



**2025-2045**  
**EXISTING**  
**CONDITIONS**  
**& ANALYSIS**  
**ELEMENT**  
ADOPTED JANUARY 30TH, 2025



Developed by ARPC with funding provided through FDOT.







## 2025-2045

# APALACHEE REGIONAL RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Prepared for Apalachee Regional Planning Council and  
The Florida Department of Transportation, District Three.  
Prepared by ARPC Staff.

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# APALACHEE RRTP INTRODUCTION

This document—the Existing Conditions, Trends, and Analysis Element—is part 2 of the Rural Regional Transportation Plan (RRTP).

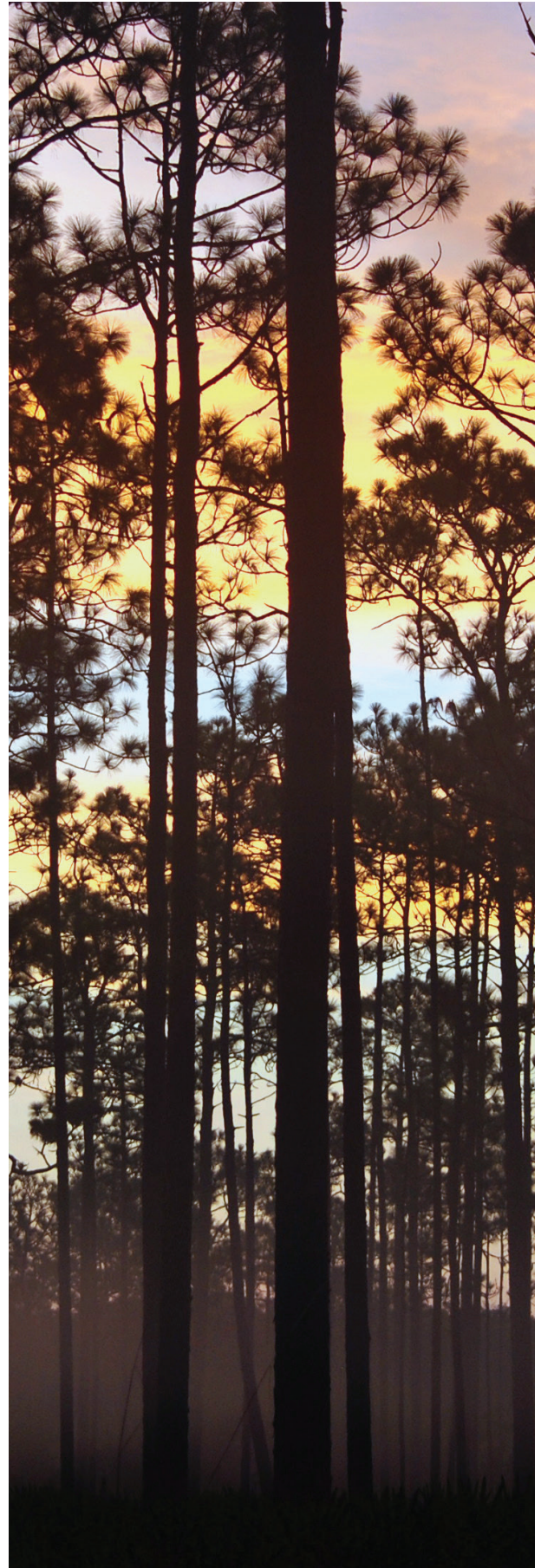
## APALACHEE RRTP FOUR ELEMENTS OF THE RRTP

The RRTP comprises four elements:

- The Vision Element goes over the four Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) emphasis areas and how they inform the RRTP as well as the overall planning process.
- This document, the Existing Conditions and Analysis Element, provides an overview of the conditions and trends in the region as well as specific conditions and trends per the five counties of the RRTP: Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty.
- The Projects Element describes the project solicitation and scoring process and the short-term and long-term project needs throughout the area.
- The Implementation Element describes recommended next steps to procure funding for the projects.

## HOW TO USE THIS ELEMENT

This element is divided into two sections. The first is an analysis of the cumulative existing conditions and trends throughout the five counties in the planning area: Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty. The second portion of this element provides more detailed information about existing conditions and trends by county. It is meant to be used as an easy resource to quickly find information by county, by topic.





# EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

The RRTP's planning area of Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty counties has many similarities and also some distinct differences.

The most binding similarity is that the entire area is rural. The vast majority of the land is set aside for conservation or agriculture and the population of residents is low.

Throughout the area youth baseball is a popular activity and spectator sport, bringing the whole community together. Full of natural amenities, the area has many opportunities for outdoor recreation. Between the rivers, Gulf of Mexico, and lakes, there are options to access water for enjoyment throughout the region, providing tourism and quality of life benefits. On the flip side, water is also a concern throughout the area. Whether from storm surge, flood hazards, or being inundated with evacuation traffic during hurricane threats, the region is vulnerable to water concerns. The area is also similar in its limited transportation professionals and transportation options. Public transportation is very constrained and consists of only a reservation-based transit system and school bus services. Additionally, throughout the area there is limited access to hospitals, higher education, and concerns about economic vitality.

## TRENDS

Based on analysis of the existing conditions and trends, there are a number of opportunities in the RRTP area. To continue to attract tourists as well as create a transportation system that works well for low-income populations, where the purchase and maintenance of an automobile is particularly burdensome, it will be important to create walkable and bikeable areas in downtowns. This would need to be done through a combination of transportation infrastructure and land use choices. The area may also consider shuttles, other means of public transportation, and car sharing for people to access key destinations without a vehicle and possibly evacuate during storms. There is also a lack of park and ride lots in the region, particularly that can handle the size and wear and tear of trucks. Additionally, long-distance passenger rail with stops in the area is highly desirable. The area would also benefit from more diversified options for freight travel.



# Table 1: Transportation Existing Conditions by County

VARIABLE	CALHOUN	FRANKLIN	GULF	JACKSON	LIBERTY	
<b>TRANSPORTATION TO WORK</b>	Drive Alone	80.80%	75%	72.30%	84.10%	79.90%
	Carpool	13.20%	12.30%	17.10%	7.30%	13.80%
	Take Public Transit	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.20%	0.00%
	Walked	0.80%	4.00%	1.90%	2.10%	0.80%
	Bicycle	0.00%	0.20%	0.20%	0.00%	0.00%
	Other Means	1.90%	2.90%	2.50%	1.10%	0.00%
	Work From Home	3.40%	5.50%	5.90%	5.30%	5.60%
<b>AVERAGE # OF VEHICLES PER HOUSEHOLD</b>	<b>2 Vehicles</b>	<b>2 Vehicles</b>	<b>2 vehicles</b>	<b>2 vehicles</b>	<b>2 vehicles</b>	
<b>TRAVEL TIME TO WORK</b>	Less than 10 minutes	19.7%	27.40%	26.10%	11.50%	16.20%
	10 to 14 minutes	12%	15.10%	14.50%	11.30%	13.20%
	15 to 19 minutes	7.1%	14.10%	10.20%	13.40%	7.10%
	20 to 24 minutes	10.2%	10.50%	8%	13.50%	6.60%
	25 to 29 minutes	1.6%	7.20%	6%	4.70%	4.30%
	30 to 34 minutes	11.3%	13.60%	9.30%	23.20%	8.40%
	35 to 44 minutes	10%	4.80%	5.90%	4.90%	6.40%
	45 to 59 minutes	14.7%	3.30%	11.90%	7.80%	23.20%
	60 minutes or more	13.4%	4%	8.10%	9.70%	14.60%

Source: American Community Survey  
 S0801: Commuting Characteristics by Sex, 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables

## Table 2: Existing Employee Conditions by County

	VARIABLE	CALHOUN	FRANKLIN	GULF	JACKSON	LIBERTY
<b>LABOR FORCE *</b>	In Labor Force	4,691	4,669	5,290	16,982	2,772
<b>ACTIVE WORKFORCE *</b>	Active Workforce, Age 16+	4,518	4,255	5,290	16,126	2,545
<b>EDUCATION ** (POPULATION AGE 25+)</b>	No Highschool Diploma	21%	19.70%	14.30%	15.80%	19%
	High School Graduate	42%	32.20%	34.10%	39.70%	41.60%
	Some College, No Degree	20.80%	19.60%	21%	21.80%	17.20%
	Associates Degree	5.50%	7.60%	9.20%	8.90%	5.30%
	Bachelors Degree	7.70%	11.50%	12.80%	8.30%	9.40%
	Graduate or Professional Degree	3.40%	9.40%	8.60%	5.50%	7.50%

Source: American Community Survey

\*DP03 Selected Economic Characteristics. 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles

\*\*S1501 Educational Attainment. 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables

## Table 3: Existing Population and Household Conditions per County

	VARIABLE	CALHOUN	FRANKLIN	GULF	JACKSON	LIBERTY
<b>POPULATION *</b>	Population	13,753	12,276	15,002	48,622	7,704
	Males	56.10%	55.61%	57.52%	54.74%	56.04%
	Females	43.90%	44.39%	42.48%	45.26%	43.96%
<b>HOUSING **</b>	Total Households	4,448	4,761	5,648	16,880	2,447

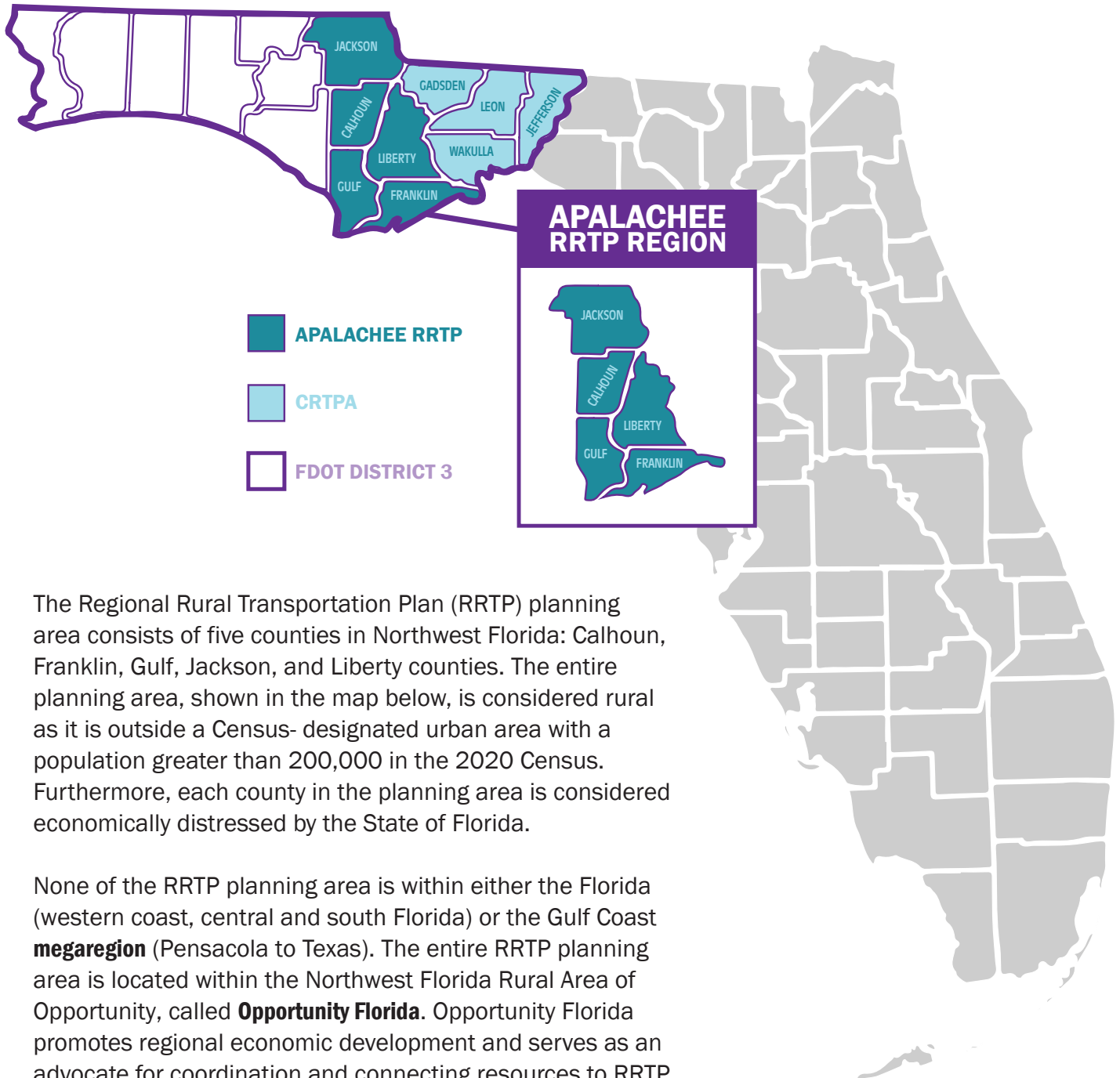
Source: American Community Survey.

\*DP05 ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates. 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles

\*\*S1101 Households and Families. 2022: ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables



# APALACHEE RRTP PLANNING AREA



The Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP) planning area consists of five counties in Northwest Florida: Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty counties. The entire planning area, shown in the map below, is considered rural as it is outside a Census- designated urban area with a population greater than 200,000 in the 2020 Census. Furthermore, each county in the planning area is considered economically distressed by the State of Florida.

None of the RRTP planning area is within either the Florida (western coast, central and south Florida) or the Gulf Coast **megaregion** (Pensacola to Texas). The entire RRTP planning area is located within the Northwest Florida Rural Area of Opportunity, called **Opportunity Florida**. Opportunity Florida promotes regional economic development and serves as an advocate for coordination and connecting resources to RRTP counties.

Figure 1: Planning Area Map

## CALHOUN COUNTY

### PEOPLE, PLACES, & ECONOMY

Located in the Florida panhandle, it has Jackson County to its north, Liberty County to its east, Gulf County to its south, and Bay County to its west. Calhoun has many natural water features. Chipola River runs north south through the center of the county and Juniper Creek runs east west through much of the county. The Apalachicola River runs along the entire eastern county line and the Dead Lakes are located in the southern part of the county. The county seat is the City of Blountstown. Blountstown is situated on the Apalachicola River, directly across the river from the City of Bristol in Liberty County.

Calhoun County's population according to the 2020 US Census is 13,648 and is the fifth least populated county in Florida. 42.6% of Calhoun County's population is low or moderate income. Calhoun County has an **annual operating budget** of \$48.2 million. Current industries in Calhoun County include agriculture, timber, agriculture, local businesses, and public services. A large employer in the Altha area is Oglesby Plants International, which produces high quality ornamental plants for commercial growers. A top business sector initiative is clean energy, specifically solar.

Calhoun County is about an hour or hour and a half by automobile from a variety of different public beach access points along the Gulf Coast such as in St. George Island, Port St. Joe, and Panama City Beach by taking roads like CR 274, CR 167, US 231, US 98, SR 20, SR 71, CR 12, SR 65, CR 275, CR 386, or Hwy 388.

### COMMUNITY AMENITIES & FACILITIES

Calhoun County has a number of amenities. It is close to I-10, about a 15-minute drive north, near both the Alabama and Georgia state lines, and roughly an hour drive to larger communities such as Tallahassee, Panama City, Dothan (AL), or Bainbridge (GA). Additionally, it is about an hour and half drive from a variety of beautiful beaches along the Gulf Coast. The best-known historic landmark in the county is the Old Calhoun County Courthouse in Blountstown, which was built in 1904, has been restored, and is listed as a historic Florida landmark.

Calhoun County has Altha Public School (K-12), Blountstown Elementary School, and Blountstown High School. There are also resources for non-traditional learning. There is a Home Education Program Students and Calhoun Virtual Instruction Program.

Additionally, there are higher education opportunities (including trade schools and military) for residents in nearby Marianna, Tallahassee, and Panama City areas. To the west is the Gulf Coast State College in Panama City, FL and University of West Florida and Pensacola State College in Pensacola, FL. Also nearby is Florida State College, FAMU, and Florida State University in Tallahassee, FL. Chipola College Main Campus is in Marianna. Calhoun also supports education through libraries. Calhoun County Public Library has locations throughout the county (Altha, Blountstown, Hugh Creek, Kinard, Mossy Pond, and Shelton), and the county is also part of the Panhandle Public Library Cooperative System.

The Calhoun Chamber of Commerce is located in Blountstown and serves the entire county. In addition to supporting businesses, they promote the area for tourism, events, and quality of life, including recreational opportunities.



The Chipola River is about 3 miles west of Altha and provides swimming, tubing, canoeing, kayaking and fishing. For example, near town is the Look and Tremble Shoals/ Falls a rapids and swimming hole on the Chipola River that is popular for tubing and swimming. There are also destinations in the Blountstown area such as the M&B Train Depot Museum and Park in Blountstown which showcases the M&B Railroad that ran from Marianna to Blountstown from 1909 to the 1970s. Nearby, situated on the outskirts of Blountstown is The Panhandle Pioneer Settlement Museum, which hosts community events throughout the year and is an attraction in the area. Another attraction is the Greenway Trail. A little under 3 and a half miles of the Trail, which is part of the Florida Trails System, is in Blountstown between Sam Atkins Park and the Apalachicola River. Sam Atkins Park (Recreation Complex) includes a playground, basketball and tennis courts, picnic facilities, and a riding arena. Blountstown Boat Ramp has picnic areas and provides access to the Apalachicola River for boating, fishing, kayaking, and canoeing. Sutton Creek Park is another spot for recreation.

There are also many parks and landings throughout the county that allow residents and visitors easy access to water for fun and enjoyment. Finally, youth baseball is a popular activity in the county that brings the whole community together. Some of the baseball fields in the county are at the following locations: Altha Public School, Blountstown High School, Sam Atkins Park in Blountstown, and City Ball Park and Recreation in Altha.

## **BLOUNTSTOWN SNAPSHOT**

Blountstown, the county seat of Calhoun County, Florida, is a small city with a population of approximately 3,273 residents. Situated along the Apalachicola River, it serves as a hub for the surrounding rural communities. The city's economy is primarily driven by agriculture, local businesses, and public services.

Blountstown is accessible via major routes such as SR 20 and SR 71, facilitating regional connectivity. The Calhoun CR Department oversees the maintenance and improvement of local roadways, ensuring safe and efficient transportation for residents and visitors.

The city features the Blountstown Greenway Trail, a 3.325-mile naturally landscaped path extending from Sam Atkins Park to the Apalachicola River. This trail is part of the Florida Trails System and offers residents and visitors opportunities for walking, running, and biking. Additionally, Calhoun County Transit provides community transportation services, offering a reservation-based system that caters to the general public, including Medicaid recipients and transportation-disadvantaged individuals.

## **DISASTER RESILIENCE VULNERABILITY TO FLOODING & STORM SURGE**

RRTP's interactive map shows Calhoun County barely has any portions in a Storm Surge Zone, which is good news for the resiliency of the transportation system. There is a small portion in the southern part of the county around Dead Lakes, Chipola River, and Apalachicola River. Luckily, they are designated as Category 4 and 5, meaning that any storm surge that Calhoun County might experience would be infrequent.

However, RRTP's interactive map shows that a fair portion of Calhoun County is considered high risk for flood hazards; this especially applies to parts of the county that are in close proximity to the Apalachicola River, Chipola River, or other waters or wetlands. The rest of Calhoun County is at low to moderate risk for flooding.

Calhoun County may pursue natural disaster risk reduction coordination among the various responsible entities (e.g. county and city staff, elected officials, DEP, FDOT, Local Mitigation Strategy [LMS] Working Group) as a proactive approach to prepare for disasters, implement resiliency strategies, and reduce the vulnerability of the transportation network. Of note, Calhoun County's LMS Working Group is facilitated by Calhoun County Emergency Management, and it provides input to reduce the community's long-term risks to people and property from the effects of natural disasters. The County encourages any interested citizens and/or business owners to attend and provide input. Calhoun County also has Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) meetings that facilitate coordination among various entities.

Additionally, when planning for transportation improvements, the county always takes a risk reduction approach to lower maintenance costs and provide safe transportation for those traveling in the county.

## **SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ADAPTATION STRATEGIES**

The **FDOT Resilience Action Plan (RAP)** web map shows there are roads within Calhoun County that have been identified as low tier vulnerability areas. Luckily the county does not have any medium or high tier areas. Nevertheless, it is prudent to identify ways to secure resilience for these sections:

- Calhoun Low Tier Vulnerability Areas: SR 20, SR 69, SR 71, SR 73

## **HISTORIC DISASTER IMPACTS**

In October of 2018, Calhoun County was badly damaged by Hurricane Michael, a Category 5 hurricane. In Altha, the old high school and many homes were damaged or destroyed. Also, the vast majority of homes and businesses were heavily damaged or destroyed in Blountstown, including the Blountstown High School—an evacuation shelter—which lost its roof in the storm. The city was without power for almost three weeks. Additionally, the local timber and agriculture industries and transportation networks were impacted.



## **LOCAL POLICIES & COORDINATION**

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT**

Land use plays a critical role in the types of transportation that are convenient and practical. The more interspersed housing is with other land uses, such as commercial, or if mixed use or form-based code is provided, the easier it will be for people to walk, bike or use transit. The more spread-out different land uses are from one another, the more likely the most convenient and practical transportation option will be an automobile.

RRTP's interactive map shows the future land use of Calhoun County uses Euclidean zoning and form-based codes have not been implemented. The majority of Calhoun County has the Future Land Use classification of agriculture. There are a number of large swaths of mixed-use land use along certain corridors. There are also large swaths of residential, for example in Blountstown, Altha, and in the northwestern portion of the county around Mossy Pond and Mule Head Pond. Scattering additional land use options into these residential areas will lend to a larger assortment of convenient transportation options.

## **URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY AGREEMENTS**

Urban growth boundaries are put in place to avoid sprawl. Typically residential, commercial, public, and other zoning are inside the boundary, and agriculture and nature preserves zoning are outside the boundary. Calhoun County does not have any urban growth boundaries; however, it does have other measures in place that discourage urban sprawl. Calhoun County has an **Industrial Development Authority**, a Dependent Special District created to preserve and maintain Calhoun County's agriculturally based economy and for development and financing of industry and other projects within the county.

Additionally, the **Calhoun County Comprehensive Plan** has provisions which allow for self-contained communities which will make it easier for people to use a variety of types of transportation. In particular, Policy 9.2 establishes the mixed use-rural residential land use category "to assist with discouraging urban sprawl, to establish a mechanism for the provision of affordable housing, and to encourage the development of self-contained residential communities (i.e., residential, recreation, commercial and associated public facilities are provided within the development)."

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Special interest or place-based community organizations can provide a valuable forum for input on transportation needs. Common organizations include:

- School-based Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Committees
- Citizens’ Advisory Committees
- Bicycle/ Pedestrian Advisory Councils
- Neighborhood Associations

There is only one organization like this in Calhoun County—a citizens’ advisory committee; the Calhoun County Senior Citizens Association advises on how to best provide transportation services to areas with the highest concentration of minority and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations as well as the general public as a whole. Targeted locations include:

- Chipola Manor Apartments
- Blountstown Drugs
- Cash Savers
- Calhoun-Liberty Ministry Center
- St. Paul AME Church
- First Baptist Church
- Blountstown Library
- Altha Library
- Shelton Library
- Hugh Creek Library
- Kinard Library

## FDOT WORK PROGRAM: CALHOUN COUNTY

RRTP’s interactive map shows the current FDOT District 3 Work Program has identified the following projects in Calhoun County.

LOCATION DESCRIPTION	WORK MIX NAME
<b>Blountstown Hight School Roy Golden Rd Sidewalk - on Ray Golden Road from Finley Ave to SR 71</b>	<b>Sidewalk</b>
<b>John F. Bailey Rd from SR 20 to W Smokehouse Rd</b>	<b>Widen/ Resurface Existing Lanes</b>
<b>SR 73 from SR 20 to Jackson County Line</b>	<b>Resurfacing</b>
<b>SR 69 from S of NE Van Lierop Rd to Jackson County Line</b>	<b>Resurfacing</b>
<b>SR 20 from SW CR 275 to SW Matthew Woods Rd</b>	<b>Signing/ Pavement Markings</b>
<b>CR 167 from Bay County Line to Jackson County Line</b>	<b>Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes</b>



# SAFETY

**SCHOOLS:** There are not currently any schools in Calhoun County teaching the Florida Safe Routes to School curricula.

**FREIGHT:** There are large and/or heavy loads coming through Calhoun County on roads such as SR 20, SR 69, and back roads. These loads beat up the roads and are a safety concern as a crash with them would be particularly dangerous. Also, their height is an issue; when large loads pass through Blountstown, the community has to raise the traffic signal for them. These loads have either originated from or are headed to SpaceX, solar farms, or logging related places.

**HOSPITALS:** RRTP's interactive map shows that there is one hospital in Calhoun County. Located on the north side of Blountstown is the Calhoun-Liberty Hospital, a Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare Affiliate, which provides primary, preventive, and diagnostic healthcare to the community and serves as a critical-access hospital. Despite this, very often people in car crashes are taken to hospitals outside the county, such as the Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare. Post-Crash Care is one of the five elements identified in the Safe System Approach to get towards Vision Zero of zero serious and fatal injury crashes. The ability to quickly get crash victims to a medical facility to treat their injuries is key to reaching Vision Zero. Maintaining efficient routes to hospitals and having nearby hospitals capable of treating serious injuries is important.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT:** RRTP's interactive map shows that Blountstown hosts the Calhoun County Sheriff's Office and the Blountstown Police Department. Altha has an Altha Police Department downtown on Main Street. Both the Calhoun County Jail and the Calhoun Correctional Institution, a state prison for men, are in Blountstown.

**FIRE SAFETY:** RRTP's interactive map shows Blountstown hosts the only paid on call fire department within the county. Volunteer fire departments in the county include: Altha Volunteer Fire Department, Kinard Volunteer Fire Department, Scott's Ferry Volunteer Fire Department, Westside Volunteer Fire Department in Blountstown, Nettle Ridge Volunteer Fire Department, Red Oak Volunteer Fire Department, Carr/ Clarksville Fire Department, Magnolia Volunteer Fire Department, and Mossy Pond Volunteer Fire Department.

**LOCAL ROAD MAINTENANCE:** There are limited transportation related staff in the county. The Calhoun CR Department oversees the maintenance and improvement of local roadways for all of Calhoun County except the local roads in Blountstown where the municipality's Street & Sanitation Department plays that role. Together, they ensure safe and efficient transportation for residents and visitors.

# SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY

## HIGHWAY AND ROAD NETWORKS:

RRTP's interactive map shows none of the FDOT's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) highway facilities are in Calhoun County. I-10 is the only one in the RRTP area and it runs through neighboring Jackson County to the north, a short 15-minute drive from Calhoun County, making it easily accessible for long-distance travel. Prominent roads in Calhoun County include SR 20, SR 69, SR 71, and SR 73. Expanding SR 20 and SR 71 are key transportation topics of regional significance. Blountstown is accessible via major routes such as SR 20 and SR 71, which facilitates regional connectivity.

There are not any Scenic Highways in Calhoun County, however the Big Bend Scenic Byway is just to the east of the county.

RRTP's interactive map shows there is mainly automobile transportation within Calhoun County. The main places within the county where different modes of transportation connect to one another are along SRs. SR 20 connects automobile transportation to air travel as the road connects to the private Ron Wood and Steep Head Farm Airports in the western portion of the county. SR 71 connects automobile transportation to air travel by connecting to the Calhoun County Airport, a public airport. Additionally, both SR 20 and SR 71 connect automobile transportation to active transportation as the road connects to the multi-use trail, Blountstown Greenway, in the eastern part of the county.

The Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) **2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)** identified in its **needs plan** a partially funded project to make SR 20 4 lanes in part of the county. Specifically, the project is described as "SR 20 from Washington County Line to US 231 (SR 75), 4 Lane Capacity." As SR 20 eventually crosses into Calhoun County, this is good to be aware of and dovetails nicely with the RRTP's interest in expanding SR 20 to 4 lanes as well.

## COMMUTER ROUTES

No commuter routes have been identified in Calhoun County. RRTP's interactive map shows that within Calhoun County, most workers are traveling to Panama City in Bay County, Marianna or Sneads in Jackson County, Chattahoochee in Gadsden County, Tallahassee and Bradfordville in Leon County, Bristol or the Lake Mystic area in Liberty County, or Blountstown or Altha in Calhoun County.

Many truck drivers, including those with logging trucks and lowboy trailers, currently park in the grocery store parking lot or in an unpaved dirt lot near the gas station on the west side of Blountstown. Drivers often park their work trucks overnight, then switch to personal vehicles to commute home. Currently, people park in front of the old schoolhouse in Altha, which has limited parking spaces and is used by pickup trucks during the day. Given the rural nature of the area, many residents drive in from the countryside, park wherever they can, and carpool to work.

## **FREIGHT MOVEMENT**

The **Freight Mobility and Trade Plan 2024 (FMTP)** states, “in 2022, the USDOT looked at America’s supply chains and identified the trends below:

- Growing freight demand
- Changing consumer preferences
- Increasing need for qualified logistics workforce
- Increasingly complete global supply chains
- Increasing weather disruptions
- New technologies”

Calhoun County will need to stay abreast of these trends and how they may affect the county. Freight movements in Calhoun County are mainly done by truck on major highways. Below 5% of total traffic volume is typically considered low truck traffic, however since rural areas often have low total traffic volume, a bit over 5% is often still considered low. High truck volume routes are sometimes considered roads with 25% or more of the traffic from trucks.

The FMTP does not identify Critical Rural Freight Corridors within Calhoun County, However, FDOT’s **Calhoun County Freight and Logistics Overview** states that “the county is in a unique location that makes it ideal for transportation, distribution, and logistics (TDL) of goods, as it is accessible by ground to virtually every primary southeastern market within a one-day truck haul.”

RRTP’s interactive map shows truck volume is very high (15.01-20%) north south on:

- SR 73
- SR 71 from SR 73 to CR 392
- SR 69 from SR 20 to Chipola Road
- SR 69 from CR 274 north to the Jackson County state line Truck volume is also very high (15.01-20%) going east-west on:
  - SR 20 from River Street west to the county line
  - CR 392 between SR 71 and SR 73

Truck volume is somewhat high (10.01-15%) on several north-south corridors:

- SR 71 from the Gulf County line north to SR 73
- CR 392 north to SR 69
- CR 69A from SR 69 north to the Jackson County line
- SR 69 from CR 69A north to CR 274
- CR 275 from SR 71 south to SR 71
- CR 167 from the Bay County line to Jackson County line
- CR 287 from SR 20 to CR 287A
- Chipola Road from SR 69 to SR 20
- River Street from SR 20 south to the end of the road.

Going east-west, truck volume is somewhat high on the following routes:

- CR 274 and turning into CR 286 across the county
- CR 287A from CR 287 to SR 73
- SR 20 from River Street to the Apalachicola River
- Clark Rd from SR 71 to SR 69



## **BRIDGES**

There are many bridges in Calhoun County, but the most notable is where SR 20 crosses the Apalachicola River between Blountstown and Bristol via the Trammel Bridge, which is 1.6 miles long. This is the only river crossing until Interstate 10. FDOT has proposed closing the aging west bound portion of the bridge (going from Bristol to Blountstown), due to high maintenance costs, but the community would like to see

the bridge repaired or replaced as it serves as a critical evacuation route and daily commute for residents between Bristol and Blountstown. The Trammel Bridge is a key transportation topic of regional significance.

## **TRAILS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there is a portion of a SUN Trail route going through the very northwestern corner of Calhoun County; this is an unfunded gap on NW CR 167. The Florida Greenways and Trails Land Trail Priority Corridor follows this SUN Trail route in Calhoun County. Additionally, there are many existing hiking and multi-use Greenways and Trails in Calhoun County. A notable one is the Blountstown Greenway Trail, a 3.325-mile naturally landscaped path extending from Sam Atkins Park to the Apalachicola River. This trail is part of the Florida Trails System/Florida National Scenic Trail and offers residents and visitors opportunities for walking, running, and biking. The Blountstown Greenway Trail has been a popular walking route for years, especially among older residents who use it in the mornings. However, the asphalt is crumbling in places, raising safety concerns that need to be addressed.

The Altha Trail is a new section of the Florida Trail in Calhoun County. Also, there is an existing Greenways and Trails Trail to the south of Altha, along CR 275 and SR 71. The Florida National Scenic Trail Corridor goes through Calhoun County; once this trail passes from Calhoun into Liberty County, it becomes a paved trail.

## **EVACUATION ROUTES AND SHELTERS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are many evacuation routes going through Calhoun County. They run along the following roads: SR 73, SR 71, CR 392, CR 275, SR 20, SR 69, CR 274, CR 287, and CR 287A. RRTP's interactive map shows there are three evacuation shelters in Calhoun County; the Blountstown High School, Altha Elementary School, and the Mossy Pond Community Center.

## **FIXED ROUTE BUS SERVICE**

Although there is not a fixed-route bus service in Calhoun County, **Calhoun County Florida Transit** (of the Calhoun County Senior Citizens Association) offers a reservation-based transit system. They provide transit to appointments in Blountstown, Bristol, Marianna, Wewahitchka, Quincy, Chipley, Gainesville, Sneads, Chattahoochee, Tallahassee, Panama City, Lake City, Pensacola, and Dothan, Alabama. They also provide days for local shopping in Altha and Blountstown. Also, the Calhoun County School District provides school bus services. Providing school bus service can greatly reduce automobile traffic and make it easier for parents to work.

## **TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (TD) AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) OPERATIONS**

Calhoun County Senior Citizens Association (Calhoun County Florida Transit) is the **Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC)** for Calhoun County. They provide community transportation services that cater to the general public, including Medicaid recipients and transportation-disadvantaged individuals.

Regarding transportation-disadvantaged, they provide rides for people who depend upon others for transportation to healthcare, employment, education, shopping, social activities, and other life-sustaining activities. This may be because of physical or mental disabilities, income, age, or children who are handicapped, high risk or at-risk. The CTC's routes are mostly SR 20 and SR 71 to either Tallahassee, Panama City, or Marianna for medical appointments.

## **FREIGHT AND PASSENGER RAIL**

RRTP's interactive map shows there is not currently any rail in Calhoun County. In the past, the Marianna and Blountstown Railroad was a 29-mile-long railroad that connected Blountstown and Marianna from 1909 to the 1970s. It carried passengers, mail, agricultural products, and manufactured goods.

## **SIS WATERWAY FACILITIES**

Although there are not any **SIS Waterway Facilities** in Calhoun County, there are some in Franklin and Gulf counties, which is discussed in the section for those counties.

## **AIRPORTS**

**RRTP's interactive map** shows there are six airports in Calhoun County. There is one publicly owned airport, Calhoun County Airport (F95), which is five miles northwest of Blountstown. The other five are private airports: Maran Airport, Steep Head Farm Airport, Ron Wood Airport, Clarksville Executive Airport, and Cattle Creek Ranch Airport. Additionally, there are the commercial airports of Tallahassee International Airport in Leon County and the Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport in Panama City in Bay County that are close by. Both are designated as Strategic Growth, SIS Facilities.

## **ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EV)**

There are pending Electric Vehicle (EV) Corridor designations in Florida. EV Corridors will have adequate density and accessibility of electric vehicle charging stations to make travel by EV reliable along the corridor. The FHWA may refer to these corridors as Alternative Fuel Corridors. RRTP's interactive map shows there are not any pending electric vehicle corridor designations in Calhoun County. The nearest one is I-10 to the north in Jackson County.

RRTP's interactive map shows there is one electric vehicle charging station in Calhoun County. It is located in Blountstown on Central Avenue W. near SW Chipola Road. Additionally, there are charging stations nearby in Jackson County.



### **AUTOMATED AND CONNECTED VEHICLES**

Florida is a leader in automated and connected vehicles. For example, Florida was the first state to legalize autonomous vehicles on public roads. Also, Jacksonville, FL will soon have an autonomous vehicle plant and COAST's autonomous vehicles has a testing and prototyping facility in Largo, FL. Currently there are not any automated and connected vehicle initiatives in Calhoun County.

### **SHARED USE VEHICLES**

Shared use vehicles in Florida means the authorized use of a motor vehicle by an individual other than the vehicle's owner through a peer-to-peer car-sharing program. Car sharing has been shown to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which means it can reduce car parking needs and traffic congestion. Bicycle sharing is also a type of shared use vehicle. Currently there are not any car sharing or bicycle sharing companies in Calhoun County.

### **PARK AND RIDE LOTS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are not any designated park and ride lots in Calhoun County. This may make carpooling more difficult. There are a couple nearby though. There is one in Bristol, Liberty County, only 5 miles from Blountstown. There is also one to the north in Grand Ridge, Jackson County.





## FRANKLIN COUNTY

### PEOPLE, PLACES, & ECONOMY

Franklin County is located on the Gulf of Mexico along the Forgotten Coast, nestled between Gulf, Liberty, and Wakulla counties. The majority of Franklin County is public conservation land including Tate's Hell State Forest, Bald Point State Park, St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge, and St. George Island State Park. Most of the county is covered in marshes, woodlands, rivers, and bays.

With so many natural areas, it is no surprise that this is a rural county with a small population. Franklin has 12,452 residents according to the 2020 US Census and is the third least populated county in the state. There are two municipalities in the county, Apalachicola and Carrabelle, which provide their own police and zoning.

Unincorporated communities include Alligator Point, Eastpoint, St. George Island, and Lanark. Franklin County has an **annual operating budget** of \$111.6 million (FY 2024- 2025). 44.1% of Franklin County's population is low to moderate income.

The county characterizes itself as "Old Florida" as there aren't high rises or large streets. Developable lands are constrained by public lands and the ocean. While the local economy previously relied on the seafood industry, Franklin County's economy is now driven almost exclusively by the food and accommodation industry, which includes all businesses relating to leisure and hospitality (hotels, restaurants, etc.).

### APALACHICOLA SNAPSHOT

Apalachicola, a historic coastal city in Franklin County, has a population of approximately 2,200 residents. Apalachicola is known for its charming downtown, maritime heritage, and well-preserved historic architecture. The city serves as an important cultural and economic hub for the region, attracting visitors with its seafood industry, eco-tourism opportunities, and vibrant local arts scene.

Apalachicola is primarily accessible via U.S. Highway 98, which connects the city to other parts of the Florida Panhandle. Local road maintenance is overseen by the Franklin County Public Works Department. The city has limited public transit options, which poses challenges for residents without access to private vehicles.

Apalachicola offers a walkable downtown area with historic charm, but there are opportunities to enhance pedestrian infrastructure to improve safety and accessibility. The city is actively updating its Comprehensive Plan to address infrastructure needs, including the expansion of pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and bicycle facilities. The planned improvements align with Apalachicola's goal of promoting sustainable tourism and enhancing the quality of life for residents.

## **CARRABELLE SNAPSHOT**

Carrabelle, located in Franklin County, Florida, is a small coastal city with a population of approximately 2,600 residents. Known for its relaxed atmosphere and stunning views of the Gulf of Mexico, Carrabelle is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts, offering boating, fishing, and eco-tourism opportunities. The city is also home to historic landmarks such as the Crooked River Lighthouse and the World's Smallest Police Station. With its rich maritime heritage, Carrabelle serves as a gateway to Florida's Forgotten Coast, attracting visitors seeking a slower-paced, coastal experience.

Carrabelle is accessible via U.S. Highway 98, which serves as the main transportation corridor connecting it to Apalachicola to the west and Wakulla County to the east. SR 67 provides access to northern areas, including the Apalachicola National Forest.

Public transportation options are limited, and most residents rely on private vehicles for mobility. Franklin County provides demand-response transit services for residents, including seniors and those who are transportation-disadvantaged.

Carrabelle's waterfront area offers scenic walkways and communal spaces like a public marina, enhancing its appeal as a coastal destination. However, pedestrian infrastructure beyond the waterfront is limited, and there are opportunities to expand sidewalks and bike lanes to improve safety and connectivity. Key locations for transportation improvement include routes leading to schools, parks, and the downtown business district.

## **COMMUNITY AMENITIES & FACILITIES**

Franklin County has a number of amenities and facilities. It is along the Gulf Coast which has some of the most beautiful beaches in the world, it is near larger communities such as Panama City, FL (about 70 miles to the northwest) and Tallahassee, FL (about 80 miles to the northeast), and both the Georgia and Alabama state lines. I-10 is about an hour and a half drive from much of Franklin County.

Franklin County is rich in history. The county has historic lighthouses, as well as many museums. Many of the historic areas depict life in the 1800s, although there is also reflection of the 1940s, such as Camp Gordon Johnson, a WWII training camp and museum.

There are education facilities both within and around Franklin County. Within the county are Franklin County School (k-12) in Eastpoint, Franklin County Learning Center in Eastpoint, and Apalachicola Bay Charter School. Additionally, there are higher education opportunities (including trade schools and military) for residents in nearby Marianna, Tallahassee and Panama City areas. To the west is the Gulf Coast State College, in Panama City, FL and University of West Florida and Pensacola State College in Pensacola, FL. Also nearby is Florida State College, FAMU, and Florida State University in Tallahassee, FL. Chipola College Main Campus is in Marianna.

There are several libraries in the county. Franklin County Public Library has two locations, one in Carrabelle and one in Eastpoint. Franklin County also has an independent library, the Apalachicola Margaret Key Library.

The Apalachicola Bay Chamber of Commerce serves Apalachicola, St. George Island and Eastpoint. Carrabelle has the Carrabelle Chamber of Commerce. Opportunity Florida promotes regional economic development in ten counties, including Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty counties.

Franklin County is full of recreation opportunities. There are many boat ramps and public beach access points to the Gulf of Mexico in Franklin County making it easy to go swimming. Other outdoor recreation available in Franklin County includes bird watching, hiking, fishing, and boating. Also, youth baseball is a popular activity in the county that brings the whole community together. For those preferring more in-town activities there is shopping, museums, and world-class seafood to enjoy.

## **DISASTER RESILIENCE VULNERABILITY TO FLOODING AND STORM SURGE**

RRTP's interactive map shows that all of Franklin County is in a Storm Surge Zone, with most of it in a category 1-3 zone, which means the transportation system is particularly vulnerable as category 1-3 storms, which are more common, would lead to storm surge throughout most of the county, impacting the transportation system. RRTP's interactive map also shows that nearly all of Franklin County is in a high risk area for flooding. Surface transportation facilities in these high risk areas will want to take measures to mitigate flooding and make plans to return the system back to normal soon if it does flood. Natural disaster risk reduction coordination among appropriate entities—such as county/city staff, elected officials, DEP, and FDOT—can provide a forum for implementing new strategies to increase resiliency of transportation networks. The county has a Local Mitigation Strategy Committee (which is active and meets quarterly) and a mitigation plan required by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and overseen by the Franklin County Emergency Management staff

and the Local Mitigation Strategy Committee. This plan addresses steps that can be taken to mitigate future damage to infrastructure, including transportation.

### **SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ADAPTATION STRATEGIES**

In addition to well-maintained ditches, Franklin County has been a leader in implementing nature-based solutions such as living shorelines that protect transportation vital routes including **Franklin 98**. Franklin 98, in the Gulf of Mexico along US 98, just north of Apalachicola and Eastpoint, in the Green Point area. The project uses estuarine reef and marsh planting to restore and protect the shoreline, and subsequently US 98, from erosion.

### **Franklin: FDOT Resilience Action Plan (RAP) SRs**

There are roads within Franklin County that have been identified as low, medium, and high tier vulnerability areas. It is particularly important to identify ways to secure resilience for the high tier vulnerability roadway sections.

- Franklin Low Tier Vulnerability Areas: SR 30, SR 65, SR 300, SR 377
- Franklin Medium Tier Vulnerability Areas: SR 30, SR 65, SR 300, SR 377
- Franklin High Tier Vulnerability Areas: SR 30, SR 65, SR 300

## **HISTORIC DISASTER IMPACTS**

In October of 2018, Franklin County was badly damaged by Hurricane Michael, a category 5 hurricane, where storm surge reached 10 feet.



# **LOCAL POLICIES & COORDINATION**

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT**

Land use plays a critical role in the types of transportation that are convenient and practical. The more interspersed housing is with other land uses, such as commercial, or if mixed use or a form-based code is provided, the easier it will be for people to walk, bike or use transit. The more spread-out different land uses are from one another, the more likely the most convenient and practical transportation option will be an automobile.

RRTP's interactive map shows that the future land use of Franklin County uses Euclidean zoning and form-based codes have not been implemented. However, there is a fair amount of mixed use in Apalachicola, for example, and other areas along the coast. Most of the county is conservation and agriculture. Within the county's municipalities, it is mainly a mix of residential, mixed use, commercial, and public.

There are large swaths of residential. Scattering additional land use options into these residential areas will lend to a larger assortment of convenient transportation options.

## **URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY AGREEMENTS**

Urban growth boundaries are put in place to avoid urban sprawl. Typically residential, commercial, public, and other zoning are inside the boundary, and agriculture and nature preserves zoning are outside the boundary.

Although Franklin County does not have any urban growth boundaries in place, their Comprehensive Plan does encourage infill to avoid urban sprawl per Land Use Goal 1, Objective 8, for example.

“To prevent urban sprawl the County shall encourage infill in already developed areas and the redevelopment and renewal of blighted areas. This objective shall be accomplished by fulfilling the following policies, and by fulfilling Objective 8 of the Housing Element”.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Special interest or place-based community organizations can provide a valuable forum for input on transportation needs. Common organizations include:

- School-based Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Committees
- Citizens' Advisory Committees
- Bicycle/ Pedestrian Advisory Councils
- Neighborhood Associations

There are not currently any organizations like these in Franklin County. If created, they may advise the county on transportation planning and provide a valuable reservoir for community feedback. Franklin County does have a Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Committee that is active, meets quarterly, and may serve as a conduit for community engagement.

# FDOT WORK PROGRAM: FRANKLIN COUNTY

RRTP’s interactive map shows the current Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District 3 Work Program has identified projects in Franklin County. These projects are listed in the table below:

LOCATION DESCRIPTION	WORK MIX NAME
<b>SR 30 (US 98) from Alligator Drive to east of the Ochlockonee River Bridge</b>	<b>Bike Path/Trail</b>
<b>SR 377 (US 319) from SR 30 (US 98) to Ochlockonee River Bridge</b>	<b>Resurfacing</b>
<b>Otter Slide/ Ave A to Vrooman Park Sidewalks</b>	<b>Sidewalk</b>
<b>Patton Drive from SR 30 (US 98) to SR 300 Island Drive</b>	<b>Resurfacing</b>
<b>Gulf Beach Dr from W 12th St to State Park</b>	<b>Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes</b>
<b>CR 30A from E of 11 Mile Rd to SR 30 (US 98) Phase 3</b>	<b>Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes</b>
<b>Districtwide Pushbutton State Hwy Sys bridge rehab project</b>	<b>Bridge-Repair/Rehabilitation</b>

## SAFETY

**SCHOOLS:** There are not currently any schools in Franklin County teaching the Florida Safe Routes to School curricula.

**FREIGHT MOVEMENT:** There are large/ heavy loads coming through the community on roads such as US 98 and back roads. These loads are a safety concern as they beat up the roads and a crash with them would be particularly dangerous. The loads have either originated from or are headed to SpaceX, solar farms, or logging related places.

**HOSPITALS:** RRTP’s interactive map shows there is one hospital in Franklin County, the George Weems Memorial Hospital, in Apalachicola. The hospital has an emergency room that is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. They also provide primary care and rotating specialty care to the community. Post-Crash Care is one of the five elements identified in the Safe System Approach to get towards Vision Zero of zero serious and fatal injury crashes. The ability to quickly get crash victims to a medical facility to treat their injuries is key to reaching Vision Zero. Maintaining efficient routes to hospitals and having nearby hospitals capable of treating serious injuries is important.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT:** RRTP’s interactive map shows the Franklin County Sheriff’s Office is located in Eastpoint. Also, there are two police departments in Franklin County: the Carrabelle Police Department and the Apalachicola Police Department.

**FIRE SAFETY:** RRTP’s interactive map shows there are many volunteer fire departments in Franklin County; Alligator Point Volunteer Fire Department Stations 1 and 2, Lanark Village Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Station (St. James Station), Dog Island Volunteer Fire Department, Carrabelle Volunteer Fire Department, St. George Island Volunteer Fire Department Stations 1 and 2, Eastpoint

Volunteer Fire Department, and Apalachicola Volunteer Fire Department. There is also the Franklin County Rescue Station (Weems EMS).

**LOCAL ROAD MAINTENANCE:** There are limited transportation related staff in the county. Franklin County has a Road Department. They manage and repair existing local roads in Franklin County, including in its municipalities.

## **SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY**

### **HIGHWAY AND ROAD NETWORKS**

RRTP's interactive map shows US 98 and US 319 both run through the southern portion of Franklin County making it easily accessible for long-distance travel. Additionally, Franklin County is accessible via major routes such as SR 65, SR 300, and 30A, facilitating regional connectivity. None of the FDOT's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) highway facilities are in the county. I-10 is the only one in the RRTP area and it runs through Jackson County, north of Franklin County.

Big Bend Scenic Byway runs through Leon, Franklin, and Wakulla Counties for a total of 220 miles. In Franklin County, it runs along US 98 from Apalachicola to Eastpoint to Carrabelle to the Wakulla County line, US 319 north to the Wakulla County line, SR 65 north to the Liberty County line, and SR 300 in St. George Island.

RRTP's interactive map shows there are a variety of different types of transportation in Franklin County. There are airports, seaports, trails, and highways, for example. There are a number of places within the county where different modes of transportation connect to one another. The public airport, Carrabelle – Thompson Airport, nearly connects directly to US 98 and the SUN Trail Carrabelle Beach Trail. The public airport, Apalachicola Regional – Cleve Randolph Field, also nearly connects directly to US 98, and the Great NW Coastal Trail. The seaport, Carrabelle Marina, connects with US 98 and the Great NW Coastal Trail. Additionally, trails up and down the coast connect to US 98 and 30A.

Of note, the CRTPA Connections **2045 Regional Mobility Plan** identifies the need for a new transit route destination in Sopchoppy, just north of Franklin County. Additionally, they identify the Existing Plus Committed Project of Coastal Trail from Surf Road to Tower Road (looks like it runs along US 98). Finally, they identify a Bike/Ped RMP Project called CR 299/ Curtis Mill Road from Rose Street to Smith Creek Road to CR 299 to US 319 as a multi-use path. US 319 and US 98 are the main places where there is interplay between the CRTPA and Franklin County.

### **COMMUTER ROUTES**

RRTP's interactive map shows that Franklin County workers travel to a variety of places for work. They mostly travel to Port St. Joe or Wewahitchka in Gulf County; Panama City in Bay County; Tallahassee and the surrounding area in Leon County; Panacea or the Crawfordville area in Wakulla County; or Carrabelle, St. George Island, Apalachicola, or the Eastpoint area in Franklin County.

Commuter Routes have not been identified in the county. However, US 98/ US 319 is the main route entering Franklin County and traveling across it. US 98 travels across the coastline and provides access to Port St. Joe, Wewahitchka and Panama City heading west and Panacea, Crawfordville and Tallahassee heading east, and Carrabelle, Eastpoint and Apalachicola within the county. US 98 connecting to SR 300 is used to access St. George Island. To access Wewahitchka, Franklin County residents might take US 98/ US 319 and SR 71.

## **FREIGHT MOVEMENT**

The **Freight Mobility and Trade Plan 2024 (FMTP)** states, “in 2022, the USDOT looked at America’s supply chains and identified the trends below:

- Growing freight demand
- Changing consumer preferences
- Increasing need for qualified logistics workforce
- Increasingly complete global supply chains
- Increasing weather disruptions
- New technologies”

Franklin County will need to stay abreast of these trends and how they may affect the county. Freight movements in Franklin County are mainly done through truck transportation on major highways since there are not major ports or rail lines in the county.

Below 5% of total traffic volume is typically considered low truck traffic, however since rural areas often have low total traffic volume, a bit over 5% is often still considered low. High truck volume routes are sometimes considered roads with 25% or more of the traffic from trucks.

The FMTP does not identify Primary Highway Freight System or Critical Rural Freight Corridors within Franklin County. Nonetheless, RRTP’s interactive map shows truck volume is on the high end, 15.01-20%, on US 98 from US 319 east to the Wakulla County line, and on SR 65 from Green Point to the Liberty County line.

Truck volume is somewhat high, 10.01-15%, on: Gulf Beach Dr from SR 300 to Shelter 21 on St. George Island; from US 319 to west along US 98 until River Road in Carrabelle; US 98 from Woodill Rd south of Carrabelle to Avenue E in Apalachicola; 30 A in Nine Mile from US 98 to the Gulf County line; US 98 from 30 A in Nine Mile to the Gulf County line; CR 384 from US 98 in Apalachicola to Pinhook Rd; Prado Street (turning into Brownsville Rd) from US 98 in Apalachicola to Apalachee Street; and finally Tallahassee Street (turning into Highway 67) in Carrabelle to the Liberty County line. More holistically, Franklin County is part of the Gulf to Gadsden Freight Logistics Zone (FLZ) which also includes Gadsden, Gulf, and Liberty Counties.

## **BRIDGES**

There are many bridges in Franklin County. The St. George Island Bridge, SR 300 from East Point to St. George Island crossing St. George Sount, is one of the major bridges in the county. Also, there are two that carry US 98/SR 30 from Eastpoint to Apalachicola, one crossing the Apalachicola Bay and the other crossing the Apalachicola River. Carrabelle has a bridge carrying US 98/SR 30 across Carrabelle River. Additionally, there is a bridge carrying US 98/SR 30 across Ochlockonee Bay from Franklin County to Wakulla County. Finally, there is a bridge crossing US 319/ SR 377 across the Ochlockonee River from Franklin County to Wakulla County.

## **TRAILS**

RRTP’s interactive map shows there is a SUN Trail route going all along the Gulf Coast of Franklin County called The Great NW Coastal Trail. There is also a spur called GF&A Trail going from US 319 to McIntyre Rd to Oak Street in Lanark Village stopping at Lake Morality Rd. The SUN Trail along the coast is a key transportation topic of regional significance.

There are also many existing hiking and multi-use Greenways and Trails in Franklin County. These trails are in Bald Point State Park, Tate’s Hell, St. George Island, St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge, and in



the Wright Lake area. There is also a land trail priority corridor that mirrors the SUN Trail route. Moreover, the Big Bend Scenic Byway contains a Forest Trail and a Coastal Trail in Franklin County.

### **EVACUATION ROUTES AND SHELTERS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are a number of evacuation routes going through Franklin County. US 98 and 30A along the coast; US 319, Highway 67, and SR 65 heading north. Arc on the Gulf provides evacuation services for county residents and those with special needs. There are no shelters in Franklin County.

### **FIXED ROUTE BUS SERVICE**

Although there is not a fixed-route bus service in Franklin County, they do have Franklin County Public Transportation, a Demand Response Service, which provides non-emergency trips arranged through a phone call. Additionally, the Franklin County School District offers school bus services. Providing school bus service can greatly reduce automobile traffic and make it easier for parents to work.

### **TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (TD) AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) OPERATIONS**

Arc on the Gulf is the Community Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for both Franklin and Gulf Counties. According to the Franklin County Transportation Disadvantaged Service Plan FY 2022-2027 (Updated June 12, 2024):

“Arc on the Gulf, Inc., advertises through the local radio station (WOYS) and the local papers (The Apalachicola Times & The Forgotten Coast). The CTC provides community education that details the operation of the coordinated transportation system, its services, where and how to apply for these services. Arc on the Gulf, Inc., will network with social service and medical organizations, such as but not limited to, Franklin Promise, Franklin County Senior Citizens, Elder Care, Hospice, the local health departments, medical clinics and hospitals, etc. As deemed appropriate, CTC will utilize Facebook, and other social media to promote the transportation services. User guides are also available explaining the services available and eligibility requirements.”

Notably, ARC on the Gulf provides rides for people with cognitive disabilities as well as the general public to appointments, work, or shopping, for example.

### **FREIGHT AND PASSENGER RAIL**

There is one freight railroad that passes through Franklin County, AN Railway, but it is out of service within the county. The AN Railway (formerly Apalachicola Railroad) is a short line railroad owned by Genesee and Wyoming that moves freight. Reopening the AN Railway is a key transportation topic of regional significance.

The AN Railway line from Telogia, FL in Liberty County south to the Franklin County line and then south and west to the Gulf County line and west to Port St. Joe in Gulf County, with a short spur to Apalachicola, FL, requires major repairs. It has been out of service since 2010. Although not in use in Franklin County, AN Railway is in use traveling north south from Chattahoochee, FL (Gadsden County) to Telogia, FL (in Liberty County between Hosford and the northern tip of the Apalachicola National Forest).

The Florida Gulf & Atlantic Railroad (FGA) is a short line railroad owned by RailUSA that moves freight. Although not in use in Franklin County, it is in use traveling east west between Baldwin, FL (near Jacksonville) in Duval County through Tallahassee, FL in Leon County, across Jackson County in the RRTP planning area, to Pensacola, FL in Escambia County.

There are not any active passenger railroads in North Florida. The Amtrak passenger rail service, Sunset Limited, has been out of service east of New Orleans since it was damaged in Hurricane Katrina in 2005. It used to run from Los Angeles, CA to Orlando, FL, and the route passed north of Franklin County. The Amtrak service, Sunset Limited, (or a different passenger rail option) is a key transportation topic of regional significance.

The Florida Association of Counties voted unanimously in 2024 to make the state joining the Southern Rail Commission one of its legislative priorities. Local officials believe joining the commission could be one of the first steps to bringing passenger rail back to North Florida.

### **SIS WATERWAY FACILITIES**

There are two **SIS Waterway Facilities** in Franklin County. They are the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway from Panama City Harbor to Carrabelle that has been identified as a SIS Facility, Waterway, Corridor and goes through the Apalachicola Bay alongside the county and through the southern tip of the county towards Gulf County, and also the Gulf Coastal Shipping Lane from Anclote River to Apalachee Bay at Carrabelle has been identified as a SIS Facility, Waterway, Shipping Lane and borders Franklin County. Nearby, the Port of Port St. Joe to Gulf Coast Shipping Lane has been identified as a SIS Facility, Waterway, Connector and borders Gulf County going through St. Joseph Bay and the Gulf of Mexico.

### **AIRPORTS AND SEAPORTS**

**RRTP's interactive map** shows there are four airports in Franklin County for charter or private flights: Dog Island Airport, Carrabelle-Thompson Airport, Apalachicola Regional Airport, and the St. George Island Airport. Improvements are currently being planning for the Carrabelle and Apalachicola airports. Carrabelle has many marinas and a port that is about 10 feet deep; it is used for boating, fishing, and sailing.

There are additional airports as well as seaports in areas around Franklin County. The commercial airports of Tallahassee International Airport in Leon County and the Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport in Panama City in Bay County that are close by. Both are designated as SIS Facilities, Airport (Strategic Growth).

Nearby in the RRTP planning area, Gulf County has the Port of Port St. Joe, which includes the Point South Marina. The port is currently between 25 and 35 feet deep and is designated as a SIS Facility, Seaport (Strategic Growth). Although the Port is currently closed, the marina offers services to boaters and sailors.

Nearby in NW Florida is Port Panama City in Bay County on the Gulf of Mexico and accessible through St. Andrews Pass. The port is about 36 feet deep. Cargo can travel by truck along US 98, US 231, and I-10. Additionally, rail comes to the port by the Bay Line Railroad, with direct rail access to CSX and Norfolk Southern. It is designated as a SIS Facility, Seaport (SIS).

### **ELECTRIC VEHICLES**

There are pending Electric Vehicle (EV) Corridor designations in Florida. EV Corridors will have adequate density and accessibility of electric vehicle charging stations to make travel by EV reliable along the corridor. The FHWA may refer to these corridors as Alternative Fuel Corridors. RRTP's interactive map shows there is a pending electric vehicle corridor designation on US 98 along the entire coast of Franklin County.

RRTP's interactive map shows there are currently electric vehicle charging stations in Franklin County. There is a public charge in Carrabelle at the Fire Department right off US 98, a public charger on St. George Island on Magnolia Rd, and a private charger in Apalachicola at the Water Street Hotel and Marina.

### **AUTOMATED AND CONNECTED VEHICLES**

Florida is a leader in automated and connected vehicles. For example, Florida was the first state to legalize autonomous vehicles on public roads. Also, Jacksonville, FL will soon have an autonomous vehicle plant and COAST's autonomous vehicles has a testing and prototyping facility in Largo, FL. Currently there are not any automated and connected vehicle initiatives in Franklin County.

### **SHARED USE VEHICLES**

Shared use vehicles in Florida means the authorized use of a motor vehicle by an individual other than the vehicle's owner through a peer-to-peer car-sharing program. Car sharing has been shown to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which means it can reduce car parking needs and traffic congestion. Bicycle sharing is also a type of shared use vehicle. Currently there are not any car sharing or bicycle sharing companies in Franklin County.

### **PARK AND RIDE LOTS**

RRTP's interactive map shows that Franklin County does not currently have any Park and Ride Lots. This is a barrier to carpooling.







## **GULF COUNTY PEOPLE, PLACES, & ECONOMY**

Gulf County, located in the panhandle of Northwest Florida on the Gulf of Mexico’s Forgotten Coast, has a population of 14,192 residents (2020 Census). Gulf County enjoys clear water and white sand, making local beaches some of the most beautiful beaches in the world and major pull for tourism. Beyond beaches, Gulf County has a variety of attractive natural land and water features, such as Cape San Blas, St. Joe Bay, Lake Wimico, Luke Ford Lake, Dead Lakes, Wetappo Creek, and the Intracoastal Waterway.

In terms of the economy, Gulf County has experienced major economic shifts over the past several decades. When the St. Joe Paper Mill closed in 1999, Port St. Joe lost 900 manufacturing jobs. Hurricane Michael in 2018 further changed the economic landscape. In the past 5 years, the economy has rebounded. Currently, Gulf County’s main industries are food and accommodation, health care and social assistance, manufacturing, and construction. The shipyard, where Eastern Shipbuilding gives the community clean manufacturing jobs, has become an economic driver for Port St. Joe along with Sacred Heart Hospital and other employers.

Gulf County has an **annual operating budget** of \$124.2 million (FY 2024-2025). Gulf County’s low to moderate income population is 34.2%. The population size, median household income, and home values are all steadily increasing as development from further west in the panhandle shifts into Gulf County.



## **COMMUNITY AMENITIES & FACILITIES**

Gulf County is a 1.5-hour drive from Interstate-10. There are a number of beaches in the county for residents and visitors to enjoy, including Cape San Blas, Indian Pass and St. Joe Beach. Historic places of interest in Gulf County include the Gulf County Courthouse, Cape San Blas Lighthouse, Centennial Building, Port Theatre Art and Culture Center, and the St. Joseph Catholic Mission Church.

Gulf County Schools includes Port St. Joe Elementary School, Port St. Joe High School, Wewahitchka Elementary School, Wewahitchka High School, and Gulf District Adult School. Interestingly, the Port St. Joe community set up welding programs in their high schools to serve as a lead-in to working at Eastern Shipbuilding Group.

Gulf County is home to a satellite campus for Gulf Coast State College, which has high-performing medical programs, a drone program, in addition to other curricula. Additionally, there are other higher education opportunities (including trade schools and military) for residents in nearby Marianna, Tallahassee and Panama City. To the west is the main campus for Gulf Coast State College in Panama City, FL. Also nearby is Florida State College, Florida A&M University and Florida State University in Tallahassee, the Florida State University Panama City campus in Bay County, and Chipola College in Jackson County.

Gulf County provides library services through establishments such as the Corinne Costin Gibson Memorial Public Library in Port St. Joe and the Wewahitchka Library. There is also the Gulf County Chamber of Commerce and the Gulf County Economic Development Coalition, which provide business and industry support

Popular recreation in Gulf County includes beaches, visiting Cape San Blas Park, Lake Alice Park in Wewahitchka, and youth baseball. Youth baseball is a popular activity in the county that brings the whole community together. Some of the baseball fields in the county are at the following locations: Port St. Joe Ball Park, Centennial Field- Port St. Joe, James “Mr. Benny” Roberts Sports Park (10th Street Park) in Port St. Joe, Port St. Joe High School, T.L. James Park in Wewahitchka, and Wewahitchka High School.

## **PORT ST. JOE SNAPSHOT**

Port St. Joe, located in Gulf County, Florida, is a picturesque coastal city with a population of approximately 3,500 residents. Known for its rich history and scenic views of St. Joseph Bay, the city is a popular destination for fishing, boating, and outdoor recreation. Once the site of Florida's first state constitution convention in 1838, Port St. Joe has evolved into a charming coastal community that blends historical significance with a laid-back atmosphere. The local economy is driven by tourism, small businesses, and outdoor recreation, with ongoing efforts to diversify through sustainable development initiatives.

Port St. Joe is accessible via U.S. Highway 98, which serves as the primary thoroughfare connecting the city to neighboring communities. The city is also supported by SR 71, providing regional connectivity to Interstate 10 and the rest of the Florida Panhandle. While there are limited public transit services, Gulf County Transportation provides demand-response options for seniors, persons with disabilities, and those without access to private vehicles.

The city has made significant investments in enhancing public spaces, including a scenic waterfront trail and boardwalk along St. Joseph Bay, providing residents and visitors with safe spaces for walking, jogging, and cycling. However, there are still areas where pedestrian infrastructure could be expanded, particularly to improve

connectivity between residential neighborhoods, schools, and the downtown business district. Enhancing sidewalks, crosswalks, and bike lanes remains a priority for increasing walkability.

## **WEWAHITCHKA SNAPSHOT**

Wewahitchka, known locally as “Wewa,” is a small city in Gulf County with a population of approximately 2,000 residents. The town is renowned for its natural beauty and is famously home to the Dead Lakes, a unique ecosystem popular for fishing, boating, and eco-tourism. Wewahitchka is also known for its honey production, especially the highly sought-after Tupelo honey, which draws visitors to the town annually.

Wewahitchka is accessible via SR 71, which serves as the main north-south corridor connecting it to Port St. Joe to the south and Blountstown to the north. SR 22 provides access to Panama City to the west. The town’s rural location means limited public transit services, with most residents relying on private vehicles. Gulf County Transportation offers demand-response transit services to assist seniors, persons with disabilities, and transportation-disadvantaged individuals.

The town has limited sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure, which restricts safe walkability, particularly along SR 71 and near schools and parks. There are opportunities to enhance pedestrian connectivity and create safer routes for walking and cycling, especially for residents and visitors accessing outdoor recreation areas.

The town faces challenges related to its aging transportation infrastructure and the need for improved pedestrian safety. Wewahitchka’s location near rivers and lakes also makes it vulnerable to flooding, which can damage roadways and limit access during severe weather events. Priorities include upgrading stormwater management systems, expanding pedestrian pathways, and improving road resilience to withstand the impacts of heavy rain and storms.

Wewahitchka has not adopted a formal Vision Zero policy but is focused on improving road safety, particularly in areas with high pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Aligning with Florida’s Target Zero initiative, the town aims to reduce traffic-related incidents by investing in enhanced signage, crosswalks, and traffic-calming measures. The town is actively exploring grants to support improvements in transportation infrastructure, enhance pedestrian safety, and expand access to recreational amenities.

## **DISASTER RESILIENCE VULNERABILITY TO FLOODING AND STORM SURGE**

RRTP’s interactive map shows the majority of Gulf County is impacted by Storm Surge Zones Categories 1-5. Cape San Blas, the land right along the coast, and the land surrounding the Apalachicola River, Lake Wimico, and Big Cove are particularly hard hit, even for a category 1 or 2 storm. The storm surge goes from about the coast, north to Honeyville and from the Franklin County line west to Honeyville and Wewahitchka.

RRTP’s interactive map shows High Risk Flood Hazard Zones cover the majority of Gulf County with particular concentration along the eastern portion of the county. There are scatterings of low to moderate risk areas in more the central east portion of the county.

Natural disaster risk reduction coordination among appropriate entities—such as county/city staff, elected officials, DEP, and FDOT—can provide a forum for implementing new strategies to increase resiliency of transportation networks.

## **SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ADAPTATION STRATEGIES**

The **FDOT Resilience Action Plan (RAP)** shows there are roads within Gulf County that have been identified as low, medium, and high tier vulnerability areas. It is particularly important to identify ways to secure resilience for the high tier vulnerability roadway sections.

Gulf Low Tier Vulnerability Areas: SR 22, SR 30, SR 30A, SR 30E, SR 71

Gulf Medium Tier Vulnerability Areas: SR 30, SR 30A, SR 30E, SR 71

Gulf High Tier Vulnerability Areas: SR 30, SR 30A, SR 71

Adaptation strategies for roadways can be used in order to increase the resilience of vulnerable areas. Strategies can include hard infrastructure, like ditches to control flooding, or nature-based solutions like rain gardens and living shorelines.

## **HISTORIC DISASTER IMPACTS**

In 1844, a hurricane almost completely destroyed Port St. Joe in Gulf County. Many years later, in October of 2018, Gulf County was severely impacted by Hurricane Michael, a category 5 hurricane, that made landfall just beyond the Gulf County line in Mexico Beach. Damage was widespread. Nearly 100% of the county lost power, and the power outage lasted for weeks in some areas.

## **LOCAL POLICIES & COORDINATION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT**

Land use plays a critical role in the types of transportation that are convenient and practical. The more interspersed different types of housing are or if mixed use or a form-based code is provided, the easier it will be for people to walk, bike or use transit. The more spread-out different land uses are from one another, the more likely the most convenient and practical transportation option will be an automobile. RRTP's interactive map shows the Future Land Use of Gulf County uses Euclidean zoning and form-based codes have not been implemented. However, there is considerable mixed-use zoning in the coastal areas such as the St. Joe Beach area, north and south of the St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve and in much of Cape San Blas. The City of Wewahitchka also has a fair amount of mixed-use zoning.

## **URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY AGREEMENTS**

Urban growth boundaries are put in place to avoid urban sprawl. Typically residential, commercial, public, and other zoning are inside the boundary, and agriculture and nature preserves zoning are outside the boundary.

Although Gulf County does not have any urban growth boundaries in place, their Comprehensive Plan does encourage infill to avoid urban sprawl (**see Land Use Goal 1, Objective 1.1, Policy 1.1.9**). For example, Gulf County's Policy 1.1.9 states that "to promote the protection of wetlands and surface water resources in all coastal, inland riverine and isolated wetlands, the following principles will apply.

The County shall:

- a) Encourage infill development;
- b) Require the use of Best Management Practices (BMP) for agriculture and silviculture; and
- c) Require the use of vegetated buffer zones adjacent to wetlands and surface waters."

Policies like this that encourage infill development provide a land use approach that can foster a stronger transportation network and create opportunities for multi-modal infrastructure.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Special interest or place-based community organizations can provide a valuable forum for input on transportation needs. Common organizations include:

- School-based Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Committees
- Citizens' Advisory Committees
- Bicycle/ Pedestrian Advisory Councils
- Neighborhood Associations

There are not currently any organizations like these in Gulf County.

## FDOT WORK PROGRAM: GULF COUNTY

RRTP's interactive map shows projects that are identified in the current Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 3 Work Program for Gulf County. These projects are listed below:

<b>LOCATION DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>WORK MIX NAME</b>
<b>Iola Road/ GU Parker Road from end of pavement to Porter Landing Road</b>	<b>New Road Construction</b>
<b>SR 71 from Pine Ave to Britt Ave</b>	<b>Resurfacing</b>
<b>Shorty Kemp Rd from SR 22 to Kemp Cemetery Rd</b>	<b>Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes</b>
<b>SR 22 from Bay County Line to SR 71</b>	<b>Resurfacing</b>
<b>CR 381 from CR 381A to SR 71 -PHI</b>	<b>Widen/ Resurface Existing Lanes</b>
<b>CR 381 from end of pavement to CR 381A</b>	<b>Widen/ Resurface Existing Lanes</b>
<b>Gardenia St from Sealy Dr to W Beatty Ave</b>	<b>Widen/ Resurface Existing Lanes</b>
<b>SR 30 (US 98) from Gulf County Canal to E of Pine Street</b>	<b>Resurfacing</b>
<b>SR 30 (US 98) from W of St. Joe Inlet Bridge to ICWW Bridge</b>	<b>Resurfacing</b>
<b>SR 71 Cecil G Costins Blvd from SR 30 (US 98) to S of P.O. Entrance</b>	<b>Resurfacing</b>
<b>Long Ave from SR 30 (US 98) to Madison Ave</b>	<b>Resurfacing</b>



## **SAFETY**

**SCHOOLS:** There are not currently any **schools** in Gulf County teaching the Florida Safe Routes to School curricula.

**FREIGHT MOVEMENT:** There are large/heavy freight truckloads coming through the community on roads such as US 98 and back roads. These loads are a safety concern as they beat up the roads and a crash with them would be particularly dangerous. The loads have either originated from or are headed to SpaceX, solar farms, or logging related places.

**HOSPITALS:** RRTP's interactive map shows there is one hospital in Gulf County; Sacred Heart Hospital on The Gulf, located in Port St. Joe. The George Weems

Memorial Hospital is nearby in Franklin County and there are also hospitals to the west in Bay County. If a car crash happens in the Wewahitchka area, then the closest hospital may be in Panama City. If the crash occurs in the southern part of the county, then the Sacred Heart Hospital on The Gulf would most likely be able to handle their care and where they would go.

Post-Crash Care is one of the five elements identified in the Safe System Approach to get towards Vision Zero of zero serious and fatal injury crashes. The ability to quickly get crash victims to a medical facility to treat their injuries is key to reaching Vision Zero. Maintaining efficient routes to hospitals and having nearby hospitals capable of treating serious injuries is important.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT:** RRTP's interactive map shows there is a Gulf County Sheriff's Office located in Wewahitchka and another one located in Port St. Joe. Port St. Joe also has a Police Department.

**FIRE SAFETY:** RRTP's interactive map shows there are many fire departments throughout Gulf County in Stonemill Creek, Wettapo, Wewahitchka, Dalkeith, Howard Creek, White City, Highland View, and Port St. Joe. The county also has four volunteer fire departments. There is the Gulf County Beaches Volunteer Fire Department, Overstreet Volunteer Fire Department, and South Gulf County Volunteer Fire Department Stations 1 and 2. Finally, Gulf County has the Port St. Joe Rescue Station and Wewahitchka Rescue Station.

**LOCAL ROAD MAINTENANCE:** Gulf County has a Road Department that manages and repairs existing local roadways in the county outside of Port St. Joe. Port St. Joe has a Public Works Department that provides maintenance services for City streets.

# SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY

## HIGHWAY AND ROAD NETWORKS

RRTP's interactive map shows US 98/SR 30 runs through the southern portion of Gulf County making it easily accessible for long-distance travel. Additionally, Franklin County is accessible via major routes such as SR 71 and SR 22, facilitating regional connectivity. Expanding SR 71 is a key transportation topic of regional significance. None of the FDOT's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) highway facilities are in Gulf County. I-10 is the only one in the RRTP area and it runs through Jackson County, north of Gulf County.

There are not any Scenic Highways in Gulf County, however, nearby is the Big Bend Scenic Byway which runs through Leon, Franklin, and Wakulla Counties for a total of 220 miles.

RRTP's interactive map shows there is mainly automobile transportation within Gulf County. However, there are some places within the county where different modes of transportation connect to one another. For example, the existing paddling route along the Intracoastal Waterway Trail within Gulf County intersects with SR 71. SUN Trail along US 98/SR 30 and existing Florida Greenways and Trails has bicycling and hiking trails that nearly intersect with SR 30. Although currently not in use, the Port of Port St. Joe is connected with US 98/SR 30, as is the operable Point South Marina in Port St. Joe. The Sacred Heart Hospital on the Gulf Heliport and Costin Airport are along US 98/SR 30 connecting air and surface transportation travel. Also, US 98/SR 30 and SR 71 function as an integrated transportation system by bringing people and goods in and out of the county.

The Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) **2045 Long Range Transportation Plan** (LRTP) identified in its need plan several projects that abut Gulf County. For example, the unfunded project to make Gulf Coast Parkway from US 98 (SR 30) to US 231 (SR 75) 4 lanes and the unfunded project to create 15th Street sidewalks/ multi-use path (Mexico Beach) from SR 30/ US 98 to CR 386. They also identified the partially funded project to make Gulf to Bay Highway (Parkway) from US 98 (SR 30) west of Mexico Beach to The Bay/ Gulf County Line 4 lanes.

## COMMUTER ROUTES

Most residents travel to work using their own personal vehicle. RRTP's interactive map shows Gulf County workers travel to several places for work. Gulf County workers mostly travel to Port St. Joe or Wewahitchka in Gulf County; Mexico Beach, Panama City, Panama City Beach, Lynn Haven, or Callaway in Bay County; Tallahassee in Leon County; or Apalachicola or Eastpoint in Franklin County. The Commuter Routes within Gulf County are US 98 and SR 22 going east west and SR 71 going north south. People travel to the Allanton Shipyard in Panama City Florida; Eastern Shipyard in Port St. Joe; and the prison, The Gulf Correctional Institution, near Wewahitchka. Many people come in to Port St. Joe to work from Panama City.

All of these options are viable for people with an automobile. Unfortunately, there is a lack of public transportation or other options (park and ride lots for carpooling, shared use vehicles) for workers. As a result, businesses are having a hard time attracting employees.

## **FREIGHT MOVEMENT**

The Freight Mobility and Trade Plan 2024 (FMTP) states, “in 2022, the USDOT looked at America’s supply chains and identified the trends below:

- Growing freight demand
- Changing consumer preferences
- Increasing need for qualified logistics workforce
- Increasingly complete global supply chains
- Increasing weather disruptions
- New technologies”

Gulf County will need to stay abreast of these trends and how they may affect the county. There is rail nearby in the region such as the Florida Gulf & Atlantic (FGA) Railroad and ports nearby in the region that carry freight. However, freight primarily moves through Gulf County via truck on major highways, like US 98.

Unique to Gulf County in the RRTP planning area but a key transportation topic of regional significance is the potential for a major port, Port St. Joe. The first port development was in the late 1830s and lasted until roughly 1844 when it went into decline due to a yellow fever outbreak and hurricane damage. The port was revived around 1910, was at its peak in the 1950s, and then began declining in the 1970s before closing in 1996. There is great interest in reopening it, and the Port St. Joe Port Master Plan 2021 lays out what that could look like.

Below 5% of total traffic volume is typically considered low truck traffic, however since rural areas often have low total traffic volume, a bit over 5% is often still considered low. High truck volume routes are sometimes considered roads with 25% or more of the traffic from trucks.

The FMTP does not identify a Primary Highway Freight System or Critical Rural Freight Corridors within Gulf County. Nonetheless, RRTP’s interactive map shows truck volume is somewhat high, 10.01-15%, heading east west on SR 30 from the Franklin County line, continuing on to Cape San Blas Rd to the end of the road, CR 387 from Magnolia Ave to SR 71, CR 386 from US 98 to SR 71, SR 22 from the Bay County line to SR 71, and Lake Grove Rd from SR 71 to the end of Cox Landing Rd, and CR 381 from Riverside Circle to SR 71,

Truck volume is also somewhat high, 10.01-15%, heading north south on SR 30 from Cape San Blas Rd to US 98, CR 382 from US 98 to SR 71, and SR 71 from US 98 to the Calhoun County line. More holistically, Gulf County is part of the Gulf to Gadsden Freight Logistics Zone (FLZ) which also includes Franklin, Gadsden, and Liberty counties.

## **BRIDGES**

Gulf County has many bridges. For example, SR 22 goes over Wetappo Creek and Sandy Branch, SR 71 over the Intracoastal Waterway, Overstreet goes over the Intracoastal Waterway, and there are a number of bridges along the coast on US 98 and SR 30.

## **TRAILS**

RRTP’s interactive map shows there is a SUN Trail route running along the coast (US 98/ SR 30) in Gulf County. There are a couple existing sections, and one programmed/ funded section, but most of it is classified as an unfunded gap. The SUN Trail along the coast is a key transportation topic of regional significance.

There are designated Land Trail Priority Corridors along the SUN Trail route in Gulf County. Additionally, there are existing Florida Greenways and Trails in Gulf County's Cape San Blas, a loop in the Dead Lakes Park, and a paddling trail in the Intracoastal Waterway. The Florida National Scenic Trail Corridor does not go through Gulf County. It does go through nearby Liberty and Calhoun counties in the RRTP planning area though.

### **EVACUATION ROUTES AND SHELTERS**

RRTP's interactive map shows Gulf County's evacuation routes run along US 98/ SR 30, SR 71, CR 382, Watermark Way, CR 386, and SR 22. RRTP's interactive map shows there are two evacuation shelters in the Wewahitchka area; one at the Honeyville Community Center, and one at the Wewahitchka High School.

### **FIXED ROUTE BUS SERVICE**

Although there is not a fixed-route bus service in Gulf County, Arc on the Gulf provides free transportation services to those with developmental disabilities. Additionally, the Gulf District Schools offer school bus services. Providing school bus service can greatly reduce automobile traffic and make it easier for parents to work. The neighboring Bay County has 'bay way,' Bay County's Public Transit System.

### **TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (TD) AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) OPERATIONS**

Arc on the Gulf is the Community Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for both Franklin and Gulf Counties. ARC on the Gulf provides rides for people with cognitive disabilities as well as the general public to appointments, work, or shopping, for example.

### **RAIL**

There is one railway going through Gulf County, AN Railway, but it is out of service within the county. The AN Railway (formerly Apalachicola Railroad) is a short line railroad owned by Genesee and Wyoming that moves freight. Reopening the AN Railway is a key transportation topic of regional significance.

The AN Railway line from Telogia, FL in Liberty County south to the Franklin County line and then south and west to the Gulf County line and west to Port St. Joe in Gulf County requires major repairs. It has been out of service since 2010. Although not in use in Gulf County, AN Railway is in use traveling north south from Chattahoochee, FL (Gadsden County) to Telogia, FL (in Liberty County between Hosford and the northern tip of the Apalachicola National Forest).

The Florida Gulf & Atlantic Railroad (FGA) is a short line railroad owned by RailUSA that moves freight. Although not in use in Gulf County, it is in use traveling east west between Baldwin, FL (near Jacksonville) in Duval County through Tallahassee, FL in Leon County, across Jackson County in the RRTP planning area, to Pensacola, FL in Escambia County.

There are not any active passenger railroads in north Florida. The Amtrak service, Sunset Limited, has been out of service east of New Orleans since it was damaged in Hurricane Katrina in 2005. It used to run from Los Angeles, CA to Orlando, FL. The Amtrak service, Sunset Limited, (or a different passenger rail option) is a key transportation topic of regional significance.



The Florida Association of Counties voted unanimously in 2024 to make the state joining the Southern Rail Commission one of its legislative priorities. Local officials believe joining the commission could be one of the first steps to bringing passenger rail back to North Florida.

### **SIS WATERWAY FACILITY**

There are two SIS Waterway Facilities in Gulf County. They are the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway from Panama City Harbor to Carrabelle that has been identified as a SIS Facility, Waterway, Corridor and goes through the southern portion of the county, and also the Port of Port St. Joe to Gulf Coast Shipping Lane that has been identified as a SIS Facility, Waterway, Connector and is in St. Joseph Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, bordering Gulf County.

Nearby in Franklin County, the Gulf Coastal Shipping Lane from Anclote River to Apalachee Bay at Carrabelle has been identified as a SIS Facility, Waterway, Shipping Lane.

### **AIRPORTS AND SEAPORTS**

**RRTP's interactive map** shows there is one airport in Gulf County, Costin Airport. It is small, privately owned and primarily used for charter and private flights. The county also has the Sacred Heart Hospital on the Gulf Heliport. Both are located in the Port St. Joe area.

Gulf County has the Port of Port St. Joe, which includes the Point South Marina. The port is currently between 25 and 35 feet deep and is designated as a SIS Facility, Seaport (Strategic Growth). Although the Port is currently closed, the marina offers services to boaters and sailors.

There are also airports and seaports in areas around Gulf County. The commercial airports of Tallahassee International Airport in Leon County and the Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport in Panama City in Bay County that are close by. Both are designated as SIS Facilities, Airport (Strategic Growth).

Nearby in NW Florida is Port Panama City in Bay County on the Gulf of Mexico and accessible through St. Andrews Pass. The port is about 36 feet deep. Cargo can travel by truck along US 98, US 231, and I-10. Additionally, rail comes to the port by the Bay Line Railroad, with direct rail access to CSX and Norfolk Southern. It is designated as a SIS Facility, Seaport (SIS).

### **ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EV)**

There are pending Electric Vehicle (EV) Corridor designations in Florida. EV Corridors will have adequate density and accessibility of electric vehicle charging stations to make travel by EV reliable along the corridor. The FHWA may refer to these corridors as Alternative Fuel Corridors. RRTP's interactive map shows there is a pending electric vehicle corridor designation going through Gulf County along US 98/ SR 30. Currently there are not any electric vehicle charging stations in Gulf County.

### **AUTOMATED AND CONNECTED VEHICLES**

Florida is a leader in automated and connected vehicles. For example, Florida was the first state to legalize autonomous vehicles on public roads. Also, Jacksonville, FL will soon have an autonomous vehicle plant and COAST's autonomous vehicles has a testing and prototyping facility in Largo, FL. There are not any automated and connected vehicle initiatives in Gulf County.

### **SHARED USE VEHICLES**

Shared use vehicles in Florida means the authorized use of a motor vehicle by an individual other than the vehicle's owner through a peer-to-peer car-sharing program. Car sharing has been shown to reduce

vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which means it can reduce car parking needs and traffic congestion. Bicycle sharing is also a type of shared use vehicle. There are not any car sharing or bicycle sharing companies in Gulf County.

**PARK AND RIDE LOTS**

RRTP’s interactive map shows currently there are not any Park and Ride Lots in Gulf County. This may be a barrier to carpooling.

# JACKSON COUNTY

## PEOPLE, PLACES, & ECONOMY

Jackson County is in Florida's panhandle, in the northwest portion of the state, and is the only county in Florida that borders both Alabama and Georgia. Although not on the coast, it does have water features, such as Lake Seminole, Chattahoochee River, Apalachicola River, Chipola River, Holmes Creek, Blue Springs, Compass Lake, and Ocheesee Pond. According to the 2020 US Census, Jackson County has a population of 47,314, the most populous in the RRTP planning area. Marianna is the county seat of Jackson as well as the overall main hub of the county. Jackson County was created in 1822 and named for Andrew Jackson. The county was primarily in the cotton business before the Civil War and struggled after the war was over.

Jackson County has an **annual operating budget** of \$640.5 million (FY 2024-2025). 40.9% of the population is low to moderate income. Some of the more concentrated industries in the county are state and local government, retail trade, health care and social assistance, construction, and farming.

## COMMUNITY AMENITIES & FACILITIES

Jackson County has a number of amenities and facilities. Possibly the largest amenity is having I-10 run east west through Jackson County. Jackson County is not along the coast, so it doesn't have any beaches, but it is about an hour and a half drive from many, such as Shell Point Beach, Port St. Joe Bay Public Beach Access, and others.

Jackson County is about an hour's drive from the larger communities of Tallahassee, FL to the east and Panama City to the west. Both the Alabama and Georgia state lines abut Jackson County. Jackson County has many places listed on the national register of historic places. For example, the Marianna Historic District, Sneads Community House and Old Pump, and the Bellamy Bridge. Jackson County's educational centers include: Sneads High School, Sneads Elementary School, Grand Ridge School (Middle/Junior high), Marianna K-8 School, Marianna High School, Cottondale High School Cottondale Elementary School, Malone School, Graceville School, Jackson Alternative School (elementary and secondary), Hope School (elementary and secondary), Jackson County Early Childhood Center, Marianna Adult Center, Jackson Adults with Disabilities, The Baptist College of Florida, and Chipola College. Additionally, there are higher education opportunities (including trade schools and military) for residents in nearby Tallahassee and Panama City areas. To the west is the Gulf Coast State College, in Panama City, FL and University of West Florida and Pensacola State College in Pensacola, FL. Also nearby is Florida State College, FAMU, and Florida State University in Tallahassee, FL.



Jackson County has a library in Marianna and another one in Graceville. They are part of Jackson County Public Library. Also, there is the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, located in Marianna, FL.

Jackson County has many opportunities for outdoor recreation. For example, Blue Springs is a recreation area used for swimming, and also has volleyball courts and a new children's playground. Residents and visitors can also take a tour at Florida Caverns State Park, or go to places like Three Rivers State Park for hiking, camping, fishing, biking, and more. The Apalachee Wildlife Management Area is used for hunting, mountain biking, hiking, and nature viewing. Plant lovers will enjoy seeing the rare and endangered plants at Bellamy Bridge Heritage Trail and bird watchers will enjoy the Butler Tract, part of the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail that is known as a bird watchers' paradise. Additionally, Hinson Conservation and Recreation Area offers hiking, kayaking and canoeing, horseback riding and other activities.

Finally, youth baseball is a popular activity in the county that brings the whole community together.

## **MARIANNA SNAPSHOT**

Marianna, the county seat of Jackson County, Florida, is a vibrant city with a population of approximately 6,000 residents. Known as the "City of Southern Charm," Marianna is steeped in history and is home to the historic St. Luke's Episcopal Church, as well as the stunning Florida Caverns State Park. The city's economy is supported by agriculture, healthcare, and tourism, with a focus on leveraging its natural and historical assets to attract visitors.

Marianna is strategically located along Interstate 10 and U.S. Highway 90, providing direct access to the Florida Panhandle and the southeastern United States. The city is served by the Jackson County Transportation System, offering demand-response transit services for seniors, persons with disabilities, and the general public. Despite its strategic location, the city's infrastructure faces challenges, particularly in maintaining road quality and ensuring safe and efficient transportation options for all residents.

Marianna has made strides in enhancing its walkability, especially in its historic downtown area. The city is home to parks, trails, and public spaces that support an active lifestyle. However, some residential areas lack comprehensive pedestrian infrastructure, making it difficult for residents to access key amenities safely.

Expanding sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle lanes is a key priority to enhance connectivity and promote healthier lifestyles.

## **SNEADS SNAPSHOT**

Sneads, a small town located in northeast Jackson County, Florida, has a population of approximately 1,800 residents. Known for its close-knit community and rural charm, Sneads is situated near the scenic shores of Lake Seminole and the Apalachicola River. The town serves as a gateway to various outdoor recreational activities, including boating, fishing, and hiking. The local economy is largely supported by agriculture, small businesses, Apalachicola Correctional Institute, and the Florida State Hospital (Chattahoochee, FL).

Sneads is bisected by Highway 90, which connects it to nearby towns and the regional transportation network. The town also has access to Interstate 10, which lies 10 miles south of Sneads. Public transit



in Sneads is limited, with the Jackson County Transportation system providing essential, demand-response transit services for residents, particularly seniors and those without access to private vehicles.

Sneads offers several recreational amenities, including Three Rivers State Park, which features trails, picnic areas, and lake access for boating and fishing. Sneads has made strides in improving pedestrian infrastructure, with sidewalks along U.S. Highway 90 and around the town's baseball fields, enhancing walkability and safety for residents and visitors. However, there are opportunities to expand these sidewalks to connect more residential areas, schools, and parks, thereby further improving accessibility.

## **DISASTER RESILIENCE VULNERABILITY TO FLOODING AND STORM SURGE**

RRTP's interactive map shows that while Jackson County does not have any Storm Surge Zones, there are High Risk Flood Hazard Zones along the eastern county line and running north south through the center of the county along the Chipola River and east west along Dry Creek. There are also minor scatterings of high risk areas where there are bodies of water within the county. Surface transportation facilities in these high risk areas will want to take measures to mitigate flooding and make plans to return the system back to normal soon if it does flood. Natural disaster risk reduction coordination among appropriate entities—such as county/city staff, elected officials,

DEP, and FDOT—can provide a forum for implementing new strategies to increase resiliency of transportation networks.

## **SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ADAPTATION STRATEGIES**

The **FDOT Resilience Action Plan (RAP)** web map shows there are roads within Jackson County that have been identified as low tier vulnerability areas. Luckily the county doesn't have any medium or high tier areas. Nevertheless, it is prudent to identify ways to secure resilience for these sections.

- Jackson Low Tier Vulnerability Areas: SR 2, SR 8, SR 10, SR 69, SR 71, SR 73, SR 75, SR 77, SR 166, SR 273, SR 276

## **HISTORICAL DISASTER IMPACTS**

In October of 2018, Jackson County was badly damaged by Hurricane Michael, a category 5 hurricane. Many structures and power lines were damaged or destroyed. 80% of the county's trees came down in the storm, the 911 system went down, and the water system failed.

## **LOCAL POLICIES & COORDINATION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT**

Land use plays a critical role in the types of transportation that are convenient and practical. The more interspersed housing is with other land uses, such as commercial, or if mixed use or form-based code is provided, the easier it will be for people to walk, bike, or use public transit.

RRTP's interactive map shows the future land use of Jackson County uses Euclidean zoning and form-based codes have not been implemented. The future land use is predominantly Agricultural.

There is a fair amount of Mixed Use throughout the county. There is a large Residential cluster in the lower southwest corner of the county. Scattering additional land use options into this residential area will lend to a larger assortment of convenient transportation options.

## **URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY AGREEMENTS**

Urban growth boundaries are put in place to avoid urban sprawl. Typically residential, commercial, public, and other zoning are inside the boundary, and agriculture and nature preserves zoning are outside the boundary. Although there are not any urban growth boundary agreements in Jackson County, the **Jackson County Comprehensive Plan's** Future Land Use Element aims to avoid sprawl "through the provision of appropriate land uses [to]...reduce urban sprawl, promote energy efficient land use patterns, and increase energy conservation, while maximizing economic benefits and minimizing threats to natural and man-made resources."

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Special interest or place-based community organizations can provide a valuable forum for input on transportation needs. Common organizations include:

- School-based Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Committees
- Citizens' Advisory Committees
- Bicycle/ Pedestrian Advisory Councils
- Neighborhood Associations

There are not currently any organizations like these in Jackson County. If created, they may advise Jackson County on transportation planning and provide a valuable reservoir for community feedback.

# FDOT WORK PROGRAM: JACKSON COUNTY

RRTP's interactive map shows projects for Jackson County that are identified in the current District 3 Work Program. They are mainly resurfacing projects. The projects are listed below:

LOCATION DESCRIPTION	WORK MIX NAME
13th Ave from Bevis Rd to SR 71	Resurfacing
CR 164 Blue Springs Road from Butler Road to SR 69	Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes
CR 167 South Street from Eva Mae St to McPherson St	Sidewalk
CR 276 Kynesville Hwy from Bethlehem Rd to Topaz Rd	Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes
CR 280 Corbin Rd from US 231 to Washington County Line	Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes
Districtwide Pushbutton-State Hwy Sys Bridge Rehab Project	Bridge - Repair/ Rehabilitation
Lovers Ln/ Providence Church Rd from SR 10 (US 90) to Murphy Ln	Resurfacing
Old US Road from SR 2 to Alabama State Line	Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes
Pooser Road from SR 276 Penn Avenue to Old Airbase Road	New Road Construction
SR 2 from Spring Branch to E of Cowarts Creek	Resurfacing
SR 2 from SR 77 to W of Spring Branch Bridge	Resurfacing
SR 8 (I-10) from Washington County Line to East of SR 276	Resurfacing
SR 8 (I-10) New Jackson County Rest Area -East Bound Facility	Rest Area
SR 8 (I-10) New Jackson County Rest Area -West Bound Facility	Rest Area
SR 10 (US 90) from end of 4L in Grand Ridge to Apalachicola River	Resurfacing
SR 10 (US 90) Over Chipola River Bridge No. 530005	Bridge Replacement
SR 69 from Calhoun Co Line to SR 10 (US 90)	Resurfacing
SR 71 at SR 8 (I-10) Interchange	Traffic Signals
SR 75 (US 231) from S of SR 10 (US 90) to end of Curb and Gutter	Resurfacing

# **SAFETY**

## **SCHOOLS**

There are not currently any **schools** in the county teaching the Florida Safe Routes to School curricula.

## **FREIGHT**

There are large/ heavy loads coming through the community on roads such as SR 69, CR 167 and back roads. These loads are a safety concern as they beat up the roads and a crash with them would be particularly dangerous. Also, their height is an issue. They won't fit under the overpasses of I-10. The loads have either originated from or are headed to SpaceX, solar farms, or logging related places.

## **HOSPITALS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are two hospitals in Jackson County, Jackson Hospital in Marianna, and Campbellton-Graceville Hospital in Graceville. Post-Crash Care is one of the five elements identified in the Safe System Approach to get towards Vision Zero of zero serious and fatal injury crashes. The ability to quickly get crash victims to a medical facility to treat their injuries is key to reaching Vision Zero. Maintaining efficient routes to hospitals and having nearby hospitals capable of treating serious injuries is important.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are a number of law enforcement offices in Jackson County, including the Graceville Police Department, Cottdale Police Department, Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles in Marianna, Jackson County Sheriff's Office in Marianna, Marianna Police Department, and Sneads Police Department.

## **FIRE SAFETY**

RRTP's interactive map shows that Jackson County has many fire departments. There are eight volunteer fire departments in the county, located in Alford, Bascom, Compass Lake, Cottdale, Dellwood, Graceville, Grand Ridge, and Malone.

Additionally, the county has Jackson County Fire Department and Rescue Station 1 in Marianna, Jackson County Fire Department and Rescue Station 2 in Campbellton, Jackson County Fire Department and Rescue Station 3 in Sneads, and Marianna Fire Department and Rescue Stations 1 and 2. Although not a fire department, part of the county's safety response resources includes the Chipola Aviation Air Ambulance.

## **LOCAL ROAD MAINTENANCE**

There are limited transportation related staff in the county. Jackson County has a Road and Bridge Department that maintains and repairs existing local roadways for all of Jackson County, including its municipalities.



# SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY

## HIGHWAY AND ROAD NETWORKS

RRTP's interactive map shows US 231 and SR 71 run north-south in Jackson County and US 90 and SR 2 run east-west. Expanding SR 71 is a key transportation topic of regional significance. The FDOT's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) highway facility of I-10 runs east west through the southern portion of Jackson County. It is the only SIS facility in the RRTP area. Jackson County has the Historic Highway 90 Corridor from the Apalachicola River in the east to the Washington County line in the west.

There are a number of places within Jackson County where different modes of transportation connect to one another. The Marianna Municipal Airport and Chipola Airpark connect to SR 71. Kirkland Airport connects to SR 77. Folsom Airport connects to I-10. Watson Airport connects to SR 2 and is also very close to US 231 and the Bay Line Railroad. US 90 and the Florida Gulf & Atlantic Railroad run very close to one another and even crisscross near Marianna.

The Bay County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) **2045 Long Range Transportation Plan** (LRTP) identified in its **need plan** an unfunded project to make US 231 6 lanes in part of Bay County. Specifically, the project is described as "US 231 (SR 75) (SIS) from Scotts Ferry Road to SR 20, 6 Lane Capacity." Although this project wouldn't go all the way north that it would about Jackson County, it could still lead to more vehicle miles traveled (VMT) along US 231 in Jackson County should the project be realized in Bay County, as typically when new lanes are added to a roadway it soon leads to more traffic.

I-10 and US 90 are the main places where there is interplay between the CRTPA and Jackson County. Of note, the CRTPA Connections **2045 Regional Mobility Plan** identifies the need for a new transit route destination and transit stop in Chattahoochee, just east of Jackson County. There are also a couple Bike/Ped RMP Projects near Jackson such as the Chattahoochee to Bristol (C2B) Trail that runs from Chattahoochee to Bristol as a multi-use path, Chattahoochee Connection Multi-Use path from CSX Track Multi-Use path to US 90 as a multi-use path, and CSX Track Multi-Use path that runs from Lincoln Drive to Chattahoochee Connection MUP as a Rails to Trails facility. There is the potential to pick up and extend these Gadsden County- based transportation projects on the Jackson County side of the Apalachicola River in order to enhance regional connectivity.

## COMMUTER ROUTES

RRTP's interactive map shows that Jackson County residents are traveling to work in Dothan, AL, Tallahassee, Eastpoint and Apalachicola in Franklin County, Port St. Joe and Wewahitchka in Gulf County, Panama City in Bay County, Blountstown in Calhoun County, and locations within Jackson County.

## FREIGHT MOVEMENTS

The Freight Mobility and Trade Plan 2024 (FMTP) states, "in 2022, the USDOT looked at America's supply chains and identified the trends below:

- Growing freight demand
- Changing consumer preferences
- Increasing need for qualified logistics workforce
- Increasingly complete global supply chains
- Increasing weather disruptions
- New technologies"

Jackson County will need to stay abreast of these trends and potential local impact. While freight movements in Jackson County are mainly done by truck on I-10, there is additional freight passing through Jackson County on rail via the FGA Railroad.

Below 5% of total traffic volume is typically considered low truck traffic, however since rural areas often have low total traffic volume, a bit over 5% is often still considered low. High truck volume routes are sometimes considered roads with 25% or more of the traffic from trucks. The FMTP identifies a Primary Highway Freight System (PHFS) in Jackson County, I-10. It also identifies a Critical Rural Freight Corridor within the county, US 231. RRTP's interactive map shows truck volume is high (20.01-36.10%), going east-west on SR 2 from the Georgia state line to SR 71, and again from Holyneck Rd to just west of US 231. I-10 from the Washington County line to SR 276 and again from SR 71 to CR 286. Truck volume is also high heading north south on US 231 from Freeman Rd to Park Rd and again from SR 276 to Jacob Rd. Truck volume is on the high end, 15.01-20%, running east west on SR 2 from SR 71 to Holyneck Rd, along Three River Park Road, and on I-10 from SR 71 to SR 276. Truck volume is also high running north-south on:

- SR 69 from the Calhoun County line to Shady Grove Rd
- US 231 from Park Rd to SR 276
- CR 169 from US 231 to SR 77
- SR 273 from the Washington County line to CR 169
- US 231 from SR 2 to Hwy 162
- CR 169 from US 231 to SR 77

## **BRIDGES**

There are many bridges in Jackson County such as US 90 going over Merritts Mill Pond and SR 2 going over the Chattahoochee River.

## **TRAILS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are SUN Trail routes going through Jackson County. One goes east west along US 90 from the Gadsden County line, through Jackson County, to Washington County and one goes north south along Fairview Rd from US 90 to the Calhoun County line. They are both designated as Unfunded Gaps.

There are existing hiking, bicycling and multi-use trails in Three Rivers State Park, there are multi-use and hiking trails in Florida Caverns State Park, there is a multi-use trail east of Marianna near Old US Rd and US 90, a multi-use trail south of Marianna near Hwy 73, and there is a multi-use trail in the southern part of the county right by the Calhoun County line in the Econfina Creek area.

There are two land trail priority corridors going through Jackson County. One goes east west along US 90 from the Gadsden County line to the Washington County line. Another one travels north south starting at US 90 and traveling along SR 73, CR 176, CR 276, and Fairview Rd until the Calhoun County line.

## **EVACUATION ROUTES AND SHELTERS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are many evacuation routes going through Jackson County. There are north south routes running along CR 286, SR 69, SR 71, SR 73/ CR 167, US 231, CR 169, SR 273, Browntown Rd, and SR 77. Additionally, there are east west routes running along CR 193, SR 2, US 90, I-10, and SR 276. RRTP's interactive map shows there are two evacuation shelters in Jackson County, specifically Marianna, at Marianna High School and Chipola College.

## **FIXED ROUTE BUS SERVICE**

Although there is not a fixed-route bus service in Jackson County, they do have JTans, which provides non-emergency transportation for residents of the county. They are a private, non-profit company. Residents request a ride through initially filling out an online Transportation Disadvantaged Eligibility Application, and then call or fill out an online form. Additionally, Jackson County provides school bus services. Providing school bus service can greatly reduce automobile traffic and make it easier for parents to work.

## **TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (TD) AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) OPERATIONS**

JTrans is the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for Jackson County. To receive services, residents fill out the online Transportation Disadvantaged Eligibility Application, and once that is on file, then they either call or use the online contact form to request a ride.

## **FREIGHT AND PASSENGER RAIL**

RRTP's interactive map shows two in use rail lines going across Jackson County; the Bay Line Railroad (BAYL) travels north south through the western portion of Jackson County and the Florida Gulf & Atlantic Railroad (FGA) runs east west across the center of Jackson County. They both move freight. BAYL is owned by Genesee and Wyoming and goes from the Port of Panama City north to Abbeville in Alabama. FGA is a short line railroad owned by RailUSA that travels between Baldwin, FL (near Jacksonville) in Duval County through Tallahassee, FL in Leon County to Pensacola, FL in Escambia County.

Other rail in use in the RRTP area includes the AN Railway (formerly Apalachicola Railroad) a short line freight railroad owned by Genesee and Wyoming. It is in use traveling north south from Chattahoochee, FL (Gadsden County) to Telogia, FL (in Liberty County between Hosford and the northern tip of the Apalachicola National Forest). The AN Railway line from Telogia, FL in Liberty County south to the Franklin

County line and then south and west to the Gulf County line and west to Port St. Joe in Gulf County requires major repairs. It has been out of service since 2010.

The Amtrak service, Sunset Limited, has been out of service east of New Orleans since it was damaged in Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The Florida Association of Counties voted unanimously in 2024 to make the state joining the Southern Rail Commission one of its legislative priorities. Local officials believe joining the commission could be one of the first steps to bringing passenger rail back to North Florida. Restoring both the AN Railway and the Amtrak service, Sunset Limited, (or a different passenger rail option) is a key transportation topic of regional significance.

## **SIS WATERWAY FACILITY**

Although there are not any SIS Waterway Facilities in Jackson County, there are some in Franklin and Gulf counties, which are in the RRTP planning area and are discussed in this document in the sections for those respective counties.

## **AIRPORTS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are many airports in Jackson County. Most of the airports are private, such as: Kilpatrick Farm Airport, Yoder Airport, Lawrence Airport, Folsom Airport, Helirich Heliport, North American Farms Airport, Chipola Airpark, Jackson County Hospital Helistop, Lands Field, Watson Airport, and Kirkland Airport. There is one public airport in Jackson County,

Marianna Municipal Airport. It is a general aviation facility and is in the process of being expanded through a runway extension and construction of additional hangers.

Additionally, there are the commercial airports of Tallahassee International Airport in Leon County and the Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport in Panama City in Bay County that are close by. Both are designated as SIS Facilities, Airport (Strategic Growth).

### **ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EV)**

There are pending Electric Vehicle (EV) Corridor designations in Florida. EV Corridors will have adequate density and accessibility of electric vehicle charging stations to make travel by EV reliable along the corridor. The FHWA may refer to these corridors as Alternative Fuel Corridors. RRTP's interactive map shows there are several pending electric vehicle corridor designations run through Jackson County. One runs east west along I-10. Also, there are north south running routes along US 231 and SR 77.

RRTP's interactive map shows there are several electric vehicle charging stations in Jackson County. There are a cluster of three to the southeast of Marianna, near SR 71 and I-10, at a Waffle House, Quality Inn, and Dickey's Barbecue Pit. There are two in the northwest part of Marianna: one at a Miller & Miller Nissan and another at a Marianna Chevrolet Buick GMC. Finally, there is an EV charging station at the Federal Correctional Institute, northeast of Marianna.

### **AUTOMATED AND CONNECTED VEHICLES**

Florida is a leader in automated and connected vehicles. For example, Florida was the first state to legalize autonomous vehicles on public roads. Also, Jacksonville, FL will soon have an autonomous vehicle plant and COAST's autonomous vehicles has a testing and prototyping facility in Largo, FL. Currently there are not any automated and connected vehicle initiatives in Jackson County.

### **SHARED USE VEHICLES**

Shared use vehicles in Florida means the authorized use of a motor vehicle by an individual other than the vehicle's owner through a peer-to-peer car-sharing program. Car sharing has been shown to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which means it can reduce car parking needs and traffic congestion. Bicycle sharing is also a type of shared use vehicle. Currently there are not any car sharing or bicycle sharing companies in Jackson County.

### **PARK AND RIDE LOTS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there is one Park and Ride Lot in Jackson County, Grand Ridge. It is at the Senior Citizen Center on SR 69/ Porter Avenue, off of US 90. Park and Ride Lots assist with carpooling.



# **LIBERTY COUNTY**

## **PEOPLE, PLACES, & ECONOMY**

Liberty County is in northwest Florida, in the panhandle. It has Gadsden, Leon, and Wakulla counties to its east, Gadsden and Jackson counties to its north, Calhoun and Gulf counties to its west, and Franklin County to its south. The Apalachicola River runs along the entire western county line and the Ochlockonee River runs along the entire eastern county line. Additionally, the county has Telogia Creek and is adjacent to Lake Talquin. More than half of the county is Florida Conservation Lands such as for the Apalachicola National Forest, Apalachicola Wildlife Management Area, Robert Brent Wildlife Management Area and Torreya State Park.

Liberty County has a population of 7,974, according to the 2020 Census. It is Florida's least populous and least densely populated county. It is also a dry county. The City of Bristol serves as the county seat. Liberty County has an annual operating budget of \$51.5 million (FY 2024-2025). 41.7% of Liberty County's population is moderate to low income. Almost half of the occupied residences in the county are mobile homes. The main industries in Liberty County are the timber/logging industry, construction, public administration, manufacturing, and retail trade. Many residents commute to Tallahassee for work.

Although Liberty is not on the coast directly, it is only about an hour's drive to the beach at Alligator Point or St. George Island in Franklin County. The county is situated between two metropolitan centers—Tallahassee and Panama City—which are common destinations for shopping, restaurants, and other entertainment.

### **COMMUNITY AMENITIES AND FACILITIES**

I-10 runs east west right above Liberty County. Although Liberty is not a coastal county, it is close to beaches. It is about an hour's drive or a little more to places such as Carrabelle, St. George Island, or Alligator Point

Liberty County is a little over an hour's drive from the larger community of Tallahassee, FL to the east and around an hour and 45-minute drive to the larger community of Panama City to the west. The county is just shy of the Georgia state line and also close to the Alabama state line. Some historical landmarks in Liberty County include Torreya State Park, Otis Hare Archeological Site and the Yon Mound and Village Site.

Liberty County has the following educational institutions; Hosford Elementary Junior High School, W. R. Tolar K-8 School (near Lake Mystic), and stationed in Bristol is the Liberty County High School, Liberty Early Learning Center, Liberty Virtual Instruction Program (elementary and secondary), Liberty Virtual Franchise (senior high), Liberty K12 Virtual, and Liberty County Adult School. There are two libraries in Liberty County, Jimmy Weaver Memorial Public Library in Hosford and Harrell Memorial Public Library in Bristol. Liberty County also has a Chamber of Commerce, located in Bristol.

Parks, trails and youth baseball and softball are some major forms of recreation in Liberty County. For example, Torreya State Park offers hiking, camping, and picnicking and Wright Lake Trail within the Apalachicola State Forest provides views of pitcher plants.

## **BRISTOL SNAPSHOT**

Bristol, the county seat of Liberty County, Florida, is a small rural city with a population of approximately 1,000 residents. Nestled along the scenic Apalachicola River, Bristol is known for its natural beauty, rich history, and tight-knit community. The city serves as an important local hub for the surrounding rural areas, with a focus on agriculture, forestry, and outdoor recreation, particularly hunting, fishing, and ecotourism activities.

Bristol is primarily accessed via SR 20 and 12, which connect the city to Tallahassee and other parts of the Florida Panhandle. The city's transportation network is limited, with minimal public transit options available, relying on the Liberty County Transit service, which provides demand-response transportation for residents, including seniors and transportation-disadvantaged individuals.

While Bristol offers several parks and natural areas, such as Veterans Memorial Park and Torreya State Park nearby, the city lacks extensive pedestrian infrastructure. The focus is on providing safe access to key destinations, including schools, parks, and government facilities. There is potential for enhancing pedestrian-friendly streetscapes to improve walkability and encourage healthier living.

## **DISASTER RESILIENCE VULNERABILITY TO FLOODING AND STORM SURGE**

RRTP's interactive map shows Liberty County has some Storm Surge Zone impacts. The worst is along the Apalachicola and Ochlockonee Rivers but there are also impact areas in the New River area. RRTP's interactive map shows much of Liberty County is in High Risk Flood Hazard Zones. This is particularly true along the Telogia Creek,

Apalachicola National Forest, Apalachicola River and Ochlockonee River. Natural disaster risk reduction coordination among appropriate entities—such as county/city staff, elected officials, DEP, and FDOT—can provide a forum for implementing new strategies to increase resiliency of transportation networks.

### **SURFACE TRANSPORTATION ADAPTATION STRATEGIES**

The FDOT Resilience Action Plan (RAP) shows there are roads within Liberty County that have been identified as low and medium tier vulnerability areas. It is particularly important to identify ways to secure resilience for the medium tier vulnerability roadway sections.

Liberty Low Tier Vulnerability Areas: SR 65

Liberty Medium Tier Vulnerability Areas: SR 65

## **HISTORIC DISASTER IMPACTS**

In October of 2018, Liberty County was badly damaged by Hurricane Michael, a category 5 hurricane. 516,673 acres of timber were damaged and the logging industry was harshly affected. Also, the emergency shelter in Bristol was badly damaged.

## **LOCAL POLICIES & COORDINATION**

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT**

Land use plays a critical role in the types of transportation that are convenient and practical. The more interspersed housing is with other land uses, such as commercial, or if mixed use or a form-based code is provided, the easier it will be for people to walk, bike or use transit. The more spread-out different land uses are from one another, the more likely the most convenient and practical transportation option will be an automobile.

RRTP’s interactive map shows the future land use of Liberty County uses Euclidean zoning and form-based codes have not been implemented. However, there is a lot of mixed-use zoning in the county where it isn’t conservation or agriculture. About half of the county, mainly the southern half, is designated as conservation due to the Apalachicola National Forest, Apalachicola Wildlife Management Area and Apalachicola Bluffs and Ravines Preserve. Another large portion of the county is agriculture. What remains is designated as mixed use.

### **URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY AGREEMENTS**

Urban growth boundaries are put in place to avoid urban sprawl. Typically residential, commercial, public, and other zoning are inside the boundary, and agriculture and nature preserves zoning are outside the boundary.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Special interest or place-based community organizations can provide a valuable forum for input on transportation needs. Common organizations include:

- School-based Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Committees
- Citizens’ Advisory Committees
- Bicycle/ Pedestrian Advisory Councils
- Neighborhood Associations

There are not currently any organizations like these in Liberty County. If created, they may advise Franklin County on transportation planning and provide a valuable reservoir for community feedback.

### **FDOT WORK PROGRAM: LIBERTY COUNTY**

RRTP’s interactive map shows the current District 3 Work Program has identified projects in Liberty County, which are mainly resurfacing projects. The current project list is provided below:

<b>LOCATION DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>WORK MIX NAME</b>
CR 67 from Franklin County line to Forest Rd 152	Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes
CR 379 from SR 65 to Forest Road 115	Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes
CR 379 from Forest Road 115 to CR 12	Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes
CR 12 from S of Zebbie Odom Road to Lake Mystic Road	Widen/ Resurface Exist Lanes
Veterans Park Sidewalk from the Bristol Library to Veterans Park Gate	Sidewalk

# SAFETY

**SCHOOLS:** There are not currently any schools in the county teaching the Florida Safe Routes to School curricula.

**FREIGHT MOVEMENT:** There are large/ heavy loads coming through the community on roads such as SR 20, SR/ CR 12, and back roads. These loads are a safety concern as they beat up the roads and a crash with them would be particularly dangerous.

Also, their height is an issue. Every time these loads come through Bristol, the community has to raise the traffic signals for them. The loads have either originated from or are headed to SpaceX, solar farms, or logging related places.

**HOSPITALS:** RRTP's interactive map shows there are not any hospitals in Liberty County, however, there is the Calhoun-Liberty Hospital located in Blountstown just west of the Liberty County line. A new facility for the Calhoun-Liberty Hospital was built in 2024 since the original facility was severely damaged by Hurricane Michael in 2018. This hospital serves as a critical access hospital and has a limited number of patient beds.

Additionally, there are hospitals in Tallahassee, to the east. Transportation from Liberty County to one of Tallahassee's hospitals is common for specialized medical care or severe, urgent medical needs.

Post-Crash Care is one of the five elements identified in the Safe System Approach to get towards Vision Zero of zero serious and fatal injury crashes. The ability to quickly get crash victims to a medical facility to treat their injuries is key to reaching Vision Zero. Maintaining efficient routes to hospitals and having nearby hospitals capable of treating serious injuries is important.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT:** RRTP's interactive map shows several sheriff's offices in Liberty County. The Liberty County Sheriff's Office -Hosford Substation is in Hosford. The Liberty County Sheriff's Office -Communications Center is in Bristol and the Liberty County Sheriff's Office -Headquarters is also in Bristol.

**FIRE SAFETY:** RRTP's interactive map shows there are six volunteer fire departments in Liberty County. The Sumatra Volunteer Fire Department is in the very southern part of Liberty County. Orange Volunteer Fire Department and Estiffanulga Volunteer Fire Department are both in the western central part of the county. The Hosford Volunteer Fire Department, Bristol Volunteer Fire Department, and Rockbluff Volunteer Fire Department are in the northern portion of the county. The county also has the Liberty County Rescue Station which is in Bristol.

**LOCAL ROAD MAINTENANCE:** There are limited transportation related staff in the county. Liberty County has a Roads and Bridges department. They manage the local roads in Liberty County, including in its municipalities.



# SYSTEM CONNECTIVITY

## HIGHWAY AND ROAD NETWORKS

RRTP's interactive map shows SR 20 runs east west through Liberty County and is a major road. Other roadways of significance include SR 12 and SR 65. Expanding SR 20 is a key transportation topic of regional significance. None of the FDOT's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) highway facilities are in the county. I-10 is the only one in the RRTP area and it runs through Jackson County.

Liberty County does not have any designated Scenic Highways.

RRTP's interactive map shows there are different types of transportation in Liberty County such as airports, trails, highways, and rail for example. There are a couple places within Liberty County where different modes of transportation connect to one another. The AN Railway (formerly Apalachicola Railroad) crosses SR 20. Also, the hiking trail, Apalachicola National Forest to SR 20 Connector, connects to SR 20.

The CRTPA Connections 2045 Regional Mobility Plan identifies a Bike/Ped RMP Project going from Gadsden to Liberty County called Greensboro to C2B Multi-Use path that goes from Greensboro to the Liberty County line and is a multi-use path.

## COMMUTER ROUTES

RRTP's interactive map shows that Liberty County residents travel to a variety of places for work, including Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Quincy, Chattahoochee, Dothan (AL), Blountstown, or within Liberty County.

- To Dothan, AL (2-hour drive): SR 65 to SR 20 to SR 69 to I-10 to SR 276 to US 90 to SR 73 to US 231
- To Tallahassee, FL (1 hour 15-minute drive): SR 65 to SR 20
- To Jacksonville, FL (3 hour 30-minute drive): SR 65 to SR 20 to SR 267 to I-10
- To Quincy, FL (50-minute drive): SR 65 to SR 12 to US 90
- To Chattahoochee, FL (1 hour drive): SR 65 to SR 20 to NW Dempsey Barron Rd to NW Torreya Park Rd, to CR 270 to CR 269
- To Blountstown, FL (40-minute drive): SR 65 to SR 20

## FRIEGHT

The Freight Mobility and Trade Plan 2024 (FMTP) states, "in 2022, the USDOT looked at America's supply chains and identified the trends below:

- Growing freight demand
- Changing consumer preferences
- Increasing need for qualified logistics workforce
- Increasingly complete global supply chains
- Increasing weather disruptions
- New technologies"

Liberty County will need to stay abreast of these trends and how they may affect the county. Freight movements in Jackson County are mainly done by truck on major highways such as SR 12, SR 20, SR 65, or SR 267.

Below 5% of total traffic volume is typically considered low truck traffic, however since rural areas often have low total traffic volume, a bit over 5% is often still considered low. High truck volume routes are sometimes considered roads with 25% or more of the traffic from trucks. The FMTP does not identify a Primary Highway Freight System or Critical Rural Freight Corridors within Liberty County.

Nonetheless, RRTP's interactive map shows truck volume is on the high end, 15.01-20%, heading north south on:

- CR 67 from the Franklin County line to SR 65
- SR 65 from the Franklin County line to CR 67
- CR 379 from SR 65 to CR 12
- CR 12 from CR 379 to SR 65
- NW Pea Ridge Rd/CR 379A from SR 12 to SR 20
- SR 12 from SR 20 to NW Dempsey Barron Rd
- NW Dempsey Barron Rd from SR 20 to SR 12
- CR 270 from Torreya Park Rd to the Gadsden County line

It is also on the high end, 15.01-20% heading east west on NE Blue Creek Rd from SR 65 to SR 20 and SR 20 from the Leon/ Gadsden County line to just before the Calhoun County line. More holistically, Liberty County is part of the Gulf to Gadsden Freight Logistics Zone (FLZ), which also includes Franklin, Gadsden, and Gulf Counties.

## **BRIDGES**

There are many bridges in Liberty County, but the most notable one is the Trammel Bridge. It carries SR 20 over the Apalachicola River to Blountstown in Calhoun County. The community would like to see the westbound bridge over the Apalachicola River replaced as it serves as a critical evacuation route and daily commute for residents between Bristol and Blountstown. Trammel Bridge is a key transportation topic of regional significance.

## **TRAILS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are not any SUN Trail routes in Liberty County. There are, however, existing hiking Greenways and Trails in Liberty County. The main trail travels east west through the center of the county in the Apalachicola National Forest before heading north along SR 12 up to SR 20. It also goes around Camel Pond and Little Camel Pond. There is another existing trail in the Garden of Eden Rd and Apalachicola River area. In the northern part of the county there is a trail in Torreya State Park near the Apalachicola River.

There are not any FL Greenways and Trails Land Trail Priority Corridors or Florida National Scenic Trail Corridor going through Liberty County. The Florida National Scenic Trail Corridor passes through Liberty County (as well as Calhoun County).

## **EVACUATION ROUTES AND SHELTERS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are evacuation routes going through Liberty County. The north south corridors include:

- CR 67 from the Franklin County line to SR 65
- SR 65 from the Franklin County line to the Gadsden County line
- SR 12 from SR 65 (jog on SR 20) to the Gadsden County line

The evacuation route heading east-west goes on SR 20 from the Gadsden/ Leon County line to the Calhoun County line. RRTP's interactive map shows there are three evacuation shelters in Liberty County: Hosford Elementary/ Junior High School, WR Toler K-8 School (northeast of Bristol), and Liberty County High School.

## **FIXED BUS ROUTE SERVICE**

Liberty County does not have a fixed route bus service, but it does have Liberty County Transit a Demand Response Service, which provides non-emergency trips arranged through a phone call. They provide services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to locations both inside and outside of Liberty County

(Tallahassee, Marianna, Pensacola, Panama City, Gainesville, Jacksonville), as long as a reservation is made.

Additionally, the Liberty County School District offers school bus services. Providing school bus service can greatly reduce automobile traffic and make employment easier to coordinate for the parents of schoolchildren.

## **TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED (TD) AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR (CTC) OPERATIONS**

Liberty County Board of County Commissioners is the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for the county—they power Liberty County Transit. They provide vital transportation services for Liberty County residents including medical, education, and work trips.

### **RAIL**

Liberty County has existing rail infrastructure. AN Railway (formerly Apalachicola Railroad) is a short line railroad owned by Genesee and Wyoming. It is in use traveling north south from Chattahoochee, FL (Gadsden County) to Telogia, FL (in Liberty County between Hosford and the northern tip of the Apalachicola National Forest). It moves freight.

The Florida Gulf & Atlantic Railroad (FGA) is a short line railroad owned by RailUSA. It is in use traveling east west between Baldwin, FL (near Jacksonville) in Duval County through Tallahassee, FL in Leon County, across Jackson County in the RRTP planning area, to Pensacola, FL in Escambia County. It also moves freight.

The AN Railway line from Telogia, FL in Liberty County south to the Franklin County line and then south and west to the Gulf County line and west to Port St. Joe in Gulf County requires major repairs. It has been out of service since 2010.

The Amtrak service, Sunset Limited, has been out of service east of New Orleans since it was damaged in Hurricane Katrina in 2005. It used to run from Los Angeles, CA to Orlando, FL. There are not any active passenger railroads in north Florida.

The Florida Association of Counties voted unanimously in 2024 to make the state joining the Southern Rail Commission one of its legislative priorities. Local officials believe joining the commission could be one of the first steps to bringing passenger rail back to North Florida. Restoring both the AN Railway and the Amtrak service, Sunset Limited, (or a different passenger rail option) is a key transportation topic of regional significance.

### **SIS WATERWAY FACILITY**

Although there are not any SIS Waterway Facilities in Liberty County, there are sites in Franklin and Gulf counties, which are within the RRTP planning area. This information is provided in the Franklin and Gulf County sections of this document.

### **AIRPORTS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there is one airport in Liberty County, called Blue Creek. However, it is a private airport. There are the commercial airports of Tallahassee International Airport in Leon County and the Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport in Panama City in Bay County that are close by. Both are designated as SIS Facilities, Airport (Strategic Growth).

## **ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EV)**

There are pending Electric Vehicle (EV) Corridor designations in Florida. EV Corridors will have adequate density and accessibility of electric vehicle charging stations to make travel by EV reliable along the corridor. The FHWA may refer to these corridors as Alternative Fuel Corridors. RRTP's interactive map shows there are not any pending electric vehicle corridor designations in Liberty County, but there is one running east west in nearby Jackson County along I-10.

RRTP's interactive map shows there are not any electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in Liberty County. However, there is an EV charging station nearby in Blountstown.

## **AUTOMATED AND CONNECTED VEHICLES**

Florida is a leader in automated and connected vehicles. For example, Florida was the first state to legalize autonomous vehicles on public roads. Also, Jacksonville, FL will soon have an autonomous vehicle plant and COAST's autonomous vehicles has a testing and prototyping facility in Largo, FL. There are not any automated and connected vehicle initiatives in Liberty County.

## **SHARED USE VEHICLES**

Shared use vehicles in Florida means the authorized use of a motor vehicle by an individual other than the vehicle's owner through a peer-to-peer car-sharing program. Car sharing has been shown to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which means it can reduce car parking needs and traffic congestion. Within Florida there are car sharing companies such as Zipcar, Turo, and Getaround. Bicycle sharing is also a type of shared use vehicle. Some bicycle sharing companies in Florida include HOPR (Orlando), BrightBike (West Palm Beach), and CITI Bike Miami. There are not any car sharing or bicycle sharing companies in Liberty County.

## **PARK AND RIDE LOTS**

RRTP's interactive map shows there are three park and ride lots in Liberty County. The ones in Hosford and Telogia are both FDOT owned and maintained. There is also one in Bristol in the school parking lot that is county owned and FDOT maintained.

# **CONCLUSION**

This concludes the Existing Conditions and Analysis Element—part 2 of the Rural Regional Transportation Plan (RRTP).

See the other elements of the RRTP for more information:

The Foundation and Process Element goes over the four Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) emphasis areas and how they inform the RRTP as well as the overall planning process.

The Projects Element describes the project solicitation and scoring process and the short-term and long-term project needs throughout the area.

The Implementation Element describes recommended next steps to procure funding for the projects.