

Transportation

A centralized location is a major point of attraction for companies in determining where to locate new facilities. Polk County, located at the **center of a super region between Tampa and Orlando**, allows for the shortest transport distance to destinations within the state. This is a significant advantage as Florida is one of the country's fastest growing states and is predicted to overtake New York as the third most populated state in the union, after California and Texas. Central Florida is one of the largest consumer markets in the Southeast. Polk County has easy access to consumers in the Tampa Bay and Metro Orlando markets, with four million and two million residents, respectively. There are **7 million people within 70 miles of Polk County**.

Polk County is also located in close proximity to the **Port of Tampa**, a major international port. This gives distribution centers in the area access to a low cost means of shipping products and materials from other domestic and foreign markets. This area is also served by three major high-speed limited access facilities, including I-4, I-75 and the Polk Parkway. The area also has access to several long haul rail lines maintained by **CSX Transportation**. Together, these transportation facilities provide access to the rest of the state, region, and world.

Another significant logistics advantage is that Polk County businesses operate between two of the best international airports in the world – **Tampa and Orlando International Airports**. Combined, these airports serve **55 million passengers annually with 1,300 daily flights to all major U.S. markets and 25 international metropolitan areas**. There are also four general aviation airports in the community with runways ranging from 3,999 feet to 8,500 feet.

Polk County is also home to **Lakeland Linder Regional Airport (KLAL)**. It is the newest Commercial Service Airport located in Central Florida on the I-4 corridor just 45 minutes from Disney World and 35 minutes from downtown Tampa. The Airport is centrally located in the state and has excellent access to all parts of Florida. The airport has a newly renovated 30,000-square foot terminal building that includes commercial service support facilities and offices, rental car facilities, restaurant, airport administration offices and parking facilities to serve the terminal building. KLAL is poised for growth and is in the planning stages to add a US Customs Facility to handle Boeing 767s.

One project with major implications to the distribution industry in Polk County is the **CSX Winter Haven Intermodal Terminal**. The first phase of this project will consist of a 318 acre terminal capable of unloading automobiles and containers directly from train to truck. It will be the first of its kind in the Southeastern United States. At build-out, the ILC is proposed to become a 1,250 acre industrial park. It will improve access to rail facilities for nearby distribution centers and is expected to have a major impact on the industries in Central Florida and beyond.

