



— POSITION AVAILABLE —

## COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Apply by December 14, 2022

Located on Florida's famed Treasure Coast, St. Lucie County is an exciting, picturesque community brimming with opportunity and a great place to raise a family. It is a microcosm of Florida, offering old and new; urban, suburban, and rural; and densely populated master-planned communities as well as large farms and ranches. It is 120 miles north of Miami, 120 miles southeast of Orlando and 160 miles east and a little south of Tampa. In fact, it is within 200 miles of every major metropolitan area in Florida except Jacksonville/Duval County. That proximity makes it an ideal location for a logistical hub. It is growing rapidly and projected to continue to do so. While its current population is about 350,000, it is anticipated to reach 400,000 by 2025 and 600,000 by 2050, if not sooner.

Considering its perpetually gorgeous weather, St. Lucie County is an ideal location for outdoor, sun-loving adventurers. Residents and visitors both enjoy finding their favorite spot along the area's 21 miles-worth of Atlantic Ocean beaches. The area is a surfer's paradise. For those seeking other ocean thrills, the Fort Pierce Inlet provides direct ocean access for deep-sea fishing and scuba diving. In fact, the Port of Fort Pierce is the only deep-water port in

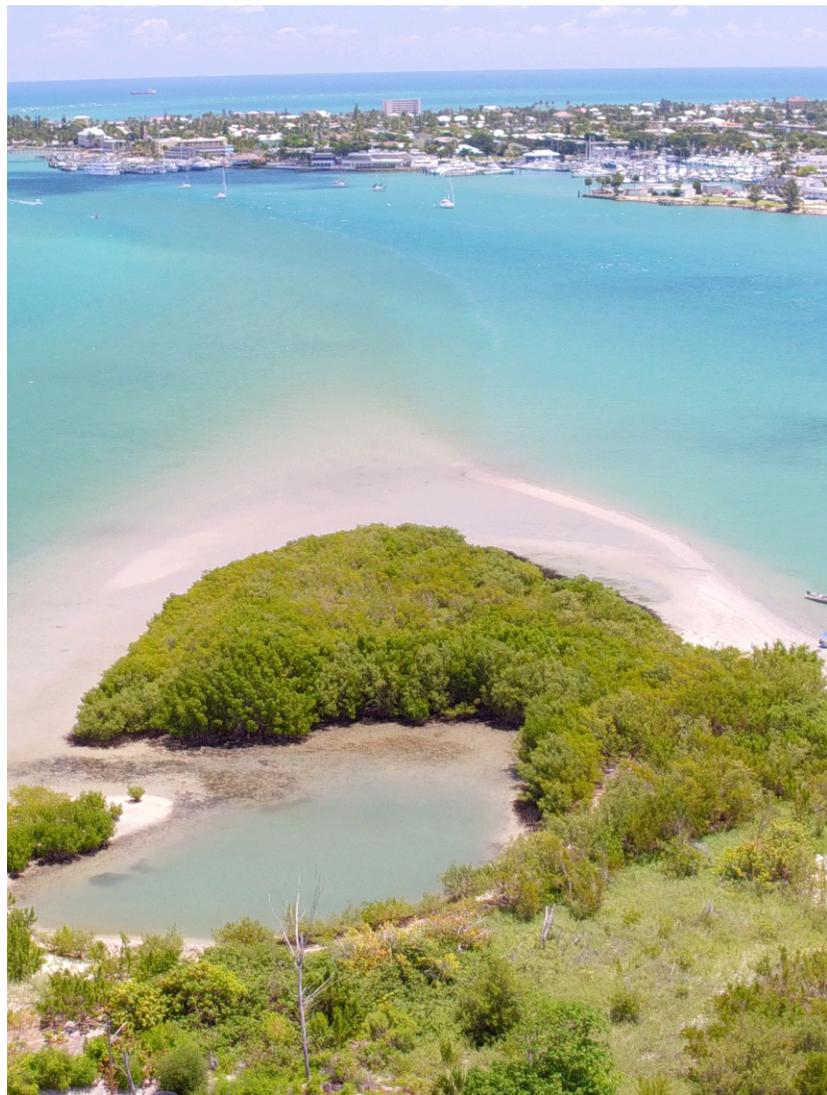
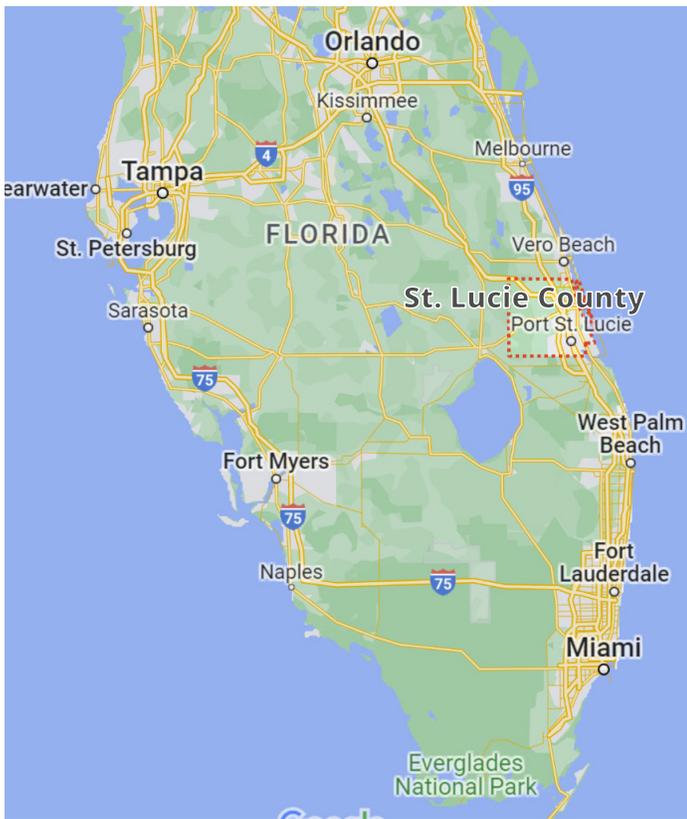


Figure I: Location of St. Lucie County



the Western Hemisphere with unobstructed access. In addition, the Indian River Lagoon and St. Lucie River provide many opportunities for fishing, boating, and kayaking.

A landlubber can also find much to do here. You can explore over 11,000 acres of nature preserves with 42 miles of hiking trails. Golfers will be in heaven with the County's 16 courses—highlighted by the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) Village in St. Lucie West. It features a unique PGA Learning Center and History Museum in addition to public courses. More organized recreational options for the young and old include a wide variety of programs offered by the County and its primary cities (Port St. Lucie and Fort Pierce).

While you will not find the tourist attractions and nightlife of a large city within its boundaries, St. Lucie County has much to offer. The Fort Pierce Jazz and Blues Society offers a weekly market with a plethora of foods and amazing crafts in downtown Fort Pierce adjacent to the marina. The Society also hosts regular musical performances. The Sunrise Theatre (also in Fort Pierce) hosts numerous popular entertainers. Numerous other concerts,

festivals, and events are frequently held nearby. Furthermore, the County is the original home of the Navy SEALs and hosts the National Navy UDT [underwater demolition team]-SEAL Museum. Restaurants are abundant and first rate.

Within a reasonable drive lie many other attractions. The home courts of the NBA's Miami Heat and Orlando Magic are each two-hours away. So is the home of the NFL's Miami Dolphins while the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, and the Jacksonville Jaguars are a bit further away. Orlando hosts both professional men's and women's soccer. Baseball enthusiasts enjoy proximity to the Tampa Bay Rays and the Miami Marlins, as well as the New York Mets Single-A team, the St. Lucie Mets. MLB's New York Mets also conduct their spring training in Port St. Lucie. Those who enjoy collegiate athletics will be able to easily attend games of the well-regarded teams of the University of Florida, the University of Miami, and the University of Central Florida

If that is not enough, Orlando's theme parks beckon. You can choose from Disney World (the Magic Kingdom, Hollywood Studios, Animal Kingdom, Epcot Center, and two water parks), Universal Studios (along with its Islands of Adventure and Volcano Baywater Park), and SeaWorld, plus several other smaller unaffiliated parks. A bit further away in Winter Haven is the Legoland theme park.

If you like to travel, St. Lucie County is the place to be. Though it has its own airport, it is a general aviation airport - part of your job will be to extend the runways and bring commercial carriers here. Until then, several commercial airports are within a two-hour drive—Orlando, West Palm Beach, Melbourne, Fort Lauderdale, and Miami. For those who enjoy cruising, the three largest cruise ports (by passenger volume) are also within a two-hour drive—the Port of Miami, Port Everglades at Fort Lauderdale, and Port Canaveral.

Most importantly, the County is widely recognized as home to a friendly, welcoming community where neighbors know their neighbors and care for one another. Many have migrated from somewhere else and, as a result, newcomers are embraced! As with any large county, crime varies depending on the location.

That said, US News & World Report ranked Port St. Lucie as the “Second Safest City [in its size category] in the U.S.” in 2022. It also ranked the city in the top eight places to retire for each year since 2019. The County has excellent medical facilities with five hospitals and doctors in virtually every medical specialty imaginable.

Many housing options are available and range from the affordable to the luxurious. Fairly nice properties (three bedrooms/two baths, 2000 square feet) start at about \$300,000 and can go into the millions. Prices depend on the city, the neighborhood and location, and they can vary quite a bit. Homes in Port St. Lucie tend to run about \$75,000 more than in Fort Pierce.

Students can receive an excellent education in St. Lucie County. The County School District operates 17 elementary schools, nine K-8 schools, four middle schools, five high schools, and one 6–12 school. Included in these numbers are six magnet schools. With a goal to meet every student and family’s needs, the District also operates two virtual K-12 schools and two academies. Student-to-teacher ratios are relatively low (around 17:1), and St. Lucie Public Schools recently earned an historic high school graduation rate of 94.5%.

When it is time to take your education to the next level, you need not travel. Indian River State College, a four-year institution, is headquartered in Fort Pierce. It offers associate degrees as well as twelve bachelor’s degree programs (including teacher education, nursing, organizational management, public safety administration, and healthcare management). Florida Atlantic University’s Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute is also located in Fort Pierce. Other larger schools have satellites within the County, specifically University of Florida’s Fort Pierce campus and Keiser University’s Port St. Lucie campus.

All in all, St. Lucie County is a unique place with virtually limitless potential—one that will serve your every professional and personal need. So, if you are an outstanding, savvy, and seasoned professional government manager, please consider applying to become our next County Administrator. Opportunities like this do not come along often.

## HISTORY

Founded by Spanish colonists, the Treasure Coast received its name when, in 1715, 11 treasure laden ships returning to Spain sank offshore during a hurricane.

Originally part of Brevard County, settlers began to arrive in the area known today as St. Lucie County in the mid-1800s when the U.S. initiated land grants for those who would settle the area. Early industries focused on pineapple, fishing, seafood canning and cattle. Commerce increased when Henry Flagler’s Florida East Coast Railroad reached St. Lucie in the 1890s and provided a means to ship food and materials to market in the North. In 1905, St. Lucie County was created as a governmental entity.

In 1940, the County had a population of 11,871. With World War II came the United States Naval Amphibious Training Base in Fort Pierce, and over 140,000 troops were processed through the base. The post-war years saw a major population boom, as many returning sailors brought their families. Air conditioning arrived in the 1950s and with it, many more found Florida to be habitable.

By 1960, the County’s population was nearly 40,000 and ripe for further development. In 1958, General Development Corporation (GDC) purchased over 40,000 acres along the Indian River, subdivided the area into lots, and began selling them. That area was the foundation for the City of Port St. Lucie. The County’s population exploded, reaching 150,171 by 1990. Unfortunately, GDC went bankrupt before it could install most of the supporting infrastructure, leaving it for the City to develop.

Today, St. Lucie County has grown to a population of approximately 350,000 and its growth is only increasing. Between 2020 and 2021, the number of residents increased by 14,000. Further, the County is currently issuing approximately 6,000 building permits each year. That is expected to increase to 12,000 to 14,000 over the next few years. St. Lucie County is definitely now on the map and no longer a hidden gem.

Table I: St. Lucie County Demographics

Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	58.4%	0 to 15	16.1%
Black	20.2%	15 to 25	10.6%
Asian	1.8%	25 to 45	22.9%
Native American	0.4%	45 to 65	25.9%
Two or More Races	19.2%	65 to 85	21.9%
Total	100%	85 +	2.6%
Hispanic Ethnicity	20.1%	Estimated Population: 329,226	

Educational Achievement (Over Age 25)	
High School or Higher	87.3%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	27.3%

Other Statistics	
Median Age—St. Lucie County	45.4
Median Age—U.S.	38.5
Median Household Income—St. Lucie County	\$62,797
Median Household Income—U.S.	\$61,937
Poverty Rate	10.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## DEMOGRAPHICS

As can be seen from Table I (above), St. Lucie County is diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, and age.

## CLIMATE

St. Lucie County's climate is generally classified as warm and subtropical. Summers are hot and humid, with temperatures generally between 70° and 90° F. Winters are mild and comfortable, with high temperatures in the mid 70s and low temperatures in the low 50s. Annual average rainfall is approximately 56 inches with most of it occurring during the summer and early fall months.

The area experiences hurricanes from time to time. Although few serious storms have directly struck the area, Hurricane Nicole (a category 1 hurricane) made landfall five miles north of the county line in November of this year. The most recent prior storms were Hurricanes Jean (a category 3 hurricane), and Francis (a category 2 hurricane) in 2004. Both made landfall 30 miles south in neighboring Martin County.

## GEOGRAPHY

St. Lucie County is part of the Port St. Lucie, Florida Metropolitan Statistical area. The county seat is in Fort Pierce, though its largest city is Port St. Lucie. The County consists of 688 square miles, of which 572 square miles are land and 116 square miles are water. Major roads passing through the area running north – south include Interstate 95, U.S. Highway 1, and the Florida Turnpike. State Road 70 runs east-west through the County.

The County is mostly flat and has an average elevation of 26 feet above sea level. The County's eastern border touches the Atlantic Ocean and consists of sandbars and barrier islands. These natural formations make the Treasure Coast a gallery of lagoons, rivers, and bays.

## COMMERCE

The area supports over 6,000 employer establishments, approximately two-thirds of which are small businesses. According to the 2020 U.S. Census, St. Lucie County's top three occupational areas are: (1) management, business, science, and arts; (2) sales and office; and (3) service.

In spite of COVID-19 and the subsequent supply chain issues, the County's economy remains strong—its unemployment numbers are low (currently 3.4%) and its labor force growing. A list of the County's 10 largest employers is included in Table II. (See page 5.)

While St. Lucie County's economy is already strong, it still offers a wealth of untapped potential. It has a small but increasingly

Table II: Principal Employers, St. Lucie County, FL

Employer	Number of Employees
St. Lucie County School Board	5,205
Indian River State College	2,266
Teleperformance	1,850
St. Lucie County Government	1,829
Publix	1,650
HCA/Lawnwood & St. Lucie Medical Center	1,500
City of Port St. Lucie	1,181
St. Lucie Medical Center	892
Wal-Mart Distribution Center	890
Cleveland Clinic Martin Health	850

Source: St. Lucie County, FL 2020 CAFR

important port (Port of Fort Pierce) and an international general aviation airport ready for expansion and then to add commercial flights. The County has excellent access to rail, I-95, and the Florida Turnpike. With these assets and sizeable nearby populations, opportunities for both private and commercial expansion are immense.

The County is also the home of several research facilities. The most prestigious are probably the Florida Atlantic University Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute and the Smithsonian Marine Station in Fort Pierce. Additionally, The University of Florida has established an agricultural research center in the county. The United States Department of Agriculture has selected St. Lucie County as a location for a research facility, and Florida International University has merged with Torrey Pines Institute for Molecular Studies to create a well-regarded medical research facility in Port St. Lucie.

## THE GOVERNMENT

The direction and operations of St. Lucie County are overseen by a Board of County Commissioners (BCC). The Board sets policy and is composed of five members who serve staggered

four-year terms. The Commission Chair is selected by the Commission from among its members. Each member represents a district and must reside in that district, but is elected by the voters of the the entire county. Elections are held in November of even numbered years, and members are not term-limited.

Historically, the Commission has been very stable. Of the current commissioners, one has served since 2008, two since 2016, and two were elected in 2022. One of the new commissioners ran for a seat opened by the retirement of a 24-year incumbent, and the other defeated a commissioner who had served one term. Elections are

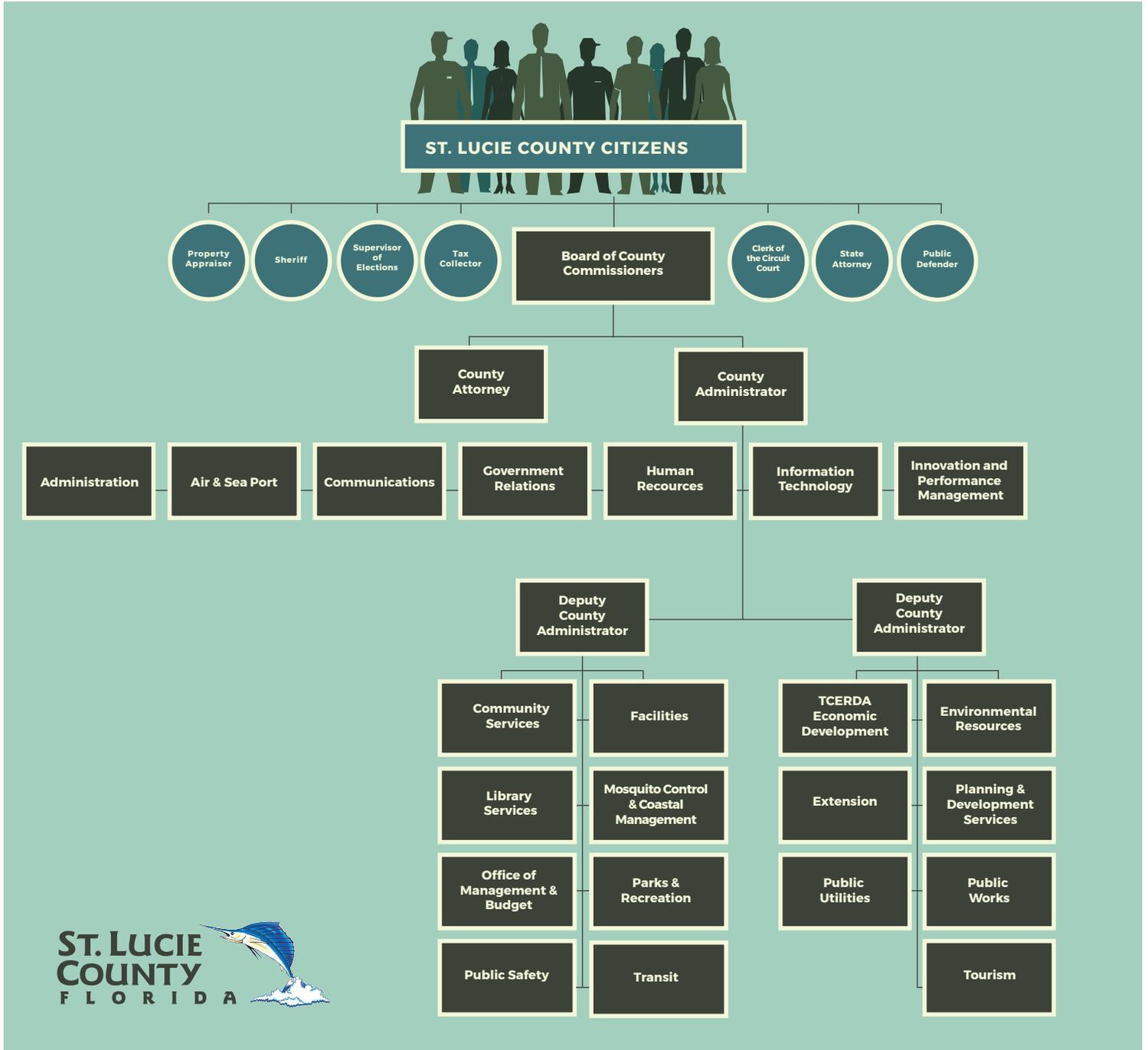
partisan, and the Commission is split between the two major parties. Although the Commissioners do not agree on everything, historically the body has been collegial, and members work well together. They respect and support the staff.

The BCC appoints the County Administrator to oversee the operation of the County’s functions within its span of control. He/she manages all the traditional county services as well as the management of the air and seaports. The Board also appoints the County Attorney to oversee its legal matters.

The County Sheriff (separately elected) provides police services. Other elected constitutional officers include the Clerk of the Courts, Property Appraiser, Supervisor of Elections and Tax Collector. The School Board is an entirely separate entity and financially independent. The Fire District provides fire/rescue services to County residents and is also independent. See Chart I on page 6 for a pictorial representation of the County government.

The total County budget for 2022-2023 is \$694,820,789. Of that amount, \$116,485,633 will be transferred to the other constitutional officers, the largest single component going to the Sheriff (\$96,622,949). The largest areas which are within the

# ST. LUCIE COUNTY, FLORIDA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





County Administrator's control are Public Works (\$61,345,380), Public Utilities (\$48,693,206 of which solid waste is approximately \$31 million and water and sewer compose \$17.7 million), and Parks and Recreation (\$33,195,714). Overall, the County has approximately 1,800 employees, about 850 of which are under the County Administrator. The Teamsters Union represents approximately 315 of the 850 employees and they are primarily in public works, parks and recreation, animal safety, ocean rescue, and mosquito abatement

The County has an excellent staff at every level and has been extremely well run as is evidenced by the extensive list of awards it has won in the last decade or so. A list of which can be found at: [www.stlucieco.gov/departments-and-services/county-administration/state-and-federal-awards](http://www.stlucieco.gov/departments-and-services/county-administration/state-and-federal-awards)

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As noted, St. Lucie County is financially sound with an excellent workforce. Nonetheless, the new County Administrator will have plenty on his/her plate.

The biggest challenge/opportunity facing the County is growth and being prepared for it. As noted earlier, the population is expanding rapidly, and housing starts reflect that. Getting the right kind of growth and providing the infrastructure necessary to support that growth will require excellent planning, new infrastructure, and significant resources. \$40 million has been set aside for utility development but it is not enough and is only one element of what will be needed.

The second challenge is economic development. When the growth comes, jobs will need to be available for the new residents. Over the past few years, the County has made a remarkable transition. In 2018, 84% of its working residents left the County for their jobs. Today, only 64% do. That sort of development will need to continue.

In terms of opportunities, Treasure Coast International Airport (TCIA) is a diamond in the rough. Presently a general aviation airport, it covers over 4,000 acres (including a foreign trade zone). It supports a pilot training college (which is branching into power plan technician training) and a new state-of-the-art maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) hangar to expand existing activities in that area. Its two runways of approximately 6,500 feet are set to be extended to at least 7,800 feet and ideally 8,500. When that happens, the airport can host virtually any of the world's current aircraft, and ideally host commercial flights.

The Port of Fort Pierce also presents some unique opportunities for economic development. It is one of 14 deep-water seaports in Florida and the only one with an unobstructed entrance from the ocean. Covering 120 acres and offering a foreign trade zone, it could become a good, if small, working port. Derecktor Shipyards has opened a facility to refit and refurbish mega yachts (i.e., yachts over 260 feet in length). Among other things, it will include a 1,500-ton mobile hoist, the world's largest. This hoist will lift yachts out of the water and place them on land where the repair and refitting work will take place. The port is another diamond in the rough!

Other challenges include upgrading existing infrastructure more frequently. For example, the County roads are currently on a 35-year repaving cycle. While that is much better than it was a few years ago (when it was on a 75-year cycle), the cycle should be more in the 15-to-20 year range.

The new Administrator will want to review the organization from top to bottom to ensure it is the right size with the right people doing the right jobs in the most efficient manner possible. Nothing is broken, but resources are limited, and the Commission wants to be sure these resources are used optimally.

Further, though the County's population is quite diverse, that diversity is not fully reflected in the County's government management team. Some work needs to be done. A number of retirements are on the horizon. As such, succession planning will be important.

Finally, St. Lucie County has three incorporated cities: Fort Pierce (population 47,927), Port St. Lucie (population 217,523), and St. Lucie Village (population 612). In other words, a little more than 75% of the County's residents live in incorporated municipalities. Hence, close coordination and good relations with the County's cities will be essential. The demographic dispersion also means that the County must provide services over a large unincorporated area with relatively few people.

#### THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The County Commission is seeking a consummate professional—an outstanding leader and manager—to oversee its day-to-day operations. It hopes to find not just an employee but a partner and a trusted advisor. The Administrator will keep the Commissioners informed – no surprises, please – and work with them to solve problems. It expects the Administrator to alert them diplomatically when they are about to pursue a course, he/she feels is unwise. “Yes” men/women should not apply. The next County Administrator will be someone who counts to five (not three) and treats all the Commissioners equally.

The best candidate will be calm in a storm (both literally and figuratively) yet involved, enthusiastic, and proactive. The individual will recognize process is essential but also have a healthy sense of urgency and a strong desire to get things done. That is, he/she will be accomplishment-oriented.

The next Administrator will need to be active in the community, and constantly taking its pulse. The ideal candidate will insist on outstanding customer service. He/she will ensure that the staff have the resources to be exceptionally respectful, responsive, and flexible. Customers are not always right but do deserve a prompt and sincere effort to resolve their problems.

The best candidate will be honest with a great deal of integrity and will value and encourage transparency. He/she will be able to communicate effectively with people of all walks of life and every demographic, whether they be Fortune 500 executives or individuals cutting the grass around the Administrative Center. Translating complex concepts into language the layperson can understand will come naturally. Outstanding people skills are a must.

The Administrator will lead the staff in accomplishing the Commission's goals. He/she will set high (but reasonable) standards and hold staff accountable for meeting their targets. Creativity and innovation will be important, and he/she will encourage it. Communication will flow smoothly throughout the organization so everyone, including the Administrator, will be well informed. He/she will not be a micro manager. Rather the individual will be comfortable letting staff do the jobs they are being paid to do without undue oversight and control. The best candidate will be an excellent motivator and motivate without fear.

Staff development will be important to the Administrator. The individual will value initiative and encourage reasonable risk taking. While it would be wonderful if every new idea succeeded, he/she will recognize some will fail and these experiences can yield valuable lessons and growth. The individual will be approachable with an open-door policy and enjoy mentoring. His/her goal will be to help the staff to become the best they can be.

The best candidate will be a strong negotiator and know not just how to bring people to the table, but how to close deals. While being collaborative and always looking for win-wins, the individual will understand how to work with difficult people and how to deal with tense situations. A sense of humor will be a big plus.

In terms of experience, the ideal candidate will have a record of demonstrated achievement and excellence with at least five years' experience as a local government CEO, deputy manager, or assistant manager. A strong background in finance, development,

and utilities will be important. A bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration or a related field is required. A master/s degree is preferred.

## COMPENSATION

The salary range is \$200,000 to \$270,000. The County values talent and experience and is willing to pay at the top of the range for the right person. and will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent. The County Administrator will be part of the Florida Retirement System Senior Management Class.

## THE MOST RECENT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

The St. Lucie County Administrator position has been very stable. In fact, since 1959, only eight people have held the position. The incumbent County Administrator, after eight successful years, has accepted a position as Town Manager of Longboat Key on Florida's west coast, and will start in February 2023.

## RESIDENCY

The County Administrator is required to live within County boundaries.

## HOW TO APPLY

Email your cover letter and resume to [Recruit43@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit43@cb-asso.com) by December 14th. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or Lynelle Klein at (970) 433-7189.

## INTERNAL CANDIDATES

It is possible that one or more internal candidates may apply. Please call for more information.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Under Florida law, all applications are a public record once submitted. That said, we do not expect media coverage until after the semi-finalists and possibly not until finalists are named.

## THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between December 15th and January 16th. Finalists will be selected on January 17th. A reception and interviews will be held January 26th and 27th. A selection will be made shortly thereafter.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

St. Lucie County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. It strongly encourages women, minorities, and veterans to apply. A veteran's preference will be awarded per Florida law.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about the County, visit:

[www.stlucieco.gov](http://www.stlucieco.gov)

[visistlucie.com](http://visistlucie.com)

[stluciechamber.org](http://stluciechamber.org)

