

## CHAPTER 1 – EXISTING CONDITIONS

This chapter provides an overview of existing conditions in Collier County, particularly as they relate to the bicycle and pedestrian network and the people who use the network. Figure 1 shows the MPO’s 2018 updated inventory of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Collier County.

### Demographics

Collier is the largest county in Florida by land area and had a 2016 American Community Survey (ACS) population estimate of 348,236. The county includes three cities—Everglades City, Marco Island, Naples—as well as multiple Census Designated Places (CDP) within unincorporated Collier County. Demographics for the three cities and three of the largest CDPs—Immokalee, Golden Gate City, Naples Manor—were compared with each other, the county, and the state.

The county’s population is socio-economically diverse. The average household income is higher than that of Florida, and the percent of people living below the poverty level is lower than Florida. However, there are areas within Collier County, including Golden Gate City, Immokalee, and Naples Manor, where incomes are significantly lower, levels of poverty are significantly higher, and more people are without access to a vehicle than county or Florida averages, as shown in Table 1. The people who live and work in these areas tend to be greater users of the bicycle, pedestrian, and transit networks. Collier also has many seasonal residents and visitors who, as part of their daily lives, bike and walk for recreation, run errands, and as transportation to and from local destinations.

**Table 1. Vehicle Availability, Income, Means of Transportation to Work<sup>1</sup>**

Area	Percent of Population with No Vehicle Available	Percent of Population Who Walk, Bike, or Use Public Transportation to Get to Work	Percent of Individuals with Incomes in Last 12 Months Below Poverty Level	Mean Household Income
Florida	3%	2%	16%	\$69,936
Collier County	5%	6%	13%	\$98,115
Everglades City	4%	5%	11%	\$57,739
Marco Island	6%	6%	8%	\$119,571
Naples	2%	7%	9%	\$173,790
Golden Gate City	13%	5%	23%	\$52,759
Immokalee	24%	32%	44%	\$38,071
Naples Manor	16%	8%	25%	\$56,339

<sup>1</sup> US Census, American Community Survey, 2016 5-year estimates, Tables S0802, B08101, B17001, DP03.





The 2016 ACS indicates that 30% of Collier County's residents are age 65 and older compared to 19% for the state. As these residents become less comfortable with driving, they may increasingly use the transit system or, with the appropriate infrastructure and proximity, could walk or bicycle to run errands or get to appointments. Research has shown that people are willing to walk about ½ mile to a transit stop, and access to convenient biking infrastructure can increase that travel distance to about 3 miles. This access can have far-reaching impacts on personal and community quality of life and livability, provide better access to jobs, and benefit the overall financial health of the community.

As noted in the Collier MPO's 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Collier County is one of the fastest-growing counties in the US, with its population increasing seven-fold between 1970 and 2010. Population projections forecast the addition of another 150,000 people by 2040, bringing the population to almost 500,000. This forecasted growth in population will increase travel demand and likely result in additional traffic congestion. Whereas widening roads to accommodate additional vehicle traffic is one approach, continuing to build these roads to accommodate different modes of travel such as bicycles and proactively planning bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure are other important strategies.

To address the issue of equity in terms of providing equal access to bicycle and pedestrian facilities county-wide, the MPO's previous identification of Environmental Justice (EJ) communities was updated. The EJ criteria used for this Plan were minority status, poverty, no access to a vehicle, and limited ability to speak English. EJ areas were defined as areas where the criteria were 10% greater than the county average. Figure 2 shows the results of the EJ analysis, and a full description of the EJ methodology is provided in Appendix 1.

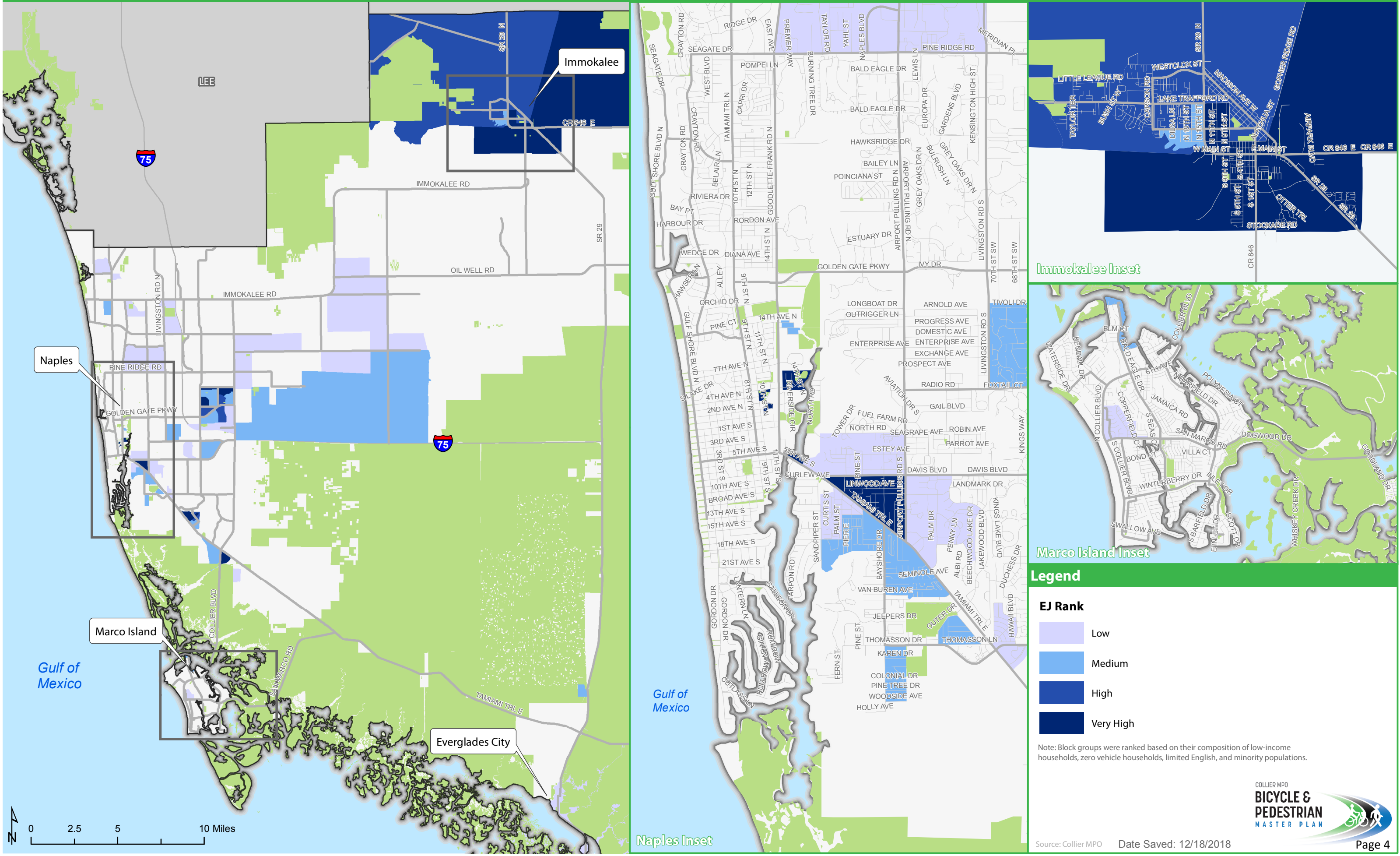
## Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

Except for I-75 and limited access facilities, bicyclists and pedestrians are allowed, under State statute, to use all types of roads, sidewalks, and shared-use paths in Collier County. Therefore, their needs must be addressed at all levels, from the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and intersection improvements to creating corridors that safely accommodate walking and bicycling. There are roughly 1,400 centerline miles of locally-maintained roads throughout Collier County. Focusing just on collector and arterial roadways, the current facility inventory and gap analysis (see Chapter 5) show approximately 72 miles with no bicycle facility and 153 miles having insufficient cycling facilities, either a paved shoulder or connector sidewalk. Currently, five miles of bike lanes are funded but not yet constructed; this provides a glimpse of the amount of work left to be done.

Many factors beyond the number of bicyclists influence the extent to which these facilities are used, including traffic volumes, posted speed limits, width of facilities, and individual rider level of comfort and perception of safety. Current best practices indicate that separating bicycles from vehicles is the safest and preferred method when adding bicycle infrastructure to roadways that carry large volumes of traffic at higher speeds. Increasing the quantity, quality, connectivity, and safety of the bicycle infrastructure is a critical strategy for improving the overall appeal of the bicycle network.



Figure 2: Environmental Justice (EJ) Communities





The current facility inventory and gap analysis indicates there are approximately 72 miles of collector and arterial roadways having no sidewalk or shared-use path. Filling in the gaps and increasing connectivity in the existing sidewalk and pathway network and constructing and interconnecting new sidewalks and pathways where there is demand are critical steps to improving the connectivity and overall appeal of the sidewalk/pathway network.

### *Other Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans*

The cities of Marco Island and Naples have developed their own bicycle and pedestrian master plans that include similar goals of improving bicycle and pedestrian safety and connectivity. The Collier MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan will work in conjunction with these other plans by incorporating their priorities and needs into the MPOs' list of needed improvements to be prioritized and evaluated for funding.

In 2013, Naples adopted a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan<sup>2</sup> that identified five-year goals and objectives and outlined programs and projects that would enhance biking and walking in Naples. The infrastructure recommendations include adding bike lanes and shared-lane markings with pavement resurfacing and completing sidewalk gaps. The 2013 Naples Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan is provided in Appendix 2. Refer to Chapter 5, Needs Analysis, and Chapter 7, Policies and Implementation, regarding incorporating the most current adopted City of Naples Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

The City of Marco Island has an approved bicycle and shared-use path master plan (map), which the City updates annually. The plan's goal is to develop "bike lanes and way projects to allow both expert and novice riders to get around most parts of the city by bicycle." Many of the plan's remaining projects have been funded and will be completed in the next five years. The 2018 Marco Island Bike Path Master Plan and supporting City Council resolution are provided in Appendix 3. Refer to Chapter 5, Needs Analysis, and Chapter 7, Policies and Implementation, regarding incorporating the most current adopted Marco Island Bike Path Master Plan by reference.

The City of Everglades City is a small community on the edge of the Florida Everglades. The City recently received designation as a Florida Trail Town from the Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Recreation and Parks, Office of Greenways and Trails. Its City Council has identified four priority sidewalk projects that can be considered for future funding. The City is developing its own Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan which, when adopted, will be included in this Plan by reference.

Multiple Community Redevelopment Associations (CRA) in Collier County, in collaboration with the County, identify infrastructure needs and develop funding strategies. Collier County recently was awarded a \$13 million federal TIGER Grant that will construct 20 miles of sidewalk, upgrade 32 intersections, add or upgrade bus shelters and lighting, and make drainage improvements in Immokalee. Many roads identified for improvements in the grant application also have been identified in other plans such as the Collier MPO 2012 Comprehensive Pathways Plan and the 2011 Immokalee Walkable Community Study. Needs in areas outside the grant area will be included on the list of local needs developed for this plan. See Chapter 7 Policies and

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.naplesgov.com/community/page/cycling-naples>.



Implementation regarding incorporating the most current adopted CRA bicycle and pedestrian plans by reference.

### *Walkability Studies*

Three walkable community studies have been prepared for the MPO—Bayshore (2010), Naples Manor (2010), and Immokalee (2011). A fourth study for Golden Gate City was completed in 2019. Each study identified and prioritized walking infrastructure needs within the community and included a list of prioritized recommendations to improve walkability. As part of this Plan, the first-tier recommendations from each walkability study were reviewed and added to the list of needs for bicycle and sidewalk infrastructure on local roads. Refer to Chapter 5, Needs Analysis, and Chapter 7, Policies and Implementation, for prioritized projects on local roads.