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Lee County

A FLORIDA COUNTY GUIDE · GULF COAST

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REGION

Gulf Coast

COMMUNITIES TO START WITH

Fort Myers, Cape Coral, Bonita Springs, Sanibel

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A major Southwest Florida hub with extensive canals, barrier islands, universities, healthcare, airports and diverse residential communities.

Lee County is a water-shaped Southwest Florida market. Fort Myers, Cape Coral, Bonita Springs and Sanibel differ in bridge dependence, canals, housing age, storm recovery and access to healthcare and employment. The right answer begins with the river, island or mainland route the household will use.

Healthcare, tourism, construction, aviation, education, logistics and professional services support the economy. I-75 handles regional movement, while the Caloosahatchee bridges, Cape Coral roads and island causeways can determine daily convenience and evacuation planning.

A serious scouting trip should cross every bridge on which the shortlist depends. Compare inland and water-adjacent property, review permits and repairs, use Lee County's address lookup for flood and evacuation information, and price insurance with the exact building details.

Lifestyle: Waterfront · Regional hub · Island life

Lee County by the numbers

Population	817,666	At the last full count	760,822
Census estimate		2020 Census	
Median age	49.0	Aged 65 and over	28.9%
Under 18	17.2%	Median household income	\$76,107
Median home value	\$362,200	Homeownership	74.3%
what owners estimate			
People per household	2.45	Average commute	29.4 minutes

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, published January 2026, read September 19, 2026. Survey figures are estimates; median home value is what owners estimate their home is worth, not a sale price.

Communities to compare

Fort Myers

Fort Myers is the county’s urban, government, healthcare and cultural center with historic neighborhoods, riverfront areas and growth toward I-75. Compare city and unincorporated addresses, flood conditions and bridge routes to Cape Coral or south county.

Bonita Springs

Bonita Springs sits in south Lee County near Collier, with established neighborhoods, newer communities and Gulf access. Confirm whether work and healthcare point north or south, and price association, flood and evacuation conditions.

Cape Coral

Cape Coral is a large canal city with broad residential inventory and multiple bridges to Fort Myers. Canal type, seawall, flood elevation, utility assessments, bridge commute and storm repairs require property-specific review.

Sanibel

Sanibel offers a unique barrier-island environment with conservation priorities and a single causeway connection. Building condition, elevation, permits, storm recovery, insurance, evacuation and access to mainland services are central—not secondary—questions.

Checks before Lee County becomes the answer

- ☐ **Identify every required bridge.** Drive the Caloosahatchee or island crossing during routine hours and understand toll, closure and alternate-route conditions.
 - ☐ **Check flood and evacuation by address.** Use Lee County’s resident lookup and current maps; flood and evacuation zones are separate and should be reviewed every year.
 - ☐ **Audit storm repairs and permits.** Review roof, electrical, structural, elevation, seawall and post-storm permit records with qualified professionals.
 - ☐ **Price canals and waterfront systems.** Confirm canal access, seawall responsibility, docks, lifts, water depth, flood coverage and maintenance before paying a waterfront premium.
 - ☐ **Map hospital and specialty access.** Confirm routine and emergency care from islands, Cape Coral, south county and outlying areas, including bridge-dependent routes.
 - ☐ **Review development and utilities.** Check planned projects, utility service or assessments, road capacity and construction near fast-growing communities.
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Questions to answer for Lee County

Water defines the housing market

Riverfront, canal, barrier-island and inland properties carry different elevation, access, insurance and maintenance demands. Compare total ownership cost, not the view alone.

Healthcare and tourism anchor regional work

Hospitals, hospitality, construction, aviation, education and logistics support several employment centers. Fort Myers, Cape Coral and south county routes differ.

Care is strong but bridge-sensitive

Lee Health and regional providers offer substantial services, yet island and cross-river addresses can depend on limited routes. Test routine and urgent access.

I-75 is only part of the trip

Regional highway access matters, but river bridges, Cape Coral arterials and island causeways often determine the daily schedule. Drive the complete route.

Recovery history belongs in due diligence

Flood, storm surge, wind and drainage require current maps plus careful review of permits, repairs, elevation and insurance. Rebuilt appearance is not enough evidence.

Places that reveal the county

J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge

A refuge of more than five thousand acres on Sanibel Island, and the reason most of that island was never built on.

Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve

Thirty-five hundred acres of wetland running through the middle of Fort Myers, with a mile and a bit of boardwalk over it.

Lovers Key State Park

Seven hundred and twelve acres spread across four barrier islands at 8700 Estero Boulevard, Fort Myers Beach.

Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum

The only museum in the country given over entirely to shells and mollusks, at 3075 Sanibel-Captiva Road.

Koreshan State Park

A hundred and thirty-five acres at US 41 and Corkscrew Road in Estero, preserving the settlement of a nineteenth century religious community.

Cayo Costa State Park

Two thousand four hundred and thirty-six acres on a barrier island four nautical miles west of Pine Island, reachable only by boat.

Lakes Regional Park

Two hundred and seventy-nine acres on Gladiolus Drive south of Fort Myers, built on a worked-out rock mine.

Edison and Ford Winter Estates

Twenty-one acres at 2350 McGregor Boulevard in Fort Myers holding two winter homes, a laboratory, a museum and a botanical garden.

Sanibel Island Lighthouse

An iron skeleton tower first lit on August 20, 1884, at the eastern point of Sanibel Island.

Manatee Park

A fifty-one acre county park at 10901 Palm Beach Boulevard in Fort Myers, built around a warm water refuge.

Mound House

The oldest standing structure on Fort Myers Beach, built on a Calusa shell mound, at 451 Connecticut Street.

Bunche Beach Preserve

Seven hundred and eighteen acres of sand, salt flat and mangrove on San Carlos Bay, at 18201 John Morris Road.

Four Mile Cove Ecological Preserve

Three hundred and sixty-five acres of mangrove and coastal prairie on the Caloosahatchee River at 2500 Southeast 24th Street, Cape Coral.

Cape Coral Museum of History

The city museum at 544 Cultural Park Boulevard, in three buildings with more than twenty-five hundred square feet of exhibits.

IMAG History & Science Center

A hands-on science and history museum at 2000 Cranford Avenue in Fort Myers.

Calusa Nature Center & Planetarium

A hundred and five acres of pine flatwoods and cypress at 3450 Ortiz Avenue in Fort Myers, with a planetarium in the middle of it.

Bowditch Point Regional Park

Seventeen acres at the northern tip of Estero Island, where Matanzas Pass and the Gulf meet San Carlos Bay.

Great Calusa Blueway

A marked paddling trail of a hundred and ninety miles through the coastal waters and rivers of Lee County.

Railroad Museum of South Florida

A thirty-two hundred square foot railroad museum inside Lakes Regional Park at 7330 Gladiolus Drive, free to enter.

Sanibel Island

A barrier island of about six thousand four hundred residents off Fort Myers, reached by causeway from Punta Rassa.

Beaches in Lee County

Always verify current parking, fees, water quality, lifeguard coverage and posted rules before leaving.

Boca Grande Beach

Cayo Costa State Park Beach

Captiva Beach

Turner Beach

Bowman's Beach

Sanibel Lighthouse Beach

Lynn Hall Memorial Park Beach

Lovers Key State Park Beach

Gasparilla Island State Park Beach

North Captiva Island Beach

Alison Hagerup Beach Park

Blind Pass Beach

Gulfside City Park Beach

Fort Myers Beach

Bunche Beach

Where to check

Lee County Government · Official services plus address lookup for evacuation, flood and resident information.

leegov.com

Lee County Hurricane Guide · Current evacuation zones, shelters, all-hazards and preparation guidance.

leegov.com

Lee County Flood Maps · Official county access to current flood-insurance-rate map information.

maps.leegov.com

Lee County Development Activity · Mapped development and investment activity around a potential address.

maps.leegov.com