

# **EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT**

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## **NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA STRATEGIC REGIONAL POLICY PLAN**



September 24, 2015



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North Central Florida Regional Planning Council  
2009 NW 67th Place  
Gainesville, Florida 32653-1603

September 24, 2015



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# AFFORDABLE HOUSING

## INTRODUCTION

An update of regional indicators suggests that housing affordability for north central Florida very low-, low-, and moderate-income households declined between 2000 and 2013.

**REGIONAL GOAL 1.1.      REDUCE THE PERCENTAGE OF THE REGION'S VERY LOW-, LOW-, AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS SPENDING 30.0 PERCENT OR MORE OF THEIR ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME ON HOUSING.**

## REGIONAL INDICATORS

Table I-1 contains a comparison of regional indicators listed in the regional plan for Regional Goal 1.1 for the years 2000 and 2013 based on decennial census and American Community Survey data. Unfortunately, information is no longer collected by the U.S. Census Bureau for Regional Indicators 2 through 5. Regional Indicator 1 suggests that housing affordability for households earning less than \$20,000 per year declined between 2000 and 2013.

**TABLE I-1**

**A COMPARISON OF REGIONAL GOAL 1.1 INDICATORS, 2000 AND 2013**

Regional Indicator	Year	
	2000	2013
1. Percentage of the households of the region with annual incomes of less than \$20,000 spending 30.0 percent or more of their annual income on housing.	66.2	77.6
2. Percentage of the renter households of the region with annual incomes of less than \$10,000 spending 30.0 percent or more of their annual income on gross rent.	72.6	n/a
3. Percentage of the renter households of the region with 1989 annual incomes between \$10,000 and \$19,999 spending 30.0 percent or more of their annual income on gross rent.	68.9	n/a
4. Percentage of the homeowner households of the region with annual incomes of less than \$10,000 per year spending 30.0 percent or more of their annual income on housing.	64.0	n/a
5. Percentage of the homeowner households of the region with annual incomes between \$10,000 and \$19,999 per year spending 30.0 percent or more of their annual income on gross rent.	48.8	n/a

n/a = Information not available.

Source: North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, November 2010 and 2015.

**REGIONAL GOAL 1.2. MITIGATE SIGNIFICANT AFFORDABLE HOUSING IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENTS OR REGIONAL IMPACT.**

**TABLE I-2  
A COMPARISON OF REGIONAL GOAL 1.2 INDICATORS, 2007 AND 2013**

Regional Indicator	Year	
	2007	2013
1. Number of approved Developments of Regional Impact under construction in north central Florida.	6	5

Source: North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, November 2010 and 2015.

**RECOMMENDED MODIFICATIONS TO  
THE NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA STRATEGIC REGIONAL POLICY PLAN**

As previously noted, several Indicators are no longer measurable due to changes in the 2010 Census and American Community Survey data. It is recommended that Regional Indicators 2 through 5 be amended to read, as follows:

Regional Indicator	Year	
	2000	2013
2. Percentage of the renter households of the region with annual incomes of less than <del>\$10,000</del> <u>\$20,000</u> spending 30.0 percent or more of their annual income on gross rent.	71.0	93.8
3. Percentage of the renter households of the region with <del>1989</del> annual incomes between <del>\$10,000 and \$19,999</del> <u>\$20,000 and \$34,999</u> spending 30.0 percent or more of their annual income on gross rent.	27.4	20.5
4. Percentage of the homeowner households of the region with annual incomes of less than <del>\$10,000</del> <u>\$20,000</u> per year spending 30.0 percent or more of their annual income on housing.	55.0	57.6
5. Percentage of the homeowner households of the region with annual incomes between <del>\$10,000 and \$19,999</del> <u>\$20,000 and \$34,999</u> per year spending 30.0 percent or more of their annual income on gross rent.	30.2	41.6

Source: North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, November 2010 and 2015.

It is recommended that the Regional Indicator for Regional Goal 1.2 be updated to reflect the current number of active Developments of Regional Impact in the region. Additionally, it is recommended that Tables 1.1 through 1.10 be updated to reflect the most recent data available from the U.S. Census Bureau. References to the Florida Department of Community Affairs, which no longer exists, should be changed to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity. Similarly, references to Rule 9J-2, Florida Administrative Code, should be changed to reflect new citations.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## INTRODUCTION

An update of regional indicators suggests that housing affordability for north central Florida very low-, low-, and moderate-income households declined between 2000 and 2013.

**REGIONAL GOAL 2.1.      DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY OF THE REGION AND THEREBY INCREASE THE LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND DECREASE OUT-MIGRATION OF PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF THE LABOR FORCE. THIS INCLUDES NON-TRADITIONAL JOB SECTORS AND HIGH-SKILL, HIGH-WAGE JOB SECTORS.**

### REGIONAL INDICATORS

1. In 2003, there were 1,641,000 visitors to the region.
2. In 2003, there were 20,363 professional and high-technical jobs in the region.
3. In 2006 there were 16,566 jobs in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation industries in the region.
4. In 2013 there were 17,113 jobs in the Arts, Entertainment and Recreation Industries in the region.
5. In 2006 there were 2,437 jobs in the Information industry (NAICS 54) in the region.
6. In 2013, there were 1,699 jobs in the Information industry (NAICS 54) in the region.

**REGIONAL GOAL 2.2.      DIVERSIFY THE ECONOMY OF THE REGION AND THEREBY INCREASE THE LEVEL OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND DECREASE OUT-MIGRATION OF PRODUCTIVE MEMBERS OF THE LABOR FORCE. THIS INCLUDES NON-TRADITIONAL JOB SECTORS AND HIGH-SKILL, HIGH-WAGE JOB SECTORS.**

### REGIONAL INDICATORS

1. As of 2008, 12 of the 33 north central Florida incorporated municipalities do not have a municipal wastewater treatment facility.
2. As of 2008, three of the 44 north central Florida local government comprehensive plans contain an economic development element.
3. As of 2015, 12 of the 33 north central Florida incorporated municipalities do not have a municipal wastewater treatment facility.

Source: Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Wastewater Facility Lists, Domestic Wastewater Facilities. 4/10/2015.

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/wastewater/facinfo.htm>

**RECOMMENDED MODIFICATIONS TO**  
**THE NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA STRATEGIC REGIONAL POLICY PLAN**

It is recommended that the Element be updated to reflect the most recent version of the North Central Florida Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. It is also recommended that the Regional Indicators be updated to reflect the latest available information.

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

## INTRODUCTION

An update of regional indicators suggests that the region is adequately prepared for weather-related emergencies; however, additional warning sirens are needed in coastal communities.

**REGIONAL GOAL 3.1.** Improve emergency preparedness for coastal storms in the region.

### **Regional Indicators**

1. As of ~~2010~~ 2015, one Coastal-Marine Automated Network coastal weather station is located in Keaton Beach, no weather buoys are located in the Gulf of Mexico between 10 and 50 miles of Steinhatchee, three weather buoys are located between 51 and 100 miles of Steinhatchee, two weather buoys are located between 101 and 150 miles of Steinhatchee, and ~~four~~ one weather buoys ~~are~~ is located in the Gulf of Mexico between 151 to 175 miles of Steinhatchee.
2. As of ~~2010~~ 2015, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather radio transmissions covered approximately ~~96.5~~ 97 percent of the region.
3. As of 2010 2015, ~~eight~~ five National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather radio stations serve north central Florida **from the total of 32 stations in Florida.**
4. As of 2010, ~~four~~ three north central Florida coastal communities (~~Horseshoe Beach~~, Dekle Beach, Keaton Beach, & Steinhatchee) had emergency warning sirens.
5. As of 2010, Dixie County had a Level E In-county clearance time of 12.5 hours.
6. As of 2010, Taylor County had a Level E In-county clearance time of 13.0 hours.
7. As of January 31, 2010, the American Red Cross 4496-Compliant Risk Public Shelter Capacity for the region was 32,680.

**REGIONAL GOAL 3.2.** Participation by all north Florida governments in the National Flood Insurance Program.

1. As of 2010, 39 of the 41 local governments in the region with mapped flood hazard areas within their jurisdictions participated in the National Flood Insurance Program.
2. As of ~~2010~~ 2015, National Flood Insurance Rate Maps are available for all north central Florida local governments.
3. As of ~~2010~~ 2015, two north central Florida local governments do not contain mapped flood hazard areas within their jurisdictions.

**REGIONAL GOAL 3.3.** Reduce response times of regional hazardous materials response teams to 60 minutes for hazardous materials emergencies in Perry and Greenville.

**Regional Indicators**

1. As of 2010, a hazardous materials commodity flow study was completed to determine the types and amounts of hazardous materials moving via highways in the region.
2. As of ~~2010~~ **2015**, North Central Florida Regional Hazardous Materials Response Team members are located in the Cities of ~~Alachua, Fanning Springs,~~ Gainesville ~~and~~ Lake City, ~~Starke and~~ as well as Dixie County, Gilchrist, Lafayette and Suwannee Counties.

**REGIONAL GOAL 3.4.** Improve the ability of emergency response teams to respond to hazardous materials emergencies.

**Regional Indicators**

1. As of 2010, a hazardous materials commodity flow study was completed to determine the types and amounts of hazardous materials moving via highways in the region.
2. As of ~~2010~~ **January 2015**, no commodity flow studies have been undertaken to determine the types and amounts of hazardous materials moving via railroads in the region.

**REGIONAL GOAL 3.5.** All north central Florida local governments are signatories to the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement for Catastrophic Disaster Response and Recovery.

**Regional Indicator**

As of January 2011, 41 **out of 44** north central Florida local governments have adopted the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement for Catastrophic Disaster Response and Recovery.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

No changes are recommended to the Goals and Policies of the Emergency Preparedness Element. With regards to the Conditions and Trends Statement, the following changes are recommended:

1. Amend the Emergency Preparedness Regional Indicators as presented in this report and as new information becomes available prior to the adoption of any Evaluation and Appraisal Report-based amendments to the regional plan..
2. Tables 3.1 through 3.4 be updated to reflect the latest available information.
3. Table 3.2 be amended to indicate that clearance times contained in the table are hours, not minutes.
4. The last paragraph under 6, Hazardous Materials Releases, be amended to note that as of 2015, the tri-state hazardous materials mutual aid agreement has not been signed by all parties.

# **NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In May 2015, Governor Rick Scott signed into law Senate Bill 1216 which eliminated the Withlacoochee Regional Planning Council and transferred its member counties to adjoining regional planning councils. Levy County and Marion County are now part of the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council. As part of the legislation, the Strategic Regional Policy Plan for the Withlacoochee Region remains in place for Levy and Marion Counties until such time as the two counties are incorporated into the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

The Strategic Regional Policy Plan for the Withlacoochee Region, as the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan, identifies and maps Natural Resources of Regional Significance and contains goals and policies addressing Natural Resources of Regional Significance.

### **REGIONAL GOAL 4.1. USE THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE REGION IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER.**

#### **REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1. As of 2009, the number of north central Florida local government comprehensive plans and Developments of Regional Impact which encourage the use of silvicultural best management practices is unknown.
2. As of 2009, the number of north central Florida local government comprehensive plans and Developments of Regional Impact which encourage the use of low impact development practices is unknown.
3. As of 2009, the number of north central Florida local government comprehensive plans and Developments of Regional Impact which encourage the use of energy conservation design principles is unknown.
4. As of 2009, the number of north central Florida local government comprehensive plans and Developments of Regional Impact which encourage the use of water conservation and reuse strategies is unknown.
5. As of 2009, with the exception of intracounty groundwater transfer by Gainesville Regional Utilities, no interbasin transfer of water occurs in the region.
6. As of January 2010, north central Florida has 39 megawatts of electrical generation capacity using biomass as the primary fuel source.

**REGIONAL GOAL 4.2. PRESERVE BIG BEND COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES IDENTIFIED AS NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS OF RESIDENTS IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR ECONOMIC AND ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE TO THE REGION.**

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1. As of January, 2000, the Big Bend Salt Marsh (Dixie and Taylor County) coastline comprised 48,190 acres.
2. In 2001, that portion of the Big Bend Seagrass Beds extending 6 nautical miles seaward of the Dixie County and Taylor County coastline was comprised of 102,530.5 acres of bays and estuaries, 63,992.3 acres of open water, 7,638.6 acres of tidal flats, 11,515.0 acres of patchy seagrass, 192,556.6 acres of continuous seagrass, and 108,423.7 acres which were unclassified.<sup>1</sup>
3. In 1996, the Florida Middle Ground comprised 132,000 acres.
4. As of January 2007, a Florida Department of Health No-Fish-Consumption Advisory is in effect for the Fenholloway River due to elevated mercury levels in the river's of fish in the river.
5. As of April 2007, the Fenholloway River is in violation of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency water quality standards for dissolved oxygen, biochemical oxygen demand, un-ionized ammonia, fecal coliform and dioxin.
6. As of January 2007, there were 16 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System stormwater facility permits and 8 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System wastewater permits in Taylor County. In 2006, there were 4 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System stormwater facility permits and 2 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System wastewater permits in Dixie County.
7. As of January 2007, the communities of Fanning Springs and Old Town were not serviced by a centralized wastewater treatment system.
8. As of January 2007, no offshore oil or natural gas wells are located within 100 miles of the Dixie and Taylor counties coastline.
9. As of January, 2007, no offshore oil or natural gas wells are located within the Florida Middle Ground.

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<sup>1</sup>North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, March 2007. Derived from Seagrass Habitat and Monitoring in Florida's Big Bend, Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute and Suwannee River Water Management District, 2006.

**REGIONAL GOAL 4.3. MAINTAIN AN ADEQUATE SUPPLY OF HIGH-QUALITY GROUNDWATER TO MEET THE NEEDS OF NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA RESIDENTS, IN RECOGNITION OF ITS IMPORTANCE TO THE CONTINUED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION.**

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1. As of January 2002, the quantity of potable water contained in the Floridan Aquifer underlying the north central Florida region, its average daily recharge and discharge, were unknown.
2. In 2000, an estimated 232.2 million gallons per day of water were withdrawn from north central Florida groundwater sources.
3. As of January, 2002, north central Florida contained 26 first-magnitude springs, 101 second-magnitude springs, and 70 third-magnitude springs.
4. As of May 2007, the known Nitrate Nitrogen readings for north central Florida first magnitude springs, and their date of measure, were as follows (see Table 4.5):

**REGIONAL GOAL 4.4. PROTECT ALL SOURCES OF RECHARGE TO THE FLORIDAN AQUIFER FROM ALL ACTIVITIES WHICH WOULD IMPAIR THESE FUNCTIONS OR CAUSE A DEGRADATION IN THE QUALITY OF THE WATER BEING RECHARGED IN RECOGNITION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING ADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF HIGH-QUALITY GROUNDWATER FOR THE REGION.**

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1. As of January, 2011, the St. Johns River, the Suwannee River Water Management District, Alachua County, and Columbia County had identified and mapped 968,600.90 acres of areas of high recharge potential to the Floridan Aquifer within north central Florida.
2. In Fiscal Year 2005-06, there were 167,629 visitors to Ichetucknee Springs State Park.<sup>2</sup>
3. As of January, 2007, the Suwannee River Water Management District had identified and mapped 153,588 acres of stream-to-sink watersheds located within both its jurisdictional boundaries and within north central Florida.
4. In 2007, eight sinks were delineated as Natural Resources of Regional Significance in the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

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<sup>2</sup>2006 Florida Statistical Abstract, Table 19.52.

**REGIONAL GOAL 4.5. PROTECT ALL LISTED SPECIES WITHIN THE REGIONAL ECOLOGICAL GREENWAYS NETWORK.<sup>3</sup>**

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1. As of September 2009 the Regional Ecological Greenways Network comprised 1,316,360 acres in north Central Florida.

**REGIONAL GOAL 4.6. PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE IDENTIFIED IN THIS PLAN AS “PLANNING AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AREAS.”**

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1. As of January 2011, north central Florida contained 2,640 acres of private conservation lands.
2. As of January 2011, north central Florida contained approximately 139,165 acres of federally-owned conservation lands.
3. As of January 2011, north central Florida contained 125,992 acres of state-owned conservation and recreation lands.
4. As of January 2011, north central Florida contained approximately 246,820 acres of water management District-owned conservation lands (including less than fee simple ownership).
5. In January 2011, north central Florida had 22 waterbodies identified as SWIM waterbodies.

**REGIONAL GOAL 4.7. MAINTAIN THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF THE REGION'S SURFACE WATER SYSTEMS IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR IMPORTANCE TO THE CONTINUED GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGION.**

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1. As of January, 2000, the water management districts had identified 1,109,868 acres of fresh water wetlands within the region.
2. As of January, 2002, 10 north central Florida lakes were identified as Natural Resources of Regional Significance in the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan.
3. As of January, 2002, 11 river corridors were designated as Natural Resources of Regional Significance in the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan.
4. As of January, 2002, 202,152 acres of river corridor were designated as Natural Resources of Regional Significance in the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

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<sup>3</sup>Listed species means an animal species designated as Endangered, Threatened, or Species of Special Concern in Chapter 68A-27.003-68A-27.005, Florida Administrative Code; a plant species designated as Endangered, Threatened, or Commercially Exploited as designated in Chapter 5B-40, Florida Administrative Code, or an animal or plant species designated as Endangered or Threatened in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 17.



5. As of January, 2011, 111 North central Florida springs were listed as Natural Resources of Regional Significance in the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan.
6. In January, 2006, 12 north central Florida Natural Resources of Regional Significance were under a consumption advisory for Bowfin.
7. In January, 2006, 11 north central Florida Natural Resources of Regional Significance were under a consumption advisory for Large-mouth bass and Gar.
8. In January, 2006, seven north central Florida Natural Resources of Regional Significance were under a consumption advisory for Redbreast Sunfish and Redear Sunfish.
9. In January, 2006, five north central Florida Natural Resources of Regional Significance were under a consumption advisory for Brown Bullhead.
10. In January, 2006, four north central Florida Natural Resources of Regional Significance were under a consumption advisory for Black Crappie, Bluegill, Channel Catfish, and White Catfish.
11. In January, 2006, three north central Florida Natural Resources of Regional Significance were under a consumption advisory for Spotted Sunfish.
12. In January, 2006, one north central Florida Natural Resource of Regional Significance were under a consumption advisory for Chain Pickerel and Warmouth.
13. As of June 2007, minimum flows and levels have been established for the lower Suwannee River, Madison County Blue Spring, and Fanning Spring.

**RECOMMENDED MODIFICATIONS TO**  
**THE NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA STRATEGIC REGIONAL POLICY PLAN**

It is recommended that the Natural Resources of Regional Significance Element be amended to identify and map Natural Resources of Regional Significance located in Levy and Marion Counties. It is further recommended that the Regional Indicators be updated to include identified and mapped Natural Resources of Regional Significance located in Levy and Marion Counties. Finally, it is recommended that Tables 4.1 through 4.7 be updated to reflect the latest available data as well as the inclusion of Levy and Marion Counties.

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# **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 2015-30, Laws of Florida, dissolved the Withlacoochee Regional Planning Council and transferred its member counties to adjoining regional planning councils. Levy County and Marion County have been assigned to the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council. As provided for by Chapter 2015-30, Laws of Florida, the Withlacoochee Strategic Regional Policy Plan remains in effect for Levy and Marion Counties until such time as the two counties are added to the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

The Withlacoochee Strategic Regional Policy Plan, as the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan, identifies regional transportation facilities and contains goals and policies addressing these facilities.

**REGIONAL GOAL 5.1. MITIGATE THE IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT TO THE REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK AS WELL AS ADVERSE EXTRAJURISDICTIONAL IMPACTS WHILE ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT WITHIN URBAN AREAS.**

### **REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1. In 2009, 33.9 miles, or 2.7 percent, of the north central Florida Regional Road Network did not meet the minimum operating level of service standard contained in local government comprehensive plans.
2. In 2009, 23.4 miles, or 5.4 percent, of Strategic Intermodal System roadways within north central Florida did not meet the minimum operating level of service standard established by the Florida Department of Transportation.
3. In 2009, 10.5 miles, or 1.3 percent, of State Highway System roads which were not part of the Strategic Intermodal System within north central Florida did not meet the minimum operating level of service standard established by the Florida Department of Transportation.
4. In 2009, 9 of the 44 local governments in the region had within their jurisdiction had at least 10 percent or more of the Regional Road Network located within their jurisdictions operating below the minimum level of service standard contained in local government comprehensive plans.
5. In 2009, 17 of the 44 local governments in the region were projected to have at least 10 percent or more of the Regional Road Network located within their jurisdictions operating below the minimum level of service standard contained in local government comprehensive plans by the year 2025.

**REGIONAL GOAL 5.2. COORDINATE WITH AND ASSIST STATE AGENCIES, TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO IMPLEMENT AN ENERGY-EFFICIENT, INTERAGENCY COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.**

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

As of January 2008, the Council provided staff services to the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization for the Gainesville Urbanized Area.

**REGIONAL GOAL 5.3. MITIGATE ADVERSE IMPACTS TO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH ENROLLMENT GROWTH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA.**

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1. During the fall 2004 semester, the University of Florida had no off-campus parking areas.
2. During 2005, 542 class meetings occurred after 5:00 pm on weeknights.
3. During the fall 2004 semester, 22.0 percent of University of Florida students lived on-campus in either university housing, housing for college fraternities, or housing for college sororities.

**REGIONAL GOAL 5.4. MAXIMIZE THE USE OF THE GAINESVILLE REGIONAL AIRPORT BEFORE DEVELOPING A NEW REGIONAL AIRPORT.**

**REGIONAL INDICATOR**

In 2008, Gainesville Regional Airport experienced 84,495 itinerant airport operations.

**REGIONAL GOAL 5.5. INCLUDE RAIL LINES AND RAILROADS AS PART OF AN INTEGRATED REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CONSISTING OF THE REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK, REGIONAL AIRPORTS AND TRANSIT SERVICE PROVIDERS.**

**REGIONAL INDICATOR**

As of 2010, north central Florida had 314.8 miles of rail lines.

**REGIONAL GOAL 5.6.        REDUCE THE UNMET GENERAL TRIP DEMAND OF THE  
NORTH        CENTRAL        FLORIDA        TRANSPORTATION  
DISADVANTAGED POPULATION.**

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1.     An estimated 424,276 general demand trips, 33.2 percent of total estimated transportation disadvantaged trips, were unmet in 2005.
2.     In Fiscal Year 2008-09, 778,348 paratransit trips occurred in the region by north central Florida paratransit service providers.
3.     In Fiscal Year 2008-09, north central Florida paratransit service providers reported annual operating revenues of \$10,906,472.

**REGIONAL GOAL 5.7.        INCREASE THE PERCENTAGE OF NORTH CENTRAL  
FLORIDA RESIDENTS USING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AS  
A PRIMARY MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION.**

**REGIONAL INDICATORS**

1.     In 2000, 1.5 percent of north central Florida residents used public transportation as a primary means of travel to work.
2.     The 2007 Gainesville Regional Transit System fixed-route ridership was 8,939,334.

**RECOMMENDED MODIFICATIONS TO  
THE NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA STRATEGIC REGIONAL POLICY PLAN**

It is recommended that the Regional Transportation Element be amended to identify and map Regional Transportation Facilities located in Levy and Marion Counties. It is further recommended that the Regional Indicators be updated to include the latest available data as well as the inclusion of Levy and Marion Counties. Finally, it is recommended that Tables 5.1 through 5.16 be updated to reflect the latest available data as well as the inclusion of Levy and Marion Counties.

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## **REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

The list of regionally significant facilities and resources contained in the regional plan recognizes those regionally significant facilities and resources not identified in either the Affordable Housing, Economic Development, Emergency Preparedness, Natural Resources of Regional Significance or Regional Transportation Elements. The regional plan does not contain a map of these facilities and resources. Rather, a listing is included, base on type of facility and resource. Types of regionally significant facilities and resources consist of cultural facilities, educational institutions, electric power facilities, Florida greenways and trails, historical facilities, hospitals, landfills, natural gas transmission lines and state prisons.

In May 2015, Governor Rick Scott signed into law Senate Bill 1216 which eliminated the Withlacoochee Regional Planning Council and transferred its member counties to adjoining regional planning councils. Levy County and Marion County are now part of the north central Florida region. As part of the legislation, the Strategic Regional Policy Plan for the Withlacoochee Region remains in place for Levy and Marion Counties until such time as the two counties are incorporated into the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

It is recommended that regionally significant facilities and resources identified in the Withlacoochee Strategic Regional Policy Plan which are located in either Levy or Marion Counties be considered for inclusion in the Regionally Significant Facilities and Resources chapter of the North Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

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