CHARLOTTE INTERACTIVE GROWTH MODEL® (CIGM)

2026 Update
Results and Findings

JULY 2026

METRO FORECASTING MODELS
MFM
Precise Data | Expert Analytics | Optimal Solutions

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction **3**
Key Findings 3
Growth Trends & Forecasts **4**
Housing Construction 6
Population 9
Commercial **11**
Aggregate Commercial Demand 12
Demand for Facilities by Type 13
Future Shopping Center Map 15
Industrial **16**
Land Use Economics **17**
Economics of Industrial Land Uses **18**
Forecast Summary by Planning Cluster **24**
Babcock Ranch 24
Burnt Store Road 25
East 26
Mid 28
West 30
Conclusion & Recommendations **32**

Introduction

In 2023, Charlotte County retained Metro Forecasting Models, LLC (MFM) to develop the Charlotte Interactive Growth Model (CIGM). The purpose of developing the CIGM was to identify micro and macro development trends that are taking place in the County. The CIGM incorporates the very best available data including spatial demographics from the 2020 Census. This report is based on updated parcel data and certificates of occupancy through April 2026.

The CIGM spatially models the County's development patterns and land use changes over time. The purpose of studying the county's land uses is to measure the area's realistic growth potential and provide data for prioritizing capital improvements, transportation planning, and conducting long-range planning.

The forecast considers decades of historic census data and the Buildout potential to produce a unique growth curve for the study area. The forecast results are produced in five-year increments through Buildout. The CIGM then uses a series of algorithms to anticipate residential development and distribute it to where it is most likely to occur over time. The forecast is disaggregated into 353 spatial Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZs/zones).

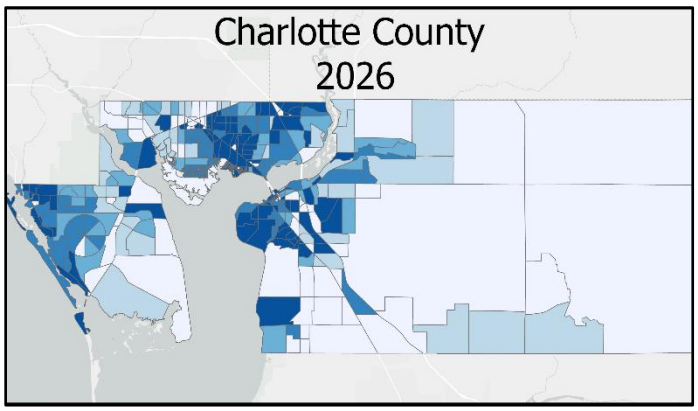
Metro Forecasting Models maintains the CIGM with guidance from staff. Housing and population forecasts can be used at the zone level. Demand for non-residential space and facilities should be considered for large areas or groups of zones. Metro Forecasting Models is available to help interpret the data and make sure it is communicated clearly.

Key Findings

- More than 26,000 new housing units and 50,000 new permanent residents have been added since 2020 in Charlotte County. This growth has impacted the Level of Service of existing facilities, thereby accelerating the need to plan for new facilities such as fire stations, parks, and libraries.
- Due to recent growth, new fire stations, parks and libraries will be needed in the near future to maintain levels of service.
- Since January 2025, Charlotte County has added 7,545 new housing units.
- The Mid Cluster experienced the strongest change in growth since 2022, accounting for 33% of all residential construction in Charlotte County.
- Babcock Ranch's population is forecasted to double by 2035, and Burnt Store Road is projected to nearly double in population over the next 10 years as entitled projects in the corridor are beginning to develop.
- Commercial building space, on a per capita basis, has declined from 70 square feet in 2023 to 63 square feet in 2025.
- Increasing the allocation of vacant industrial lands will result in greater ad valorem revenues and reduce impacts to government facilities and demand for services.

Growth Trends & Forecasts

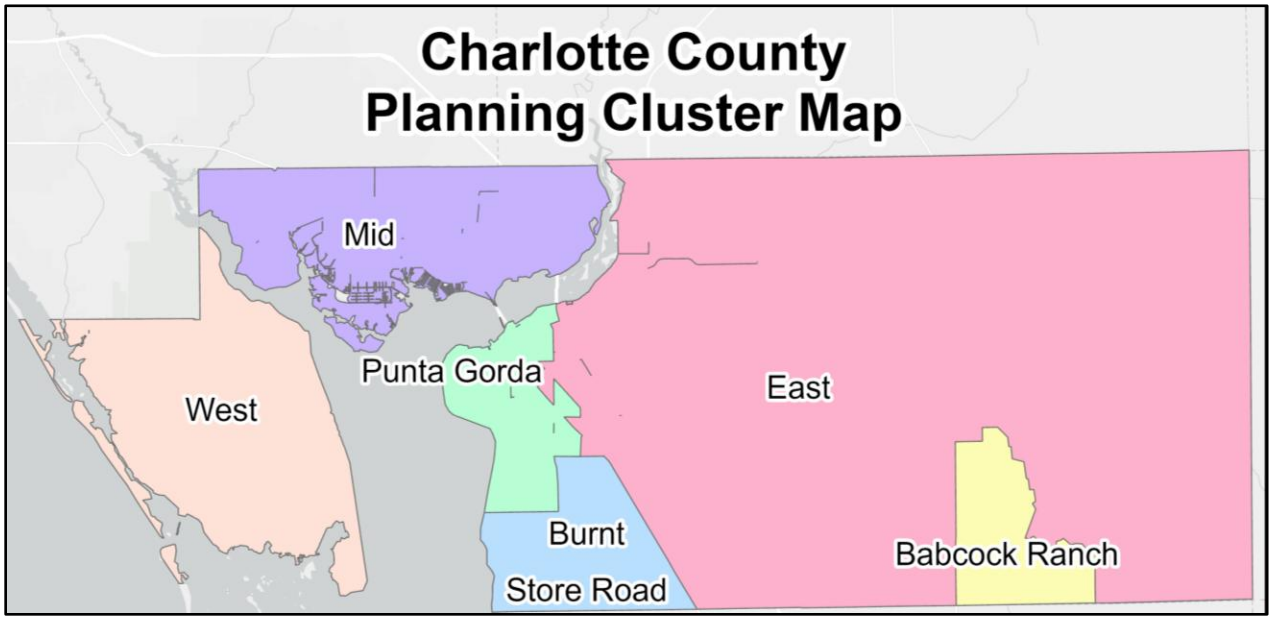
The study area consists of Charlotte County. Forecasting growth requires accurate parcel data so existing developed land can be correctly inventoried by land use, and vacant parcels can be assessed for future development potential. In 2023, MFM developed a Compatibility Analysis Tool using AI to assess the potential for future development based on the existing land uses.



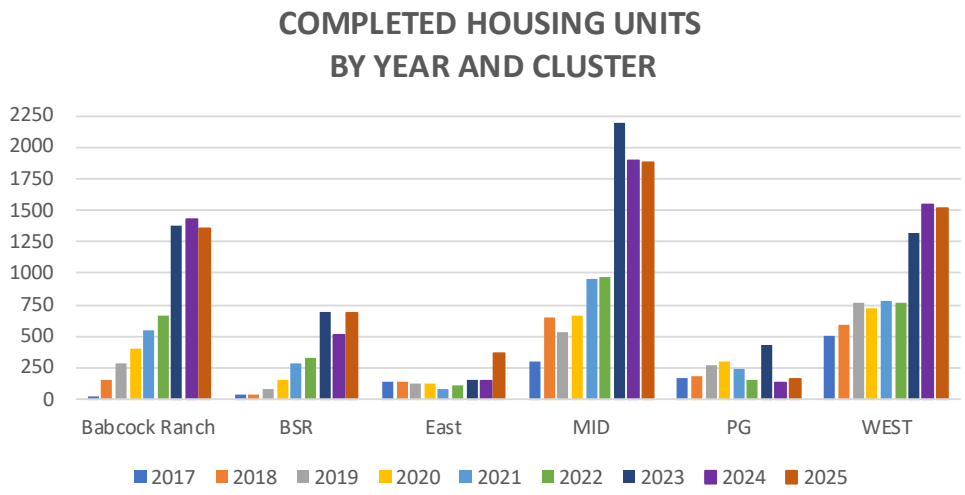
Charlotte County, Florida

Regular updating of the CIGM Baseline and Buildout data helps to identify micro and macro development trends that are taking place throughout the county. For example, the 2026 update provides a complete picture of ALL construction and development that occurred in 2025. This provides planners and policymakers opportunities to fine tune policies and make necessary adjustments to continue positive trends and curtail trends that do not benefit the county.

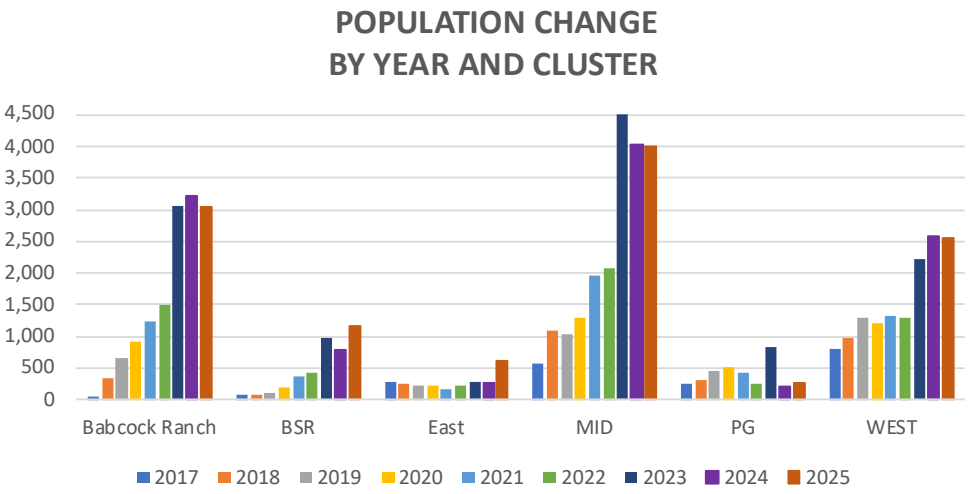
One of the challenges with data is making sense of what may first look like random numbers. To help convey the CIGM data, Charlotte County was subdivided into Planning Clusters where groups of zones (TAZs) share a common identity. Planning Clusters also help to parse and compare different areas relative to one another.



Above is a graphic showing the various Planning Clusters by geographic area. The clusters were developed using natural features, major road corridors and political boundaries.



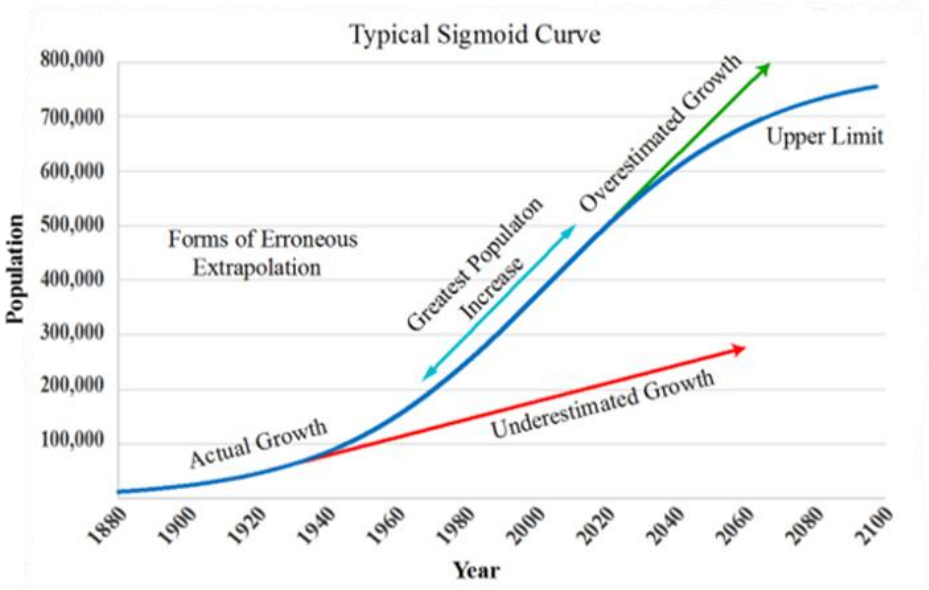
The chart above shows annual housing unit growth by Planning Cluster from 2017 through 2025. Since 2023, growth has increased significantly in the Babcock Ranch, Burnt Store Road, and Mid Planning Clusters. These areas are also positioned to support substantial growth over the next two decades. Looking ahead, the Westport area in the Mid Cluster is nearing buildout, which may slow growth as remaining platted lots are absorbed.



The chart above shows how each Planning Cluster adds permanent residents to Charlotte County each year. Because household size and seasonal vacancy rates vary by cluster, population growth does not always mirror housing growth. For example, Babcock Ranch and the West Cluster have similar housing increases, but their population growth differs: Babcock Ranch adds about 3,000 permanent residents annually, while the West Cluster adds about 2,500.

Housing Construction

Growth and development are complex. There are a multitude of variables that can influence growth, such as socioeconomic factors, demographics, and land use policies/ regulations. Recent historic growth is only a minor indicator of how the population will increase in the future. Counties and Cities do not grow consistently through time.

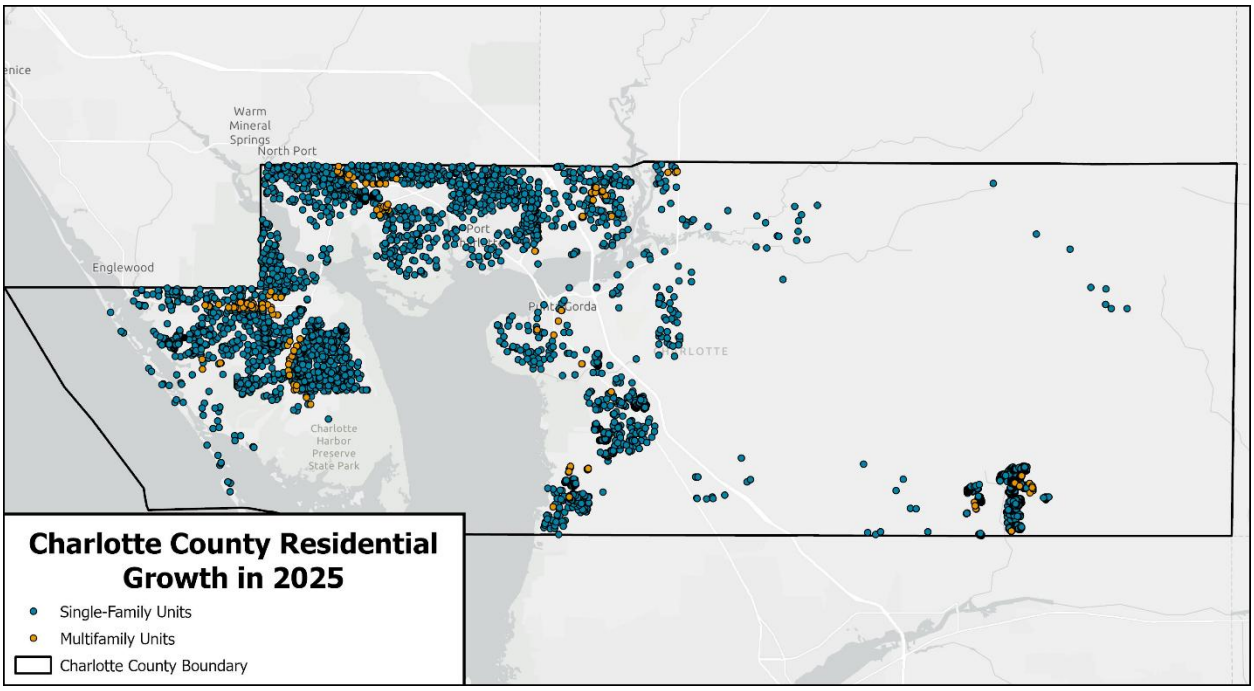


Example Population Growth Curve: Linear Projections vs. Non-Linear Regression

The graphic above shows how in places where growth is just beginning, linear projections (in red) would miss the mark, underestimating growth and failing to plan for the community's needs. In more developed communities, linear projections overestimate growth (in green) and can cause millions of dollars in ambitious yet unnecessary infrastructure development. The IGM uses non-linear regression to connect the Baseline and Buildout conditions and determine the future growth potential based on the study area's unique development characteristics.

For the Baseline analysis, the number of housing units was verified by comparing the Property Appraiser parcel datasets to other known sources of information, including: the 2020 Census, GIS address points, permit data, aerial photography and parcel-specific research. The property appraiser data was organized to produce a 2026 Baseline inventory of housing by type: single family and multifamily. Certificate of Occupancy (CO) data was also used to verify completion of new housing units.

Analysis of the 2026 baseline housing inventory compared to the October 2025 housing baseline indicated 1,600 parcels were coded as single family homes but were vacant in October 2025. This caused the October 2025 analysis to overstate the number of new single family homes. MFM used the county's CO data to correct the land use codes in the parcel data.



The map above shows where new housing units, by type, were constructed in 2025.

MFM analyzed the new housing units constructed in 2025 by zone clusters: in Babcock Ranch there were 1,106 new single-family units and 250 new multifamily units, Burnt Store Road (BSR) saw 562 new single-family units and 118 multifamily units. There are 353 new single-family units and 8 multifamily units in the East cluster, in Mid there were 1,401 new single-family units and 476 new multifamily units, in Punta Gorda (PG) there were 139 new single-family units and 25 new multifamily units, lastly there was 1,349 new single-family units and 162 new multifamily units in the West cluster.

Total new units in 2025:

- Total single-family units (SF): 4,910
- Total multifamily units (MF): 1,039

Distribution of new housing units as a percentage of all housing constructed in 2025 by cluster:

- Babcock Ranch: 23% SF and 24% MF
- BSR: 11% SF and 11% MF
- East: 7% SF and 1% MF
- Mid: 29% SF and 46% MF
- PG: 3% SF and 2% MF
- West: 27% SF and 16% MF

As of April 2026, 1477 single family and 119 multifamily units have received COs this year.

To develop the Buildout database, parcels which could realistically host future housing units (including agriculture and mixed-use) were considered in the residential Buildout analysis. The average/most realistic outcome was applied for residential density based on Zoning and Future Land Use Policy. The analysis used the average achieved densities for each land use and only applied maximum density where it will realistically occur.

Geospatial layers were applied to account for the actual drivers of growth such as vacant land, zoning, housing demand, environmental factors, and proximity to arterial roadways and public utilities. Interviews and discussions were conducted with County planning staff to learn of significant proposed projects and gather input on how larger vacant tracts may develop over time.

Then, data from a variety of sources, including future land use, zoning, proximity to existing development, proximity to utility and road infrastructure, wetland characteristics, and historic growth was used to forecast the amount, location, and timing of future residential development.

Housing Forecast							
	2026	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	9995
Babcock Ranch	6,675	11,475	15,132	16,801	17,606	17,980	18,291
Burnt Store Road	4,873	6,294	8,183	10,408	11,861	13,403	20,486
East	12,664	14,082	15,098	16,255	17,657	18,970	40,791
Mid	58,833	61,385	64,697	68,245	71,629	76,041	101,738
Punta Gorda	14,907	15,470	16,041	16,419	16,737	17,018	19,159
West	37,877	39,992	42,264	44,848	47,885	50,936	77,995
Sum	135,829	148,698	161,415	172,976	183,375	194,348	278,460

Charlotte County Housing Forecast by Cluster

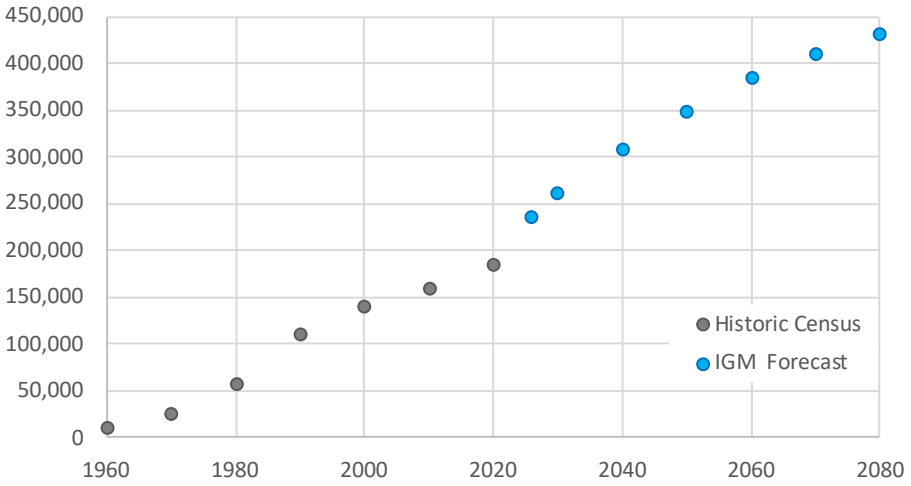
The table above presents the forecast for Charlotte County, by planning cluster, in five-year increments. The year 9995 represents Buildout. The parcel data was updated in April 2026, including the incorporation of CO data to ensure the counts of housing units are accurate.

At Buildout, the study area has the potential for nearly 278,460 housing units, more than double the existing number of housing units in 2026. Between 2026 and 2030, the forecast shows an increase of nearly 13,000 housing units. Analysis of the housing unit forecast through 2030 indicates 84% will be new single family homes and 16% will be multifamily units. Spatial analysis of the forecast shows between 2026 and 2030 approximately 20% of new housing units will be in the Murdock/West Port area (Mid cluster), 37% will be in the Babcock Ranch, 16% will be in the West and the Burnt Store Road corridor will receive 11% of all units.

Population

To determine population, the IGM uses the Housing Unit Method, which applies household demographics to the number of housing units. This means the population estimate and forecast are sensitive to changes in household demographics. Areas that are nearly built out, such as the City of Punta Gorda, will likely see small demographic characteristics change over time.

However, areas that have significant growth potential such as the Burnt Store Road and Babcock Ranch clusters may see an influx of residents with different household demographics. For example, the Burnt Store Road cluster presently has many seasonal residents whereas at Buildout the resident makeup may be less seasonal and include more children. The spatial demographics used in the CIGM are derived from the 2020 Census block group data.



	Historic Census	IGM Forecast
1950	4,286	
1960	12,594	
1970	27,559	
1980	58,460	
1990	110,975	
2000	141,627	
2010	159,978	
2020	186,847	
2026		237,982
2030		263,451
2040		309,860
2050		349,354
2060		384,971
2070		411,695
2080		431,512
Buildout		503,441

Charlotte County Historic and Forecasted Population

The graph above shows the historic and forecasted population of Charlotte County. The gray points demonstrate the population according to the decennial US census from 1960-2020. Since 2010, Charlotte County's permanent population has grown by 48% as of April 2026 and 27% since the 2020 Census.

The blue points show the County's forecasted population growth according to the CIGM. Charlotte County will reach the inflection point before 2030 when the population will be halfway to buildout. After the inflection point, the growth will still be positive, but the rate will begin to decline. By 2030, the CIGM forecasts Charlotte County will grow by an additional 25,469 residents for a population of approximately 263,000 people. Charlotte County has an updated Buildout potential of approximately 503,000 residents.

The parcel data was updated in April 2026 and CO data was used to confirm every new housing unit since October of 2025. According to the CIGM, the Charlotte County permanent population grew from 186,847 residents in the 2020 Census to 237,982 as of April 2026 (a 4.1% annualized growth rate). Growth since June 2023, when the first CIGM was developed, is over 36,000 new permanent residents which is a 5.6% annualized increase. To put the last 3 years into perspective, Charlotte County historical annualized growth since 1990 has ranged from 1.3%-2.8%.

Population Forecast							
	2026	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	9995
Babcock Ranch	14,996	25,782	33,991	37,730	39,530	40,367	41,060
Burnt Store Road	7,720	9,966	12,942	16,412	18,824	21,393	34,789
East	23,606	26,085	27,869	29,934	32,471	34,866	75,011
Mid	112,631	118,022	124,969	132,416	139,443	148,240	199,786
Punta Gorda	22,482	23,487	24,482	25,070	25,548	25,972	29,156
West	56,547	60,109	63,931	68,298	73,398	78,516	123,639
Sum	237,982	263,451	288,184	309,860	329,214	349,354	503,441

Charlotte County Population Forecast by Cluster

The population forecast for Charlotte County is presented in five-year increments. The population is based on verified housing units and the most recent census demographics. The sum represents the total population projection of the county for a given year. The Buildout potential is labeled as Year 9995. Based on the location of where new residents are likely to live, careful attention is needed to ensure adequate vacant lands are allocated and available for essential goods/services including emergency services.

Between 2026 and 2030, the population is forecasted to increase by approximately 25,469 new residents. Spatial analysis of the forecast shows between 2026 and 2030 approximately 21% of new residents will live in the Murdock/West Port area (Mid cluster), 42% will live in Babcock Ranch, and 14% will live in the Rotonda area (West cluster). The Burnt Store Road corridor will be home to 9% of new residents by 2030.

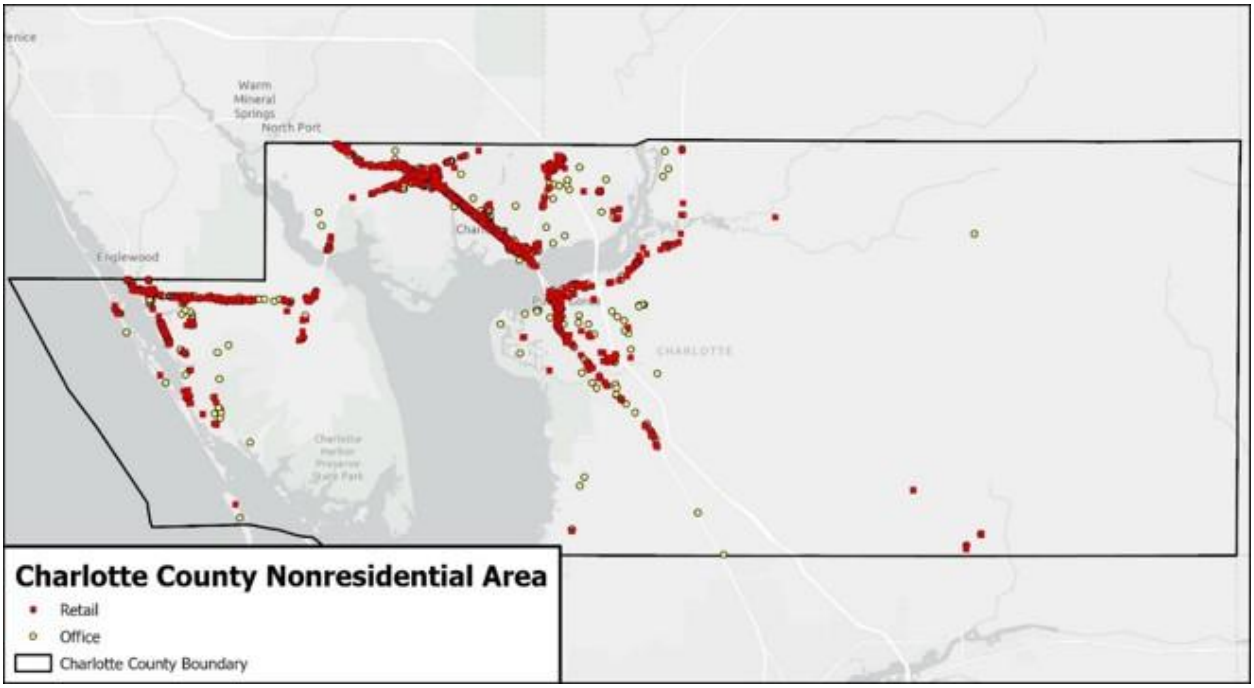
The relationship between population and housing units throughout the county is not linear. This is due to differences in household demographic characteristics. For example, in the Housing section of this report projects the Burnt Store Road Cluster is projected to receive 11% of housing units but just 9% of the population by 2030. The household sizes are smaller in the Burnt Store Road area than in other parts of the county. The seasonal vacancy rate is also higher in the Burnt Store Road area than other areas. These two traits account for the increase in housing units to be greater than the rate of increase in population.

Commercial

The basis of the Commercial analysis is parcel data obtained from the Charlotte County Property Appraiser in April 2026. The Property Appraiser Parcel Data was joined with State Parcel Data to verify the existing commercial building areas. The analysis began with reviewing and updating the Baseline data to identify non-residential land uses by parcel using GIS. Baseline non-residential uses were organized by type including commercial retail, office, industrial, government and institutional.

Then, the commercial Buildout analysis was updated using vacant land with the potential to develop as commercial. Approved petitions with commercial entitlements were provided and incorporated into the update. Vacant commercial land was identified based on zoning, future land use, proposed projects, parcel-specific research, and interviews. The analysis also incorporated data on wetlands, parcel geometry, and aerial photography. Developed parcels were assessed for their average Floor Area Ratio (FAR), or square feet of building area per acre. On average, excluding outliers, retail land uses achieved an average FAR of 0.1526 or 7,954 square feet per acre. Parcels with office uses had an average FAR of .1775 or 7,732 square feet per acre. To estimate the Buildout of future uses, these FAR factors were applied to commercial land to produce the Buildout commercial building areas at the parcel level.

Existing Commercial Land Use Distribution Maps



The map above shows the existing commercial uses (red and yellow dots) parcel locations as of April 2026.

The distribution of the commercial uses follows the arterial and collector travel routes throughout the county. An observation based on these maps is the concentration of commercial uses in the Punta Gorda, Mid and West Clusters.

This map is also useful to identify areas of the county that have fewer commercially developed parcels. In areas where recent population growth has occurred, such as Babcock Ranch and the West Cluster, there is likely pent-up demand for new commercial development. The Burnt Store Road corridor will likely see new commercial development as new homes are completed and occupied. Concentrations of population should have essential goods and services near them to reduce the length of car trips to the stores and service providers.

Aggregate Commercial Demand

To project future demand for goods and services from 2030 through 2090, the CIGM forecasts commercial demand in both square feet and acres. The forecast is based on spatial factors that measure commercial building area per resident and uses a commercial base factor derived from existing commercial uses in the Baseline data.

The CIGM parcel data was updated in April 2026 with new non-residential uses. In 2023, Charlotte County had approximately 70 square feet of commercial space per resident; by 2026, that figure had declined to 63 square feet per resident. This indicates that population growth is outpacing commercial development, a trend likely to continue through 2030 until growing areas can economically support additional commercial centers.

Because commercial development has lagged since 2010, the CIGM data indicates Charlotte County will need approximately 3.3 million square feet of additional commercial building area between 2026 and 2030 to meet unmet demand. This demand includes shopping centers, employment centers, miscellaneous retailers, and service providers. Presently, the commercial demand is being met by Sarasota and Lee counties in the form of consumer spending leakage.

Planning for future commercial development is essential to maintaining quality of life, reducing trip lengths, and minimizing traffic congestion. Even where vacant land is available, the County must ensure that enough contiguous land is reserved for commercial nodes such as shopping centers and employment centers.

Without adequately sized commercial sites, development may shift toward inefficient strip commercial patterns. While strip centers can meet some resident needs, their limited scale can increase trips to urbanized areas, reduce future employment opportunities, and add congestion on major corridors. For this reason, future shopping centers should be planned by both location and overall commercial need.

Demand for Facilities by Type

Shopping centers are classified by type: Neighborhood, Community, and Regional. The characteristics of these shopping centers vary by location. For instance, neighborhood shopping centers in Florida tend to be large, suburban style grocery stores with a combination of commercial retail, office/services, and drive-thru out-parcels (gas, fast food, banks). However, neighborhood shopping centers in North Carolina tend to be smaller, with only a grocery store and a few adjacent services. For this reason, the CIGM uses a study area's unique commercial factors to forecast future demand. The Baseline data has been used to identify the shopping centers in the study area and determine their average size and persons per shopping center. The shopping center types and their general characteristics are described below.

Neighborhood: Neighborhood shopping centers range in size from 60,000-150,000 square feet and occupy 6-20 acres, with an average of 12 acres. These centers usually serve clusters of neighborhoods and their daily needs. The study area has 12 neighborhood shopping centers. The most common commercial anchors are grocery stores such as Publix, Winn-Dixie, and ALDI. Neighborhood shopping centers also include ancillary retail and office uses which serve residents' daily/weekly needs, such as nail salons, gas stations, fast food/takeout, and gyms. In 2023 the study area had a population of 201,000 people, implying each neighborhood shopping center serves a population of approximately 15,526 people. This service area population is consistent with many locations across South and Central Florida.

Community: Community shopping centers range from 151,000-400,000 square feet and 25-60 acres, with the average being 38 acres. There are 5 community shopping centers in Charlotte County. Typical shopping center anchors include major department stores, such as Walmart, Target, and other destination retail locations. A destination retail location is a hub which attracts trips from residents looking for something specific, outside of their regular shopping habits (groceries, etc.). In Charlotte County, each community shopping center serves a population of approximately 33,639 people.

Regional: Regional shopping centers range in size from 401,000-1 million square feet and 60-200 acres, with the average being 100 acres. Regional shopping centers may take the form of enclosed shopping malls, outlet malls, or a collection of community shopping centers that collectively function as a regional retail hub. Modern regional shopping centers are typically master-planned walkable outlet malls or oversized community shopping centers with a combination of uses. A continuing trend in Florida is horizontally mixing multifamily uses with existing Regional centers to increase foot traffic for vendors/retailers and enhance access to desired uses for on-site residents. Regional shopping centers typically serve a population of approximately 150,000 people. The Port Charlotte Town Center meets the county's existing need for a Reginal Shopping Center.

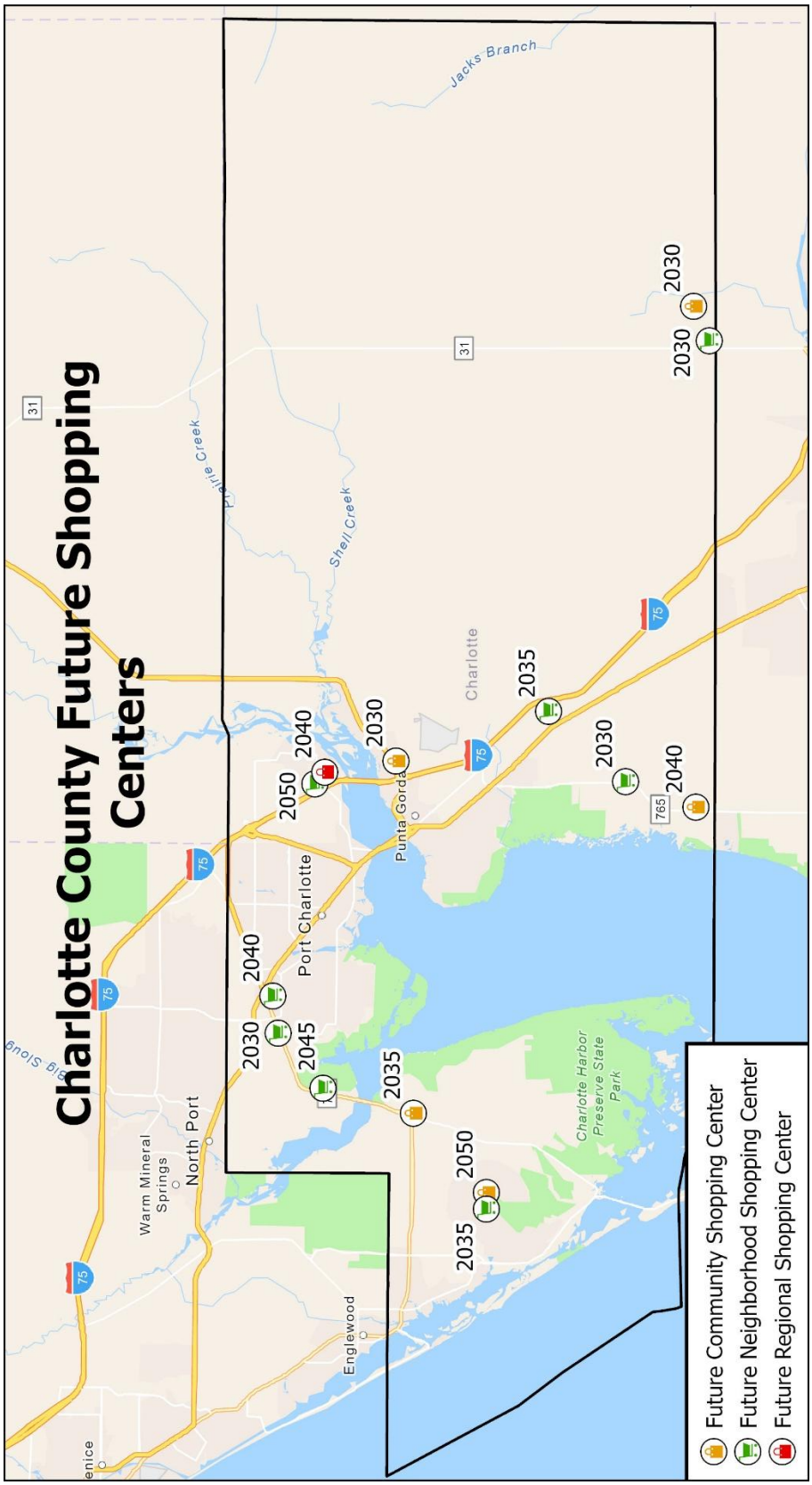
The table below demonstrates the demand for shopping centers by type and planning area in five-year increments. The table shows the percentage of the demand, by type, for one new shopping center. Negative percentages mean the cluster is "oversupplied" and likely indicates people from outside the area are getting their needs met in the cluster. This analysis is meant to provide a general metric for gauging if there is enough commercial land in each area to meet local demands.

New Shopping Center Demand							
		2030	**2035**	**2040**	**2045**	**2050**	**9995**
Babcock Ranch	Neighborhood	47%	117%	151%	162%	166%	167%
	Community	68%	100%	116%	121%	123%	123%
	Regional	15%	22%	26%	27%	28%	28%
Burnt Store Road	Neighborhood	56%	93%	124%	136%	143%	222%
	Community	27%	44%	57%	63%	64%	103%
	Regional	6%	9%	13%	14%	15%	24%
East	Neighborhood	41%	52%	59%	69%	80%	338%
	Community	63%	71%	74%	79%	82%	203%
	Regional	8%	11%	13%	13%	14%	45%
Mid	Neighborhood	163%	211%	251%	289%	321%	695%
	Community	50%	76%	89%	110%	125%	295%
	Regional	-28%	-23%	-19%	-13%	-11%	32%
Punta Gorda	Neighborhood	-24%	-11%	-4%	7%	13%	36%
	Community	-24%	-18%	-13%	-7%	-5%	12%
	Regional	17%	18%	19%	20%	22%	23%
West	Neighborhood	-27%	6%	40%	75%	115%	399%
	Community	73%	89%	101%	120%	137%	271%
	Regional	35%	39%	42%	48%	50%	77%
Sum Neighborhood		**3**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**19**
Sum Community		**3**	**4**	**4**	**5**	**5**	**10**
Sum Regional		**0**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**2**

As future large-scale residential projects are proposed, it is imperative there is enough land allocated to support commercial uses. Notable changes in demand for neighborhood centers include a new one in Babcock Ranch between 2030-35 and another center in the Burnt Store Road corridor before 2035. The Mid Cluster has a new neighborhood center (Publix) planned by 2030. The forecast shows that even with that new center open, another new center will be economically viable before 3035. These new centers will add to quality of life and reduce trips/congestion in the urbanized areas.

By 2050, the county will have enough population to support 8 new neighborhood shopping centers. Since neighborhood shopping centers are 12 acres on average, there should be enough sites with 10-20 acres each for future neighborhood shopping centers (20 1-acre parcels are not the equivalent of 1 20-acre parcel). The county also has demand for 5 additional community shopping centers by 2050. The development of the Harborview DRI with commercial entitlements of 820,000 will help to meet the demand for another regional center in 2040.

Future Shopping Center Map



Industrial

Industrial is considered differently than commercial retail and office. Commercial retail and office uses are influenced by personal demand from residents. However, industrial uses are influenced by county policy and the desire to balance the local economy and ad valorem revenues. Some industrial uses are necessary to support local needs, particularly for construction uses and employment opportunities. Most industrial uses are not driven by local demand but businesses that store or manufacture goods for the region. Industrial uses should be planned near transportation corridors, which can support freight traffic.

The Baseline industrial database was updated in April 2026 with new industrial development. In 2026, Charlotte County has 7.1 million square feet of industrial uses, approximately 500,000 more than the prior update in October 2025. The Baseline supply of industrial building area has remained steady at 30 square feet of building area per resident. The parcel data was queried to determine likely industrial uses, then reviewed using parcel attributes and aerial photography. On average, industrial development in the county has an average Floor Area Ratio of 0.165 or 7,187 square feet per acre, excluding outliers.

The Buildout analysis measures the potential for industrial land based on existing available vacant land and land use policies. This analysis indicates the amount of vacant industrial land is sufficient at Buildout to increase the current per capita industrial supply from 30 to 40 square feet per resident. The average FAR of developed industrial parcels was analyzed to forecast the amount of industrial building area per acre. Industrial demand is forecasted based on the increase in population. The table below shows the incremental increase of industrial building and land area if the county were to maintain its existing industrial ratio. By 2030, the county could support an additional 1 million square feet or 147 acres of industrial development.

Industrial Demand							
		2030	**2035**	**2040**	**2045**	**2050**	**9995**
Babcock Ranch	Sqft Building	346,238	630,990	781,052	869,138	928,379	1,196,269
	Ac Land	48	88	109	121	129	166
Burnt Store Road	Sqft Building	76,619	180,442	304,137	396,655	498,769	1,161,890
	Ac Land	12	27	44	56	71	161
East	Sqft Building	99,403	180,846	271,336	378,119	484,921	2,298,162
	Ac Land	18	28	43	58	71	323
Mid	Sqft Building	276,447	609,298	956,108	1,288,871	1,696,850	4,640,668
	Ac Land	38	87	129	178	240	641
Punta Gorda	Sqft Building	52,996	106,956	146,572	181,211	215,516	497,401
	Ac Land	7	14	18	26	29	68
West	Sqft Building	165,082	343,599	539,145	759,875	991,223	3,263,287
	Ac Land	24	53	75	105	138	459
Sum Sqft Building		**1,016,785**	**2,052,131**	**2,998,350**	**3,873,869**	**4,815,657**	**13,057,676**
Sum Ac Land		**147**	**297**	**418**	**544**	**678**	**1,818**

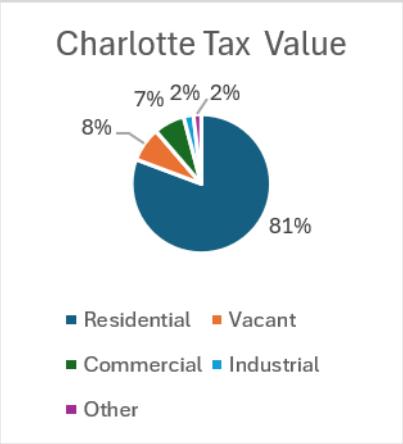
Charlotte County Industrial Demand Forecast by Area

Land Use Economics

In November 2026, Florida voters will decide if homestead exemptions should be increased from $50,000 to $150,000 in 2027 and increased again in 2028 to $250,000. This property tax referendum has the potential to influence the County's long-term fiscal capacity and its ability to provide essential public services. Regardless of the outcome, the measure highlights the importance of maintaining a resilient and sustainable tax base. A community's financial health depends not only on residential development but also on a balanced mix of commercial, industrial, institutional, and tourism-related land uses that collectively generate employment opportunities, diversify revenue sources, and help support the infrastructure and services residents expect.

Land use decisions shape Charlotte County's economic and fiscal future for decades to come. While residential growth increases demand for public facilities and services, strategically planned non-residential development helps offset those costs by expanding the tax base, creating jobs, and strengthening the local economy. Preserving an appropriate balance among land uses is therefore essential to maintaining fiscal sustainability, supporting economic resilience, and ensuring that future growth enhances both the quality of life for residents and the County's long-term financial stability.

The chart to the right shows the percentage of taxable value Charlotte County received by land use. Note that residential land uses make up the majority of the taxable value at 81%. Vacant land provides the next highest percentage at 8%. Vacant land represents opportunity to increase non-residential where compatibility is not an issue. Vacant land surrounding the Punta Gorda Airport has the greatest potential to support future commercial and industrial development, resulting in increased non-residential taxable value within Charlotte County.



The table below shows the breakdown of 2024/25 taxable value by land use for Charlotte, Lee, Martin and Sarasota counties. Taxable value is the assessed value with exemptions removed. Commercial and industrial uses reduce the cost burden to pay for law enforcement, public safety, parks, and county facility operation and maintenance. Charlotte County has a lower percentage of property tax revenue from commercial and industrial uses than Lee or Sarasota counties.

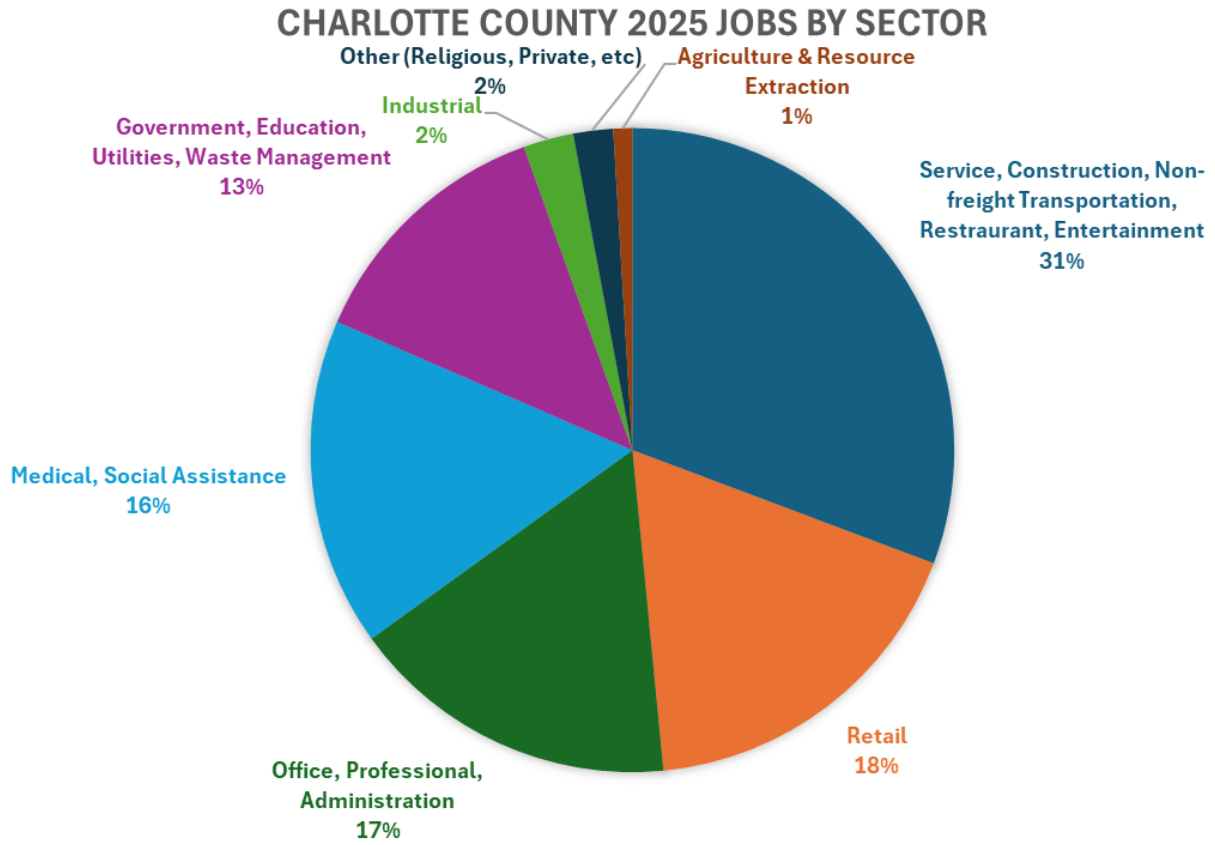
Taxable Value by Land Use FY-2024/25						
County	Total	Residential	Vacant	Commercial	Industrial	Other
Charlotte	$ 32,738,657,590	81%	8%	7%	2%	2%
Lee	$ 141,864,078,027	83%	5%	8%	3%	1%
Martin	$ 35,413,900,113	78%	8%	8%	3%	3%
Sarasota	$ 106,278,057,575	84%	3%	9%	2%	2%

Economics of Industrial Land Uses

The buildout analysis of Charlotte County indicates it will someday be home to over 503,000 permanent residents. With the April 2026 estimated population being 237,982, the county is nearly halfway built out. As the county continues to grow and develop, vacant land where more economically active land uses can be placed is becoming scarce. Vacant land is a valuable resource that allows policymakers to foster a balanced economy where businesses and industries meaningfully contribute to the fiscal tax base.

A balanced community requires diverse land uses for a broad tax base, employment opportunities and provisions for goods and services. To meet the needs of future residents, the proper apportionment of land uses and their spatial distribution is necessary to plan for a well-balanced community. This future community will include public facilities that provide adequate levels of service, helping to ensure a high quality of life for both residents and visitors. Key land uses—including residential, commercial, industrial, and public facilities—and their distribution throughout the County play a critical role in shaping community character, supporting economic vitality, and maintaining quality of life.

Industrial development in the past was commonly perceived as smokestack industries that degraded our environment and quality of life. Today, industrial development is characterized as technological and research parks with a campus atmosphere for manufacturing, distribution, and business services.



Multiplier Impact of Industrial Development

A significant portion of industrial land uses are not directly needed by the local population. By and large, the warehouses and manufacturing facilities supply materials and goods needed regionally. Cheney Bros, Inc (CBI) is an excellent example of an industrial use that supports other businesses (restaurants and food service) in many counties in southwest Florida. Serving a regional supplier is one of the features that make industrial development ideal for adding to the local economy without meaningfully increasing local government costs.

Industrial uses are also known for their "multiplier effect" meaning for every job at a local facility, other jobs are also created. Using CBI as an example, CBI's presence creates many additional indirect jobs in the form of vehicle maintenance, equipment/forklift maintenance, various trades to maintain the building HVAC, plumbing and electrical systems. The employees that work at CBI also use their disposable income in Charlotte County, adding the need for even more jobs.

The table below shows various industrial uses and the number of indirect jobs as a result of the direct employment. The data in this table is from the Economic Policy Institute, a thinktank that studies employment and relationships between businesses.

Industry Group	Direct Jobs	Indirect Jobs	Multiplier
Mining	100	390	3.90
Durable Manufacturing	100	744	7.44
Nondurable Manufacturing	100	514	5.14
Wholesale	100	235	2.35
Warehousing and Transportation	100	276	2.76

Source: Economic Policy Institute 2019

The multipliers in the table above range from 2.35 to 7.44 with the average being 4.32. Regardless of the industrial group listed, all have significant multipliers that increase employment where they are based and the region they serve. Industrial development is an employment generator that helps build strong economies.

Fiscal Impacts of Industrial Development

How land is developed impacts both government revenues and expenses. Residential projects create most of the demand for government services and facilities including parks, schools and fire stations. Industrial and other non-residential land uses pose negligible impacts to government facilities and general governmental expenses while providing significant revenues in the form of ad valorem taxes.

Agricultural land uses are similar to industrial land uses in terms of impacts to government facilities and need for public safety services. However, agricultural land uses tend to be fiscally neutral in that they generate low ad valorem revenues while imposing minimal expenses for county government. The average assessment for "vacant" farmland with agricultural zoning is less than $300 per acre.

As the number of housing units are developed/constructed, the population grows along with a demand for traditional government services and facilities. While household demographics vary throughout the county, the incremental demand for services per housing unit is generally the same. To illustrate this point, imagine a pre-platted area in Port Charlotte that has 100 homes, then imagine an area east of SR17 with 100 low density ranchettes. Both areas have the same number of housing units and produce generally the same impacts to government services and facilities. However, a significant difference is the values assessed on a per acre basis. The pre-platted lots with homes occupy approximately 29 acres with an average assessed value per acre is $545,000 whereas the rural homes occupy 189 acres with an average of $83,000 per acre.

Below are the assessed values for different industrial land uses on a per acre basis.

Land Use Description	Parcels	Acres	Assessed Value	Assessment/Acre
Light manufacturing, small equipment, manufacturing plants, small machine shops, instrument manufacturing printing plants	13	56	$ 9,095,244	$ 162,415
Lumber yards, sawmills, planing mills	3	14	$ 4,208,190	$ 300,585
Mineral processing, phosphate processing, cement plants, refineries, clay plants, rock and gravel plants	18	505	$ 16,024,959	$ 31,733
Warehousing, distribution terminals, trucking terminals, van and storage warehousing	361	782	$ 349,208,089	$ 446,558
Totals	395	1,357	$ 378,536,482	$ 278,951

Source: Charlotte PA data, Metro Forecasting Models

The average assessed value for developed industrial uses is nearly $279,000 per acre. Compared to farmland, the increase in revenues for an average developed industrial acre is about 1,000 times greater. To illustrate this point, 100 acres of farmland is assessed for $300 per acre or $30,000 in total value. The same property with developed industrial uses is likely to be assessed for nearly $27,900,000.

The average assessment for developed industrial land, on a per acres basis, is about 50% of the homes on pre-platted lots and about 300% of homes in rural subdivisions. Two key differences between the residential and industrial land uses are that first industrial land uses do not qualify for the homestead exemption and second industrial land uses do not increase the need or expenses for most county provided services. It is true that industrial land uses do occasionally need fire and law enforcement services but these costs and calls for service to public safety agencies are de minimis compared to residential land uses.

From a purely fiscal perspective, industrial land uses generate fewer expenses than residential uses and similar revenues. When agricultural lands are converted to indusial uses, the increase in revenues is substantial while impacts on expenses are negligible.

Employment Approach

The primary objective of this analysis is to determine the amount of industrial land uses (manufacturing and wholesale trade) needed to provide a more balanced tax base, employment opportunities and other economic benefits.

According to employment data from Lightcast, Charlotte County had 63,456 jobs within its boundary in 2025. Healthy economies have approximately 1 job for every 2 residents. Evidence of this includes Lee, Sarasota and Manatee counties which all have this ratio of jobs to residents. Assuming 50% of Charlotte's buildout population will be in the labor force, approximately 250,000 jobs will be needed.

As communities in Florida grow and mature, their local economies shift from agriculture and construction to manufacturing, wholesale trade, transportation and other service-based jobs. In the early to mid-stages of development, communities need a large construction work force to develop. As it approaches build-out, the construction work force decreases as a percentage of the total work force. As communities mature such as Lee, Sarasota and Manatee counties, the three largest non-government employment categories are services, retail trade and manufacturing. This demonstrates the importance of manufacturing employment for economic vitality as it replaces construction employment.

The 2024 employment data from Lightcast indicate 2.4% of employment in Charlotte County is industrial. The Lightcast industrial employment data for as Lee, Sarasota and Manatee counties is shown the table below.

County	Industrial Jobs	Total Jobs	% Industrial
Lee	12,352	332,187	3.7%
Sarasota	11,308	210,996	5.4%
Manatee	12,073	160,283	7.5%

Source: Lightcast

The employment data in the table above clearly shows that industrial employment as a percentage of employment increases as the local economy matures. The average percentage of industrial employment for the counties adjacent to Charlotte is 5.5%. To ensure the analysis is conservative, 5% will be used for benchmarking Charlotte County's future industrial employment. Applying the benchmark percentage of industrial employment to Charlotte County's buildout employment of 250,000 means approximately 12,500 industrial based jobs will be needed. In 2024 there were 1,480 industrial based jobs in Charlotte County. Therefore, the new future industrial net employment is approximately 11,020 employees.

Industrial development generally consists of the industry classification of manufacturing and wholesale trade. Having estimated the number of future industrial employees, 11,020, the required industrial building area needs to be calculated. The amount building area required to support these future employees can be estimated using Urban Land Institute case studies and standards for industrial parks of 1.13 employees per 1,000 sq. ft. of building area.

$$\frac{11{,}020\ Employees}{1.13\ Employees\ per\ 1{,}000\ Sq.Ft.} = 9{,}752{,}000\ Sq.Ft.$$

Charlotte County has enough vacant and developable industrial lands within 3 miles of I-75 and SR31 to support 8,507,000 square feet of future building area. Based on the previously calculated value of 9,752,000 required square feet of building area to provide the desired industrial employment there is a deficit of 1,245,000 square feet. As discussed in the Industrial portion of this report, industrial development in Charlotte County has an average Floor Area Ratio of 0.165, excluding outliers.

$$\frac{1{,}245{,}000\ Sq.Ft.}{0.165\ x\ 43{,}560\ Sq.Ft.per\ Acre} = 173\ Acres$$

Based on the industrial employment needed, at Buildout, Charlotte County needs at least 173 additional acres allocated for future industrial development, ideally very close to I-75 and the Punta Gorda Commercial Airport. Parcels identified for allocation to future industrial uses should be of sufficient size to accommodate buildings of at least 50,000 square feet and contiguous to other parcels that allow industrial development. This will ensure the supply of industrial parcels is large enough to host future industrial employment centers and, if necessary, parcels could be aggregated to form larger parcels for specialized manufacturing or warehousing.

Per Capita Approach

The per capita approach is based on MFM's research comparing the amount of industrial building space per resident in Charlotte County with that of other South Florida counties for which MFM maintains proprietary in-house data. Based on the database developed by MFM for the Charlotte Interactive Growth Model, Charlotte County has approximately 30 square feet of industrial building area per resident. A comparison of Charlotte County versus some other Florida counties is shown in the table below.

FLORIDA COUNTIES INDUSTRIAL SQFT PER PERSON			
Place	**Indust Sqft**	**Population**	**Sqft/Resident**
Charlotte County	6,643,524	224,147	30
Collier County	12,581,598	405,503	31
Lee County	45,364,429	819,028	55
Manatee County	36,127,228	364,171	99
Sarasota County	26,758,514	452,378	59
Seminole County	27,022,161	454,442	59
Martin County	10,273,010	161,230	64
Average			57

Source: Metro Forecasting Models

The comparative analysis shows the per capita supply of industrial building space ranges from 30 to 99 square feet with an average of 57 square feet. It is important to point out that all the counties shown in the table above still have vacant industrial land for future industrial development. Based on the buildout analysis of Charlotte's allocated industrial lands, the per capita supply at buildout is estimated to be 37 square feet.

Charlotte County could allocate more land for future industrial development to increase employment opportunities, balance the tax base and be more competitive with adjacent counties. For example, if the policymakers chose to support a goal of 45 square feet per capita, that would equate to 22.8 million square feet at buildout. The present supply of developed and vacant industrial lands will allow approximately 19.6 million square feet of building area throughout the county at buildout.

To estimate the amount of additional land that would need to be allocated for future industrial development, the Industrial FAR can be used. The table below provides a range of per capita goals for industrial uses at buildout and the number of acres that would need to be allocated from their existing land uses to industrial to achieve the goal.

Per Capita Supply	Industrial Bldg SqFt at BO	Net Increase in SqFt	Acres needed
40	20,320,000	720,000	100
45	22,860,000	3,260,000	454
50	25,400,000	5,800,000	807
55	27,940,000	8,340,000	1,160
60	30,480,000	10,880,000	1,514

Source: Metro Forecasting Models

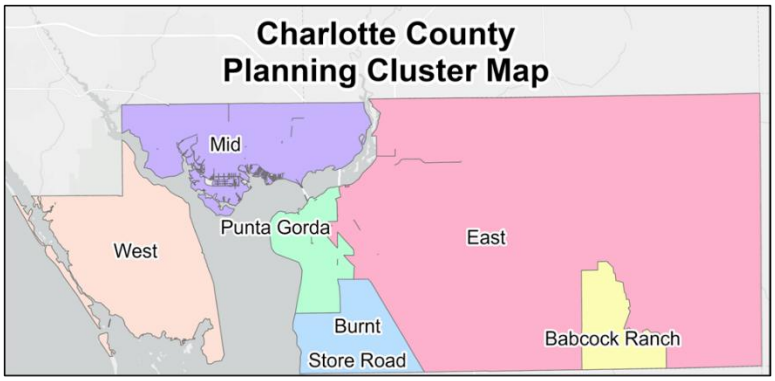
If policymakers wanted to increase the industrial lands allocation to compete with Lee County, the table above indicates a per capita supply of industrial supply of 55 square feet translates into an increase of about 1,160 acres. This increase in industrial allocation would likely increase industrial employment by 7,380.

Employment and Housing

Industrial employment centers generate employment opportunities. As more industrial projects are developed in Charlotte County, employees should have the opportunity to live in close proximity to their place of employment. From a transportation and Economic Development perspective, policymakers may want to specifically allocate housing units at such densities that would make multifamily development feasible. This would result in less congestion, fewer trips west of I75, and shorter trips to work/home for employees.

Forecast Summary by Planning Cluster
Babcock Ranch

Babcock Ranch is a large-scale master planned community and is presently comprised of two TAZs. This cluster is located east of SR31 and abuts the southern boundary of the county line shared with Lee County.



Housing & Population

As of April 2026, Babcock Ranch had 14,996 residents and 6,675 housing units, adding 1,356 new housing units and over 3,000 residents since January 2025. The demographics for this cluster are sourced from the developer due to the large size of the single block group covering much of the eastern portion of the county. The estimated household size is 2.50, the vacancy rate is 10% and the seasonal vacancy rate is unknown. Babcock Ranch is anticipated to grow into a future "town" and will ultimately provide essential goods and services as well as emergency services to residents in the southeastern area of the county. By Buildout, this cluster has the potential to increase by nearly 11,600 housing units and 26,000 residents.

Babcock Ranch								
		2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	9995	Increase
Housing & Pop	Housing	11,475	15,132	16,801	17,606	17,980	18,291	11,616
	Population	25,782	33,991	37,730	39,530	40,367	41,060	26,064
Non-Residential	Neighborhood shopping center	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
	Community shopping center	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Regional shopping center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Industrial Sqft	346,238	630,990	781,052	869,138	928,379	1,196,269	1,196,269
	Industrial Ac	48	88	109	121	129	166	166
Fire	Fire Stations	1	1	2	2	2	2	2

The table above shows the forecasts for housing, population, and non-residential demand. The forecasts for housing and population include existing development/ residents. The non-residential forecasts represent the increase in demand and do not include existing demand.

Commercial

Babcock Ranch will have over 18,000 housing units at Buildout, and a total population of 41,000 full-time residents. The eastern portion of the county had only convenience stores before a neighborhood shopping center was constructed by the developer in 2021. As the population increases the CIGM data indicates another neighborhood center may be needed before 2030 and a third center by 2045. A community shopping center will be economically feasible by 2030 as well. Existing commercial entitlements are sufficient to meet the needs of the Buildout population and the surrounding residents.

Industrial

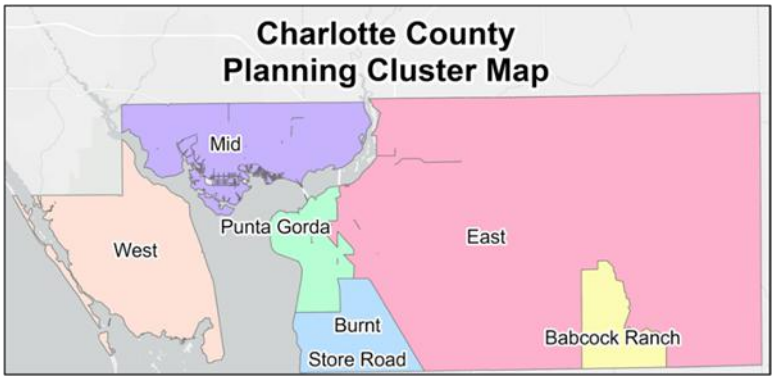
The master planned community also includes an industrial entitlement allowing for 650,000 square feet of building area. Based on the CIGM data, more land could be allocated to industrial uses in the Babcock Ranch cluster. By Buildout, there may be a shortage of industrial land allocation. Being located on SR31 with direct access to Lee and DeSoto counties, this planning cluster could be an excellent location for future employment centers and an economic hub in the county. The demand for industrial uses is forecasted to grow gradually over time in accordance with population growth.

Fire Stations

As Babcock Ranch continues to develop, a second fire station will be necessary to maintain the Level of Service. The design and location of this station will be critical as the overall project is likely to need a third station or a portion of a future station to meet resident's needs.

Burnt Store Road

The Burnt Store Road cluster contains the zones west of US41, north of Cape Coral and south of Punta Gorda. This cluster has historically been popular with seasonal residents, but the demographics may be transitioning to more permanent residents with the development of approved projects in the corridor.



Housing & Population

The Burnt Store Road cluster has approximately 4,900 housing units and 7,700 permanent residents adding 680 new housing units and nearly 1,200 residents since January 2025. The 2020 Census block group demographics show the household size is 2.03, the vacancy rate is 25.2% and the seasonal population residing in housing units is approximately 911. By Buildout, this cluster has the potential to increase to 15,600 housing units and 27,000 people. By 2035, the population will approach 13,000 residents. As existing seasonal residents choose to become permanent residents and new development in this cluster attracts new residents, traffic and congestion will likely increase.

Burnt Store Road								
		2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	9995	Increase
Housing & Pop	Housing	6,294	8,183	10,408	11,861	13,403	20,486	15,613
	Population	9,966	12,942	16,412	18,824	21,393	34,789	27,069
Non-Residential	Neighborhood shopping center	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
	Community shopping center	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
	Regional shopping center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Industrial Sqft	76,619	180,442	304,137	396,655	498,769	1,161,890	1,161,890
	Industrial Ac	12	27	44	56	71	161	161
Fire	Fire Stations	0	0	0	1	1	2	2

The table above shows the forecasts for housing, population, and non-residential demand. The forecasts for housing and population include existing development/ residents. The non-residential forecasts represent the increase in demand and do not include existing demand.

Commercial

To reduce future trips to the urban areas and trip lengths, the Burnt Store Road cluster will need at least one neighborhood by 2030 and one community shopping center by 2045. The area has large tracts of vacant land which can be designed for the optimal balance of residential and commercial land uses. It is critical that land is reserved for non-residential uses or residents will take unnecessary trips north on major corridors, increasing traffic congestion.

Industrial

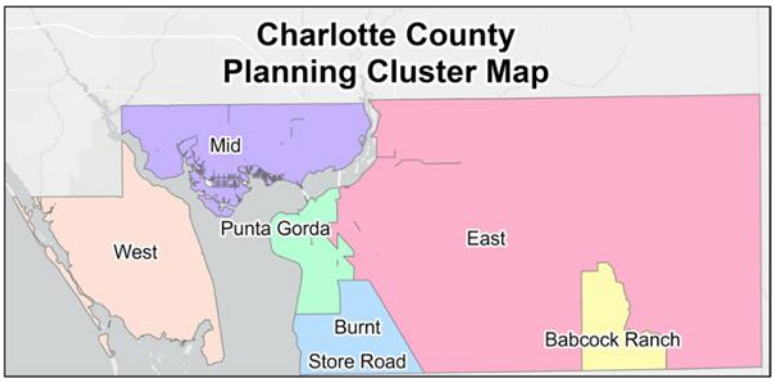
The Burnt Store Road cluster presently has 196,000 square feet of industrial type uses on 27 acres. This cluster will be able to support a modest number of industrial uses for service trades and small workshops. This cluster's need for industrial lands will be met largely outside of the cluster near the airport. The demand/design for industrial is forecasted to increase gradually over time in accordance with population growth.

Fire Stations

As the Burnt Store Road corridor continues to develop, a second fire station may be necessary to maintain the Level of Service in 2045. The design and location of this station will be important to maximize efficiency of the public safety facilities.

East

The East cluster covers the area east of US41 and the Peace River. The northern boundary is DeSoto County, and the southern boundary is Lee County. Much of the East cluster is rural in character with agricultural and conservation being the dominant land uses.



Housing and Population

As of April 2026, the East cluster had 23,600 residents and 12,700 housing units, an increase of 616 residents and 361 housing units. The 2020 Census block group demographics show the household size is 2.17, the vacancy rate is 19.3% and the seasonal population residing in housing units is approximately 2,662. At Buildout, the East cluster could host an additional 28,000 housing units and 51,000 residents. Growth anticipated in the East may be influenced by the success of Babcock Ranch and housing demand along the SR17 corridor.

East								
		2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	9995	Increase
Housing & Pop	Housing	14,082	15,098	16,255	17,657	18,970	40,791	28,127
	Population	26,085	27,869	29,934	32,471	34,866	75,011	51,405
Non-Residential	Neighborhood shopping center	1	1	1	1	1	4	4
	Community shopping center	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
	Regional shopping center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Industrial Sqft	99,403	180,846	271,336	378,119	484,921	2,298,162	2,298,162
	Industrial Ac	18	28	43	58	71	323	323
Fire	Fire Stations	0	0	0	0	1	3	3

The table above shows the forecasts for housing, population, and non-residential demand. The forecasts for housing and population include existing development/ residents. The non-residential forecasts represent the increase in demand and do not include existing demand.

Commercial

By 2035, the East Cluster is expected to support a neighborhood shopping center east of I-75, providing convenient access to essential goods and services for residents of nearby suburban developments. There is an existing demand for a Community Shopping Center in this cluster that may be accommodated by the Punta Gorda Commons project or the Willow project on Tucker's Grade. In the north and eastern portion of this cluster demand for non-residential land uses will be partially met by commercial development in Babcock Ranch and partially along SR17.

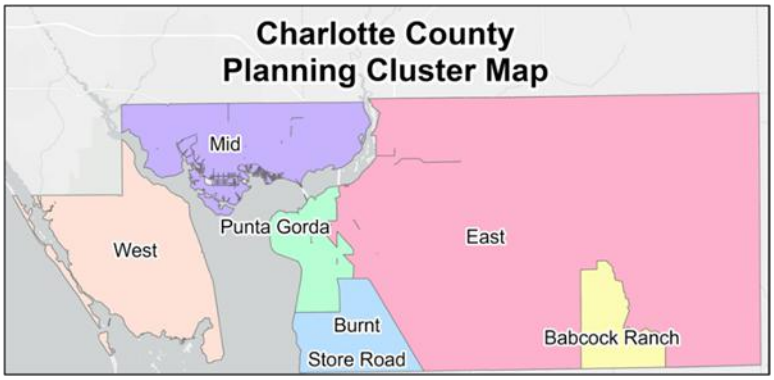
Industrial

The East cluster includes the Punta Gorda airport with nearly 900 acres of vacant land that allow future industrial uses. There are presently 2.9 million square feet of existing industrial building pace in this cluster. The areas adjacent to the Punta Gorda airport are ideal for future industrial uses and employment centers.

Fire Stations

The East cluster is not likely to need an additional fire station until development occurs north of Shell Creek along SR17.

Mid



The Mid cluster is the most active cluster, in development terms, modeled in the CIGM. This cluster contains the Port Charlotte Town Center, Murdock, and Murdock Village. The upper boundary is marked by the county's northern boundary shared with Sarasota County. The lower boundary is made up of the Myakka River and the Peace River.

Housing and Population

In April 2026, the Mid cluster had nearly 113,000 residents and 59,000 housing units. In 2025, the Mid cluster added 1877 new housing units. With over 33,000 existing platted lots entitled for single family homes, this cluster has the greatest potential for future population growth. The 2020 Census block group demographics show the household size is 2.23, the vacancy rate is 16.8% and the seasonal population residing in housing units is approximately 11,539. At Buildout, this cluster will have 102,000 housing units and 200,000 residents, similar to the 2020 Census count for the entire county. The cluster has experienced rapid growth since development started in the Murdock Village area. The Port Charlotte Town Center located in Murdock has also received approval to remove some of the commercial building area and add over 700 multifamily units to the Town Center property.

Mid								
		2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	9995	Increase
Housing & Pop	Housing	61,385	64,697	68,245	71,629	76,041	101,738	42,905
	Population	118,022	124,969	132,416	139,443	148,240	199,786	87,155
Non-Residential	Neighborhood shopping center	2	2	3	3	4	7	7
	Community shopping center	1	1	1	1	1	3	3
	Regional shopping center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Industrial Sqft	276,447	609,298	956,108	1,288,871	1,696,850	4,640,668	4,640,668
	Industrial Ac	38	87	129	178	240	641	641
Fire	Fire Stations	0	1	1	2	2	6	6

The table above shows the forecasts for housing, population, and non-residential demand. The forecasts for housing and population include existing development/ residents. The non-residential forecasts represent the increase in demand and do not include existing demand.

Commercial

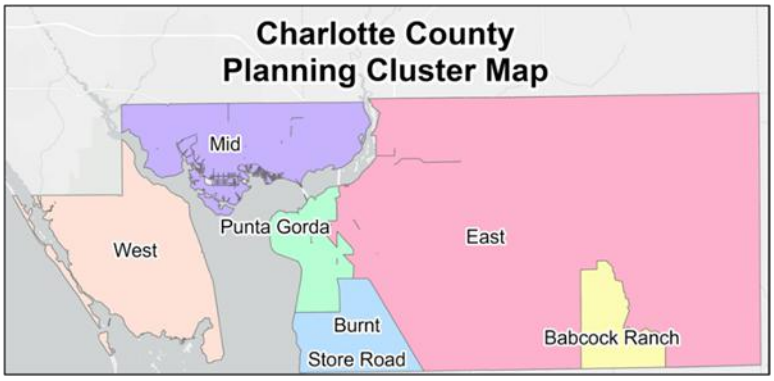
The Mid cluster provides most of the retail and office building area in the county. The diverse goods and services available make the Murdock/Town Center area a destination that attracts many residents from around the county to meet their needs. As the area continues to develop, four additional neighborhood shopping centers will be needed by 2050 in this cluster to support new residents' needs for essential goods and services.

Planning commercial nodes for these future centers now will help reduce future congestion and unnecessary trips to the Murdock area for daily needs. Policies may need to be created or adjusted to encourage aggregation of single family lots with other parcels so that contiguous tracts of vacant land can be established for these future shopping centers.

Industrial

Overall, the need for industrial building space by residents and employers will largely be met elsewhere in the county such as the vacant ECAP lands adjacent to the Punta Gorda airport. There are just over 2.3 million square feet of existing industrial building space on 337 acres in this cluster. The Mid cluster has approximately 100 acres of vacant land that allow industrial use. This will help meet future demand for construction trades, contractor services, and workshop space.

Punta Gorda



The Punta Gorda cluster is substantially developed with few large vacant parcels. The existing major corridor running through the city is US41 and I-75 is less than a mile east of the city limits.

Housing & Population

As of April 2026, the Punta Gorda cluster has approximately 14,900 housing units and 22,400 residents. This cluster has not grown significantly since the last update. The 2020 Census block group demographics show the household size is 1.92, the vacancy rate is 23.1% and the seasonal population residing in housing units is approximately 4,874. By Buildout, the Punta Gorda cluster has the potential to increase by 4,300 housing units and 6,700 residents. Much of the future development in this cluster will be single family homes on existing lots and multifamily components of mixed-use development near the City's urban core.

Punta Gorda								
		2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	9995	Increase
Housing & Pop	Housing	15,470	16,041	16,419	16,737	17,018	19,159	4,252
	Population	23,487	24,482	25,070	25,548	25,972	29,156	6,674
Non-Residential	Neighborhood shopping center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Community shopping center	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Regional shopping center	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Industrial Sqft	52,996	106,956	146,572	181,211	215,516	497,401	497,401
	Industrial Ac	7	14	18	26	29	68	68
Fire	Fire Stations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The table above shows the forecasts for housing, population, and non-residential demand. The forecasts for housing and population include existing development/ residents. The non-residential forecasts represent the increase in demand and do not include existing demand.

Commercial

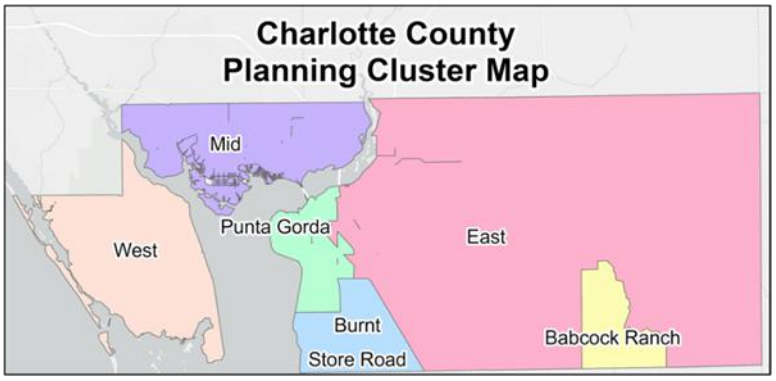
The Punta Gorda cluster provides essential goods and services for both residents living in the City of Punta Gorda and the surrounding area. Services not available in this cluster are readily available in the Mid cluster across the Peace River from Punta Gorda

Industrial

The Punta Gorda cluster has over 594,000 square feet of existing industrial building area on 132 acres. Future demand for industrial development can be accommodated on the 219 acres of vacant land that allow industrial use. Future need for additional industrial lands can be met near the airport which is in close proximity to the city.

West

The West cluster is the second most developed area in Charlotte County. This cluster includes the Rotunda area, Grove City (not incorporated), Boca Grande and Manasota Key. The northern boundary is Sarasota County, and the southern boundary is the Gulf and Charlotte Harbor.



Housing & Population

Based on the April 2026 data, the West cluster had 56,600 residents and 37,900 housing units. In 2025, this cluster added over 1,500 housing units and nearly 2,600 new residents. The 2020 Census block group demographics show the household size is 2.05, the vacancy rate is 29.8% and the seasonal population residing in housing units is approximately 14,199. By Buildout, the West cluster has the potential to more than double the existing housing units for a total of 78,000 housing units and 124,000 residents. Most of the future growth will be the development of single family homes on existing platted lots.

West								
		2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	9995	Increase
Housing & Pop	Housing	39,992	42,264	44,848	47,885	50,936	77,995	40,118
	Population	60,109	63,931	68,298	73,398	78,516	123,639	67,092
Non-Residential	Neighborhood shopping center	0	0	0	1	1	4	4
	Community shopping center	1	1	1	1	1	3	3
	Regional shopping center	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
	Industrial Sqft	165,082	343,599	539,145	759,875	991,223	3,263,287	3,263,287
	Industrial Ac	24	53	75	105	138	459	459
Fire	Fire Stations	0	1	1	2	2	5	5

The table above shows the forecasts for housing, population, and non-residential demand. The forecasts for housing and population include existing development/ residents. The non-residential forecasts represent the increase in demand and do not include existing demand.

Commercial

The West cluster has four neighborhood and one community shopping centers. As growth continues in this cluster, as many as five additional neighborhood shopping centers and three additional community shopping centers will be needed by Buildout. There is an existing demand for a community shopping center. The first new neighborhood shopping center will be needed in 2045. Planning for these future centers now will help reduce future congestion in this cluster.

Similar to the Mid cluster, the West cluster also has tens of thousands of existing platted lots and few large tracts for future shopping centers. As stated in the Mid cluster summary, policies may need to be created or adjusted to encourage aggregation of single family lots with other parcels so that contiguous tracts of vacant land can be established for these future shopping centers.

Industrial

The West cluster has 874,000 square feet of existing building space on 305 acres. There are 250 vacant industrial acres in 44 parcels. These parcels are sufficient to meet the demand by the local construction trades and storage. This cluster is fairly remote from I-75 which means it is not an ideal location for large warehouses or manufacturing facilities. These uses are better sited near the Punta Gorda airport.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The Charlotte Interactive Growth Model (CIGM) 2026 update clearly shows the pace of residential development/construction is significantly stronger since 2020 than any other period since 1990. This update also confirms Charlotte County's population is growing much faster than commercial development/construction. The supply of commercial building area per resident has declined from 70 square feet in 2023 to 63 square feet in 2026. Commercial development in key areas should be encouraged to reduce the travel lengths from where new homes are being constructed to neighborhood and community shopping centers.

The Burnt Store Road Corridor is emerging as an active development area of new projects. This corridor will need a new neighborhood shopping center before 2035. Parcels that can accommodate these future centers should be carefully monitored to ensure valuable commercial frontage is not lost to residential uses.

Charlotte County has approximately 30 square feet of industrial building area per resident. With an active Economic Development program, Charlotte County could increase the allocation of vacant industrial land and boost the industrial building area to 45 square feet per resident. Increasing industrial land allocation in Charlotte County will help to balance the local economy, provide employment centers and increase ad valorem revenues.

Key observations resulting from the study include:

- More than 26,000 new housing units and 50,000 new permanent residents have been added since 2020 in Charlotte County. This growth has impacted the Level of Service of existing facilities, thereby accelerating the need to plan for new facilities such as fire stations, parks and libraries.
- Due to recent growth, new fire stations, parks and libraries will be needed in the near future to maintain levels of service.
- Since January 2025 Charlotte County has added 7,545 new housing units.
- Commercial building space, on a per capita basis, has declined from 70 square feet in 2023 to 63 square feet in 2025. Grocery anchored Nationhood Shopping Centers will be needed in the Burnt Store Road and Mid clusters near where new homes are being built.
- Increasing the allocation of vacant industrial lands will result in greater ad valorem revenues and reduce impacts to government facilities and demand for services.
- Consider policy changes that will allow higher densities than traditional single family uses in areas near commercial centers and industrial employment centers to reduce trip lengths and increase economic activity.
- The county should continue to monitor the aggregate and spatial availability of commercial and industrial land use allocations, particularly east of US41.
- The Mid Cluster experienced the strongest change in growth since 2022, accounting for 33% of all residential construction in Charlotte County.
- Babcock Ranch's population is forecasted to double by 2035 and Burnt Store Road is projected to nearly double in population over the next 10 years as entitled projects in the corridor are beginning to develop.