



Lakeland, FL



The 80 acres that would become Lakeland, Florida, were purchased in 1882 by Abraham Munn. Two years later, Munn established the Lakeland Improvement Company, platted the property, and began selling lots. He enticed the South Florida Railroad to locate its depot on Lakeland Improvement Company land, which helped insure the success of his venture and the survival of Lakeland. The city was named for the abundance of lakes in the area and currently contains 38 named lakes.

Lakeland has several museums, including the Polk Museum of Art, Explorations V Children's Museum, and the Florida Air Museum. Platform Art showcases emerging talent in the visual arts, short film, fashion performance, music, and performance art.

The Lakeland Center hosts the Imperial Symphony Orchestra, and the Lake Mirror Center Theatre Complex is the home to The Lakeland Community Theatre. Lakeland's historic Polk Theatre offers an annual performing arts series, screenings of various independent films, and many special events throughout the year. Florida Dance Theatre performs at Florida Southern University's Branscomb Auditorium.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Apartments and condominiums overlooking Lake Mirror or Munn Park are the primary residential offerings in downtown Lakeland.

Lakeland has several historic districts, most of which date between 1918 and 1927, an era known as the Boom Period of Lakeland growth. The Lake Morton District area features historic Victorian homes, brick homes, older bungalows, cottages, and Mediterranean-style homes that are situated along tree-lined brick streets. Dixieland was the first subdivision in Lakeland to be developed south of the downtown area and is a mixed residential and commercial neighborhood. Most of the homes are of the bungalow style of architecture built during the 1920s or the later 1940s "boom" periods.

Located on the north shore of Lake Hollingsworth is the Florida Southern College Historic District, a designated National Historic Landmark that contains the largest single-site collection of Frank Lloyd Wright architecture in the world. Surrounding Lake Hollingsworth are homes that date from the early 1920s and others that date from the 1960s and 1970s. Single-family homes in ranch and various contemporary and traditional two-story styles are located along curvilinear tree-lined streets. South of Lake Hollingsworth, the neighborhoods surrounding Cleveland Heights Boulevard and the Cleveland Heights Country Club feature a mix of single-family houses, primarily in ranch styles built in the 1960s and 1970s.

Newer neighborhoods include Sandpiper Golf & Country Club, which is a 55+ gated golf community that has single-family homes and villas built in the late 1980s through the late 1990s. Hampton Hills offers new single family homes and townhomes in contemporary architectural styles. Oakbridge is a new master planned community with 18 different subdivisions that include single-family homes, condominiums, townhouses, golf course residences, and custom built homes.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Lakeland has 60 parks with amenities that include fishing and boating, playgrounds, a skate park, outdoor pools, the Beerman Family Tennis Complex, and the public Cleveland Heights Golf Course.

Located in the heart of downtown Lakeland, Munn Park was named for the city's founder and is home to numerous popular events, including Brewz Crewz Craft Beer Festival, Spring Obsession, the Thursday Squared food truck rallies, and First Friday events. The park's landscape includes green space, shade trees, flowers, a fountain, and a monument that honors those who died in the Civil War.

The Lake Mirror Complex is a multifaceted entertainment complex located on Lake Mirror also in the downtown area. Hollis Garden is a formal garden that features a neoclassical architectural environment complete with patterned flower beds, public art, and ornamental fountains. Barnett Family

Park features a large playground, a water play area, and a large picnic pavilion. The complex also contains the Lake Mirror Auditorium and Lake Mirror Theatre, Magnolia Building, Amphitheater, and Peggy Brown Building.

The much larger Lake Parker and its park offers fishing, boating, basketball, tennis, soccer, roller hockey, playground, shuffleboard, jogging and walking trails, and lawn bowling. Lake Parker Park has over 100 acres of native Florida vegetation and is perfect for bird watching.

Lake Hollingsworth has a very popular walking/biking path. Not far from Lake Hollingsworth, the Common Ground Inclusive Playground offers play opportunities for children of all ability levels.

Commonly called Swan Lake because of the large number of black and white swans inhabiting it, Lake Morton is home to many other types of birds, including seagulls, pelicans, ducks, and geese. It also is the site of the annual Mayfaire by-the-Lake, an outdoors Art Festival held every Mother's Day weekend.

Colt Creek State Park's numerous recreational opportunities include hiking, horseback riding, biking, picnicking, and nature study. The park has three freshwater man-made lakes for fishing and boating.

Joker Marchant Stadium hosts the Detroit Tigers Spring Training and Florida State League Lakeland Flying Tigers baseball games.

EDUCATION

Polk County Public Schools educate more than 94,000 students from Lakeland and 16 other municipalities and 24 unincorporated areas in 66 elementary, 4 elementary/middle, 7 elementary/middle/high, 18 middle, 3 middle/high, 18 high, 2 technical career centers, 2 adult, 11 alternative education, and 24 charters. The district offers magnet, choice, charter schools, and the Polk County Virtual School.

Higher education is available at Florida Southern College, which offers undergraduate majors and pre-professional programs, along with graduate programs in business, nursing, and education. Southeastern University is a Christian institution with undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Opening in 2014, Florida Polytechnic University is the newest state college and will grant bachelor's and master's degrees in technology and engineering. Polk State College is a multicampus institution and offers bachelor's and associate's degrees and a wide range of certificate and workforce training options. Florida Technical College Lakeland campus also offers associate's and bachelor's degrees in several fields. Whitefield College & Seminary is a conservative confessional classical Reformed seminary that provides associate and bachelor degree programs in selected fields. Career-focused education in selected fields is available at Keiser University's Lakeland campus.

HEALTH CARE

Lakeland Regional Medical Center is an 851-bed medical center.

CITY STATS

2012

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| City Population | 99,601 |
| Metropolitan Statistical Area Population | 616,158 |
| Per Capita Personal Income, Lakeland-Winter Haven, FL, MSA | \$35,746 |