
Trends and Conditions

Special Report – November 2013

COMMUTING TRENDS IN FLORIDA

This special report of the FDOT Trends and Conditions series highlights commuting trends in Florida and compares them with the national trends. It is based on data from the 2012 American Community Survey (ACS). In 2012, 122,723 Florida households were interviewed, and 7,336 people living in group quarters¹ were surveyed. In general, the trends reaffirm the continuing dominance of auto commuting but also suggest that factors such as fuel prices, economic pressures, and environmental concerns may be having some influence on travel behavior.

Florida's commuting trends as of 2012 are summarized below:

- **Decreased auto availability** – Florida's zero-vehicle households increased for a fourth year to 7.4% in 2012, up from 7% in 2010, reversing the multi-decade downward trend that reached a low of 6.2% in 2007. This compares with a national level of 9.2% in 2012.
- **Slight decrease in commuting by driving alone** – In Florida, 79.3% of commuters drove alone, slightly below the 2011 level and 3% above the national average. However, the number of commuters driving alone grew by 169,433 in 2012.
- **End of decline in commuting by carpool?** – Commuting by carpool was 9.7% in Florida and the nation. It dropped 1% for both over the past decade. Additional data will be required to see if carpool levels are stabilizing after decades of decline.
- **No statistically-significant change in commuting by walking or bicycling** – Commuting by walking rose from 1.5% last year to 1.6% in Florida while the national level remained stable at 2.8%. Bicycle commuting in Florida ticked up to 0.7% from 0.6%.
- **Slight gains for transit use for commuting** – Transit use for commuting increased to 2.2% in Florida continuing a slight upward trend. The national level remained steady at 5%. Florida shows a modest increase from 2003 while the national level is stable.
- **Working at home reaching record level** – Working at home grew to 5% in Florida and 4.4% nationally, both record levels. That meant about 40,439 more Floridians worked at home.
- **Slight increase in overall commute times** – Overall commute times increased slightly. The average one-way commute in Florida was 26.2 minutes, 0.5 minutes longer than the national average. This commute time surpassed its previous record for both Florida and the nation. In Florida, approximately 15% of commuters had trips longer than 45 minutes.
- **Mobile work force** – In Florida, 17.4% of commuters worked outside their county of residence, compared with 23.8% nationally.
- **No worker households increased** – The share of households with zero workers was 33% in Florida and nearly 27.3% in the nation. This is a record level for Florida and its largest difference from the national share.

While commuting is critically important in studying travel, it is only a portion of overall travel. Fuel price levels, the economic recession, individuals working from home, land use patterns, and the extent of zero-worker households are among the factors that influence travel behavior.

¹ Group quarters include such places as college residence halls, residential treatment centers, skilled nursing facilities, group homes, military barracks, correctional facilities, and worker dormitories.





Although fundamental travel behaviors remain intact, the most notable changes in the data for recent years reflect the influence of the economy on several measures. The following tables and figures contain detailed information supporting the above summary.

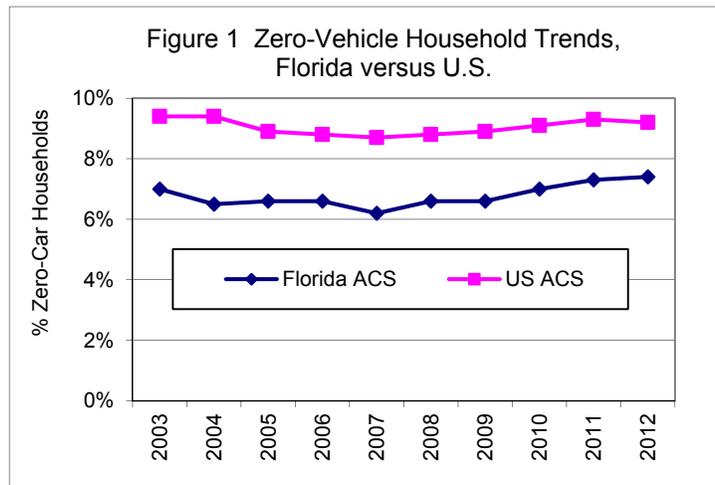
Due to relatively small sample sizes (approximately 1.7% of the households), many of the small differences over time and between locations may not be statistically significant. Therefore, the difference between the adjacent values in the tables is not necessarily statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. For information on data collection, sampling design, non-sampling error, and definitions, see http://www.census.gov/acs/www/methodology/methodology_main/.

Table 1 presents commuting trends for Florida since 2003. Readers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with margins of errors by reviewing ACS guidance.

Table 1 Florida and U.S. ACS Trends										
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
VEHICLES AVAILABLE – FLORIDA										
No vehicles available	7.0%	6.5%	6.6%	6.6%	6.2%	6.6%	6.6%	7.0%	7.3%	7.4%
1 vehicle available	40.5%	40.3%	40.0%	39.4%	39.7%	40.5%	41.2%	41.1%	41.7%	42.2%
2 vehicles available	38.7%	39.7%	39.2%	39.0%	38.8%	38.5%	38.3%	37.9%	37.8%	37.4%
3 or more vehicles available	13.9%	13.5%	14.3%	15.1%	15.3%	14.4%	14.0%	13.7%	13.1%	13.0%
VEHICLES AVAILABLE – U.S.										
No vehicles available	9.4%	9.4%	8.9%	8.8%	8.7%	8.8%	8.9%	9.1%	9.3%	9.2%
1 vehicle available	34.0%	33.8%	33.1%	33.2%	33.1%	33.4%	33.7%	33.8%	34.1%	34.1%
2 vehicles available	38.3%	38.5%	38.2%	38.0%	38.1%	37.8%	37.6%	37.6%	37.5%	37.3%
3 or more vehicles available	18.2%	18.3%	19.8%	20.0%	20.1%	20.0%	19.9%	19.5%	19.1%	19.3%
COMMUTING TO WORK – FLORIDA										
Car, truck, or van – drove alone	81.3%	81.0%	80.0%	79.3%	79.6%	79.5%	79.3%	79.9%	79.7%	79.3%
Car, truck, or van – carpooled	10.7%	10.1%	11.1%	10.9%	10.5%	10.3%	10.4%	9.6%	9.9%	9.7%
Public transportation (not taxi)	1.8%	1.7%	1.8%	2.0%	1.9%	2.0%	1.9%	2.1%	2.1%	2.2%
Walked	1.3%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	1.5%	1.5%	1.7%	1.5%	1.6%
Other means	1.5%	1.7%	2.0%	2.2%	2.1%	2.3%	2.2%	2.1%	2.1%	2.3%
Worked at home	3.0%	4.0%	3.6%	4.0%	4.2%	4.5%	4.8%	4.6%	4.6%	5.0%
COMMUTING TO WORK – U.S.										
Car, truck, or van – drove alone	76.8%	76.3%	77.0%	76.0%	76.1%	75.5%	76.1%	76.6%	76.4%	76.3%
Car, truck, or van – carpooled	10.7%	11.2%	10.7%	10.7%	10.4%	10.7%	10.0%	9.7%	9.7%	9.7%
Public transportation (not taxi)	4.9%	5.0%	4.7%	4.8%	4.9%	5.0%	5.0%	4.9%	5.0%	5.0%
Walked	2.6%	2.7%	2.5%	2.9%	2.8%	2.8%	2.9%	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%
Other means	1.5%	1.6%	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%	1.8%
Worked at home	3.4%	3.2%	3.6%	3.9%	4.1%	4.1%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.4%
ZERO-WORKER HOUSEHOLDS										
Florida	-	31.7%	31.6%	30.2%	30.0%	29.5%	31.6%	32.5%	32.9%	33.0%
U.S.	-	27.2%	27.0%	25.8%	25.8%	24.5%	26.3%	27.2%	27.5%	27.3%
MEAN TRAVEL TIME TO WORK (Minutes)										
Florida	24.8	25.4	26	25.9	25.9	25.4		25.5	25.8	26.2
U.S.	24.3	24.4	25.1	25	25.3	25.1		25.3	25.5	25.7



The work-at-home population has grown in the past decade across the nation and particularly in Florida. This is among the fastest-changing aspects of commuting. The share of households that have no workers has also grown to 33% in Florida and 27.3% in the U.S. Overall, 38% of Floridian households are not involved in commuting. This is relevant to transportation policy in that the location and travel decisions of these households are not necessarily influenced by access to work considerations.



This could have partially contributed to the increase in zero-vehicle households in recent years. Vehicle availability improved in Florida from 2003 through 2007. However, 2008 showed an increase in zero-vehicle households at both the state and national levels, and this trend continued through 2012 (Figure 1). As zero-vehicle households are typically smaller — often single persons, the share of the population that resides in zero-vehicle households is quite small, 6.6% in the U.S. and 5% in Florida.

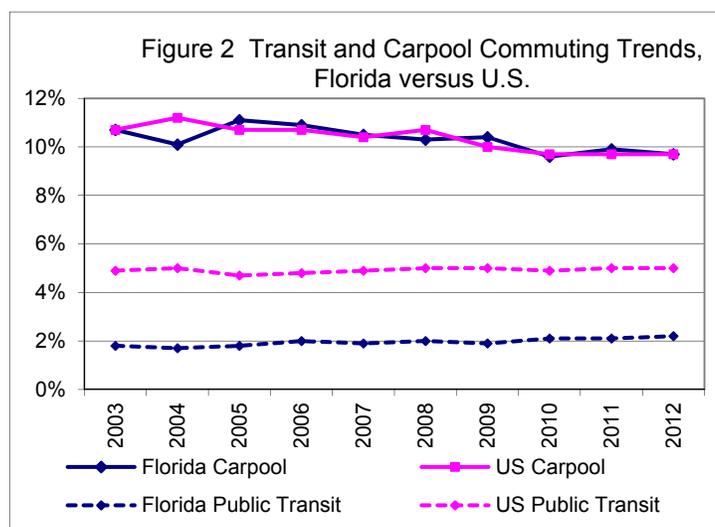


Figure 2 contrasts Florida and national trends with respect to carpool or shared-ride commuting and transit use. Reliance on driving or being a private-vehicle passenger remains the dominant means of commuting in Florida, with “drive alone” being 3% higher than in the rest of the country (Table 1). Commuting by both public transit and walking in Florida remains below the national averages. Transit use increased very slightly in the U.S. in the past decade but somewhat more rapidly in Florida. On the other hand, carpooling remained steady in the U.S. but ticked down in Florida to match the national 9.7% share.

A comparison of transit mode shares of commuting at the county level reveals that only Miami-Dade County has a transit share that exceeds the national average (Table 2). An analysis of the same data for metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) finds that transit use in all Florida MSAs is below the national average (Table 3).

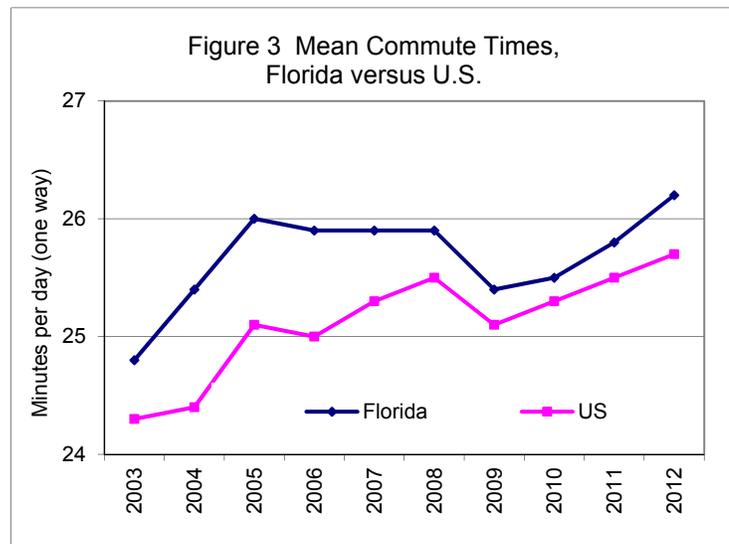


Table 2 Top Florida Counties Ranked by Transit Mode Share to Work, 2012 ACS		
Rank	County	Transit %
1	Miami-Dade County	5.9%
2	Alachua County	4.2%
3	Monroe County	3.6%
4	Broward County	3.2%
5	Orange County	2.8%
6	Collier County	2.6%
7	Palm Beach County	2.1%
8	Duval County	1.8%
9	Leon County	1.8%
10	Pinellas County	1.5%
11	Hillsborough County	1.4%
12	Lee County	1.3%
13	Volusia County	0.7%
	Florida	2.2%
	United States	5%

Table 3 Top Florida MSA's Ranked by Transit Mode Share to Work, 2012 ACS		
Rank	City - Area	Transit %
1	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach	4.2%
2	Gainesville	4.0%
3	Naples-Marco Island	2.6%
4	Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford	2.0%
5	Tallahassee	1.6%
6	Jacksonville	1.3%
6	Cape Coral-Fort Myers	1.3%
8	Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater	1.2%
9	North Port-Bradenton-Sarasota	0.8%
10	Deltona-Daytona Beach-Ormond Beach	0.7%
10	Palm Bay-Melbourne-Titusville	0.7%
12	Crestview-Fort Walton Beach-Destin	0.6%
12	Lakeland-Winter Haven	0.6%
12	Pensacola-Ferry Pass-Brent	0.6%
15	Sebastian-Vero Beach	0.4%
15	Port St. Lucie	0.4%
17	Ocala	0.1%
17	Punta Gorda	0.1%
	Florida	2.2%
	United States	5.0%

Meanwhile, mean commute times rose for both Florida and the U.S., with Florida remaining above the national average each year. Florida's commute time surpassed its 2005 peak, while the national average surpassed its 2008 peak (Figure 3). Caution must be taken that this measure does not allow dissecting of the relative contributions of trip length changes versus trip speed changes.

Commute time varies from county to county. The county averages of the top 16 Florida counties range from about 4.5 minutes longer than the national average to 2.2 minutes below the national average (Table 4). The extent of commuting across county lines can play a role in a county's commute time. Table 5 provides rank data on cross-county commuting for selected states. Many states have more cross-county-line commuting than Florida.

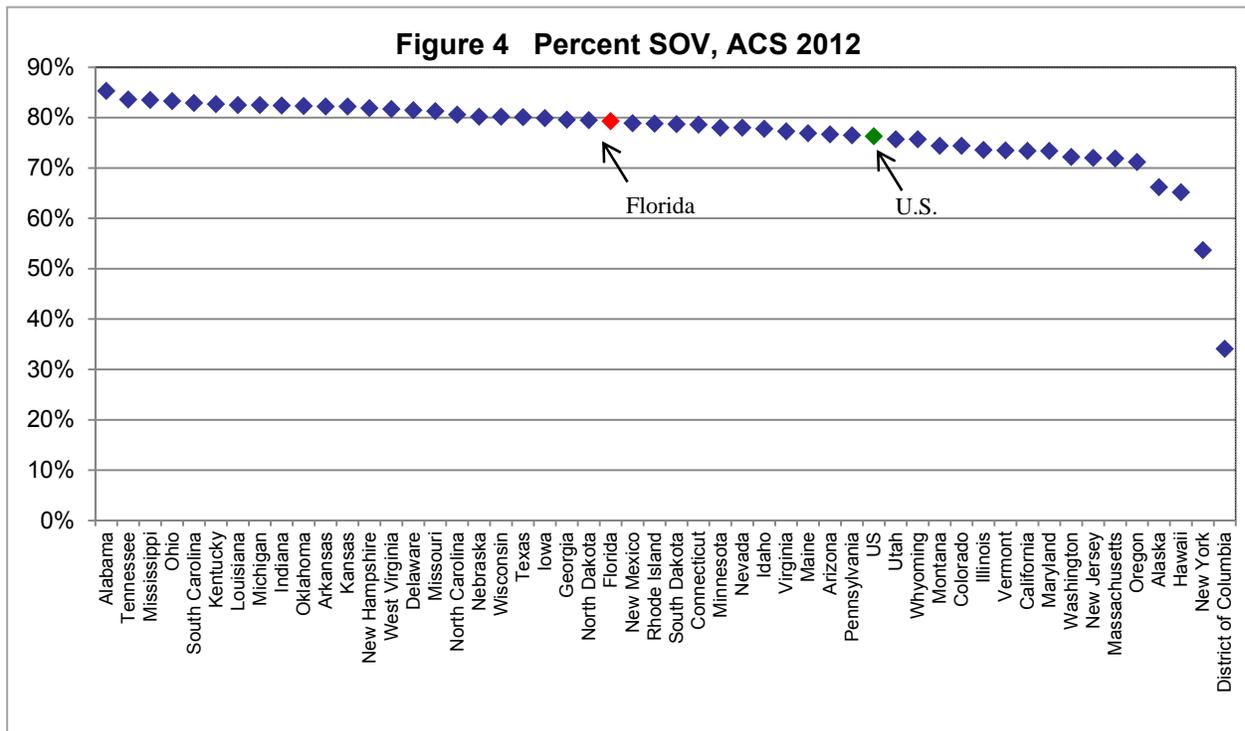


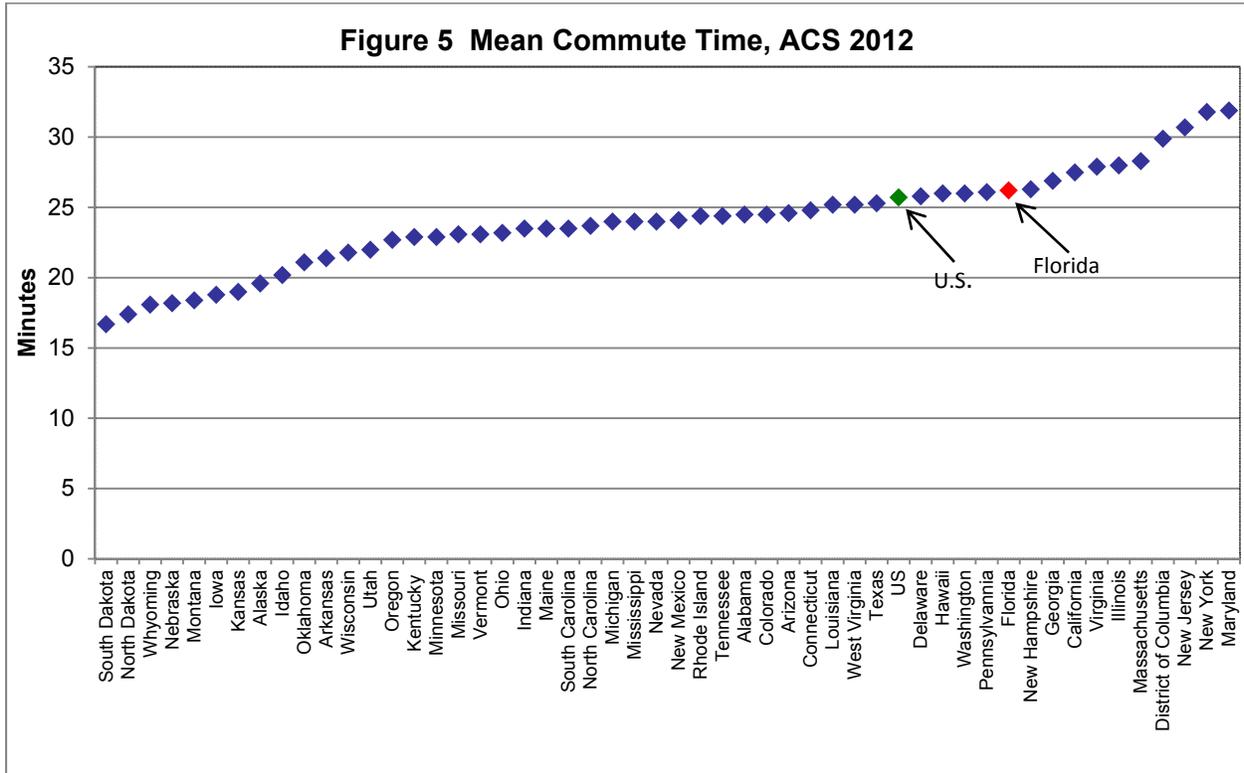


Rank	County	Minutes
1	Osceola County	30.2
2	Pasco County	29.8
3	Miami-Dade County	29.5
4	Lee County	27.7
5	Broward County	27.6
6	Lake County	27.9
7	Polk County	26.2
8	Volusia County	25.1
9	Marion County	24.3
10	Orange County	26.4
11	Seminole County	27.7
12	Hillsborough County	25.9
13	Brevard County	23.7
14	Palm Beach County	25.3
15	Collier County	24.4
16	Duval County	23.5
	Florida	26.2
	United States	25.7

Rank	State	Percent
1	Virginia	43.2%
2	Georgia	38.5%
5	New York	32.7%
6	New Jersey	32.5%
15	North Carolina	25.5%
	United States	23.8%
21	South Carolina	23.4%
25	Texas	21.6%
26	Oregon	21.3%
35	Florida	17.4%
37	California	17.1%
48	Arizona	4.5%

Figure 4 and Figure 5 provide comparisons across states in single occupant vehicle (SOV) shares and mean travel times. For SOV shares, Florida ranked above the national mean when compared with those states shown in Figure 4. When it comes to mean commute time, only 10 states had longer commute time than Florida, as can be seen in Figure 5. In both cases, Florida was higher than the national average.





Different modes can affect the distribution of commute travel time (Figure 6). It is expected that drive-alone trips take less time than carpool or transit trips and comprise a higher percentage in the shorter trip time categories. It is not surprising that transit trips are noticeably longer due to a combination of access and egress, wait time, the vehicle stopping for other passengers, and transfers.

