

Putnam County Economic Development Strategic Plan



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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Northeast Florida has boomed – with population growth nearly doubling the national average and the economic recovery creating thousands of jobs coming out of the recent recession.

Despite abundant natural resources, a high quality of life, and numerous business opportunities, at times it has seemed that Putnam County has been left behind during this regional boom. The county lost both population and jobs, new home construction has been flat, and local schools face performance challenges.

These and other challenges – perceived and real – in Putnam County have led to negative reporting throughout Florida and the compounding of a poor image of the community to both residents and outsiders.

Recognizing the need to face these perceptions and challenges, Putnam County and State leadership worked with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) to issue a Competitive Florida Partnership grant to help Putnam County find creative solutions to foster a vibrant, healthy community.

As part of the grant, this strategic planning process provides **an important opportunity to identify these challenges, prioritize strategies to address them, and start telling a positive story about Putnam County's future.**

Key components of this process including helping:

- Facilitate development of an asset map and strategic plan tailored to Putnam County's unique strengths and challenges
- Identify opportunities and priorities to guide future economic development in Putnam County
- Create a plan of action to create jobs and enhance quality of life across the county



ABOUT THE PROJECT

This Putnam County Economic Development Strategy was created in two phases:

Phase 1: Competitive Assessment

During Phase 1, Avalanche Consulting conducted a thorough evaluation of Putnam County's competitive position.

The consulting team examined a range of local assets and statistics relative to statewide and national trends to better understand how Putnam County has performed in recent years.

During a visit to the region in February 2016, the consulting team conducted a kick off meeting, public meeting, focus groups, and interviews with 90 stakeholders, including employers, public leaders, and citizens to gain further insight into local competitive assets and challenges.

Phase 2: Economic Development Strategy

During Phase 2, Avalanche Consulting crafted an economic development strategy for the County. This provides a statement of Putnam County's vision and a set of specific goals that address critical economic development factors –

- Talent
- Infrastructure
- Business Climate & Entrepreneurship
- Marketing & Communications

Strategic priorities and implementation timeframes are identified within each category based on the needs and opportunities identified in the competitive assessment.



ABOUT THIS REPORT

Specific components of this report include:

COMPETITIVE ASSESSMENT

This section provides a comprehensive inventory of quantitative metrics analyzed to lend an objective perspective on Putnam County's strengths and challenges.

SWOT ASSESSMENT

The SWOT Assessment summarizes the County's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats across major economic development drivers—Talent & Education; Infrastructure; Business Climate; Quality of Life; and Entrepreneurship.

ASSET MAPPING SUMMARY

This section provides a summary of findings from the asset mapping exercise conducted by DEO.

VISION & GOALS

This section describes the Putnam County's economic development vision and goals in detail. Topics that are addressed include workforce and talent, infrastructure, business climate,, and marketing.

These recommendations were crafted after combining extensive stakeholder input, analyzing economic & demographic statistics, and considering national best practices.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The final section of the report contains an implementation plan. It assigns timing, responsibilities and performance metrics for each recommendation.



PROJECT PARTNERS

This Economic Development Strategy was developed by Avalanche Consulting in partnership with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Putnam County, the Putnam County Chamber, city leadership from throughout the county, and other regional partners.

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)

In collaboration with local partners, DEO assists the Governor in advancing Florida's economy by championing the state's economic development vision and by administering state and federal programs and initiatives to help visitors, citizens, businesses, and communities.

Putnam County Board of County Commissioners

The Putnam County Board of County Commissioners is the official legislative and policy making body for the county, comprised of five elected commissioners.

Putnam County Chamber

The Putnam County Chamber of Commerce is the principle leader in the promotion of commerce. Our mission is to be a creative force that promotes excellence in leadership, coordination and orderly development of business enterprise. The Putnam County Chamber of Commerce is a 4-Star Accredited Chamber by the U.S. Chamber.

Putnam County Stakeholders

Development of the Putnam County Economic Development Strategy involved interviews and focus groups with 90 stakeholders.

Avalanche Consulting, Inc.

Avalanche Consulting is the nation's premier economic development strategist. We are deeply driven to make a positive impact and seek clients who are equally inspired to energize their economies. Since it was established in 2005, Avalanche Consulting, Inc. has provided strategic planning and marketing assistance in more than 100 communities throughout the US.



PROJECT PARTNERS

Stakeholder Input

Ninety stakeholders were convened to guide development of this strategy. A kickoff meeting was held February 24th at the Board of County Commissioners meeting chamber. There was a discussion of the goals and process of the project, Putnam County's competitive position in Northeast Florida, and the project's intent to identify assets for growth and strategies to address local concerns and tell the county's story. The audience was engaged in a discussion about local assets, opportunities, concerns, and potential outcomes of the strategy.

Selected individuals were also chosen for personal interviews with Avalanche for additional information gathering. Interviewed stakeholders included city and county elected officials, business leaders, the public school superintendent, and presidents of both the community college and four-year college. These stakeholders, the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce, and other Putnam County leadership helped guide this strategic planning process through review of reports, inclusion in the Asset Mapping Exercise, and continued participation in implementation.

Regional Partnerships and Collaborations

The strategic planning process included examination of Putnam County's position within the greater Northeast Florida and Jacksonville Metro region – identifying opportunities for collaboration with the JAXUSA Partnership, educational institutions, government leadership, and other strategic partners. The Implementation Plan for this strategy includes roles for all regional partner organizations.

Public Involvement

The primary community conversation was held via public meeting. This was an advertised public meeting open to the community. 39 people participated. Avalanche Consulting engaged the community in a "Big, Bold Idea Discussion." This interactive process invited participants to discuss and share their own ideas about addressing economic development topics. Participants were asked to discuss priorities and identify tactical actions to support each priority. Participants shared these ideas on post-it notes grouped around the room.



COMPETITIVE ASSESSMENT



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following section reveals numerous positive and negative trends in Putnam County. These findings put local challenges in clear perspective through objective data analysis while also highlighting competitive strengths that will help Putnam County capitalize on new opportunities.

Some of the key themes and takeaways revealed in the following section include:

- Putnam County is a **safe place**. The number of violent and property crimes were lower in the County compared to both Florida and the Jacksonville Metro.
- Putnam County has a **higher share of small businesses** – revealing both an entrepreneurial spirit and availability of supportive resources.
- Despite a high quality of life, in recent years Putnam County has **lost both population and jobs**. Many younger residents continue to leave the county, contributing to an **aging population** in Putnam County, which has a median age of 45 – seven years above the US.
- Population losses contribute to Putnam County's **deep integration into the broader regional economy**. Nearly half of all jobs in Putnam County are filled by individuals living outside the county. Contrastingly, nearly as many residents take advantage of the lifestyle in Putnam County but work elsewhere.
- An above average share of Putnam County residents **own their homes** versus rent, but many are struggling to afford their housing – partly because household incomes are lower. This contributes to **poverty rates nearly double** the state average in Putnam County.



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Putnam County is **less racially and ethnically diverse** than state averages, but the local Hispanic population is growing. **Hispanic residents** will be critical to future economic development activities and community planning, because most other ethnic groups are losing population locally.
- Putnam County residents of all ages are **less well-educated** than national and state averages. Minority residents are less well-educated than White residents of Putnam County, but the gap between White and minority residents is actually less extreme than seen across the US and Florida.
- **Natural Resources**, which includes Agriculture, is the most concentrated industry in Putnam County and contributes to the **two largest exports** – Paper and Agriculture.
- **Manufacturing is the third largest private sector** in Putnam County, and although this sector lost jobs in recent years, it pays the highest local salaries and also contributes to exports seen in Paper, Computer & Electronic Products, Chemicals, and more.
- **Government** remains the largest industry sector in Putnam County – indicating an opportunity for greater private sector diversity.



Population Growth

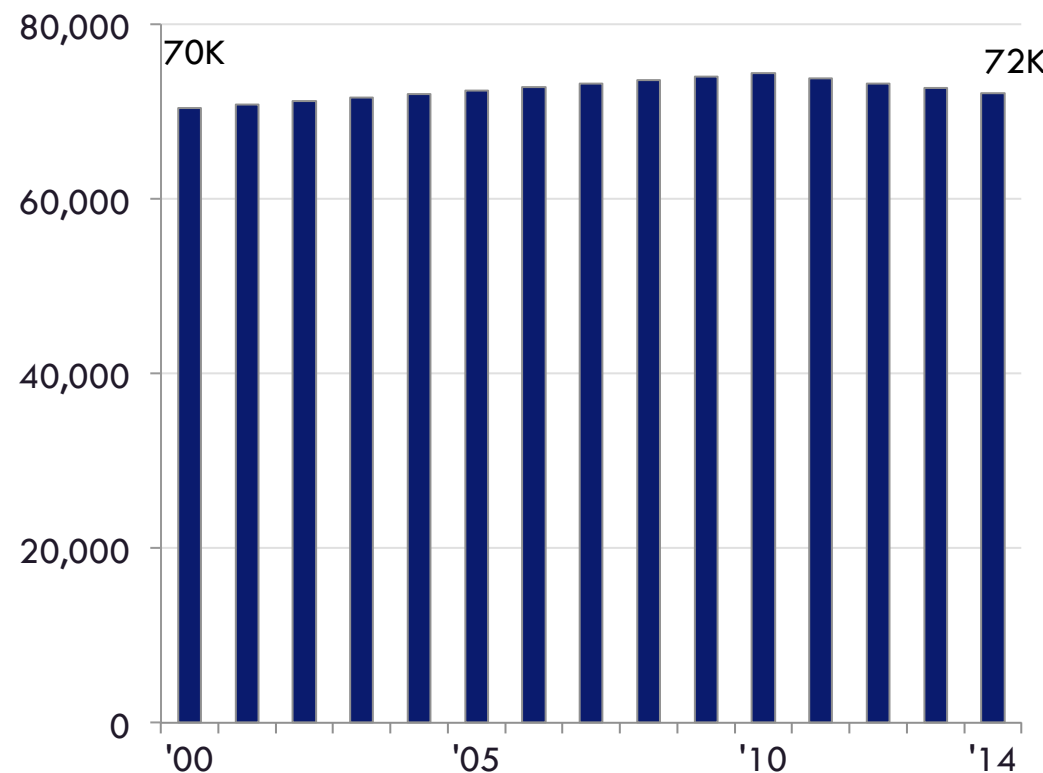
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

From 2000 to 2010, the population of Putnam County was growing – if more slowly than the US and Florida – but since 2010 the county has steadily lost population.

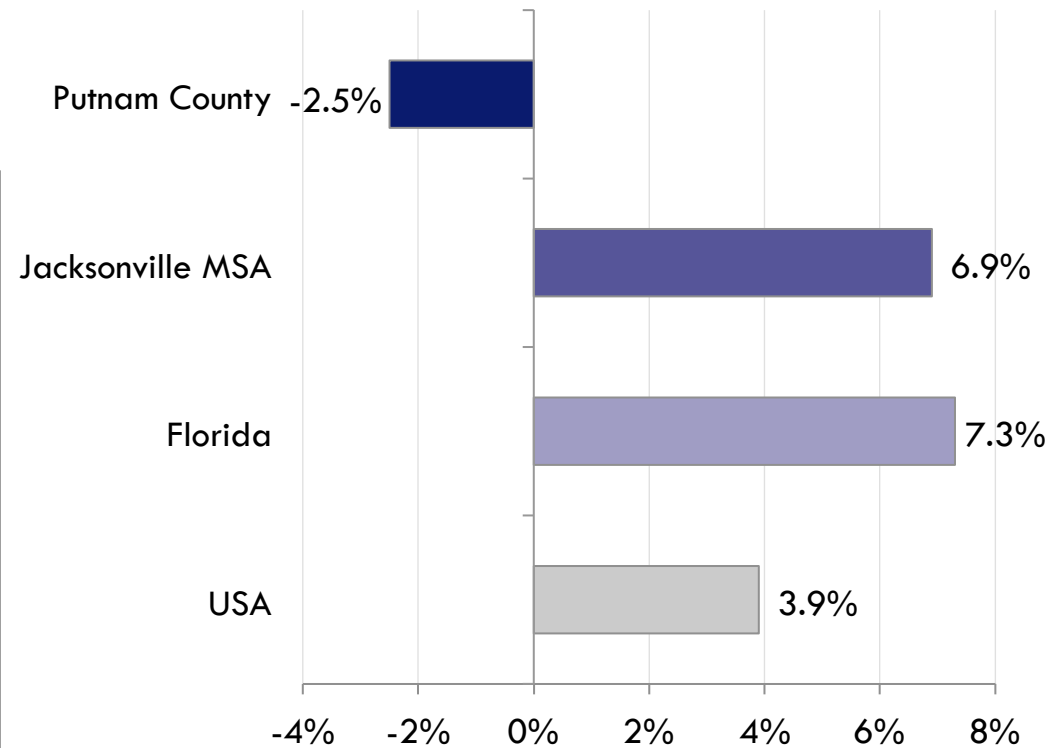
Over the previous decade, Putnam County's population grew 6%, compared to 10% in the US and 18% in Florida. From 2009 to 2014, Putnam County lost 3% of its population, while the US grew 4% and Florida grew 7%.

Population growth is one of the base indicators of overall economic prosperity in a community. A growing population shows that a community has assets and job opportunities that retain younger residents and attract new workers. A growing population also reassures businesses that they will have workers and new customers available in the future.

PUTNAM COUNTY TOTAL POPULATION



POPULATION GROWTH
2009 – 2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Age Distribution

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

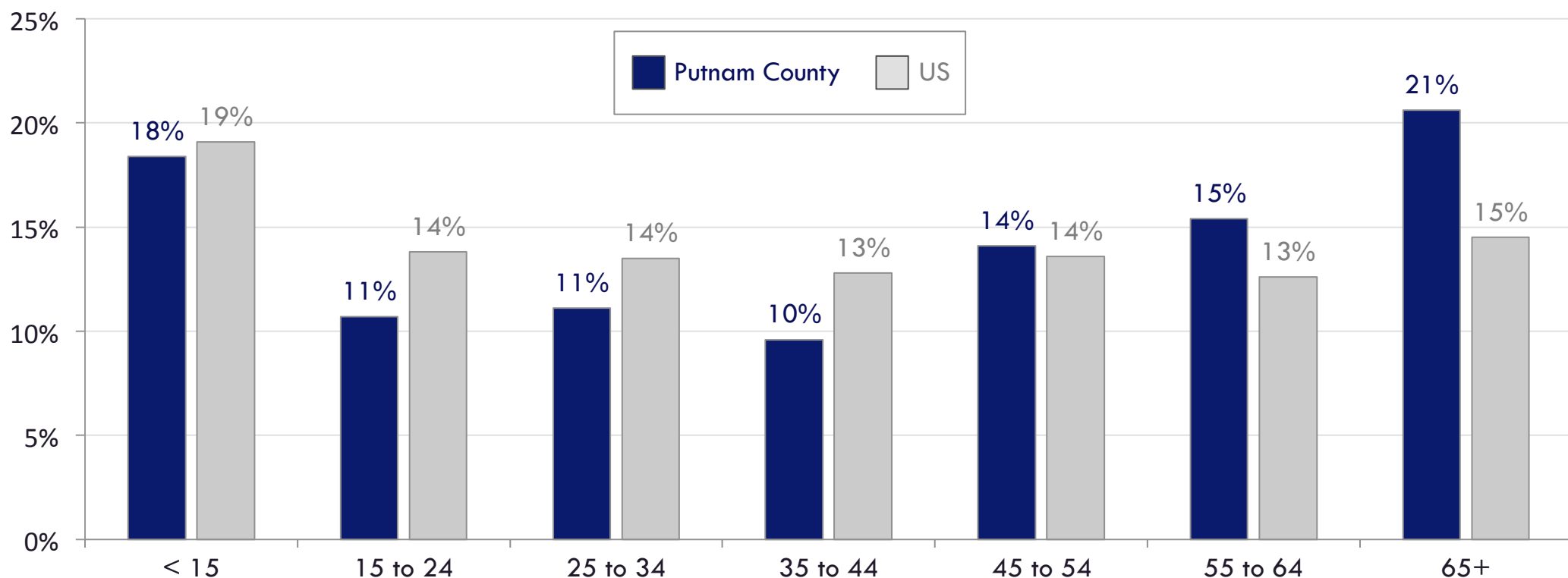
The population of Putnam County is older than the state and national average. The median age of Putnam County residents is 45 – compared to 38 in the US and 42 in Florida.

Putnam County has a similar share of children to the US average – 18% of residents are under 15 compared to 19% nationally. Conversely, the county has a much larger share of residents over 65 – 21% compared to 15% nationally.

The age distribution of a population can help better understand where to prioritize community investments.

Age distribution helps understand gaps in workforce availability and identify populations that may have distinct needs – such as children and the elderly.

COMPOSITION BY AGE
2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Age Distribution (continued)

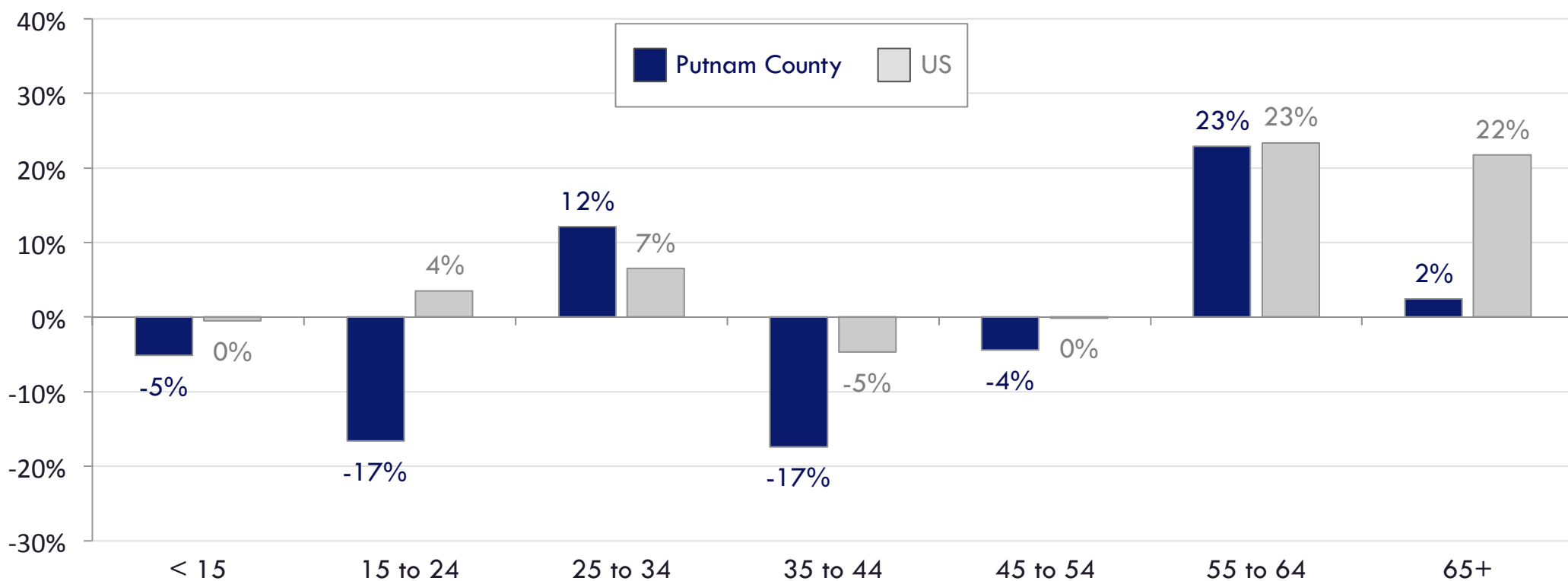
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Between 2009 and 2014, Putnam County lost population in most age cohorts – with the largest growth occurring among residents over 55 years old.

Over this period, the county lost 3,300 residents under 55 years old, while gaining 2,400 over 55 years old. Residents between 25 and 34 years old were the only age cohort under 55 to grow – with 864 new residents entering the county.

Changing age distribution within a community has widespread implications for public investments in areas such as health care, education, and workforce training.

POPULATION GROWTH BY AGE
2009 – 2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Educational Attainment

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Residents of Putnam County are overall less well-educated than the Jacksonville Metro, State of Florida, and US. **Most dramatically, only 13% of Putnam County residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher – compared to 28% in the Jacksonville Metro, 27% in Florida, and 30% in the US.**

Similarly, only 78% of residents have a high school degree (90% in JAX, 87% FL and US) and 7% have an associate degree (10% JAX and FL, and 8% US).

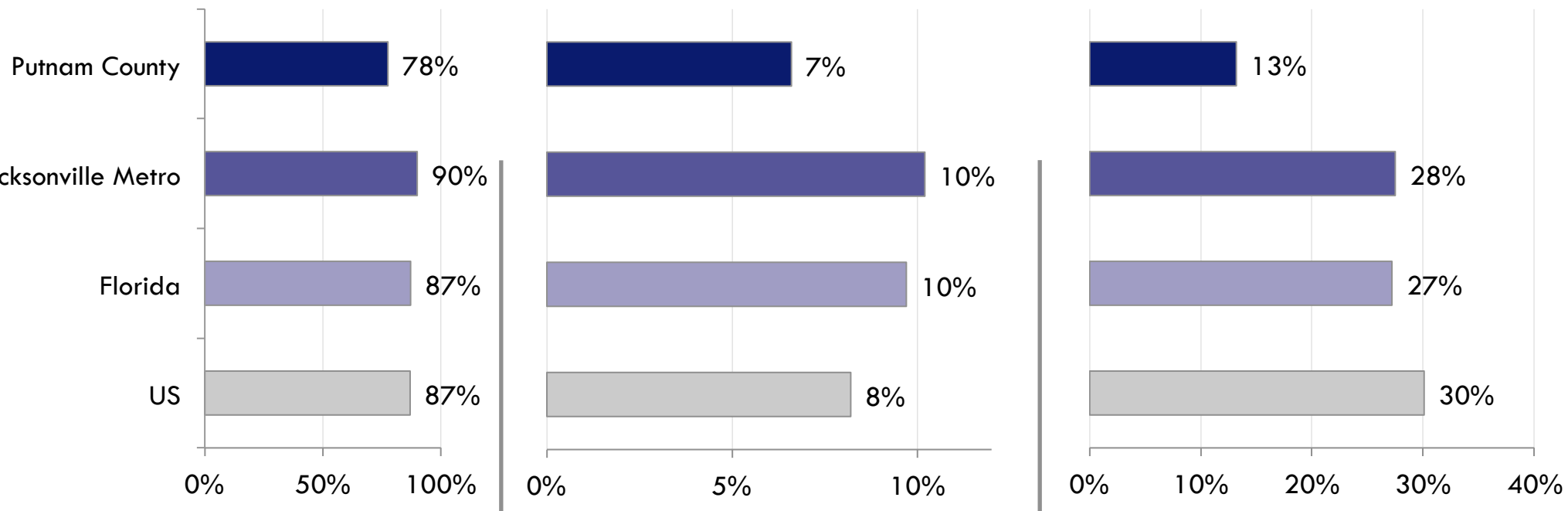
The modern economy is increasingly knowledge-intensive. New jobs often require education beyond a high-school diploma – ranging from a certificate to a master's degree. Due to this growing reliance on skilled workers, many businesses expand in and choose new locations based on the presence of a well-educated population.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT 2014

HIGH SCHOOL

ASSOCIATE

BACHELOR'S +



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Young Professionals

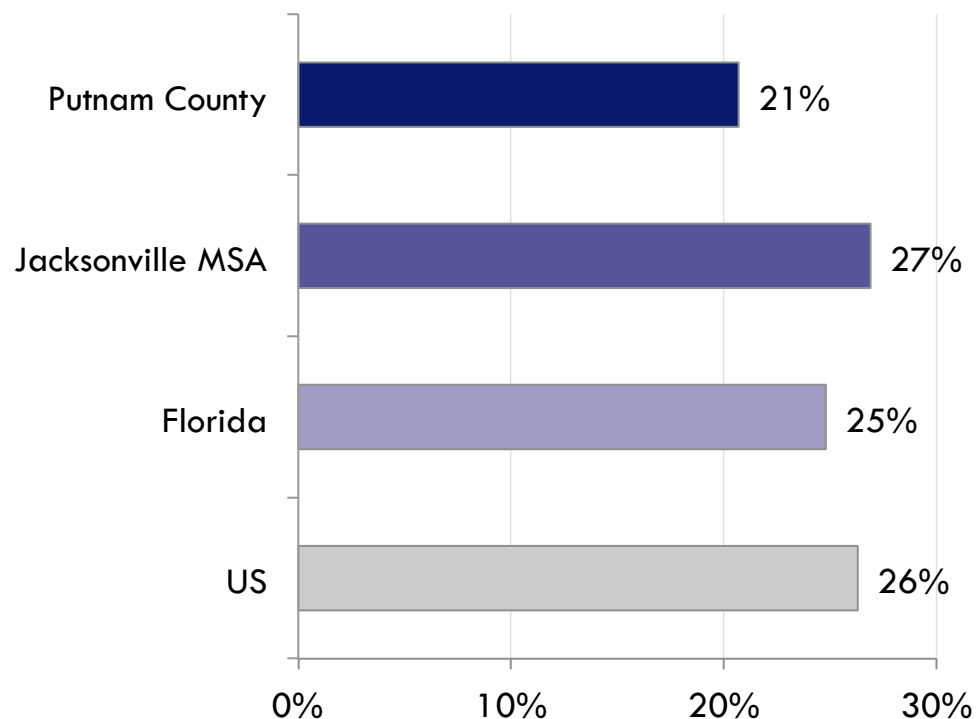
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Putnam County has a smaller Young Professional population than the state and national average. Only 21% of the county's residents are between 25 and 44 years old – compared to 25% in Florida and 26% in the US.

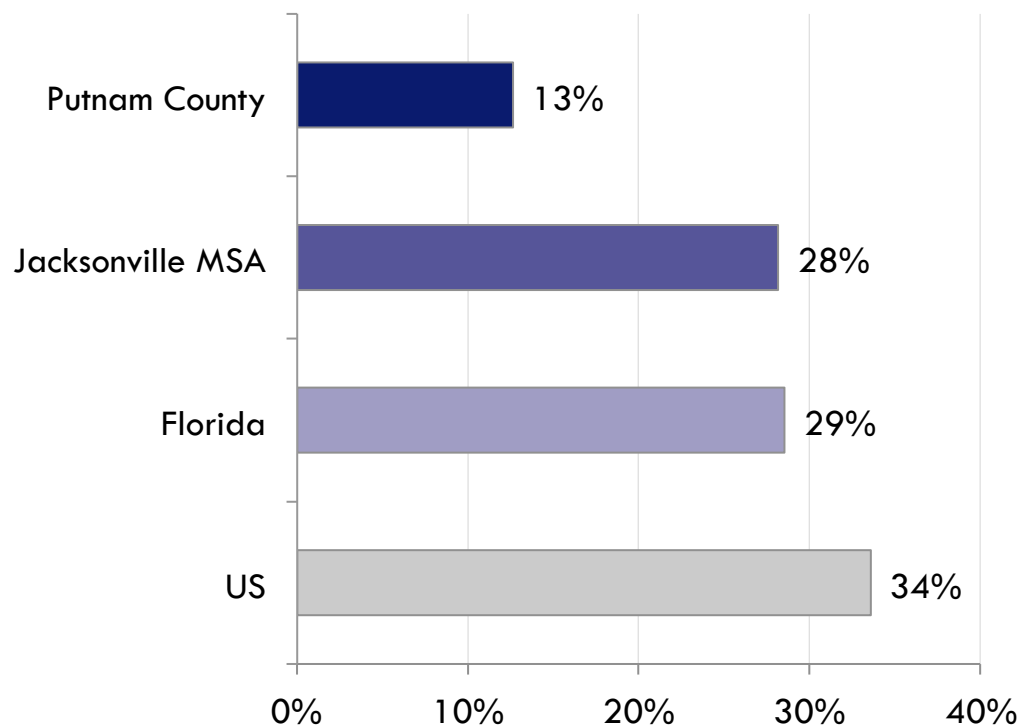
Notably, this population is also less well-educated than state and national averages. **Only 13% of Young Professional age residents of Putnam County have a bachelor's degree or higher – compared to 34% nationally and 29% in Florida.**

Young Professionals (residents aged 25 to 44 years old) represent a critical segment of a local workforce for companies seeking to hire new workers with the latest skills and knowledge. Recruiting and retaining residents in this age cohort helps ensure a region can supply a growing labor force for companies.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS (POP. AGE 25 – 44)
2014



YOUNG PROFESSIONALS W/ BACHELOR'S DEGREE +
2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Diversity

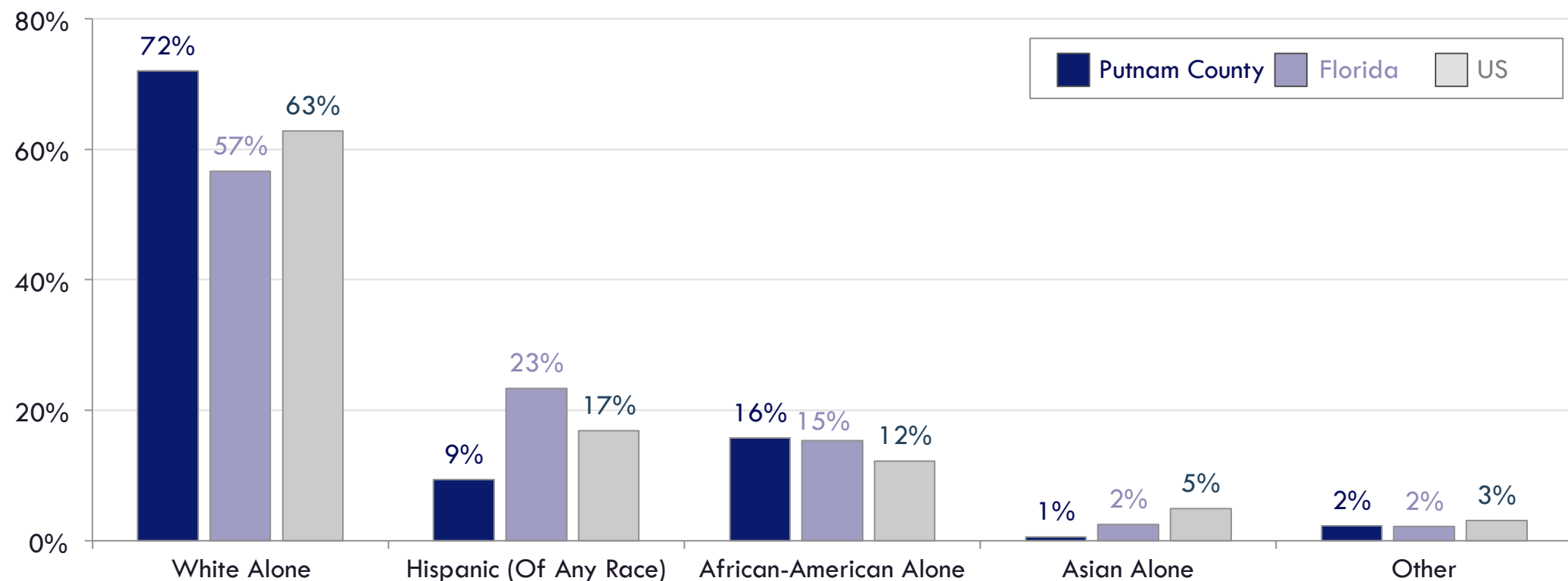
Putnam County has more White and Black residents than state and national averages but fewer Hispanics, Asian, and Other residents – making it overall less diverse.

The White population comprises 72% of the population, compared to 57% in Florida. Black residents make up 16% of the population, compared to 15% in Florida. Hispanic residents comprise only 9% of the county – compared to 23% in Florida and 17% nationally.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The racial and ethnic diversity of a community is affected by local geography, history, industry trends, and culture. Research shows that a diverse population and inclusive policies can contribute to a thriving economy.

POPULATION BY RACE & ETHNICITY
2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Diversity (continued)

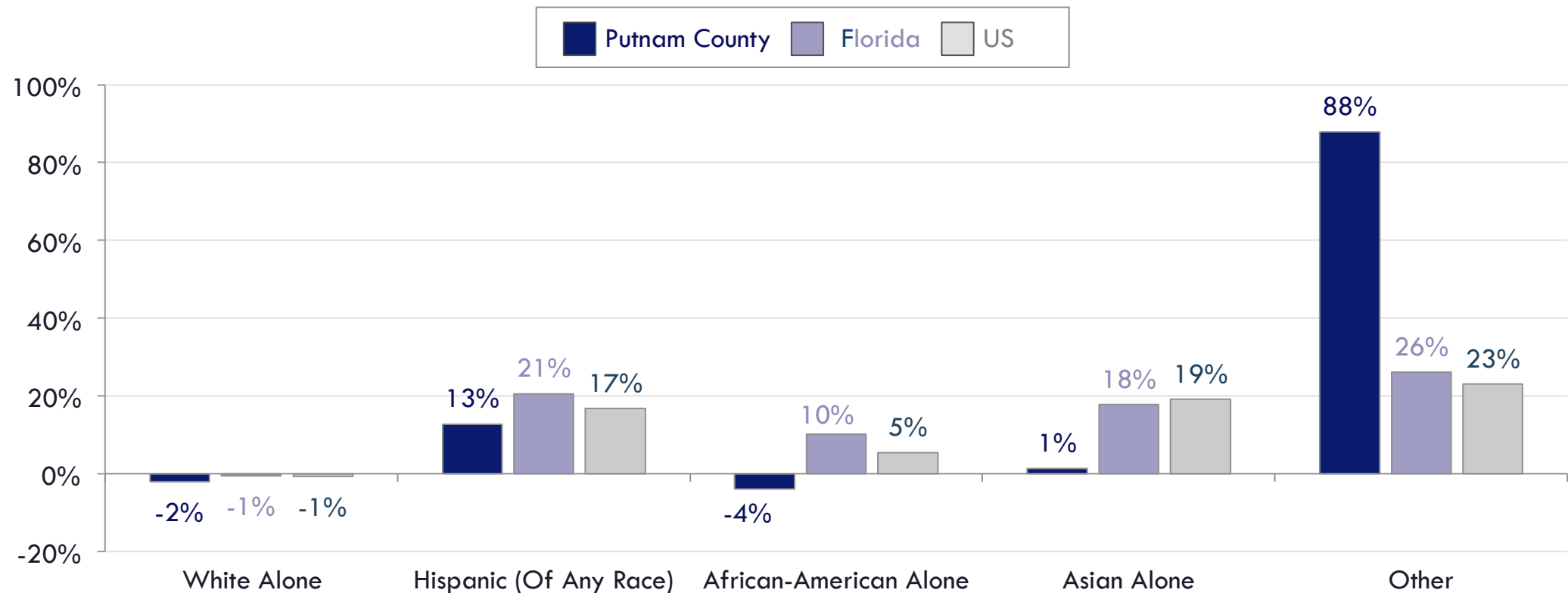
Decline in the White and Black populations are contributing to the declining overall population in Putnam County.

As the overall population declines, however, Putnam County's population is becoming more diverse – with 13% growth among Hispanic residents, and 88% growth among Other residents.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The racial and ethnic diversity of a community is affected by local geography, history, industry trends, and culture. Research shows that a diverse population and inclusive policies can contribute to a thriving economy.

CHANGE IN POPULATION BY RACE & ETHNICITY, 2009 – 2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Educational Disparity

Minority populations around the State of Florida and US are less well-educated than the White population, and these trends are mirrored in Putnam County.

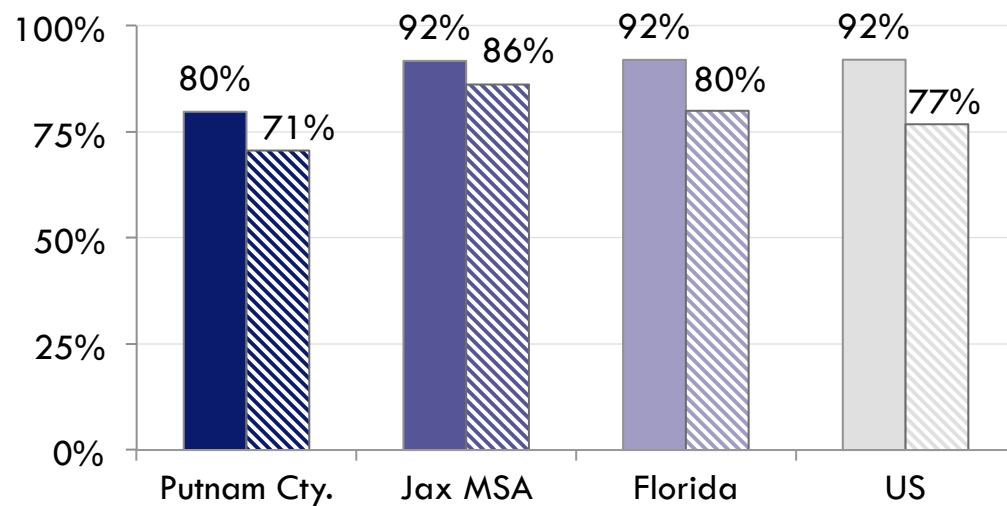
Only 80% of White residents of Putnam County have a high school degree, but the number is even lower for minority residents – 71% – comparable to the US average of 77%. Similarly, 14% of White residents hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to only 10% of Minority residents – more than half the minority attainment rate in Florida and the US.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

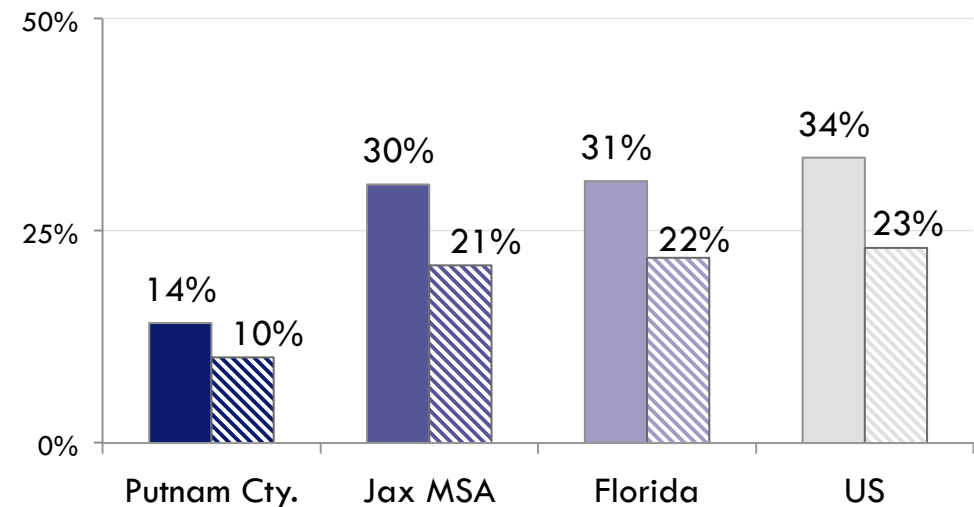
Differences in education, incomes, and other factors between ethnic groups in a community can highlight disparities between access to jobs and services in a community. They also help identify and prioritize needed investments.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT 2014

HIGH SCHOOL



BACHELOR'S +



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Educational Disparity (continued)

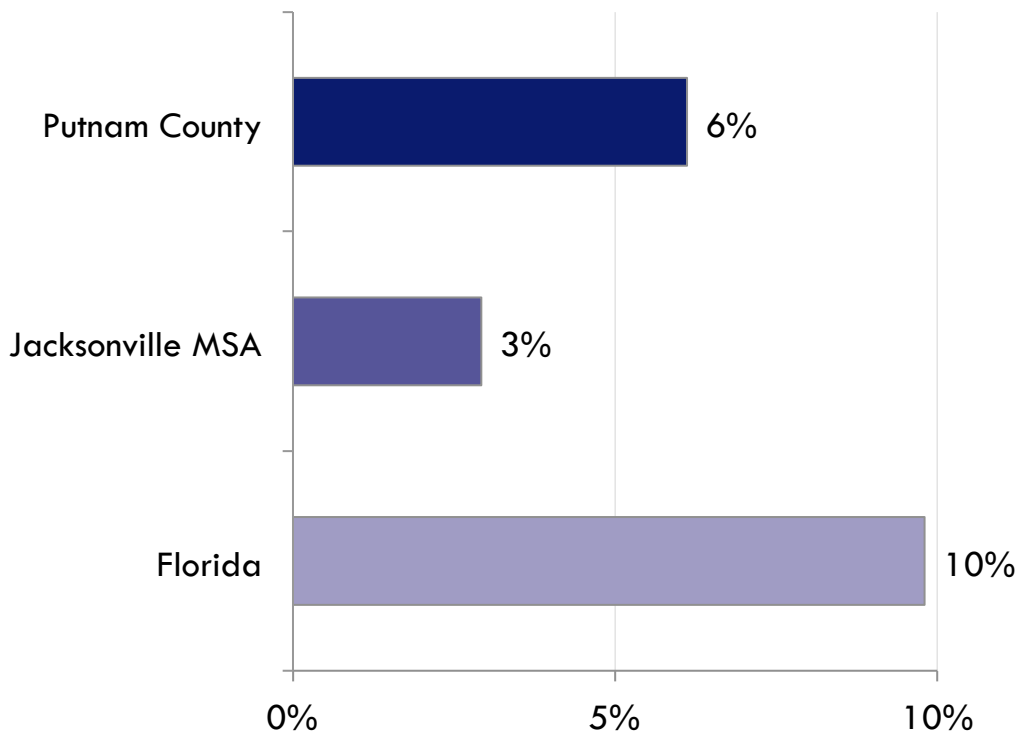
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Among school children, Putnam County has many students still learning the English language, but a lower share than the State of Florida average. Among enrolled students in Putnam County, 6% are English language learners, compared to 10% in Florida and only 3% in the Jacksonville Metro.

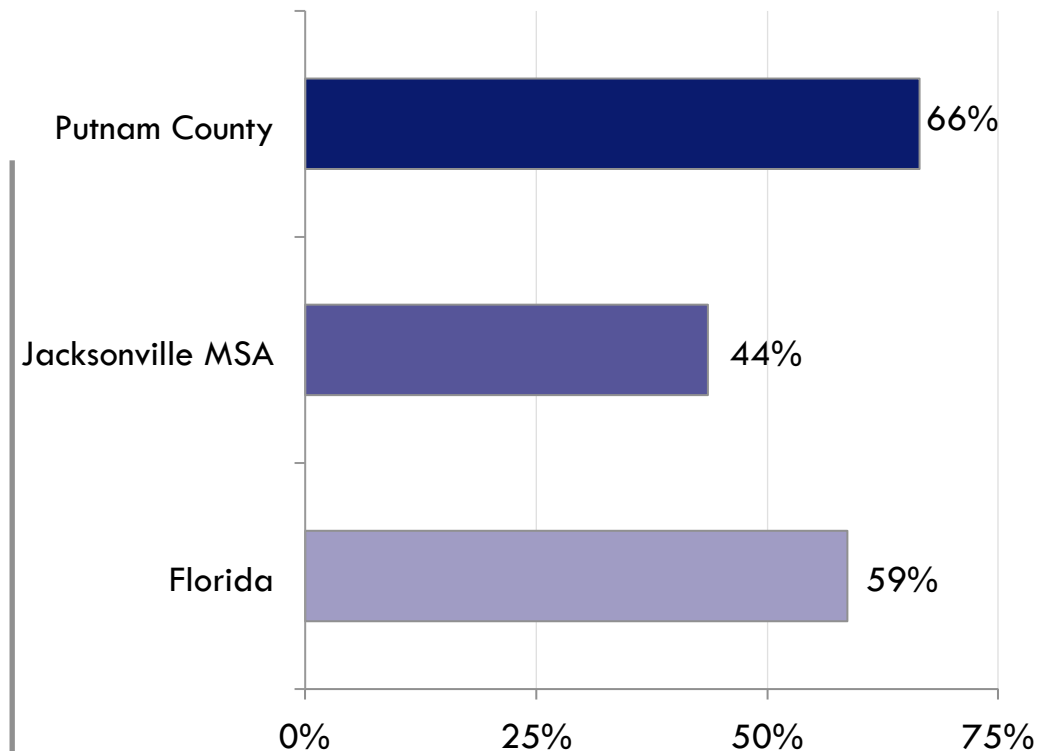
Putnam County has a similar share of students in poverty compared to the State of Florida – with 66% eligible for free or reduced school lunches compared to 59% in FL.

Differences in education, incomes, and other factors between ethnic groups in a community can highlight disparities between access to jobs and services in a community. They also help identify and prioritize needed investments.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS AS % OF TOTAL ENROLLED STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 2015



% OF STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE OR REDUCED SCHOOL LUNCHES, 2015



SOURCE: FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Household Income

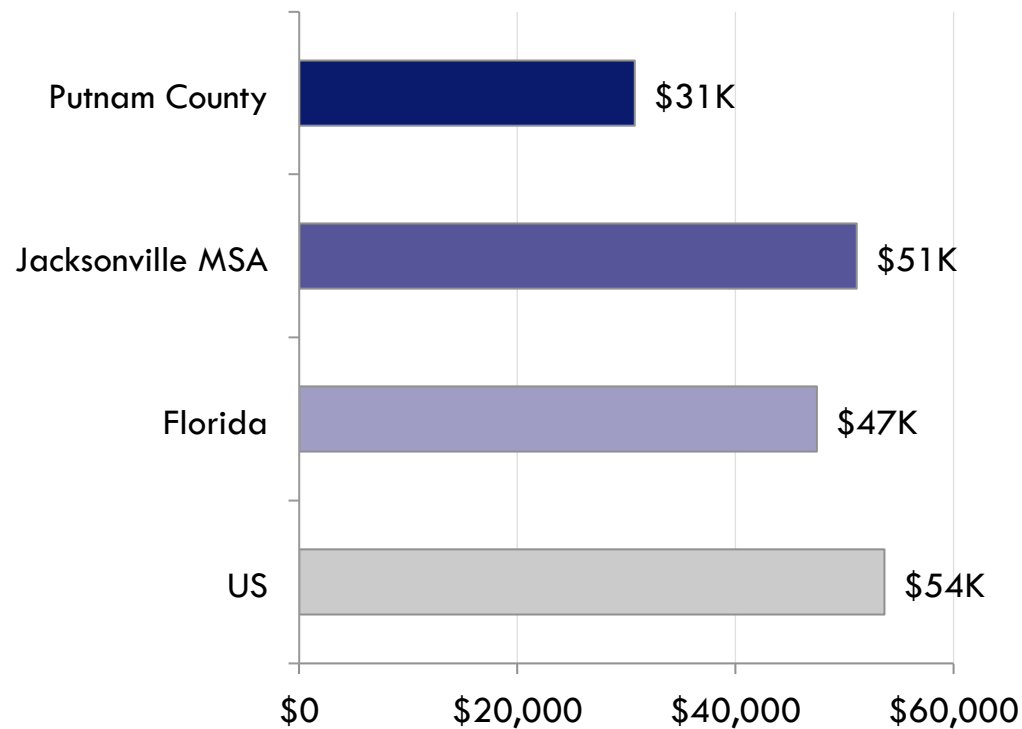
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Households in Putnam County are earning less income than those in the Jacksonville Metro, Florida, and US. Household incomes are also growing more slowly than the state and national averages.

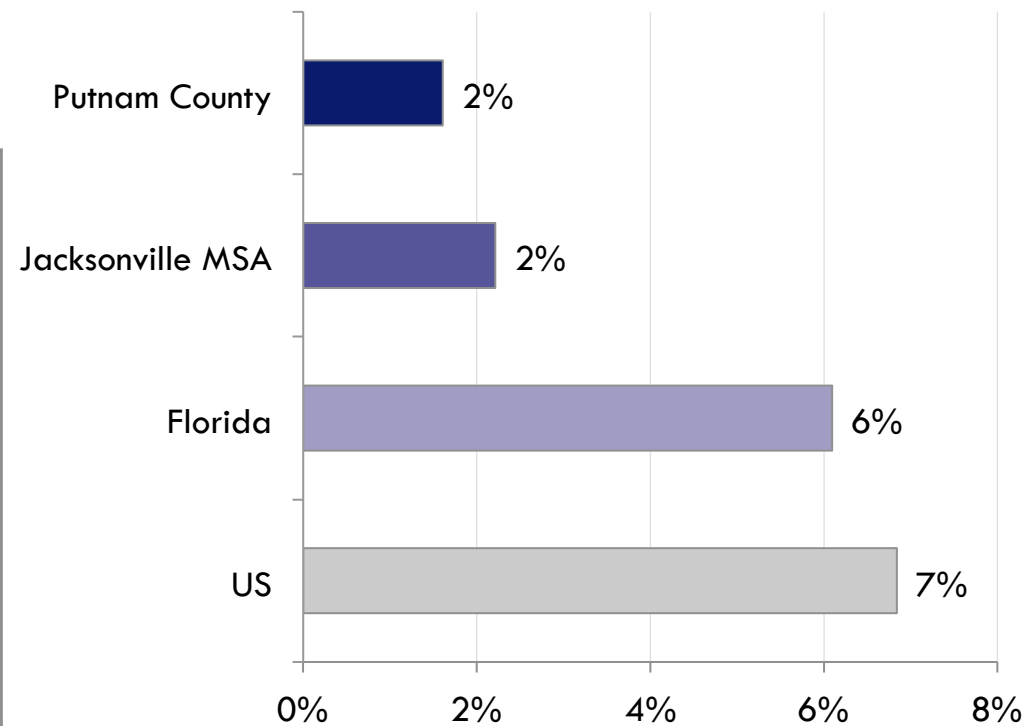
Median household income is \$30,800 in Putnam County – compared to \$51,100 in Jacksonville, \$47,600 in Florida, and \$53,700 in the US. Median household income only grew 2% from 2009 to 2014 in Putnam County.

Wealth creation is an important goal of economic development and a strong measure of a community's economic health. When residents of a community have high household incomes they are able to reinvest locally – purchasing goods and services that spur additional economic growth.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
2014



CHANGE IN MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME
2009 – 2014 (UNADJUSTED FOR INFLATION)



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Poverty Levels

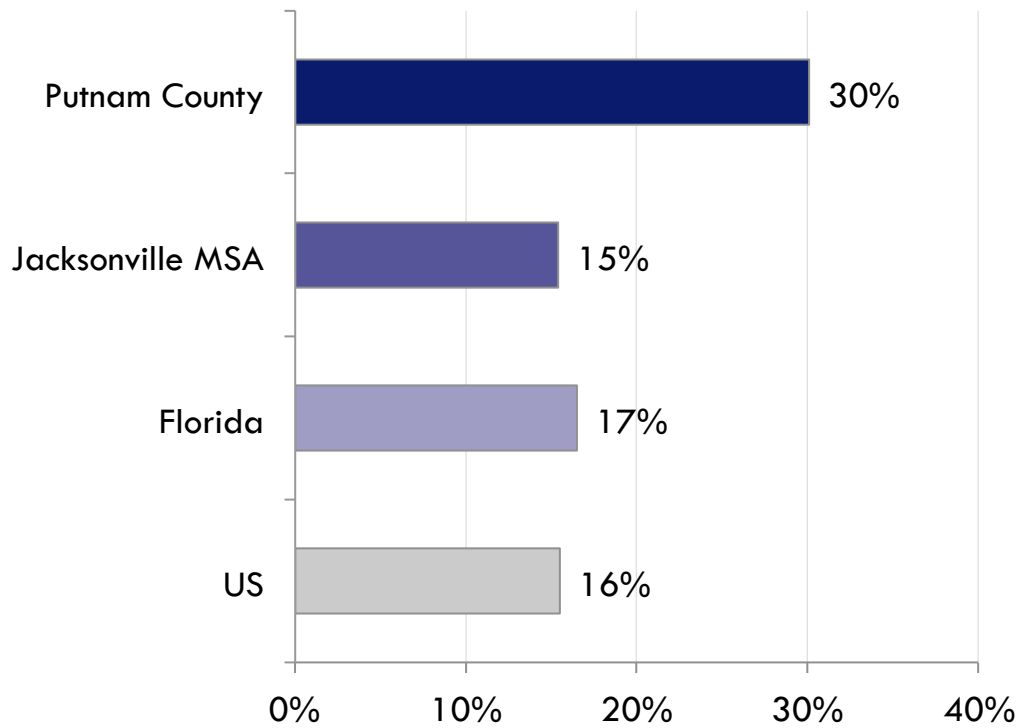
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Coinciding with lower income levels, Putnam County has high poverty levels. In 2014, 30% of Putnam County residents fell below the poverty line – nearly double the state and national poverty rate.

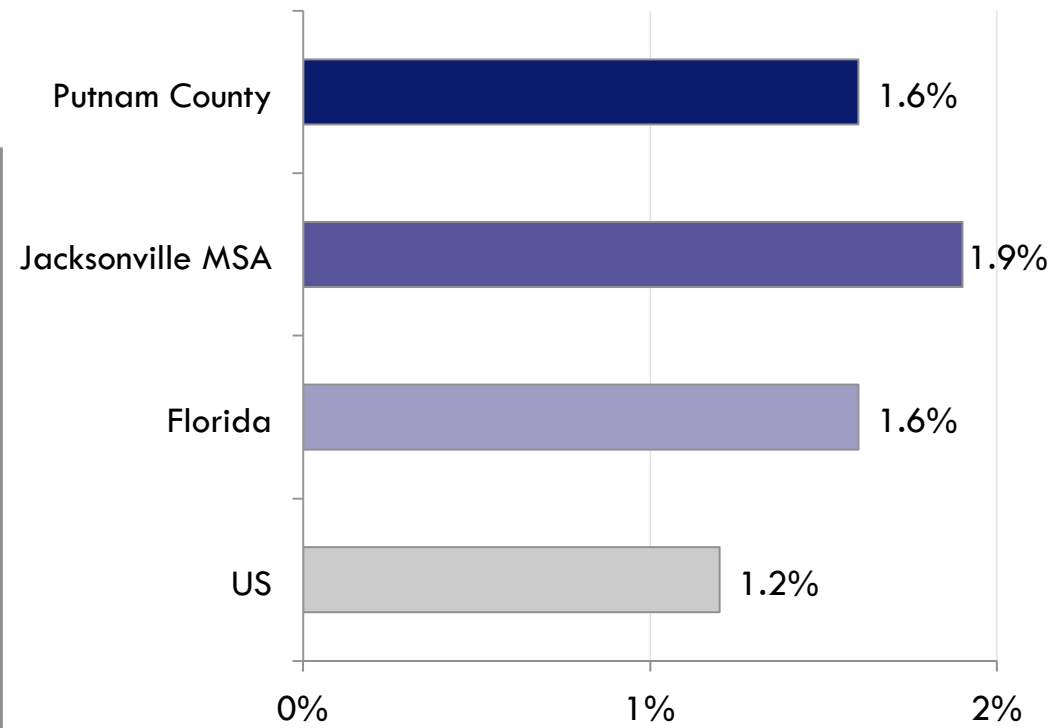
High poverty levels are not new to Putnam County. They have been fairly stable the past five years – increasingly rising 1.6 percentage points from 2009 to 2014 – the same increase as the State of Florida.

Poverty levels indicate whether residents of a county have incomes and access to jobs that allow them to prosper and support their families. High poverty levels are often the result of limited good job opportunities in a community and put heavy demands on social services.

POVERTY RATE
2014



PERCENTAGE POINT CHANGE IN POVERTY RATE
2009 – 2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Housing Availability

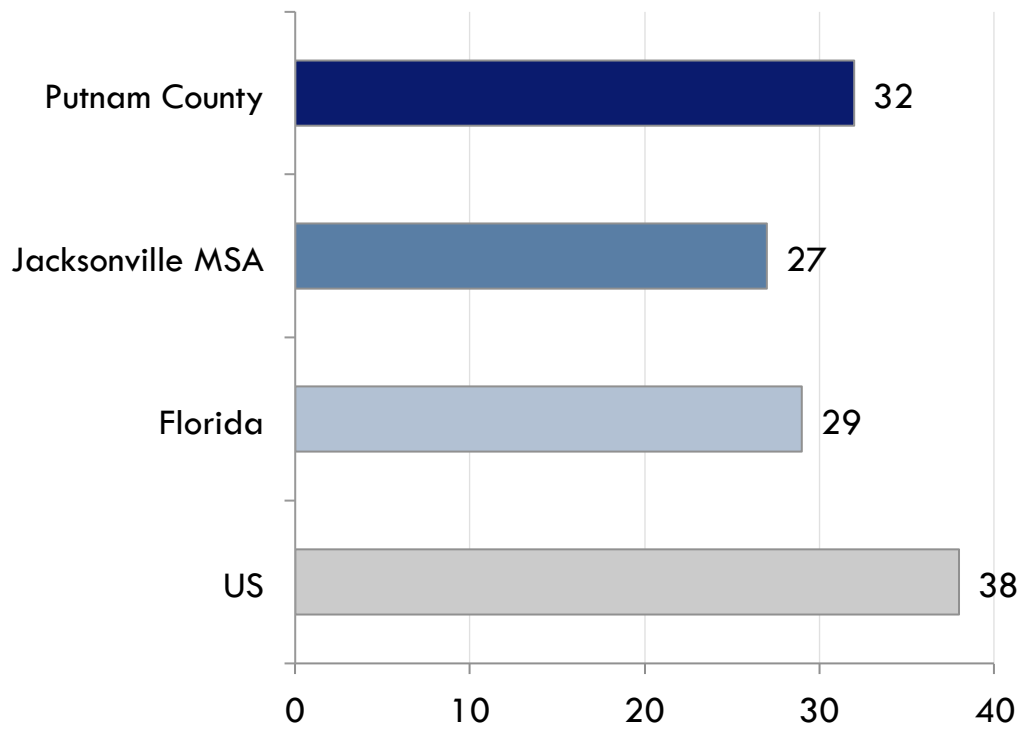
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Housing in Putnam County tends to be older than average in Florida – which has many more new home starts relative to the national average. The median age of housing in Putnam County is 32 years – compared to 29 years in Florida and 38 in the US.

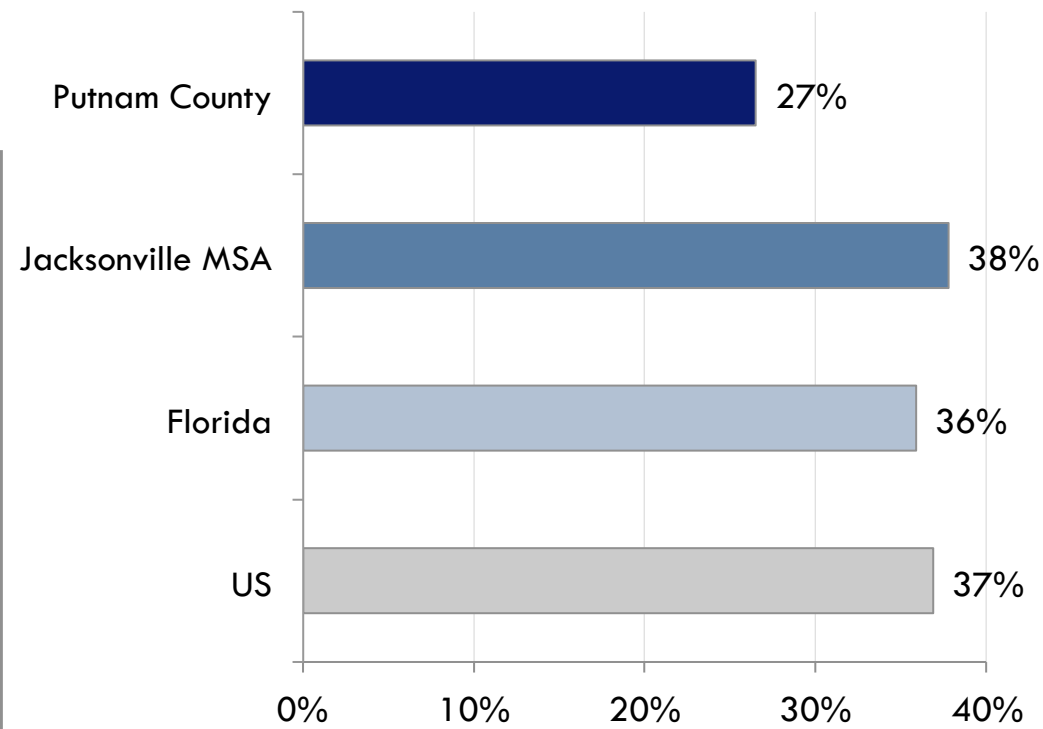
A majority of Putnam County residents own their homes versus rent. Only 27% of Putnam County housing is occupied by renters – compared to 36% in Florida and 37% nationally.

The availability and affordability of housing directly affects the lives of residents in a community and the ability of businesses to retain and attract workers. Housing is considered unaffordable if owners and renters are spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs (mortgages or rent).

MEDIAN AGE OF HOUSING,
2014



% OF HOUSING OCCUPIED BY RENTERS,
2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Housing Availability

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

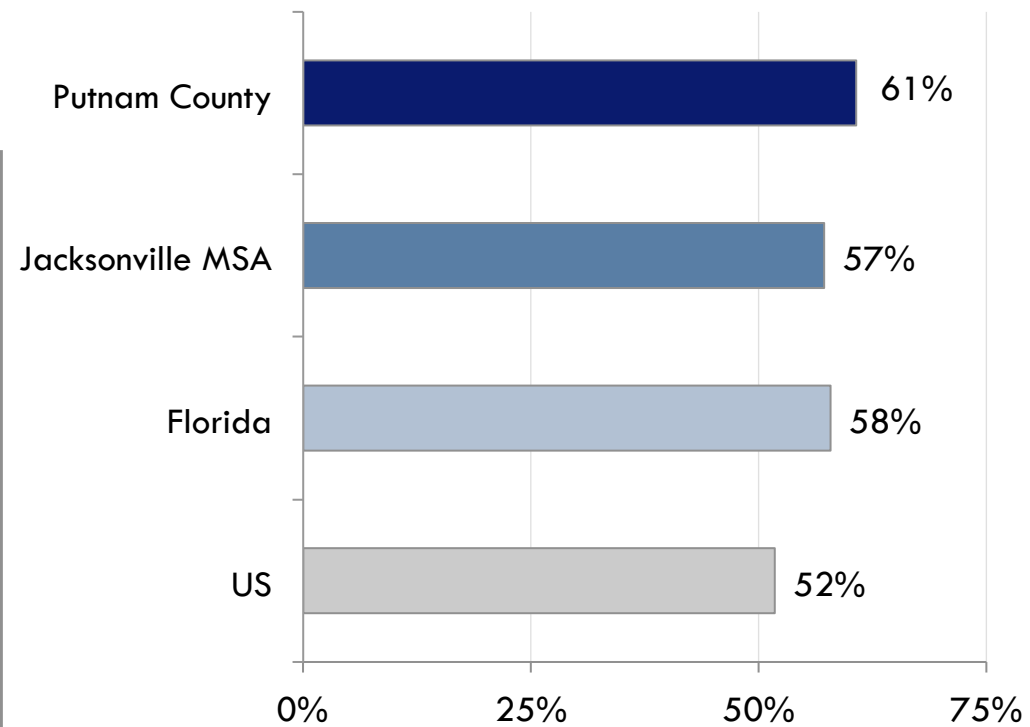
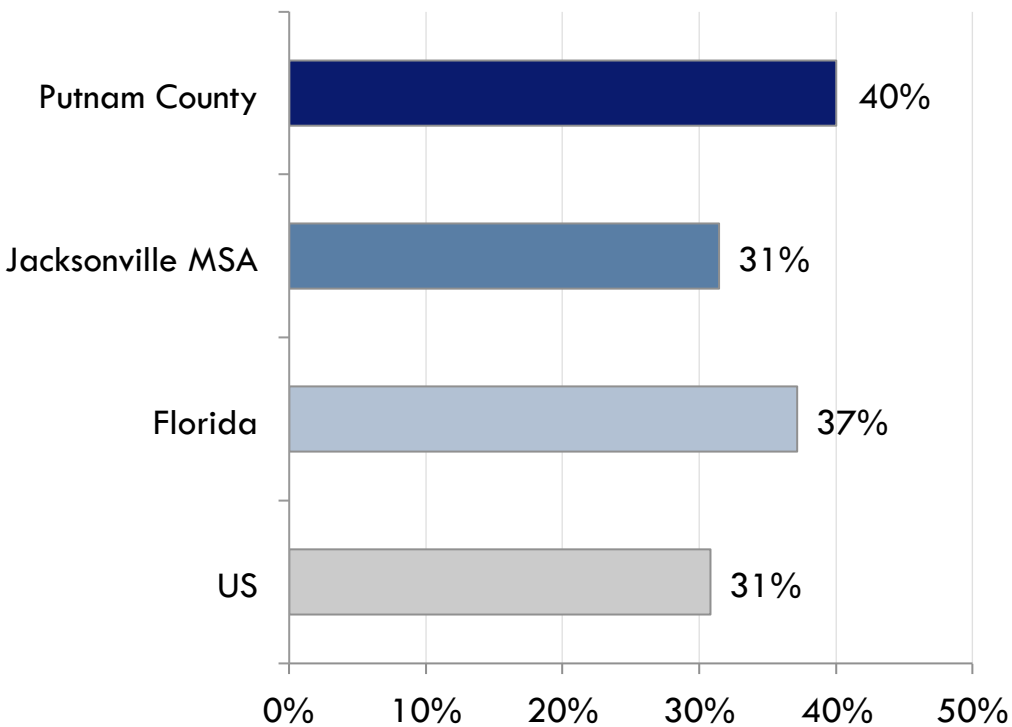
A high share of Putnam County residents are struggling to afford their housing. Housing is considered unaffordable if occupants are spending more than 30% of their income on rent or mortgage.

40% of Putnam County homeowners cannot afford their home payments – compared to 31% nationally and 37% in Florida. An even higher share, 61%, of renters are in unaffordable housing – compared to 52% nationally and 58% in Florida.

The availability and affordability of housing directly affects the lives of residents in a community and the ability of businesses to retain and attract workers. Housing is considered unaffordable if owners and renters are spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs (mortgages or rent).

HOMEOWNERS W/ MORTGAGE SPENDING MORE THAN 30% OF INCOME ON HOUSING COSTS, 2014

RENTERS SPENDING MORE THAN 30% OF INCOME ON HOUSING COSTS, 2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Crime

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

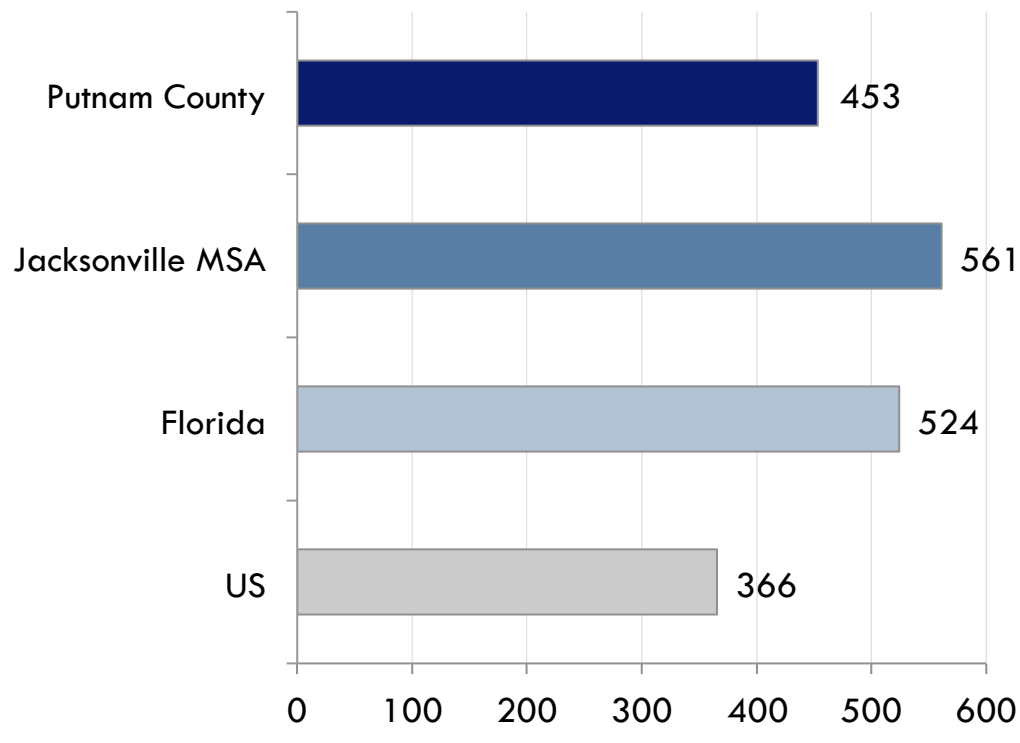
Putnam County is a safe place.

The number of violent crimes per 100,000 residents was only 453, compared to 524 in Florida and 561 in the Jacksonville Metro.

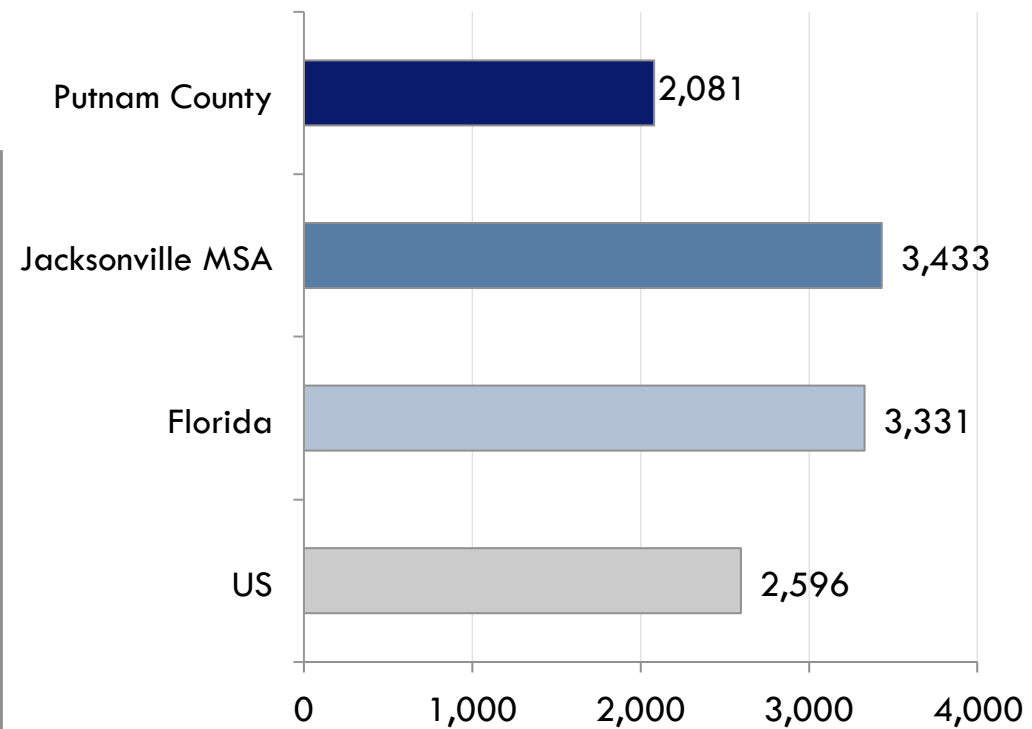
Property crime was even lower at 2,080 per 100,000 residents – well below the 3,330 in Florida and 3,430 in the Jacksonville Metro.

Actual and perceived crime rates play a significant role in location decisions for residents and businesses.

VIOLENT CRIME PER 100K RESIDENTS
2014



PROPERTY CRIME PER 100K RESIDENTS
2014



SOURCE: FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Employment Growth

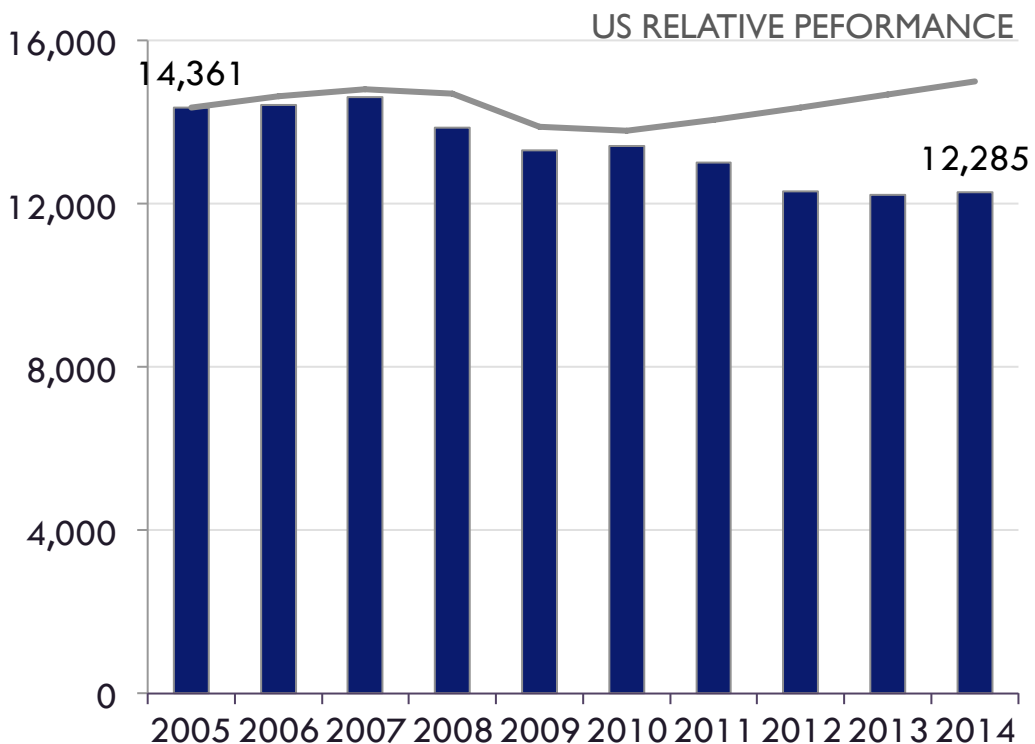
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Putnam County lost a significant share of jobs during the recession and has not yet recovered. While most of Florida and the US has seen steady job growth since 2010, Putnam County continued to lose jobs in 2010 and 2011, only stabilizing from 2012 to 2014.

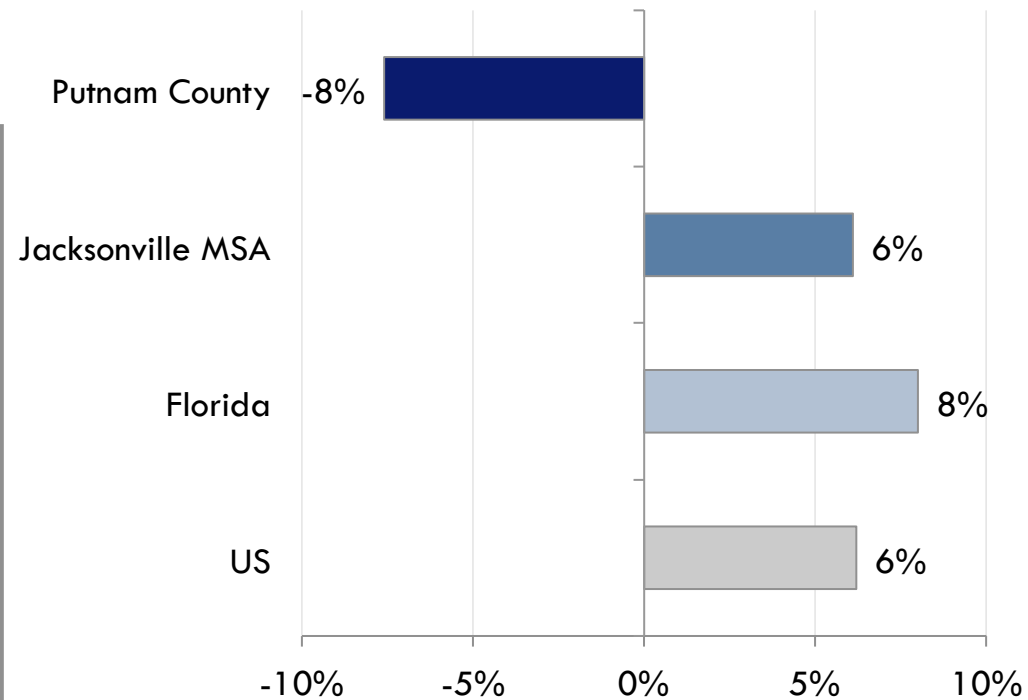
Putnam County lost 8% of total jobs from 2009 to 2014, while jobs grew 8% in Florida and 6% nationally.

Employment growth is a primary indicator of a community's overall economic health. Strong job creation relative to benchmark communities can indicate a more competitive business climate and the presence of supportive resources.

PUTNAM COUNTY PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYMENT GROWTH



TOTAL EMPLOYMENT GROWTH 2009 – 2014



SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Unemployment Rate

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

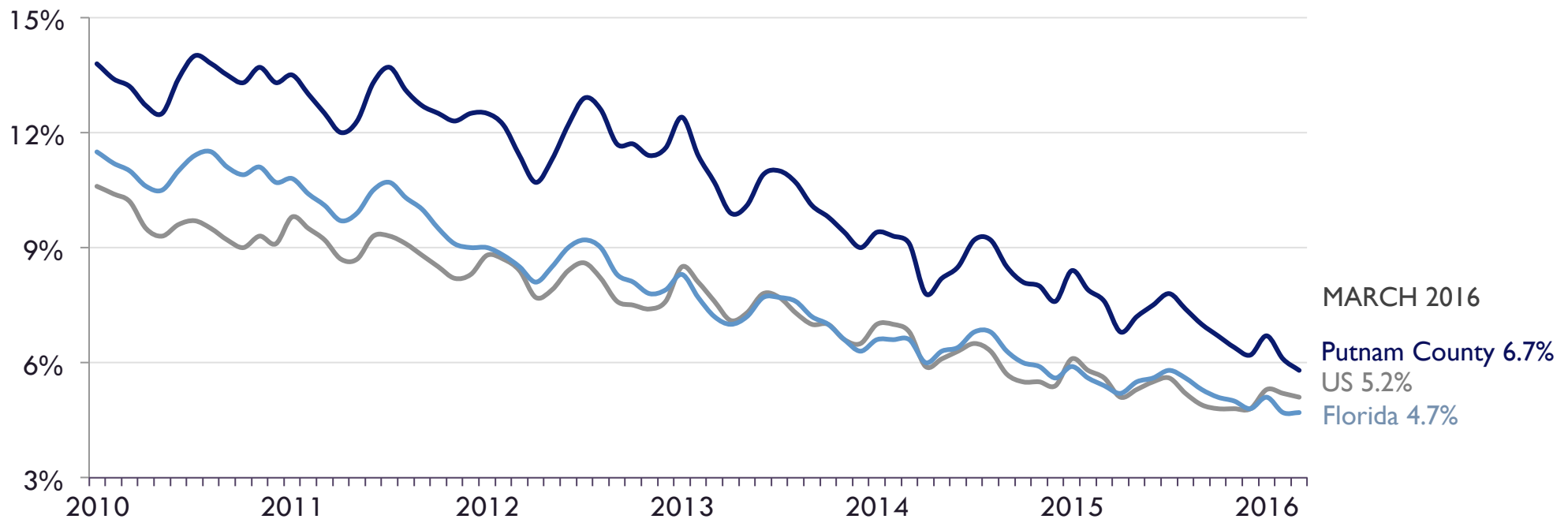
Slow job growth combined with population declines has contributed to a lower unemployment rate in Putnam County in recent years – although it still remains higher than the state and national averages.

The unemployment rate in Putnam County fell by nearly half over the past six years – from 13.2% in March 2010 to 6.7% in March 2016. This recent low still remains above the US rate of 5.2% and Florida rate of 4.7%.

Low unemployment means that the residents of a community are finding opportunities to work but also can reveal potential workforce shortages in conjunction with other factors. Higher unemployment may also indicate that a larger portion of residents are actively seeking jobs.

MONTHLY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

— US — Florida — Putnam County



SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Commuting Patterns

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

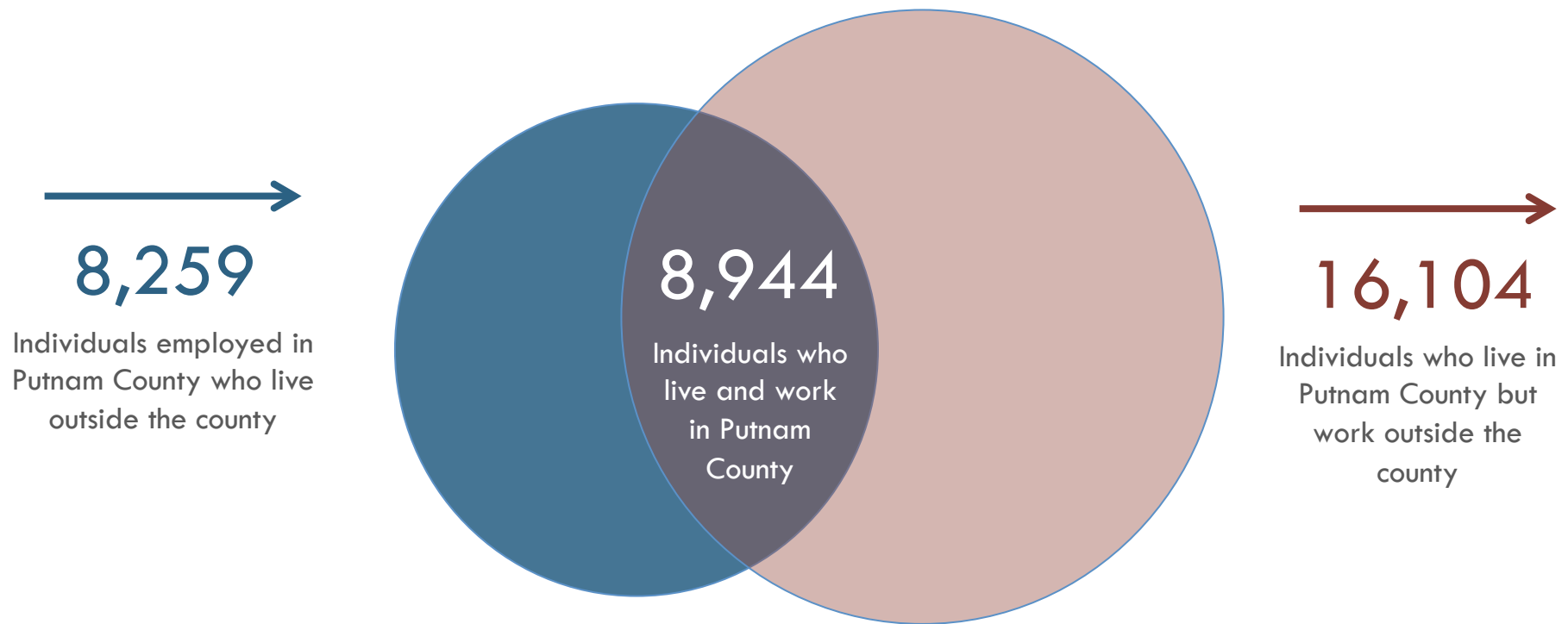
Putnam County is deeply integrated into the broader regional economy.

Nearly half of all the jobs in Putnam County are filled by individuals who live outside the county. Contrastingly, nearly as many residents of Putnam County work outside the county as there are total jobs locally.

Putnam County's commute patterns have a net outflow of residents – 7,850 more residents leave the county to work than enter.

Commuting patterns play several important roles in a region's economy. Regions that can draw from the available talents and skill sets present outside of their communities can significantly increase their available workforce.

PUTNAM COUNTY COMMUTING PATTERNS 2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Commuting Patterns

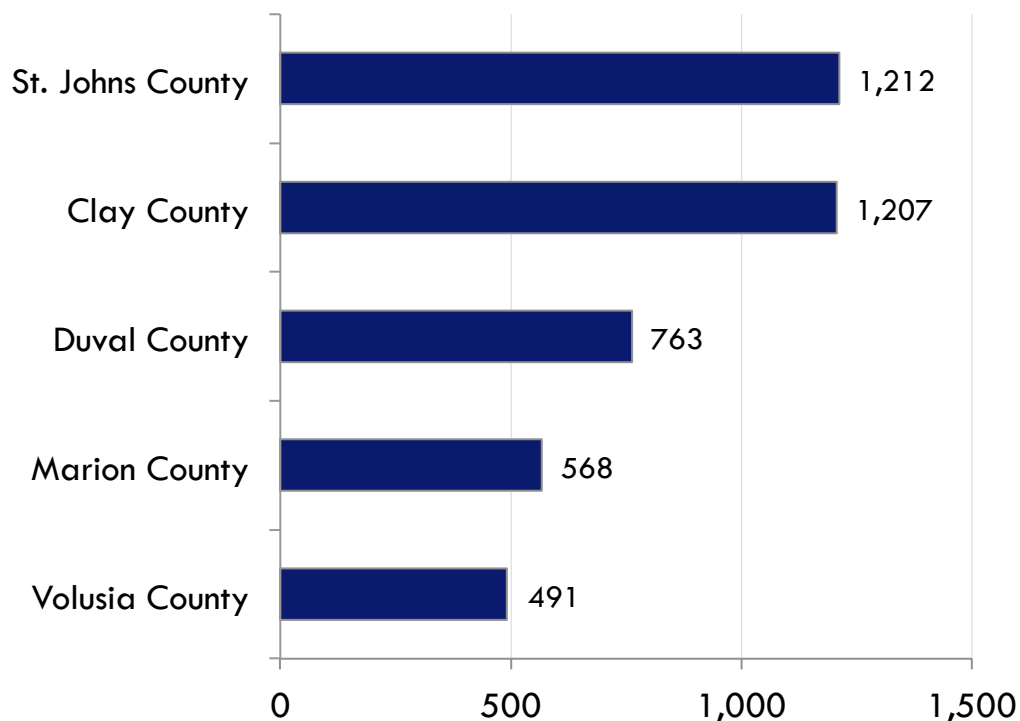
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The majority of Putnam County workers that live outside the county live in St. John's (1,210), Clay (1,210), Duval (763), Marion (568), and Volusia (491) counties.

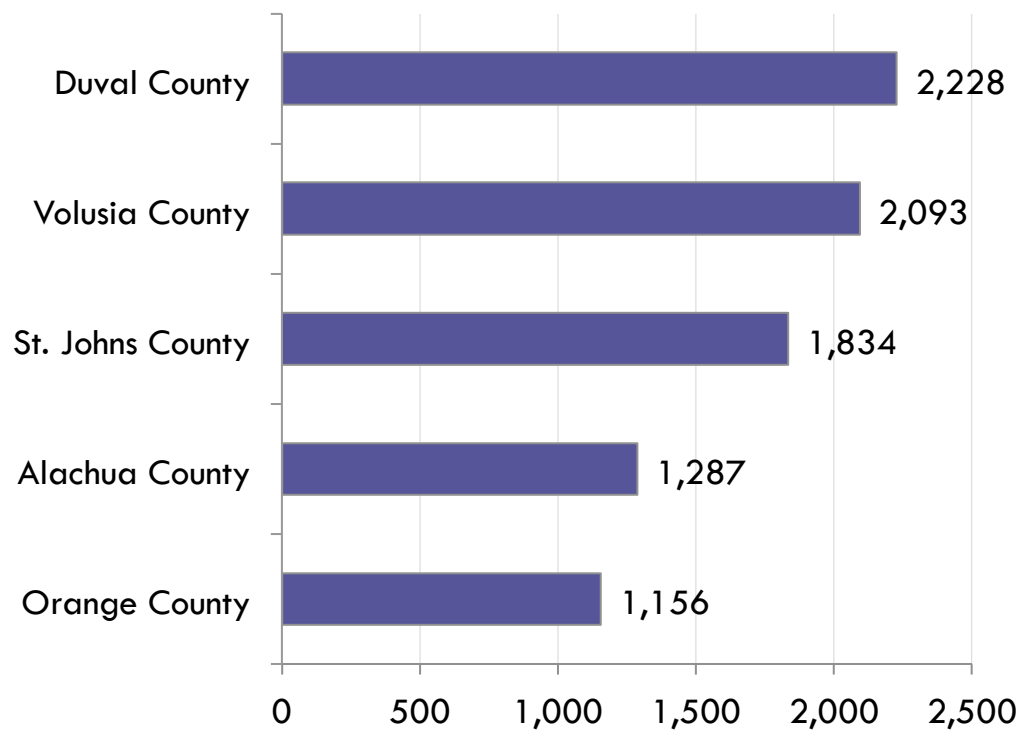
The majority of residents that work outside the county commute to Duval (2,230), Volusia (2,100), St. John's (1,830), Alachua (1,290), and Orange (1,160) counties.

Commuting patterns play several important roles in a region's economy. Regions that can draw from the available talents and skill sets present outside of their communities can significantly increase their available workforce.

TOP SOURCES OF IN-COMMUTING WORKERS
2014



TOP DESTINATIONS OF OUT-COMMUTING RESIDENTS
2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Commuting Patterns

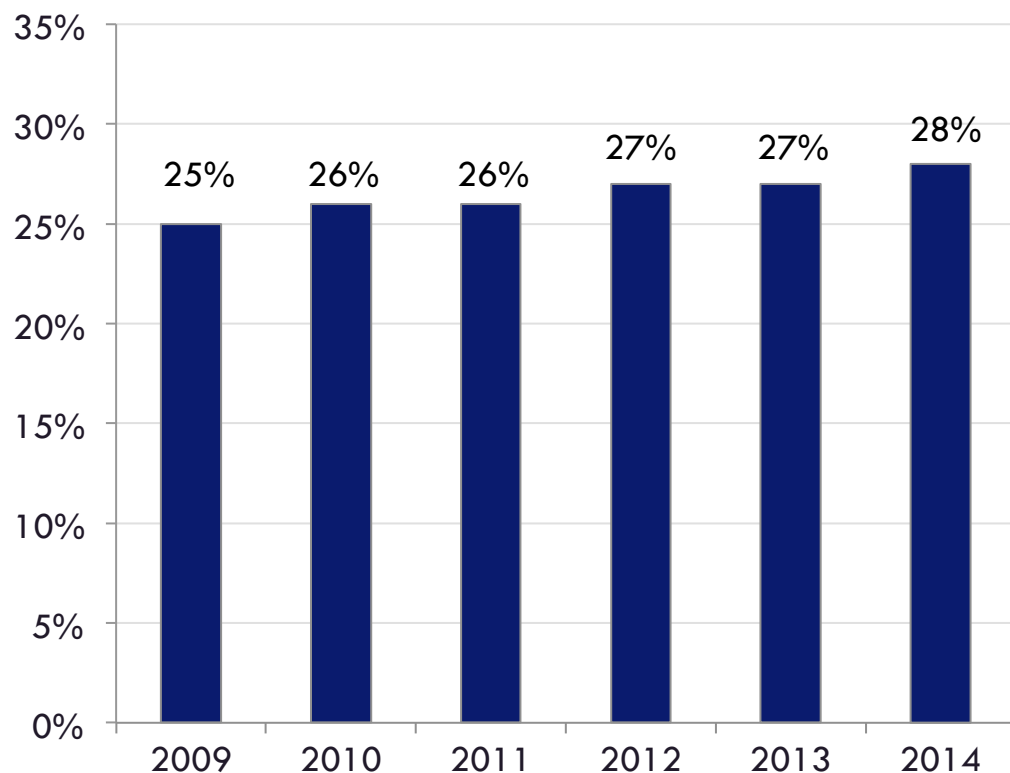
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The share of Putnam County residents earning more than \$40,000 a year increased from 25% in 2009 to 28% in 2014. This includes residents working in Putnam County and commuting to jobs outside the county.

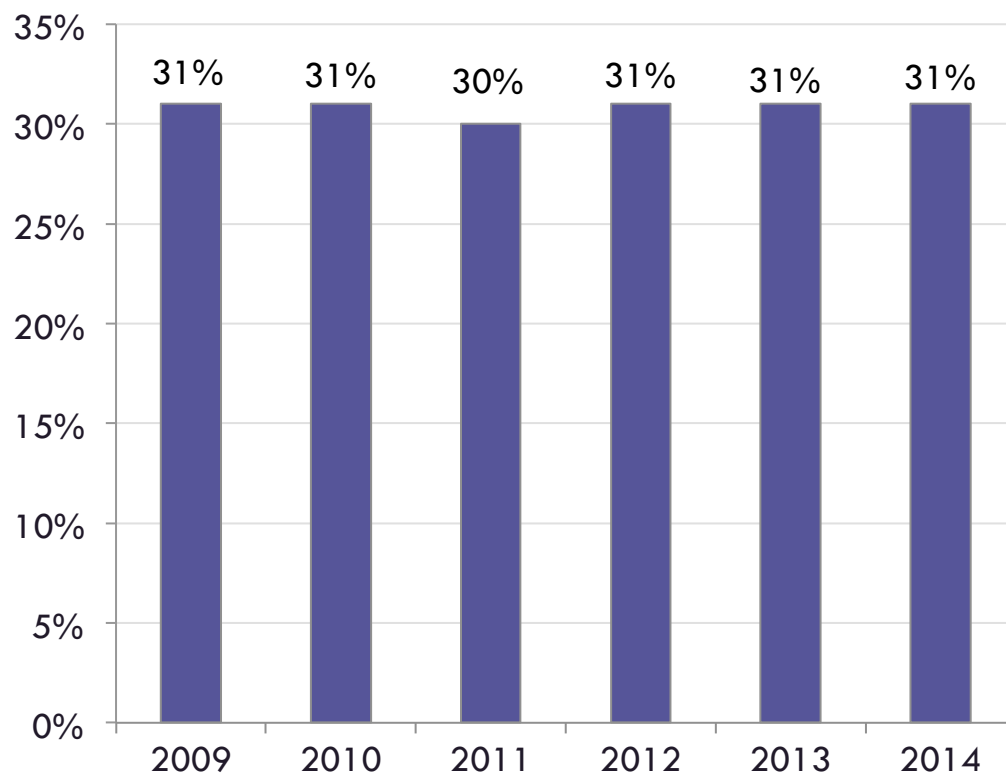
The share of workers in Putnam County (including residents and those living outside) earning over \$40,000 a year remained flat at 31% over this time period. This indicates that a slightly greater share of higher income earners live outside Putnam County and that residents may be finding higher paying job opportunities outside the county.

Commuting patterns play several important roles in a region's economy. Regions that can draw from the available talents and skill sets present outside of their communities can significantly increase their available workforce.

SHARE OF RESIDENTS EARNING MORE THAN \$40,000,
2009 – 2014



SHARE OF WORKERS EARNING MORE THAN \$40,000,
2009 – 2014



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Industry Diversity

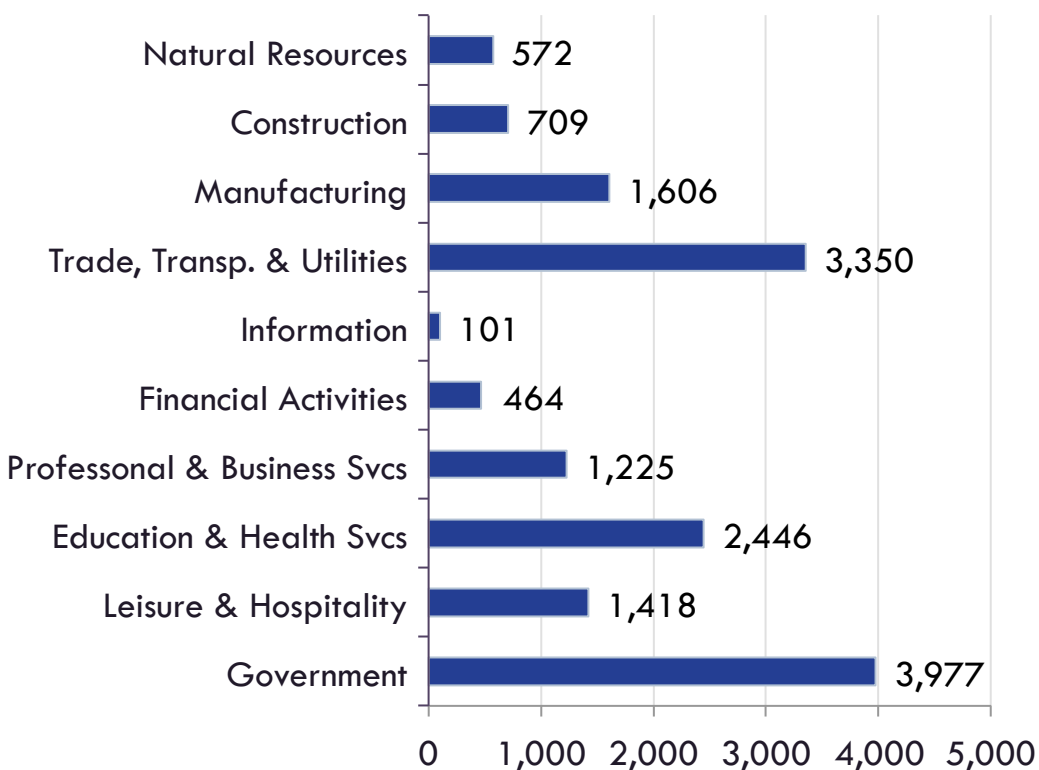
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Government is the largest employer in Putnam County – employing nearly 4,000 individuals and accounting for 25% of all local jobs. The next largest local industry sectors are Trade, Transportation, & Utilities (3,350 jobs), Education & Health Services (2,450), and Manufacturing (1,610).

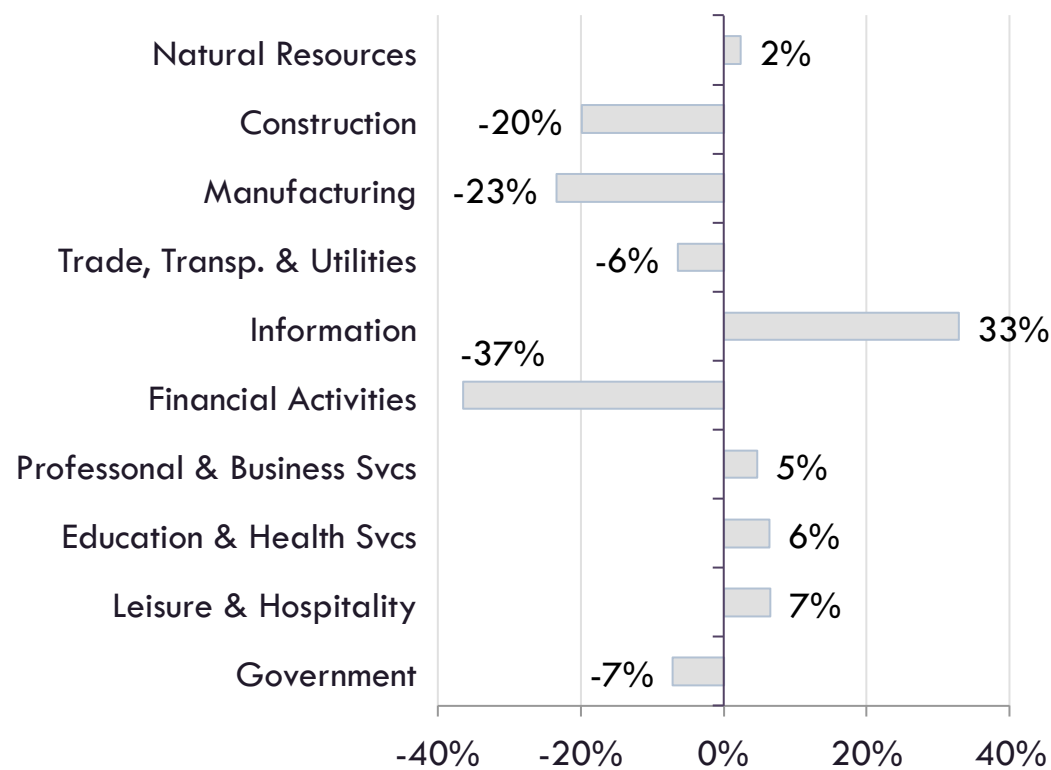
Half of local industry sectors lost jobs from 2009 to 2014. The industry sectors that grew were Information (33% growth), Leisure & Hospitality (7%), Education & Health Services (6%), Professional & Business Services (5%), and Natural Resources (2%).

Resilient economies employ residents in a diverse mix of industries. A diverse industry base allows communities to better weather economic downturns that affect one industry more than others. A diverse economy also provides a jobs with different educational and experience requirements that help sustain all residents.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY – PUTNAM COUNTY
2014



GROWTH BY INDUSTRY – PUTNAM COUNTY
2009 – 2014



SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Industry Salaries

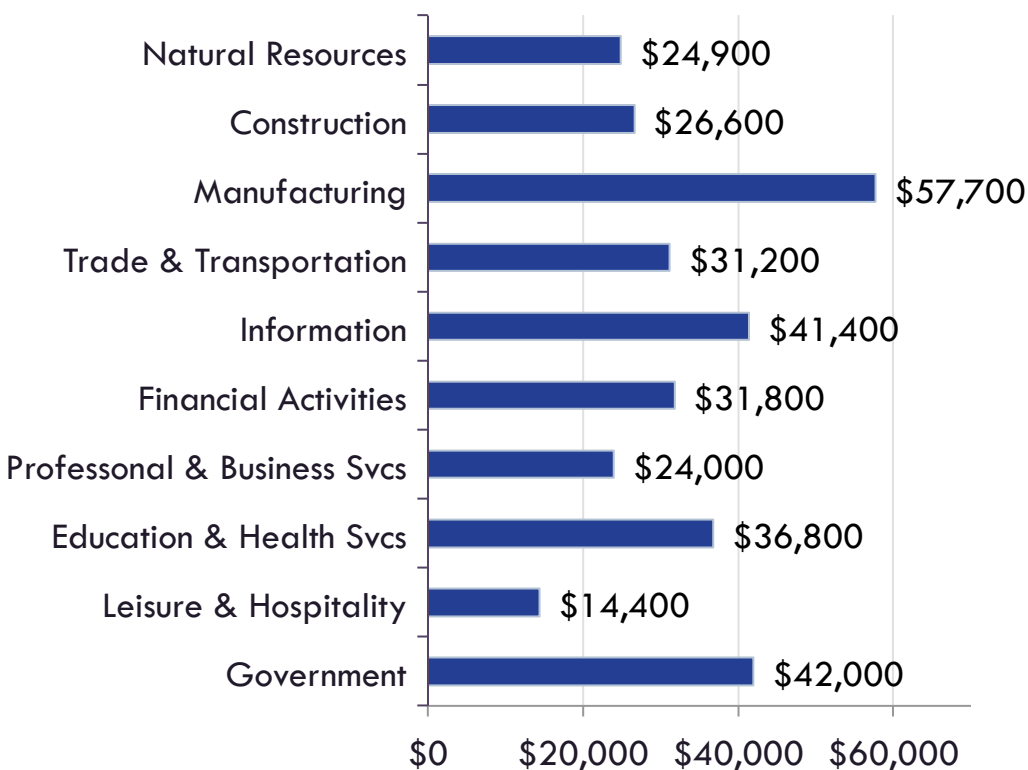
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The average salary for all industries in Putnam County was \$32,400 in 2014 – 63% of the US average salary of \$51,300.

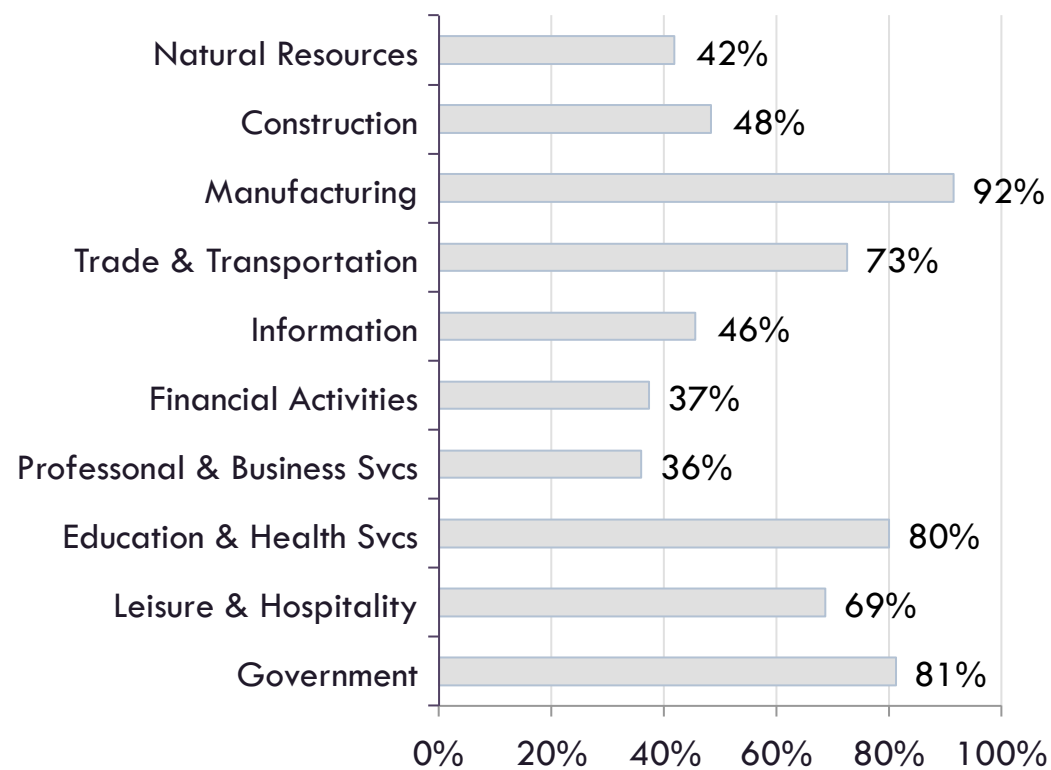
Manufacturing pays the highest salaries in Putnam County – an average of \$57,700, 92% of the US Manufacturing average. The industries with the next highest relative to US averages are Government (\$42,000, 81%), Education & Health Services (\$36,800, 80%), and Trade, Transportation, & Utilities (\$31,200, 73%).

Examining salaries by industry helps reveal which local industries are more competitive for workers or where workers show higher productivity. Above-average salaries may also indicate high demand for those workers in a community. The presence of high-salary industries is also a sign of positive wealth creation in a community.

AVERAGE SALARY BY INDUSTRY – PUTNAM COUNTY
2014



SHARE OF US SALARIES – PUTNAM COUNTY
2014



SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



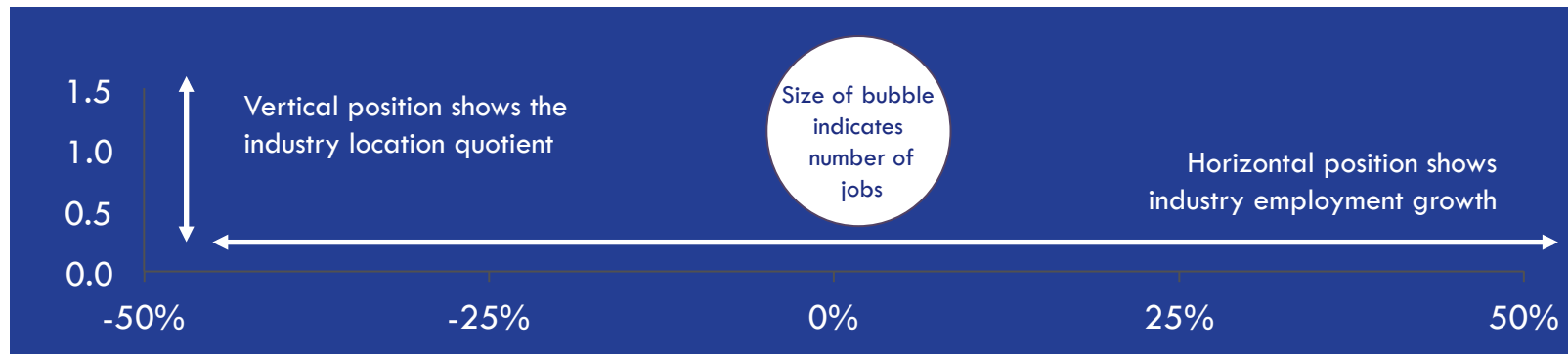
Location Quotient Cluster Analysis

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

The bubble chart on the following page shows LQ by industry on the vertical axis. The horizontal axis shows growth rates for the industry. The size of the bubble indicates the employment base of the sector.

The chart is divided into four quadrants. Sectors in the top right quadrant are growing, concentrated, and highly competitive. Bottom right sectors, while growing have below-average concentrations, and are emerging industries for the region.

Location Quotients (LQ) calculate the relative employment concentration of industries in a community compared to the US average. An LQ of 1.0 indicates parity with the US average. An LQ higher than 1.0 is more concentrated than the US average while an LQ lower than 1 indicates an industry is less concentrated than the US average.



HIGH CONCENTRATION

TOP LEFT (STRONG & DECLINING)

Contains clusters that are concentrated in the region but are declining (negative employment growth). These clusters typically fall into the lower quadrant as job losses eventually produce a decline in concentration

TOP RIGHT (STRONG & ADVANCING)

Contains clusters that are more concentrated in the region and are growing. These clusters are strengths that help a community stand out from the competition. Small, high growth clusters can be expected to become increasingly dominant over time.

BOTTOM LEFT (WEAK & DECLINING)

Contains clusters that are under-represented in the region (low concentration) and are also losing jobs. Clusters in this quadrant may indicate a gap in the workforce pipeline if local industries anticipate a future need. In general, clusters in this quadrant lack competitiveness.

BOTTOM RIGHT (WEAK & ADVANCING)

Contains clusters that are under-represented in the region but are growing (often quickly). If growth trends continue, these clusters will eventually move into the top-right quadrant. Clusters in this quadrant are considered "emerging" strengths for the region.

LOW CONCENTRATION



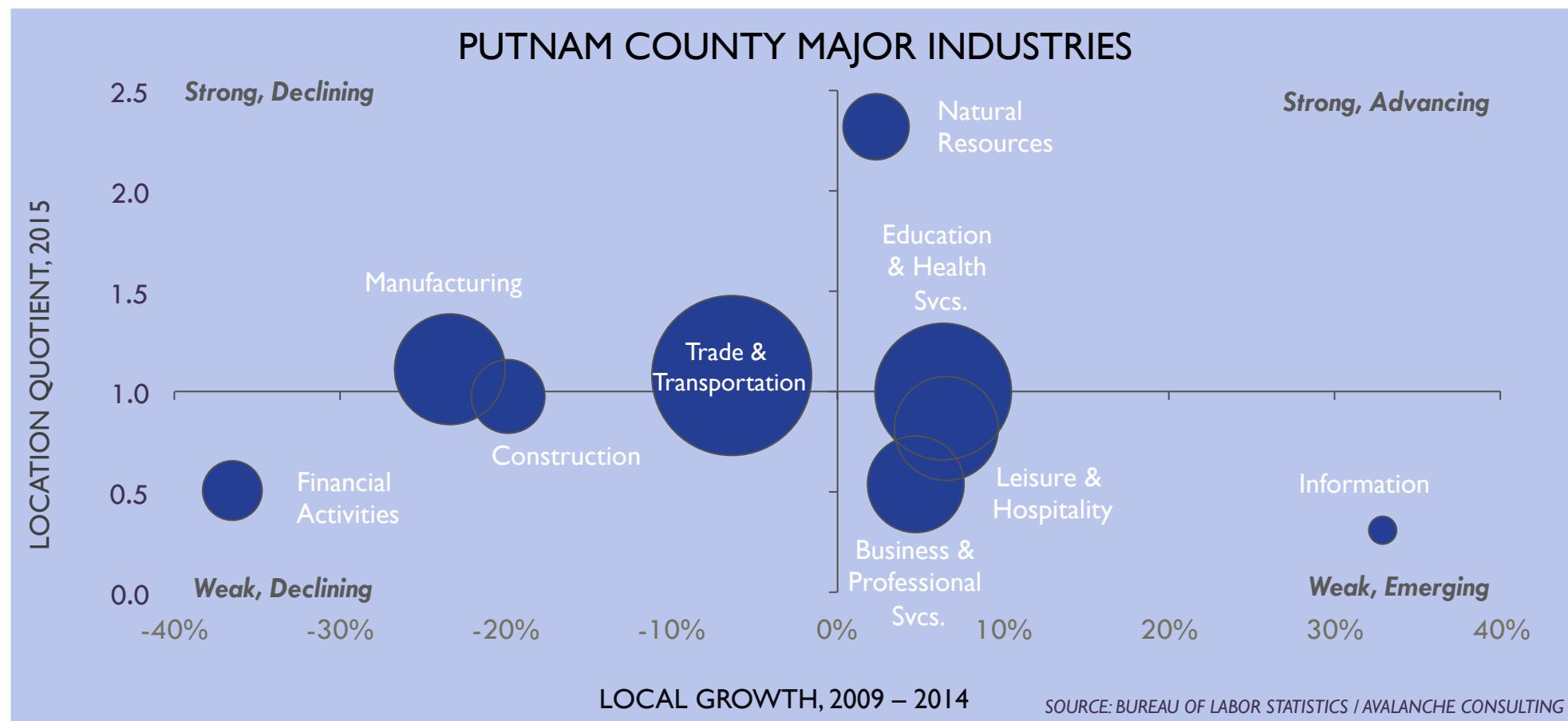
Location Quotient Cluster Analysis

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Natural Resources, which includes agriculture and mining, is the most concentrated industry in Putnam County, with an LQ of 2.3 which means it is more than twice as concentrated locally as the national average.

Only two other sectors are more concentrated than the US average – Manufacturing (1.1 LQ) and Trade, Transportation, & Utilities (1.1 LQ). Construction and Education & Health Services have equal employment concentration (1.0 LQ).

Location Quotients (LQ) calculate the relative employment concentration of industries in a community compared to the US average. An LQ of 1.0 indicates parity with the US average. An LQ higher than 1.0 is more concentrated than the US average while an LQ lower than 1 indicates an industry is less concentrated than the US average.



Exports

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

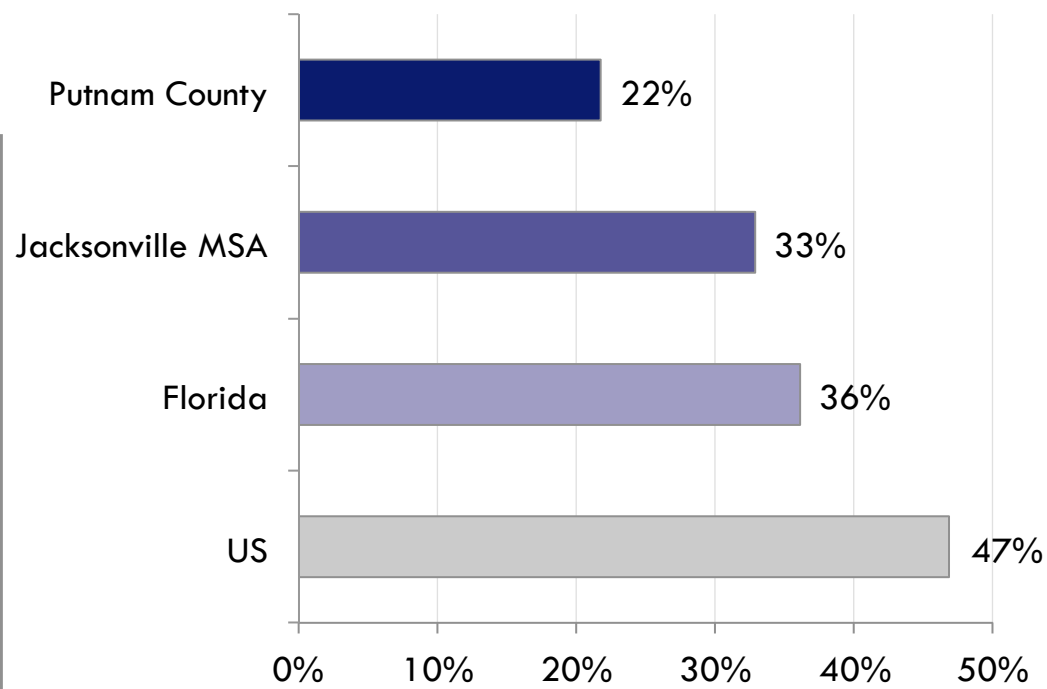
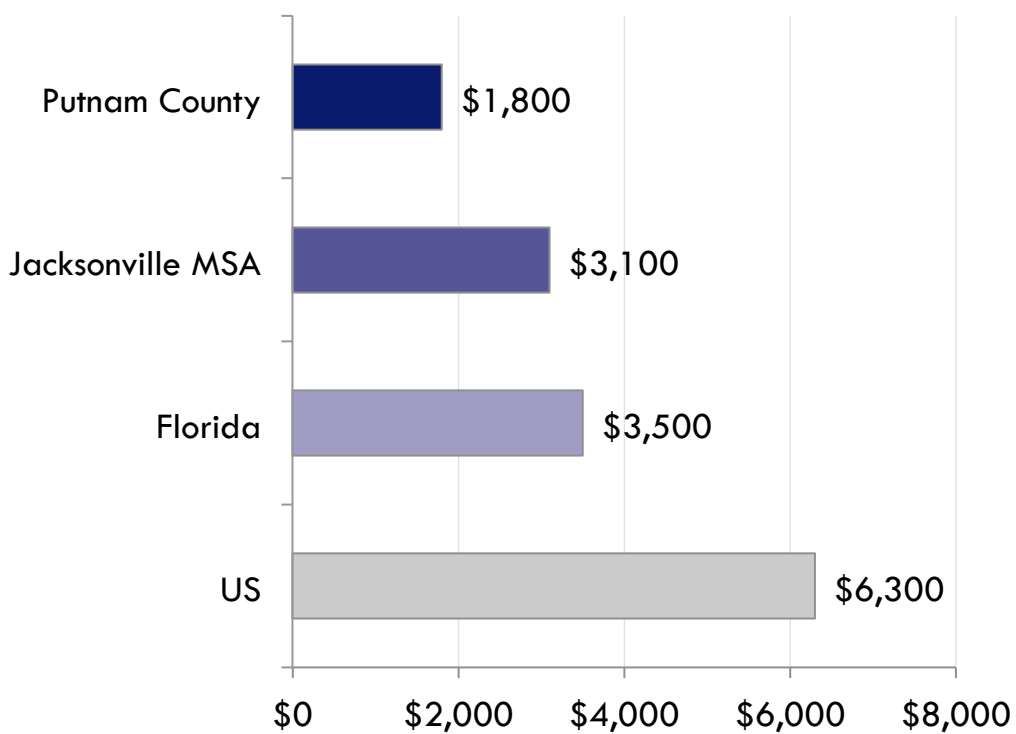
Exports are growing in Putnam County but more slowly than the national average and they comprise a smaller share of the economy. Putnam County exports \$1,800 of goods and services per residents compared to \$6,300 nationally and \$3,500 in Florida. Total export value grew only 22% from 2009 to 2014 in Putnam County compared to 47% nationally and 36% in Florida.

Putnam County's top exports are Paper, Agriculture, Computer & Electronic Products, Chemicals, Freight & Heavy Industry, and Electric Equipment & Appliances.

Exports reflect a region's competitive position. Exports draw outside dollars back into the community, increasing wealth and spurring secondary impacts across the community. If products and services are exported, they usually represent areas of specialization in the community and value-added work being done.

EXPORTS PER CAPITA, 2014

EXPORT GROWTH, 2009 – 2014



SOURCE: BROOKINGS INSTITUTE / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Gross Regional Product

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

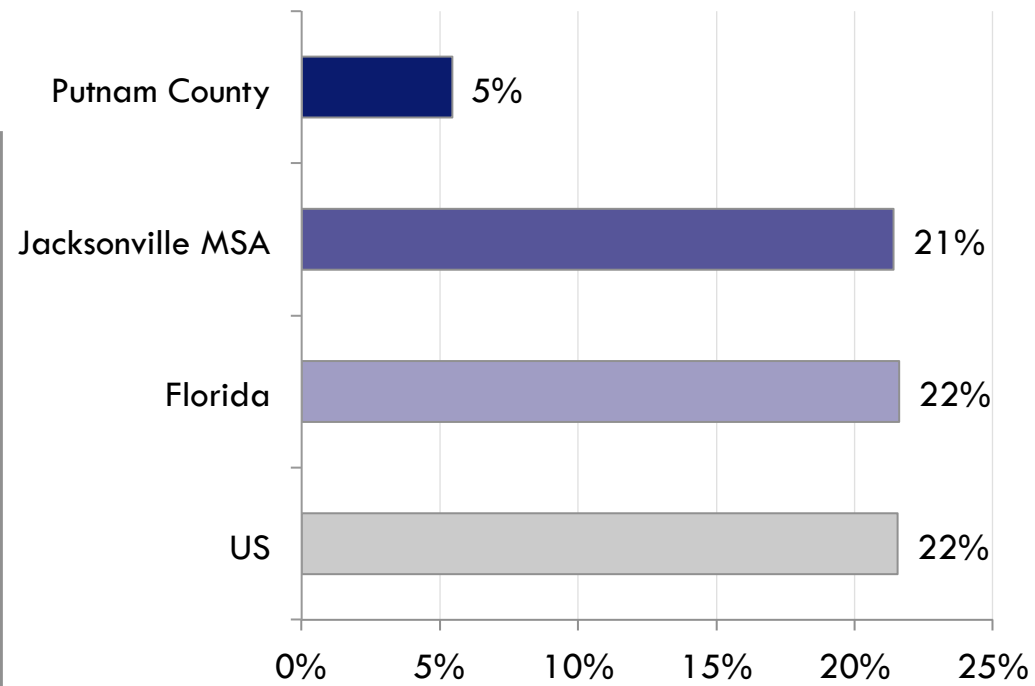
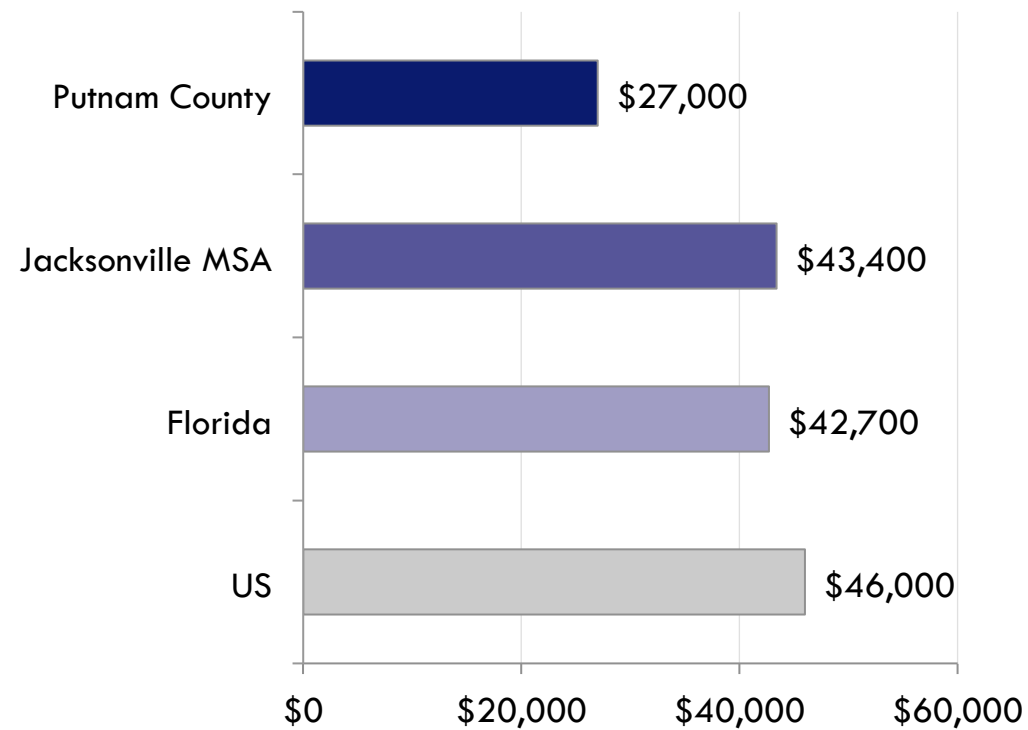
At \$27,000 per capita, Putnam County has a lower Gross Regional Product (GRP) than Florida and the US.

GRP grew only 5% in Putnam County from 2009 to 2014 compared to 22% growth in Florida and the US. Slow growth in GRP is partly due to a combination of population declines and job losses in Putnam County.

Gross Regional Product is a measure of the overall economic growth and productivity in a region. When GRP growth outpaces job growth, it shows that local workers and industries are becoming more competitive.

GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT PER CAPITA, 2014

GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT, 2009 – 2014



SOURCE: US BEA / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



Entrepreneurial Activity

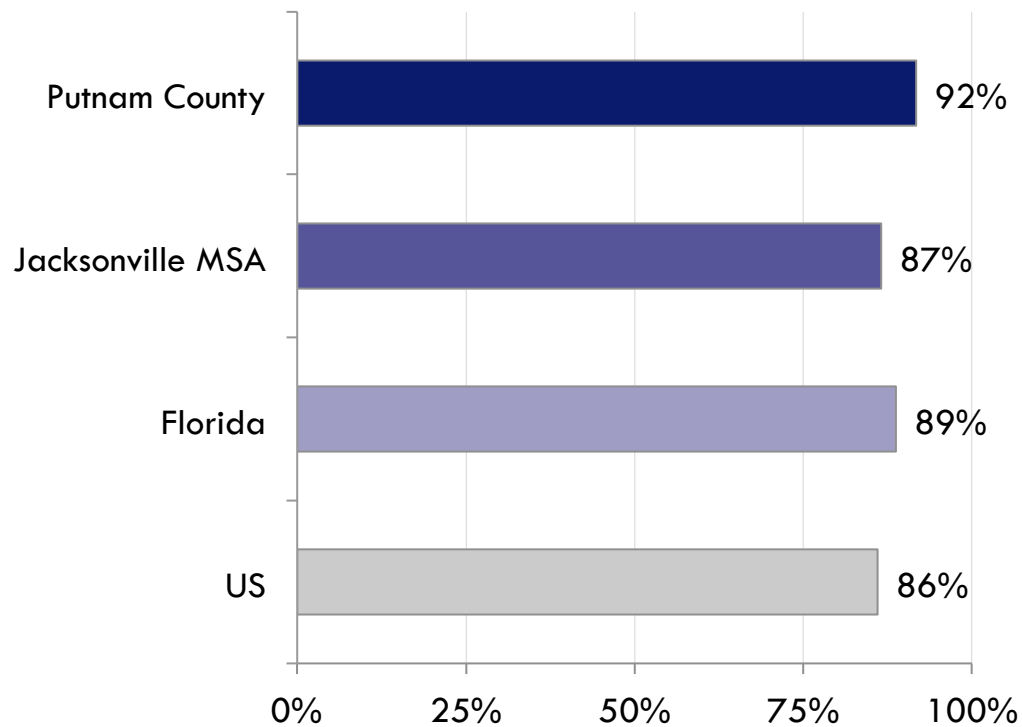
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Putnam County has a higher share of small businesses (those with twenty or fewer employees) than state and national averages. 92% of businesses in Putnam County have twenty or fewer employees – compared to 86% nationally and 89% in Florida.

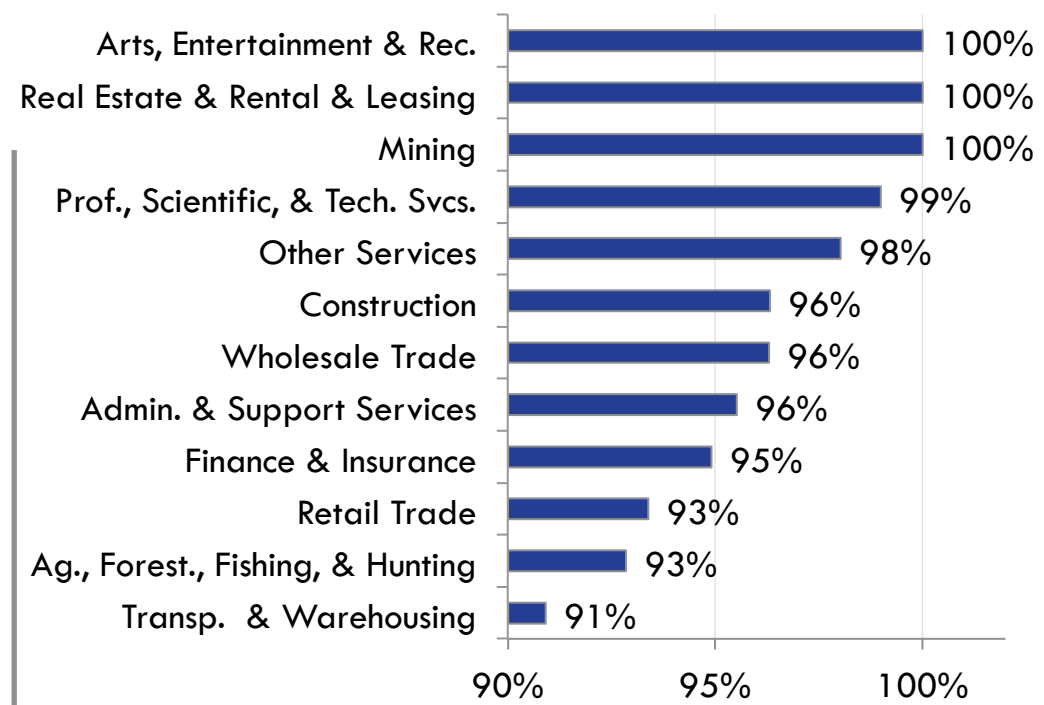
Putnam County has a higher share of small businesses in many business sectors with strong potential as targets for economic gardening activities. These sectors include: Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation; Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services; Administrative & Support Services; Agriculture; and Transportation & Warehousing.

Businesses that have fewer than twenty employees are the heart of the national economy. While few create big job gains all at once and many often fail, positive growth of small businesses reflects a thriving economy and the presence of an ecosystem that encourages entrepreneurship.

SHARE OF SMALL BUSINESSES, 2013
(COMPANIES WITH < 20 EMPLOYEES AS % OF TOTAL)



SHARE OF SMALL BUSINESSES BY SECTOR
2013

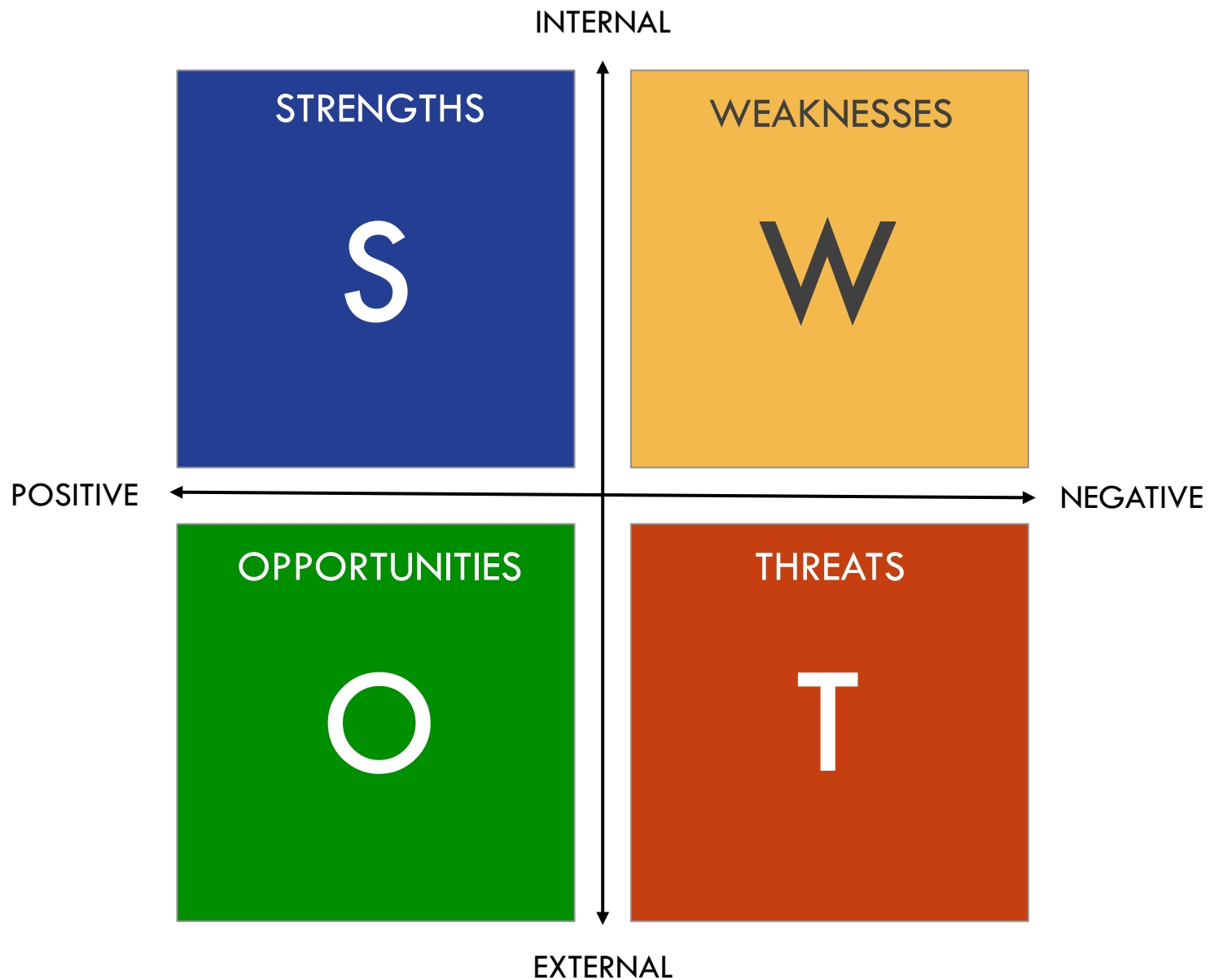


SOURCE: US CENSUS COUNTY BUSINESS PATTERNS / AVALANCHE CONSULTING



SWOT ASSESSMENT





The SWOT Assessment presents a summary of Putnam County’s strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats. The SWOT incorporates findings from quantitative information detailed in the Competitive Assessment, input from stakeholders, and the consulting team’s national perspective and expertise.



EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

STRENGTHS

- First Coast Technical College is successfully implementing training programs in collaboration with local businesses.
- St. John's River State College is an asset for 2- and 4-year degrees in the county.
- In addition to local residents, Putnam County draws nearly half its workers from the broader region – indicating that employers can draw from a larger and more diverse workforce than seen only in the county.

WEAKNESSES

- Putnam County has low levels of educational attainment and workforce participation rates.
- The internal and external perception of PK12 public schools in Putnam County is poor.
- Putnam County's population is both aging and declining, which presents challenges for businesses seeking a young and stable workforce.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Educational programs at First Coast Technical College can be further expanded and aligned to meet talent needs.
- There is an opportunity to expose middle and high school students to more local training programs and career opportunities.
- Local students could participate more in regional programs, such as Earn Up.

THREATS

- Continuing poor performing schools will cause businesses and families with the means to seek better education for their children to leave the county.



INFRASTRUCTURE

STRENGTHS

- Power and gas are affordable and available in Putnam County.
- CSX provides rail infrastructure for industrial businesses in Putnam County.
- The Business Park has available land and spec buildings.
- The Palatka Municipal Airport serves businesses and tourists, and the Kay Larkin Airport Industrial Park has available space for small industrial businesses.
- Putnam County has strong boating infrastructure and trail networks.

WEAKNESSES

- There is a lack of fully developed and updated industrial sites.
- Water and sewer connectivity is highly limited in the Western parts of the county.
- No direct interstate access makes Putnam County less competitive for greenfield development.
- Housing is relatively unaffordable for residents of Putnam County, and there is very little new housing available for rent or purchase.

OPPORTUNITIES

- There is an opportunity to further utilize the Barge Port for ship construction if Shands Bridge is replaced. This will require cooperative discussion with regional partners.
- Completion of the FDOT 4-lane extension will allow for improved distribution access to the county.
- Improved parking and access to the river would further increase utilization by residents and visitors.

THREATS

- Lack of housing stock, particularly rental units, leads many skilled workers to live outside of the county. Availability of affordable rental units is particularly important for younger workers and professionals.



BUSINESS CLIMATE & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

STRENGTHS

- Stakeholders cited having a positive experience working with the Chamber, SBDC, and Main Street Program.
- The State of Florida has no income tax and provides strong tax incentives for manufacturing.
- The number of small businesses is more concentrated and in Putnam County than state and national averages – indicating a strong entrepreneurial spirit and availability of supportive resources.

WEAKNESSES

- Stakeholders cited difficulty working with City of Palatka's permitting department, but there are signs that this is improving.

OPPORTUNITIES

- There is opportunity to grow and further connect local businesses with additional resources, such as funding sources and advising for small businesses.
- Empty buildings in downtown Palatka could be developed into incubator spaces for small businesses at relatively low cost.
- There is opportunity to leverage regional economic development and tourism resources, such as JAXUSA Partnership and VISIT FLORIDA, to promote awareness of local opportunities.

THREATS

- Local companies have threatened to relocate if tax incentives or abatements were not provided.
- The decrease in funding to Enterprise Florida could limit the number prospects coming to Putnam County from the state.
- Limited internal and external awareness of business opportunities in Putnam County could continue to prevent investment.



QUALITY OF PLACE & TOURISM

STRENGTHS

- Putnam County has tremendous natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities, including St. John's River, Ravine Gardens State Park, Rodman Lake, various trails, and some vineyards.
- There are numerous events and festivals in Putnam County, including many bass tournaments, regattas, and other water-related events.
- Stakeholders cited that they enjoy the small town living while still having access to a large metro.
- The county has a rich cultural history, from archeological sites to the David Browning Railroad Museum.
- Putnam County has many health care facilities.

WEAKNESSES

- There is a lack of awareness, both internally and externally, of the natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities present in Putnam County.
- Local organizations lack of funding to promote Putnam County's quality of place and tourism offerings.
- There is a perception that Putnam County has high crime, but statistics show that violent and property crime rates are well below Jacksonville Metro, state, and national averages.
- The county does not have enough and up-to-date sports facilities to serve local children or support attracting sports tournaments.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increased marketing of recreational and lifestyle assets in Putnam County could increase awareness among potential visitors and residents.
- Outdoor recreation assets would benefit from increased investment in their product, access, and parking.

THREATS

- Internal and external perceptions are some of the greatest threats facing Putnam County.
- A perception that Putnam County has high crime rates could deter businesses and individuals from locating in the county.
- A lack of awareness of the many recreational opportunities will lead to underutilization by residents and limit visitors.



ASSET MAPPING SUMMARY



ASSET MAPPING SUMMARY

DEO was joined by community representatives to tour and document Putnam County's assets. The team evaluated each asset to identify opportunities for enhancement or improvement. Assets that were visited include:

WORKFORCE & EDUCATION

- First Coast Technical College
- St. John's River State College
- Florida School of the Arts
- Children's Reading Center Charter School

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Kay Larkin Airport Industrial Park
- David Browning Railroad Museum & Train Station
- Business Park
- Palatka Municipal Airport
- Barge Port
- Utilities - East Palatka
- CSX

TOURISM

- Trail System for Putnam County
- St. John's River Center and River
- Ravine Gardens State Park
- Rodman Lake
- Tangled Oaks Vineyard
- Palatka Historic District
- Crescent City Historic District
- Mount Royal Airpark / Community & Archeological Site

ORGANIZATIONAL RESOURCES

- SBDC / TDC / Chamber of Commerce
- JAXUSA Partnership

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE RESOURCES

- New Putnam Jail
- Vintage Health Care
- Putnam County Medical Center
- Cancer Center of Putnam County

EMPLOYERS

- Seminole Electric Cooperative
- Georgia Pacific
- Forest Groves Fernery



VISION & GOALS



VISION STATEMENT

An economic development vision provides a foundation to inspire and guide specific goals, activities, and strategic investments in a community. The community's vision statement should be founded on the history and existing culture of the community while also providing an aspirational view of the future.

Through conversations with local stakeholders, focus groups, and continued community engagement, the following vision statement evolved for Putnam County:

Putnam County – Vision 2021

Putnam County is the rural heart of North Florida – combining a high quality of life, abundant natural resources, and opportunities for businesses and residents to thrive.

The following section identifies specific goals and objectives to help Putnam County leadership and partner organizations move forward towards this vision in upcoming years.



GOALS & OBJECTIVES

1. TALENT

GOAL: Putnam County provides strong education opportunities to all residents and boasts a workforce pipeline aligned with local business needs.

- Educational and training programs are aligned with local business needs.
- Putnam County provides education opportunities for students and adult learners.

2. INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL: Putnam County has infrastructure that supports existing businesses and creates opportunities for new industry development.

- Putnam County invests in priority infrastructure needs.

3. BUSINESS CLIMATE & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

GOAL: Putnam County provides the resources and supportive environment to help local businesses and startup companies grow.

- Putnam County's has a business-friendly regulatory environment that protects community interests without overly restricting businesses.
- Putnam County directly invests in programs and resources that support small business development.

4. MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

GOAL: Putnam County is nationally recognized as a premier location to live, work, and visit.

- Residents take pride in Putnam County and celebrate the community.
- The Putnam County Chamber has appropriate funding and a robust marketing toolkit that clearly communicates county and regional assets and opportunities.



1. TALENT

Putnam County provides strong education opportunities to all residents and boasts a workforce pipeline aligned with local business needs.

Top Priorities

- Connecting local youth with well-paying job opportunities through education
- Supporting continued education for adult learners and engaging unemployed and underemployed residents
- Investing in quality of life assets to attract and retain skilled workers

Objective 1.1: Educational and training programs are aligned with local business needs.

Strategy 1.1.1: Involve local employers in developing training programs from K12 to higher education.

- Continue to engage local employers to develop curriculum at First Coast Technical College that matches skill needs. Identify opportunities to share resources, such as equipment and instructors.
- Consider creating a Putnam County Talent Task Force made of up local employers, K12 representatives, First Coast Technical College, and St. John's River State College. This group could meet quarterly to discuss workforce needs and development new training and education programs to address gaps.

Strategy 1.1.2: Educate residents about local career opportunities, such as those in technical trades.

- Encourage First Coast Technical College to expand the Career Connector events to both middle school and high school students. Engage local employers to attend the showcases to educate students about their industry and share job openings.
- Create informational materials about various career pathways, including job descriptions, average salaries, education needed, and available jobs in Putnam County. Share these materials with career counselors, teachers, and students.
- Consider developing internship or apprenticeship opportunities for high school students to earn credit and gain job experience before graduating.



1. TALENT

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- Investing in quality of life assets to attract and retain skilled workers

Objective 1.2: Putnam County provides education opportunities for students and adult learners.

Strategy 1.2.1: Engage adult learners in the workforce.

- Partner with local nonprofits to share information about scholarships and job opportunities available to local students. For example, share financial aid information available at www.earnup.org/paying-for-school-adults.
- Encourage First Coast Technical College to develop programs that are tailored to adult learners, such as online and evening classes for those who work during the day.
- Take advantage of existing education programs for adult learners in the Northeast Florida region such as [A-Step](#), [Complete Florida](#), [Northeast Florida Community Action Agency](#), and [Year Up](#).

Strategy 1.2.2: Connect with regional programs like EarnUp and CareerSource Northeast Florida.

- Earn Up is a higher education collaborative organized by the JAXUSA Partnership with a goal of having 60 percent of adults with training certificates or college degrees by 2025. St. John's River State College is currently a partner.
- Encourage First Coast Technical College and the Putnam County School District to get involved with this program. Use Earn Up as a resource for high school students, adult learners, and veterans.
- Continue utilizing resources provided by CareerSource Northeast Florida.

Strategy 1.2.3: Conduct a needs assessment with partner organizations to address systemic issues that affect educational attainment rates – including housing, transportation, and health care.

- Identify priority issues, organizations responsible for addressing them, resources needed.
- Apply for a Community Planning Technical Assistance grant to assist with funding the needs assessment.



2. INFRASTRUCTURE

Putnam County has infrastructure that supports existing businesses and creates opportunities for new industry development.

Top Priorities

- Expanding water and wastewater systems throughout the county
- Completing current highway expansion plans and identifying greatest needs for future infrastructure investment
- Inventorying industrial sites, commercial properties, and private housing stock to identify specific needs and prioritize future investments

Objective 2.1: Putnam County invests in priority infrastructure needs.

Strategy 2.1.1: Invest in critical infrastructure needed to enhance Putnam County's competitiveness.

- Work with local public works and planning departments to extend water and wastewater systems and reduce the use of septic tanks.
- Partner with nearby counties to advocate for the replacement of the Shands Bridge. Work with FDOT to develop a plan to address height issues.
- Conduct an infrastructure needs assessment of the entire county to prioritize future investments – focusing on new highway construction and access, aging bridge replacement, and other top infrastructure needs.
- Identify the infrastructure needs and opportunities for the largest export businesses from Putnam County – including Paper, Agricultural Products, Computer & Electronic Products, Chemicals, Freight & Heavy Industry, and Electric Equipment & Appliances.

Strategy 2.1.2: Inventory industrial and commercial sites in Putnam County.

- Review the state site selection study conducted by LEO Consulting to determine the ranking of Putnam County's existing parcels.
- Work with FPL to identify sites with the most potential, such as the 2500 acre parcel near CSX, the spec building at the Business Park, and warehouses at the Barge Port.
- Identify priority investments and upgrades needed to enhance sites, such as roadway improvement and utility development.
- Explore expansion of T-hangars at Palatka Municipal Airport as a way to increase rental revenues.
- Partner with organizations such as JAXUSA Partnership, Enterprise Florida, and DEO to obtain financial resources for eligible site upgrades.



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- Completing current highway expansion plans and identifying greatest needs for future infrastructure investment
- Inventorying industrial sites, commercial properties, and private housing stock to identify specific needs and prioritize future investments

Strategy 2.1.3: Inventory Putnam County's housing stock.

- Conduct an independent inventory of all housing in Putnam County to identify specific areas that are underserved – including geographic regions and housing types (rental, multifamily, etc.).
- Work directly with private developers to create market opportunities to construct new housing to fill gaps identified in the current supply.
- Pursue Adaptive Reuse grants to convert large historic homes into multi-family developments. Visit <http://dos.myflorida.com/historical/grants/> to learn more.
- Until new housing is developed, market available housing in surrounding counties when recruiting businesses and talent.

Strategy 2.1.4: Explore the development of a medical corridor in Putnam County.

- Build upon the medical assets present in the community. Identify gaps in health care offerings and proactively recruit those services to Putnam County.
- Market these assets to residents of the broader region as part of the destination appeal of Putnam County along with natural resources.
- Work with a developer to determine the feasibility of establishing a retirement community in Putnam County.

Strategy 2.1.5: Inventory and improve integration of county-wide tourism assets through consistent signage, improved access and capital improvement planning.

- Develop a comprehensive list of tourism assets throughout Putnam County and begin to identify and plan for infrastructure investments to improve their competitiveness.
- Develop a county-wide design standard and set of graphics for tourism and recreation assets. Utilize these tools on existing and new signage to direct residents and visitors to assets.
- Include all assets on a comprehensive county-wide website and in hard-copy marketing materials.



3. BUSINESS CLIMATE & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Putnam County provides the resources and supportive environment to help local businesses and startup companies grow.

Top Priorities

- Continuing to improve the transparency and ease of project permitting across the county and each individual community
- Identifying funding and specific resources to support small business growth in targeted sectors
- Exploring opportunities to incentivize new businesses – including a formal incentive policy and creative entrepreneurial programs, such as reuse of empty structures as business incubators

Objective 3.1: Putnam County's has a business-friendly regulatory environment that protects community interests without overly restricting businesses.

Strategy 3.1.1: Streamline the permitting process across all cities.

- Invest in technology upgrades to automate permitting processes, such as the ability of inspectors to use computer tablets on site to enter inspection results.
- Ensure all key information and forms are available online.
- Train employees on customer service best practices. Consider including an online customer satisfaction survey for residents and businesses to fill out to obtain feedback.

Strategy 3.1.2: Develop a formal incentives policy.

- Create an incentives policy aligned with the County's economic development goals that outlines a process of evaluating projects and granting incentives and/or tax abatements consistently.
- The incentive policy should include the following provisions: benefits should exceed costs; the same evaluations standards are used consistently for all economic development projects; incentives are not front-loaded; incentives are available for small business and business retention, not just relocation of new businesses; and the policy includes claw back provisions in the instance that the recipient does not fulfill its contractual obligations.
- Conduct a literature review of online resources, such as the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies' Local Permitting Best Practices Model. Visit <http://www.mass.gov/hed/docs/permitting/permitting-bestpracticesguide.pdf> to learn more.
- Participate in the state's Qualified Targeted Industry (QTI) Tax Refund when applicable (local communities usually provide 20% and the state provides 80% of the QTI portion). While rural communities are not required to participate, it is a sign of good faith and could help close a deal.



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- Continuing to improve the transparency and ease of project permitting across the county and each individual community
- Identifying funding and specific resources to support small business growth in targeted sectors
- Exploring opportunities to incentivize new businesses – including a formal incentive policy and creative entrepreneurial programs, such as reuse of empty structures as business incubators

Objective 3.2: Putnam County directly invests in programs and resources that support small business development.

Strategy 3.2.1: Continue to provide informational resources to startups and existing businesses.

- The Chamber should continue to serve as the main point of contact for businesses needing guidance.
- Create a guidebook and website for startups and small businesses about available funding sources and grant opportunities.
- Continue conducting regular visits to local businesses to ensure their needs are being met.
- Develop an Economic Gardening plan to promote stability and growth in highly concentrated small business sectors that match Putnam County competitive assets and opportunities. Some of these sectors might include:
 - Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation
 - Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services
 - Administration & Support Services
 - Agriculture
 - Transportation & Warehousing

Strategy 3.2.2: Conduct a feasibility study to determine if Putnam County is a good fit for an incubator space.

- Survey small businesses participating in the SBDC program to see if an incubator would be a useful resource.
- Consider retrofitting older buildings, such as the mall or downtown, as a location for the incubator or small business office space.
- Reach out to existing incubators in the state of Florida to determine how and what kind of incubator would suite Putnam County, in collaboration with St. John's River State College and First Coast Technical College.



4. MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Putnam County is nationally recognized as a premier location to live, work, and visit.

Top Priorities

- Improving internal communication – focusing on telling positive stories about Putnam County and cultivating pride
- Identifying resources to support expanded marketing activities that highlight competitive assets and new business opportunities in Putnam County

Objective 4.1:

Residents take pride in Putnam County and celebrate the community.

Strategy 4.1.1: Generate more positive dialogue among Putnam County residents.

- Develop a social media campaign that showcases Putnam County's assets, such as its outdoor recreation amenities, using the hashtag #PutnamCountyPride, or something similar. Utilize striking photography and video to help capture the personality of Putnam County and the beauty of its natural resources across social media platforms.
- Recruit residents to serve as ambassadors by sharing what they love about Putnam County on social media using the campaign hashtag.
- Consider a "Did You Know?" series that shares interesting facts about Putnam County's historical sites on social media.
- Distribute press releases to local media that showcases economic development wins and other positive news.
- Continue to post community events and festivals on the Chamber website.



4. MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Putnam County is nationally recognized as a premier location to live, work, and visit.

Top Priorities

- Improving internal communication – focusing on telling positive stories about Putnam County and cultivating pride
- Identifying resources to support expanded marketing activities that highlight competitive assets and new business opportunities in Putnam County

Objective 4.2: The Putnam County Chamber has appropriate funding and a robust marketing toolkit that clearly communicates county and regional assets and opportunities.

Strategy 4.2.1: Obtain marketing resources.

- The Putnam County Chamber currently does not have the staff or financial resources to implement a full marketing campaign. The Chamber and other partners will have to identify additional resources to effectively promote Putnam County's assets around the state and nation.
- Reserve limited marketing resources for high ROI activities, such as maintaining a digital presence, rather than expensive tools such as advertising or print collateral.
- Utilize resources from regional organizations when possible, such as VISIT FLORIDA's advertising matching grants.

Strategy 4.2.2: Update Putnam County Chamber's marketing toolkit.

- Conduct a target industry study to identify niche sectors that are a good fit for Putnam County.
- Include more marketing messages directed towards target industries on the Chamber website and across all marketing materials, such as those identified in the Asset Mapping Exercise.
 - For each target industry, share major employers and suppliers; a map or list of supporting assets; links to sites and buildings that are a good fit for the industry; success stories and local business testimonials; a link to a printable PDF document about the industry; and industry-specific talent demographics and education programs.
 - Market not just what is within Putnam County, but assets all around the region, such as schools, housing options, and quality of life amenities.



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Top Priorities

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- Identifying resources to support expanded marketing activities that highlight competitive assets and new business opportunities in Putnam County

- Share press releases that showcase Putnam County's economic development wins with local media, regional partners, and target industry trade publications. Include publications such as Area Development and Site Selection Magazine on your distribution list.
 - Keep a News page updated on the website.
 - Distribute a quarterly e-newsletter to stakeholders, prospects, and target audiences that aggregate these news updates.
- Putnam County's social media presence currently serves to promote upcoming events. Include more external marketing messages directed towards economic development and tourism audiences. For example, share economic developments successes, project announcements, news, rankings, awards, etc. Create a monthly social media calendar to ease implementation.
- Invest in a few key printed collateral pieces, such as one-pagers about each target industry. Include links to download these on the website and use in direct sales meetings and presentations.

Strategy 4.2.3: Increase awareness of Putnam County's outdoor recreation amenities.

- Include more outdoor recreation content on the Chamber website that will position Putnam County as a must-see destination.
 - For example, rather than just listing recreation assets, include sample itineraries that help capture the experience of a long weekend in Putnam County, from the best trails to favorite local restaurants.
 - Create trail maps and other outdoor recreation collateral as a downloadable PDF online. Include printed copies at visitor centers across the County.
 - Share this content with VISIT FLORIDA, Visit Jacksonville, and other organizations that can promote Putnam County's outdoor assets.
- Use this marketing platform to advocate for additional investment in Putnam County's outdoor recreation amenities, such as trail signage or establishing a local farmer's market.



4. MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Putnam County is nationally recognized as a premier location to live, work, and visit.

Top Priorities

- Improving internal communication – focusing on telling positive stories about Putnam County and cultivating pride
- Identifying resources to support expanded marketing activities that highlight competitive assets and new business opportunities in Putnam County

Strategy 4.2.4: Partner with regional organizations to elevate Putnam County's message.

- Meet with CEOs of VISIT FLORIDA and Visit Jacksonville to discuss joint tourism marketing opportunities.
- Continue to work with JAXUSA Partnership to market Putnam County as part of the greater Jacksonville region. Attend inbound and outbound events with the Partnership that align with Putnam County's target industries and assets.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

1. TALENT	LEAD ORGANIZATION	IMPLEMENTATION ORGANIZATIONS	TIME FRAME																	
			2016		2017				2018				2019				2020			
			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Objective 1.1: Educational and training programs are aligned with local business needs.																				
1.1.1: Involve local employers in developing training programs from K12 to higher education.	• Putnam County Chamber of Commerce (Role - Convening Educators and Employers)	• First Coast Technical College																		
Continue to engage local employers to develop curriculum at First Coast Technical College that matches skill needs. Identify opportunities to share resources, such as equipment and instructors.		• Putnam County School District																		
Consider creating a Putnam County Talent Task Force made of up local employers, K12 representatives, First Coast Technical College, and St. John's River State College. This group could meet quarterly to discuss workforce needs and development new training and education programs to address gaps.		• St. John's River State College																		
1.1.2: Educate residents about local career opportunities, such as those in technical trades.	• Putnam County Chamber of Commerce (Role - Convening Educators and Employers)	• Private Employers - including major employers such as Georgia Pacific and																		
Encourage First Coast Technical College to expand the Career Connector events to both middle school and high school students. Engage local employers to attend the showcases to educate students about their industry and share job openings.		• First Coast Technical College																		
Create informational materials about various career pathways, including job descriptions, average salaries, education needed, and available jobs in Putnam County. Share these materials with career counselors, teachers, and students.		• Putnam County School District																		
Consider developing internship or apprenticeship opportunities for high school students to earn credit and gain job experience before graduating.		• St. John's River State College																		
		• Private Employers																		
Objective 1.2: Putnam County provides education opportunities for students and adult learners.																				
1.2.1: Engage adult learners in the workforce.	• St. John's River State College																			
Partner with local nonprofits to share information about scholarships and job opportunities available to local students. For example, share financial aid information available at www.earnup.org/paying-for-school-adults .		• First Coast Technocal College																		
Encourage First Coast Technical College to develop programs that are tailored to adult learners, such as online and evening classes for those who work during the day.		• Local Non-Profits																		
Take advantage of existing education programs for adult learners in the Northeast Florida region such as A-Step, Complete Florida, Northeast Florida Community Action Agency, and Year Up.		• Regional Educaiton Programs																		
1.2.2: Connect with regional programs like EarnUp and CareerSource Northeast Florida.	• St. John's River State College	• Putnam County School District																		
Encourage First Coast Technical College and the Putnam County School District to get involved with this program. Use Earn Up as a resource for high school students, adult learners, and veterans.		• First Coast Technocal College																		
Continue utilizing resources provided by CareerSource Northeast Florida.		• EarnUP																		
1.2.3: Conduct a needs assessment with partner organizations to address systemic issues that affect Putnam County residents – including housing, transportation, and health care.	• Putnam County	• CareerSource Northeast Florida																		
Identify priority issues, organizations responsible for addressing them, resources needed.		• City of Crescent City																		
Apply for a Community Planning Technical Assistance grant to assist with funding the needs assessment.		• City of Palatka																		
		• Town of Interlachen																		
		• Town of Pomona Park																		
		• Town of Welaka																		



IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

2. INFRASTRUCTURE	LEAD ORGANIZATION	IMPLEMENTATION ORGANIZATIONS	TIME FRAME																	
			2016		2017				2018				2019				2020			
			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Objective 2.1: Putnam County invests in priority infrastructure needs.																				
2.1.1: Invest in critical infrastructure needed to enhance Putnam County’s competitiveness.	• Putnam County • City of Palatka	• City of Crescent City • Town of Interlachen • Town of Pomona Park • Town of Welaka																		
Work with local public works and planning departments to extend water and wastewater systems and reduce the use of septic tanks.																				
Partner with nearby counties to advocate for the replacement of the Shands Bridge. Work with FDOT to develop a plan to address height issues.																				
Conduct an infrastructure needs assessment of the entire county to prioritize future investments – focusing on new highway construction and access, aging bridge replacement, and other top infrastructure needs.																				
Identify the infrastructure needs and opportunities for the largest export businesses from Putnam County – including Paper, Agricultural Products, Computer & Electronic Products, Chemicals, Freight & Heavy Industry, and Electric Equipment & Appliances.																				
2.1.2: Inventory industrial and commercial sites in Putnam County.	• Putnam County Chamber of Commerce	• Putnam County • City of Crescent City • City of Palatka • Town of Interlachen • Town of Pomona Park • Town of Welaka • Palatka Municipal Airport • JAXUSA Partnership • Enterprise Florida • DEO • Kay Larkin Airport Industrial Park • Barge Port • Business Park																		
Review the state site selection study conducted by LEO Consulting to determine the ranking of Putnam County’s existing parcels.																				
Work with FPL to identify sites with the most potential, such as the 2500 acre parcel near CSX, the spec building at the Business Park, and warehouses at the Barge Port.																				
Identify priority investments and upgrades needed to enhance sites, such as roadway improvement and utility development.																				
Explore expansion of T-hangars at Palatka Municipal Airport as a way to increase rental revenues.																				
Partner with organizations such as JAXUSA Partnership, Enterprise Florida, and DEO to obtain financial resources for eligible site upgrades.																				



IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

2. INFRASTRUCTURE	LEAD ORGANIZATION	IMPLEMENTATION ORGANIZATIONS	TIME FRAME																	
			2016		2017				2018				2019				2020			
			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2.1.3: Inventory Putnam County's housing stock.	• Putnam County • City of Palatka	• City of Crescent City • Town of Interlachen • Town of Pomona Park • Town of Welaka																		
Conduct an independent inventory of all housing in Putnam County to identify specific areas that are underserved – including geographic regions and housing types (rental, multifamily, etc.).																				
Work directly with private developers to create market opportunities to construct new housing to fill gaps identified in the current supply.																				
Pursue Adaptive Reuse grants to convert large historic homes into multi-family developments.																				
Until new housing is developed, market available housing in surrounding counties when recruiting businesses and talent.																				
2.1.4: Explore the development of a medical corridor in Putnam County.	• Putnam County Chamber of Commerce	• Putnam Community Medical Center • Vintage Health Care • Cancer Center of Putnam County • Putnam County • City of Crescent City • City of Palatka • Town of Interlachen • Town of Pomona Park • Town of Welaka																		
Build upon the medical assets present in the community. Identify gaps in health care offerings and proactively recruit those services to Putnam County.																				
Market these assets to residents of the broader region as part of the destination appeal of Putnam County along with natural resources.																				
Work with a developer to determine the feasibility of establishing a retirement community in Putnam County.																				
2.1.5: Inventory and improve integration of county-wide tourism assets through consistent signage, improved access and capital improvement planning.	• Putnam County Chamber of Commerce	• Putnam County • Palatka Historic District • Crescent City Historic District • St. John's River Center • Ravine Gardens State Park • Rodman Lake • Tangled Oaks Vineyard • Mount Royal Airpark • David Browning Railroad Museum • Other Tourism-Related Assets																		
Develop a comprehensive list of tourism assets throughout Putnam County and begin to identify and plan for infrastructure investments to improve their competitiveness.																				
Develop a county-wide design standard and set of graphics for tourism and recreation assets. Utilize these tools on existing and new signage to direct residents and visitors to assets.																				
Include all assets on a comprehensive county-wide website and in hard-copy marketing materials.																				



IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

3. BUSINESS CLIMATE & ENTREPRENEURSHIP	LEAD ORGANIZATION	IMPLEMENTATION ORGANIZATIONS	TIME FRAME																		
			2016		2017				2018				2019				2020				
			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Objective 3.1: Putnam County's has a business-friendly regulatory environment that protects community interests without overly restricting businesses.																					
3.1.1: Streamline the permitting process across all cities.	• Putnam County • City of Palatka	• City of Crescent City • Town of Interlachen • Town of Pomona Park • Town of Welaka																			
Invest in technology upgrades to automate permitting processes, such as the ability of inspectors to use computer tablets on site to enter inspection results.																					
Ensure all key information and forms are available online.																					
Train employees on customer service best practices. Consider including an online customer satisfaction survey for residents and businesses to fill out to obtain feedback.																					
3.1.2: Develop a formal incentives policy.	• Putnam County • City of Palatka	• City of Crescent City • Town of Interlachen • Town of Pomona Park • Town of Welaka • Putnam County Chamber of Commerce																			
Create an incentives policy aligned with the County's economic development goals that outlines a process of evaluating projects and granting incentives and/or tax abatements consistently.																					
The incentive policy should include the following provisions: benefits should exceed costs; the same evaluations standards are used consistently for all economic development projects; incentives are not front-loaded; incentives are available for small business and business retention, not just relocation of new businesses; and the policy includes claw back provisions in the instance that the recipient does not fulfill its contractual obligations.																					
Conduct a literature review of online resources, such as the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies' Local Permitting Best Practices Model.																					
Participate in the state's Qualified Targeted Industry (QTI) Tax Refund when applicable (local communities usually provide 20% and the state provides 80% of the QTI portion). While rural communities are not required to participate, it is a sign of good faith and could help close a deal.																					
Objective 3.2: Putnam County directly invests in programs and resources that support small business development.																					
3.2.1: Continue to provide informational resources to startups and existing businesses.	• Putnam County Chamber of Commerce	• US Small Business Administration • City of Palatka • Putnam County Development Authority • University of North Florida • JAXUSA Partnership																			
The Chamber should continue to serve as the main point of contact for businesses needing guidance.																					
Create a guidebook and website for startups and small businesses about available funding sources and grant opportunities.																					
Continue conducting regular visits to local businesses to ensure their needs are being met.																					
Develop an Economic Gardening plan to promote stability and growth in highly concentrated small business sectors that match Putnam County competitive assets and opportunities. Some of these sectors might include: Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation, Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services, Administration & Support Services, Agriculture, Transportation & Warehousing.	• Putnam County • City of Palatka	• City of Crescent City • Town of Interlachen • Town of Pomona Park • Town of Welaka • Putnam County Chamber of Commerce • St. John's River State College • First Coast Technical College • JAXUSA																			
3.2.2: Conduct a feasibility study to determine if Putnam County is a good fit for an incubator space.																					
Survey small businesses participating in the SBDC program to see if an incubator would be a useful resource.																					
Consider retrofitting older buildings, such as the mall or downtown, as a location for the incubator or small business office space.																					
Reach out to existing incubators in the state of Florida to determine how and what kind of incubator would suite Putnam County, in collaboration with St. John's River State College and First Coast Technical College.																					



IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

4. MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS	LEAD ORGANIZATION	IMPLEMENTATION ORGANIZATIONS	TIME FRAME																	
			2016		2017				2018				2019				2020			
			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Objective 4.1: Residents take pride in Putnam County and celebrate the community.																				
4.1.1: Generate more positive dialogue among Putnam County residents.	• Putnam County Chamber of Commerce	• Putnam County • City of Crescent City • City of Palatka • Town of Interlachen • Town of Pomona Park • Town of Welaka • Resident Organizations • Other Non-Profits • Private Employers																		
Develop a social media campaign that showcases Putnam County's assets, such as its outdoor recreation amenities, using the hashtag #PutnamCountyPride, or something similar. Utilize striking																				
Recruit residents to serve as ambassadors by sharing what they love about Putnam County on social media using the campaign hashtag.																				
Consider a "Did You Know?" series that shares interesting facts about Putnam County's historical sites on social media.																				
Distribute press releases to local media that showcases economic development wins and other positive news.																				
Continue to post community events and festivals on the Chamber website.																				
Objective 4.2: The Putnam County Chamber has appropriate funding and a robust marketing toolkit that clearly communicates county and regional assets and opportunities.																				
4.2.1: Obtain marketing resources.	• Putnam County Chamber of Commerce	• VISIT FLORIDA • JAXUSA Partnership																		
The Putnam County Chamber currently does not have the staff or financial resources to implement a full marketing campaign. The Chamber and other partners will have to identify additional resources to effectively promote Putnam County's assets around the state and nation.																				
Reserve limited marketing resources for high ROI activities, such as maintaining a digital presence, rather than expensive tools such as advertising or print collateral.																				
Utilize resources from regional organizations when possible, such as VISIT FLORIDA's advertising matching grants.																				
4.2.2: Update Putnam County Chamber's marketing toolkit.	• Putnam County Chamber of Commerce	• Putnam County • City of Crescent City • City of Palatka • Town of Interlachen • Town of Pomona Park • Town of Welaka • VISIT FLORIDA • JAXUSA Partnership • Local / Regional / State Media																		
Conduct a target industry study to identify niche sectors that are a good fit for Putnam County.																				
Include more marketing messages directed towards target industries on the Chamber website and across all marketing materials, such as those identified in the Asset Mapping Exercise.																				
For each target industry, share major employers and suppliers; a map or list of supporting assets; links to sites and buildings that are a good fit for the industry; success stories and local business testimonials; a link to a printable PDF document about the industry; and industry-specific talent demographics and education programs.																				
Market not just what is within Putnam County, but assets all around the region, such as schools, housing options, and quality of life amenities.																				
Share press releases that showcase Putnam County's economic development wins with local media, regional partners, and target industry trade publications. Include publications such as Area Development and Site Selection Magazine on your distribution list.																				
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Distribute a quarterly e-newsletter to stakeholders, prospects, and target audiences that aggregate these news updates.																				
Putnam County's social media presence currently serves to promote upcoming events. Include more external marketing messages directed towards economic development and tourism audiences. For example, share economic developments successes, project announcements, news, rankings, awards, etc. Create a monthly social media calendar to ease implementation.																				
Invest in a few key printed collateral pieces, such as one-pagers about each target industry. Include links to download these on the website and use in direct sales meetings and presentations.																				



IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

4. MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS	LEAD ORGANIZATION	IMPLEMENTATION ORGANIZATIONS	TIME FRAME																	
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			Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
4.2.3: Increase awareness of Putnam County's outdoor recreation amenities.	Putnam County Chamber of Commerce	VISIT FLORIDA Visit Jacksonville JAXUSA Partnership																		
Include more outdoor recreation content on the Chamber website that will position Putnam County as a must-see destination.																				
For example, rather than just listing recreation assets, include sample itineraries that help capture the experience of a long weekend in Putnam County, from the best trails to favorite local restaurants.																				
Create trail maps and other outdoor recreation collateral as a downloadable PDF online. Include printed copies at visitor centers across the County.																				
Share this content with VISIT FLORIDA, Visit Jacksonville, and other organizations that can promote Putnam County's outdoor assets.																				
Use this marketing platform to advocate for additional investment in Putnam County's outdoor recreation amenities, such as trail signage or establishing a local farmer's market.																				
4.2.4: Partner with regional organizations to elevate Putnam County's message.	Putnam County Chamber of Commerce	VISIT FLORIDA Visit Jacksonville JAXUSA Partnership																		
Meet with CEOs of VISIT FLORIDA and Visit Jacksonville to discuss joint tourism marketing opportunities.																				
Continue to work with JAXUSA Partnership to market Putnam County as part of the greater Jacksonville region. Attend inbound and outbound events with the Partnership that align with Putnam County's target industries and assets.																				



FUNDING & RESOURCES

The following pages list a range of state and national resources that are available to fund projects and programs.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

The information provided below describes DEO workforce programs and services. More information can be found at:

<http://www.floridajobs.org/office-directory/division-of-workforce-services/workforce-programs>

Agricultural Services Program

The Agricultural Services program is an outreach and employment program for migrant and seasonal farm workers.

Alien Labor Certification Program

The Alien Labor Certification program oversees the hiring of foreign workers by employers.

Disability Program Navigator

The Disability Program Navigator initiative helps CareerSource Florida centers improve employability and increase career opportunities available to job seekers with disabilities.

Displaced Homemaker Program

The Displaced Homemaker Program assist displaced homemakers in making the transition to viable and economically self-sufficient employment.

Eligible Training Provider List

The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) is designed to assist individuals receiving Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services in finding approved training providers for demand occupations, either within their local area or from a statewide list.



FUNDING & RESOURCES

Federal Bonding Program

The Federal Bonding Program is an incentive program that allows employers to hire with limited liability to their business at-risk job applicants.

The Military Family Employment Advocacy Program

The Military Family Employment Advocacy Program delivers priority workforce services for eligible military family members in the State of Florida.

Priority Reemployment Planning (PREP) Program

Florida's Priority Reemployment Planning program works with individuals who may exhaust their reemployment assistance benefits and who are unlikely to return to their former profession.

Reemployment and Emergency Assistance Coordination Team (REACT)

Florida's dislocated worker unit, REACT -- Reemployment and Emergency Assistance Coordination Team, is the state's focal point in dealing with the dislocation of Florida's workers.

Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment program helps reemployment assistance claimants return to work faster, and thus shorten their claim duration.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program emphasizes work, self-sufficiency, and personal responsibility. Program participants gain valuable skills, training, and work experience in an effort to reach total self-sufficiency.

Trade Program

This program assists workers who have been laid off or whose jobs have been threatened because of foreign competition.



FUNDING & RESOURCES

Veterans Employment Program

Find information on job referrals, job development, referrals to training and supportive services, case management, labor market information, resume assistance and more.

Wagner-Peyser

This labor exchange program matches individuals who are seeking employment and employers who are in need of workers.

Welfare Transition Program

The Welfare Transition program helps people go from welfare to work.

Work Opportunity Tax Credit Program

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit is an incentive to private, for profit employers to hire individuals from certain targeted groups.

Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act

The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) provides protection to workers, their families and communities by requiring employers to provide notification 60 calendar days in advance of plant closings and mass layoffs.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act helps individuals find jobs and career planning tools and helps businesses find skilled workers.



FUNDING & RESOURCES

GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

US Economic Development Administration (EDA) Grants

The EDA accepts applications from rural and urban areas to provide investments that support construction, non-construction, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund projects under EDA's Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Grants under these programs are designed to leverage existing regional assets and support the implementation of economic development strategies that advance new ideas and creative approaches.

US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development Grants

The USDA provides grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 population.

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services>

US Department of Energy (DOE) Grants

The DOE supports a number of grant, loan, and financing programs that support businesses. These programs are not limited to energy-related projects and include a range of small business and other support programs.

<http://energy.gov/public-services/funding-financing>

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) – Rural Health Grants

HRSA provides rural health grants to fund rural hospitals, health centers, and local clinics.

<http://www.hrsa.gov/grants/index.html>



FUNDING & RESOURCES

ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND BUSINESS EXPANSION

Economic Development Administration – Regional Innovation Strategies Grants

In 2015, the EDA launched a \$10 million funding opportunity within their Regional Innovation Strategies Program. Under this program, communities can apply for funding through two programs:

- i6 Challenge (\$8 million) – This is a national competition for an award of up to \$2.5 million to projects that provide services to rural areas. They are seeking projects that create outreach plans to populations and communities that are traditionally underrepresented in innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Seed Funding Support Grants (\$2 million) – These grants provide funding for technical assistance to support feasibility, planning, formation, and launch of cluster-specific seed capital funds. Funds must include job creation in their consideration and outreach to underrepresented communities and populations.

More information available here:

<http://eda.gov/news/press-releases/2015/08/04/ris.htm>

US Department of Agriculture – Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program

This program provides loans and grants to Microenterprise Development Organizations to provide microloans to microenterprise startups and growth through a Rural Microloan Revolving Fund and provide training and technical assistance to microloan borrowers and micro entrepreneurs.

<http://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-microentrepreneur-assistance-program>

National Science Foundation (NSF) Small Business Grants

NSF's SBIR/STTR programs provide funds for early-stage research and development at small businesses. This research should be based on transformational technology with high technical risk and potential for significant societal or commercial impact.

<https://www.nsf.gov/eng/iip/sbir/home.jsp>



FUNDING & RESOURCES

REDEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

National Park Service (NPS) Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Grants

This program provides grants that support community-led natural resource conservations and outdoor recreation projects.

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/rtca/index.htm>

Transportation Alternative Funds

The Transportation Alternatives program was established by Congress in 2012 to expand travel choices, strengthen local economies, improve quality of life, and protect the environment.

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm>

US Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration – National Scenic Byway Grants

The program is a grassroots, collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve, and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. The Secretary of Transportation makes grants to States to implement projects on highways designated as National Scenic Byways or All-American Roads or as State scenic byways. Projects submitted for consideration should benefit the byway traveler's experience, whether it will help manage the intrinsic qualities that support the byway's designation, shape the byway's story, interpret the story for visitors, or improve visitor facilities along the byway.

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/scenic_byways/



FUNDING & RESOURCES

TOURISM & RECREATION

US Department of Agriculture – Resource Conservation & Development Program

This program provides technical and limited financial assistance to Resource Conservation & Development Councils with development projects, including heritage tourism and related business development.

www.ncrs.usda.gov/programs/rcd/

US Department of Commerce – Market Developer Cooperator Program – International Trade Administration

This program is designed to build partnerships by providing federal assistance to organizations involved in export promotion. The program can support tourism initiatives to promote international visitors in communities outside of federal lands.

<http://trade.gov/mdcp/>

National Park Service – National Heritage Areas Programs

National Heritage Areas are individually authorized by Congress and receive funding, technical assistance, and management support from the National Park Service. Heritage area designation provides a vehicle for promoting local economic and cultural vitality by capitalizing on an area's heritage assets, particularly through heritage tourism.

<https://www.nps.gov/heritageareas/>

Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration – Recreational Trails Program Grants

These grants can be used to maintain, restore, and rehabilitate trailing, including National Historic Trails, and rehabilitate trailside facilities. They can also support acquisition of easements or titles to property for trails, including acquisition of old road or railroad bridges to be used as recreational trail bridges.

http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/



FUNDING & RESOURCES

PRIVATE/NON-PROFIT GRANTS

Citizen's Institute of Rural Design Grants

CIRD works with communities with populations of 50,000 or less and offers annual competitive funding to as many as four small towns or rural communities to host a two-and-a-half-day community design workshop.

<http://www.rural-design.org/>

American Express Grants

American Express Corporate Social Responsibility makes grants in three major program areas: Leadership, Historic Preservation and Community Service. This includes the American Express Foundation, American Express Charitable Fund and certain corporate gifts. In 2013, contributions totaled \$27.9 million.

<http://about.americanexpress.com/csr/howto.aspx>

Wells Fargo Grants

Wells Fargo gives back to nonprofits and educational institutions that address vital community needs and issues.

<https://www.wellsfargo.com/about/charitable/>

Boeing Charitable Grants

Boeing provides grants related to their focus areas: arts and culture, civic engagement, education, environment, health and human services.

<http://www.boeing.com/principles/community-engagement.page#/seeking-support>

JP Morgan Chase and Company Grants

JPMorgan Chase works with community partners to create pathways to opportunity by supporting affordable housing, economic growth, workforce readiness, and financial capability in the communities where they do business.

<https://www.jpmorganchase.com/corporate/Corporate-Responsibility/grant-programs-us.htm>



FUNDING & RESOURCES

Target Community Grants

Target provides grants for education, the arts, public safety, and more.

<https://corporate.target.com/corporate-responsibility/grants>

Tourism Cares Nonprofit Grants

Tourism Cares seeks to partner with worthy nonprofit, tax-exempt organizations for conservation, preservation, restoration, or education at tourism-related sites that need restoration, conservation and improvement.

<http://www.tourismcares.org/grants>

Ford Foundation Grants

Requests are accepted in categories such as project planning and support, general support, and endowments. Types of support include grants, recoverable grants, loans and loan guarantees.

<https://www.fordfoundation.org/work/our-grants/>

Foundation for Rural Service Grants

As part of its ongoing commitment to rural communities across the country, the Foundation for Rural Service provides annual grants for communities served by NTCA members. The goal of this program is to support local efforts to build and sustain a high quality of life in rural America. Grants will be concentrated in four major areas: business development, community development, education, and telecommunications. Grants can range from \$250 to \$5000 that goes back into rural communities, every year.

<https://www.frs.org/rural-community-outreach/grant-program>

