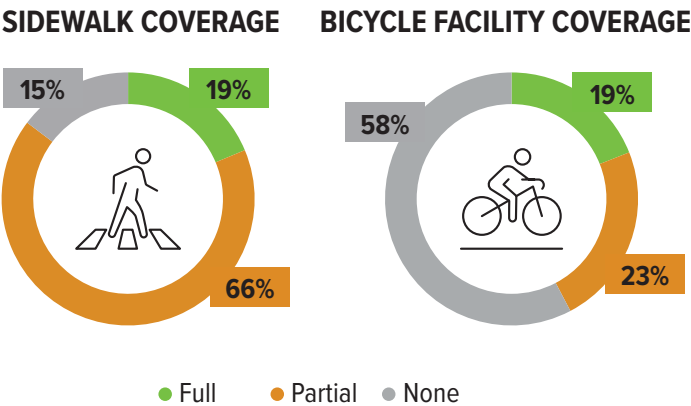
PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES

The statistics below summarize existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the county. Based on the 2026 Roadway Network Database (RND), there are approximately 655 miles of sidewalks and over 828 miles of bicycle facilities.

Polk County has a total of **1,375 roadway miles** monitored in the RND.



85% of roadways include partial or full sidewalk coverage and **42%** of roadways include bicycle facilities.*



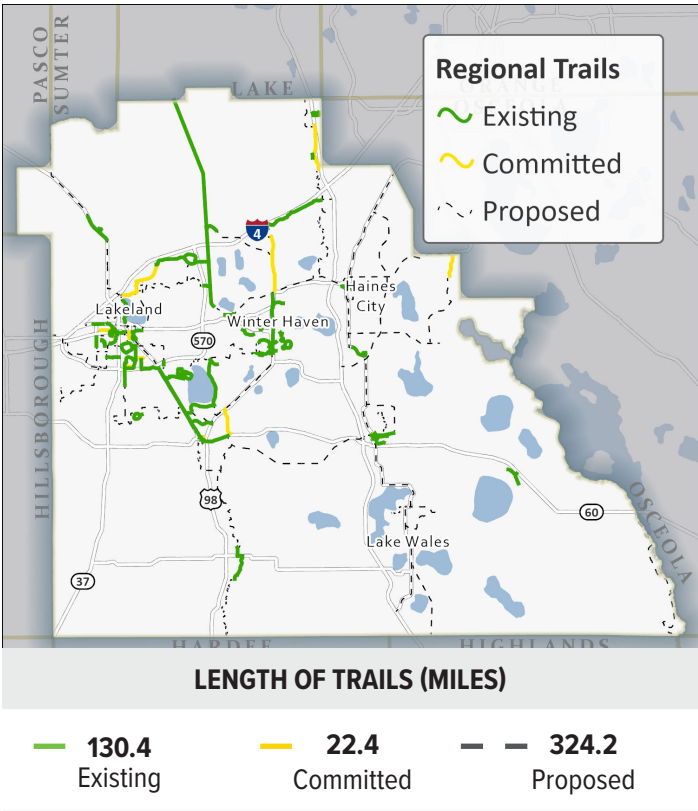
*Source: 2026 Roadway Network Database.
'Full' indicates sidewalk coverage along the entire roadway segment (typically both sides),
'Partial' indicates sidewalk coverage along a portion of the segment or on one side only,
'None' indicates no sidewalk present



REGIONAL TRAILS

As of January 2026, **22.4 miles** of new trail network segments are funded for construction.

These segments are part of a broader, multi-use regional network intended to enhance connectivity across the county.



TRANSIT

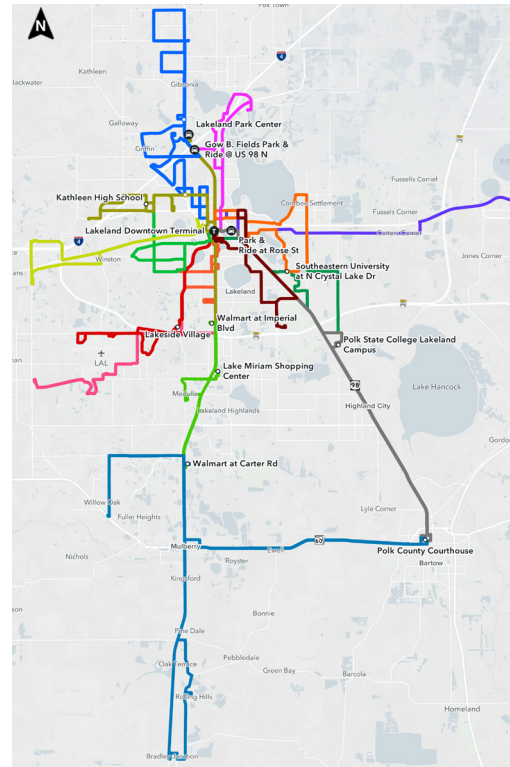
The transit ridership data examines fixed-route ridership during the 2024-2025 fiscal year with a total of 849,748 trips during this period. This service is provided by the Lakeland Area Mass Transit District (LAMTD), which operates as Citrus Connection. The 5 routes with the highest ridership comprise 43.5% of the system's annual ridership under fixed-route designation. The Gold Line routes encompass the system's greatest ridership offering connection to Lakeland's city center. In addition, Route 19X operates services to Poinciana SunRail station providing connectivity to neighboring counties via the regional rail network.



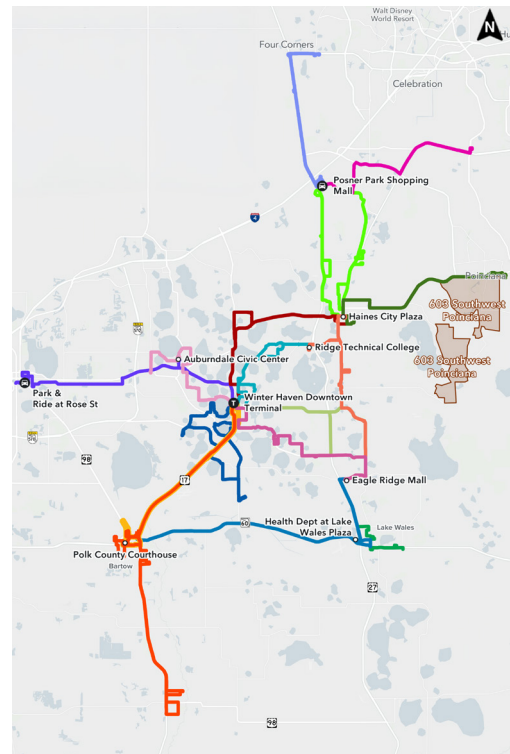
For detailed routes and bus information, simply scan the QR code on the right.



WEST COUNTY FIXED ROUTE MAP



EAST COUNTY FIXED ROUTE MAP



849,748

Fixed route trips



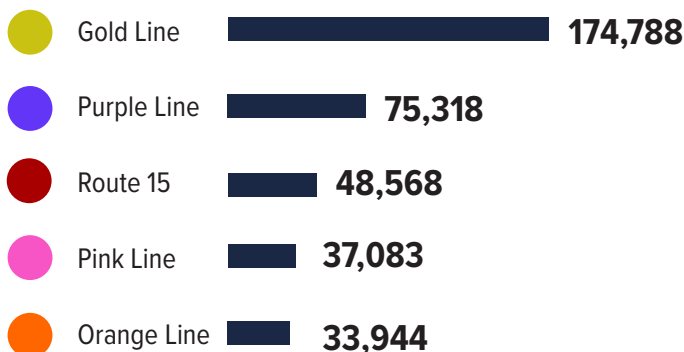
89,083

Paratransit trips

The top five highest ridership fixed routes account for approximately **44%** of the system's fixed-route ridership.

59% of customers primarily ride transit for employment.

TOP FIVE HIGHEST RIDERSHIP FIXED ROUTES



GOODS MOVEMENTS

With more than 13 million Florida residents located within 100 miles of Polk County, the County’s transportation system located at the center of the state plays an important role in supporting regional and statewide goods movement. The FDOT designates a series of transportation facilities with special importance in statewide mobility and economic activity as part of the State’s Strategic Intermodal System (SIS).



Polk County consistently ranks in the **top 7 counties** in the state for designated SIS railway and highway miles.



140

Railway Miles



182

Highway Miles

POLK COUNTY SIS FACILITIES

Central Florida Intermodal Logistic Center	Lakeland Linder International Airport
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DAILY TRUCK VOLUME

The **Top 5** roadways with the highest daily truck volume include:

I-4 SW of US 27	15,557 (14.34%)*
I-4, 0.6 MI W of SR 559	13,999 (13.12%)*
East of Hillsborough/Polk County Line	12,273 (8.77%)*
I-4, Northeast of US 27	10,949 (7.55%)*
I-4, East of SR 559	10,912 (10.98%)*

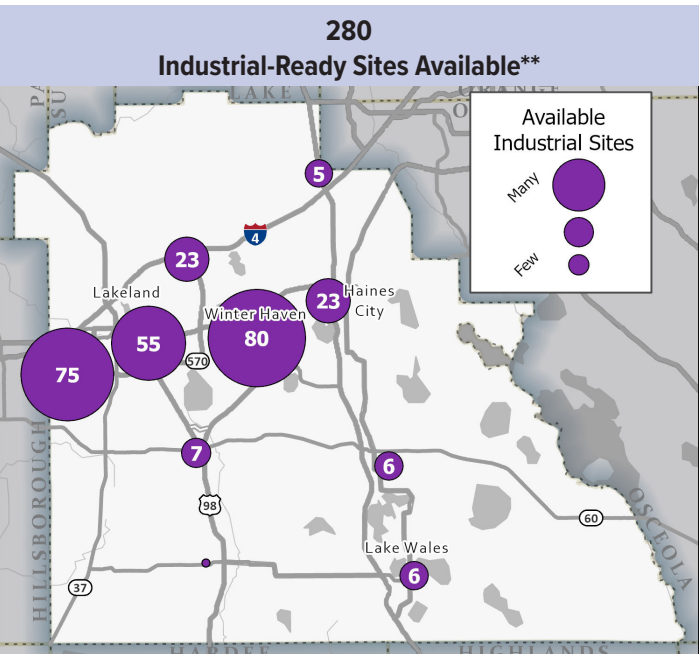
*Represents percent of total volume.

FREIGHT RELATED LAND USE

With a significant inventory of industrial space and development-ready sites, Polk County plays a growing role in supporting freight movement and goods distribution across Central Florida. The land use and available sites position Polk County to accommodate logistics, production, and supply chain expansion. This concentration of industrial assets reinforces Polk County’s importance as a regional hub for storage, processing, and the movement of goods.

Freight Related Land Use in Polk County	
Warehouses 70,769,151 (sq ft)	Light Manufacturing 20,819,708 (sq ft)

Packing Plants 1,574,580 (sq ft)	Mining Lands 1,545,059 (sq ft)	Canneries 4,589,864 (sq ft)
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Land Uses (source: FL DOR 2025): over 99 million sq ft of freight related land uses in Polk County. **Central Florida Development Council, July 2026



Polk Transportation
Planning Organization

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