

# Southwest Florida

Third Round Promise Zone Designee



## Lead Organization:

Southwest Florida  
Regional Planning  
Council

## Population:

76,348

## Poverty Rate:

31.20%

## Unemployment rate:

15.65%

## Key Partners:

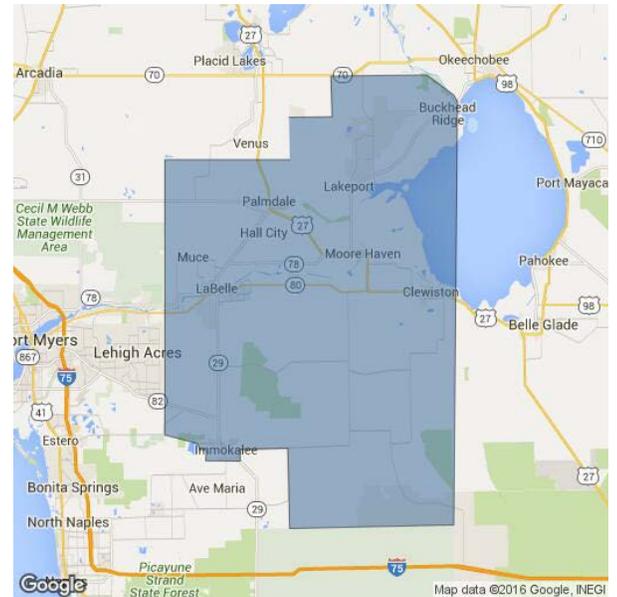
Glades, Hendry, and Collier Counties; Immokalee, FL community; Glades County, Hendry County and Immokalee Economic Development and Tourism Development Councils and Chambers of Commerce; Southwest Florida Workforce Development Board; Small Business Development Center; Immokalee Business Development Center; Immokalee Foundation; Southwest Florida Regional Human Trafficking Council; Glades, Hendry, and Collier School Districts

## About the Southwest Florida Promise Zone

The Southwest Florida Promise Zone is located in Glades County, Hendry County, and Immokalee Community in Collier County. Due to the high rates of poverty and unemployment, the region has developed a strategic plan that focuses on improving the quality of life. The plan is designed to provide new opportunities for residents by leveraging their young population, low cost of living, and abundance of developable land. The Southwest Florida Promise Zone has developed concrete strategies to train workers and fuel job growth, provide resources to help small businesses grow, develop markets for locally grown fresh food, promote eco-tourism, and improve educational opportunities in the community.

## Leadership and Goals

The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council is leading the Promise Zone initiative for the region. With partners across the local government and private sectors, the Council hopes to leverage the region's abundant natural resources and young, able population to make vast improvements throughout the Promise Zone. As the region struggles with a poverty rate over 30%, leaders are working to jumpstart economic activity in the region and improve safety and opportunities for residents.



The primary goals of the Southwest Promise Zone include:

- Growing jobs by developing an Airglades Industrial Park, an Immokalee Airport, and An Americas Gateway Logistics & Manufacturing Training Center
- Creating eco-tourism attractions and supporting small businesses throughout the region with technical assistance and funding
- Preventing human trafficking by increasing law enforcement and educating at-risk youth through the "Slave Free" program
- Improving educational opportunities by expanding the Immokalee Readers Program, the Career Development program and the Post-Secondary and Career Success Programs of the Immokalee Foundation
- Upgrading water and wastewater systems, public transit, roads and streetlights throughout the region