Southwest Florida Regional Economic Indicators

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Introduction: Regional and National Background

The latest economic indicators continued to show improvements for the Southwest Florida economy. Improvements include a 15 percent increase in **seasonally-adjusted taxable sales** in March 2022 compared to March 2021, a 26 percent improvement in **seasonally-adjusted tourist tax revenues** in March 2022 over March 2021, and an 18 percent increase in **airport passenger activity** between April 2021 and April 2022.

The **seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate** for the region was 1.9 percent in April 2022, down 0.9 percentage points from the prior month, and 2.0 percentage points below the April 2021 figure. The region had an increase in the number of employed and a decrease in the number of unemployed persons from March to April 2022 (up 11,393 and down 5,677, respectively).

Indicators relating to the real estate industry continued to reflect the surge in demand for single-family homes:

- Coastal county **single-family building permits** increased by 11 percent between April 2021 and April 2022;
- **Realtor® Active listings** for the coastal counties had an increase of 22 percent from March 2022 to April 2022, and were 5 percent above the April 2021 measure.
- **Single-family home sales** for the coastal counties decreased by 18 percent from April 2021 to April 2022, while **median prices** continued to rise, increasing between 29 to 37 percent over the same period.

The RERI staff extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to the dedicated individuals and organizations which make this report possible. They include FGCU student workers affiliated with the RERI, the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, the individual economic development organizations in Charlotte, Collier, and Lee counties, the convention and visitors' bureaus in Charlotte, Collier and Lee counties, the regional airport authorities, the Realtors[®] of Collier, Lee, and Charlotte counties, the University of Florida Survey Research Center, and the county and city permit offices.

Reader comments or suggestions to enhance the usefulness of this report are always welcome. Please email them to RERI Economic Analyst John Shannon at <u>reri@fgcu.edu</u>.

Airport Passenger Activity

Airport passenger activity is the sum of arrivals and departures for Southwest Florida International (RSW), Sarasota Bradenton International (SRQ), and Punta Gorda (PGD) airports. Peak seasonal activity usually occurs in February, March, and April, with significantly lower activity in the summer months. Charts 1, 2, and 3 illustrate the historic seasonality as well as the changes from year to year.

Total passenger traffic for the three airports amounted to 1,805,742 in April 2022, down 18 percent from March 2022 and up 18 percent from April 2021. All three airports saw a decrease in activity from the previous month.

Passenger traffic at RSW was 1,221,628 in April 2022, down 19 percent from March 2022 and 10 percent greater than April 2021 (see Chart 1). PGD's passenger activity amounted to 198,101 in April 2022, a decrease of 21 percent from March 2022 and 58 percent above April 2021 (see Chart 2). SRQ served 386,013 passengers in April 2022, a 13 percent decrease from March 2022 and 31 percent above April 2021.

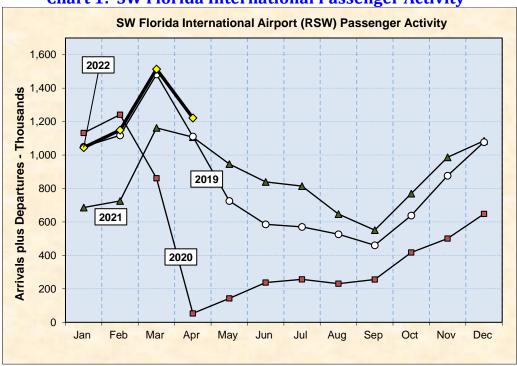
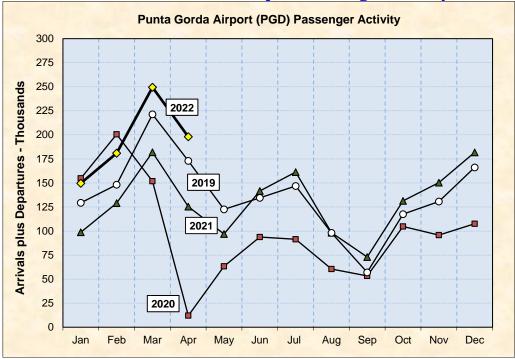


Chart 1: SW Florida International Passenger Activity

Source: Local Airport Authorities





Source: Local Airport Authorities

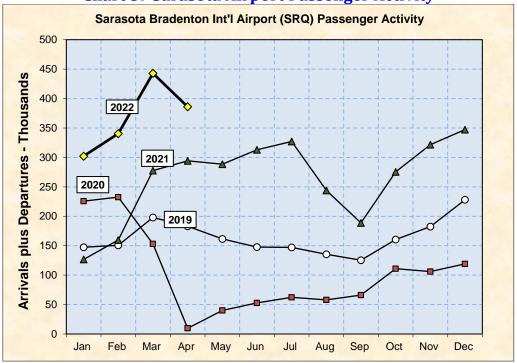


Chart 3: Sarasota Airport Passenger Activity

Source: Local Airport Authorities

Tourist Tax Revenues

Charts 4 and 5 show seasonally-adjusted tourist tax revenues by month of occupancy. Seasonallyadjusted tourist tax revenues for all the coastal counties slipped to \$8.3 million in March 2022, 15 percent below the prior month, but 26 percent above the March 2021 figure.

Lee County's seasonally-adjusted tourist tax revenues totaled \$4.3 million in March 2022, a 25 percent increase from March 2021, but a 21 percent decrease from February 2022. Collier County's tourist tax revenues amounted to \$3.6 million in March 2022, up 25 percent compared to March 2021, and down by 4 percent compared to February 2022. Seasonally-adjusted tourist tax revenues in Charlotte County fell to \$487.8 thousand in March 2022, up 38 percent from the March 2021 measure, but 23 percent below the prior month's measure.

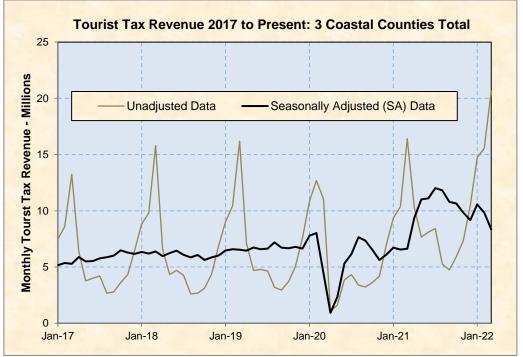


Chart 4: Tourist Tax Revenues for the Coastal Counties

Source: Local County Tourism, Tax, and Economic Development Reports

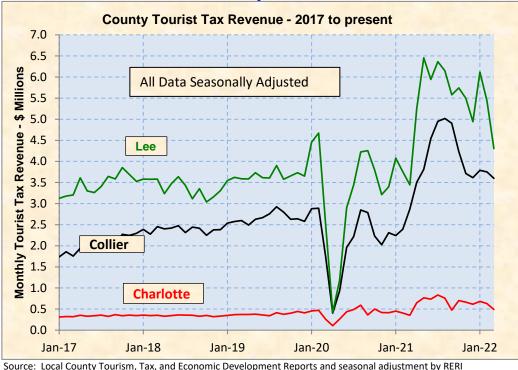


Chart 5: Coastal County Tourist Tax Revenues

Taxable Sales

Taxable sales data provided by the Florida Department of Revenue (DOR) tracks consumer spending based on the latest month of merchant collections. The RERI adjusts the DOR data to the month of transaction by lagging the data one month. Therefore, taxable sales transaction data is now available through March 2022.

Seasonally-adjusted taxable sales for Southwest Florida totaled \$3.285 billion in March 2022, an increase of 15 percent from March 2021, and a 1 percent decrease from the February 2022 measure (see Chart 6).

Results for the coastal and inland counties are shown in Charts 7 and 8, respectively. Lee County's seasonally-adjusted taxable sales were \$1.790 billion in March 2022, an increase of 16 percent over March 2021 and 1 percent above the previous month. Collier County taxable sales were \$1.097 billion in March 2022, up 15 percent from March 2021, but 3 percent below the February 2022 total. Taxable sales in Charlotte County totaled \$346.5 million in March 2022, compared to \$302.2 million in March 2021 and \$348.4 million in February 2022.

Taxable sales in Hendry County totaled \$43.4 million in March 2022, up 12 percent from March 2021, and up by 4 percent from the February 2022 total. Glades County experienced the highest year-to-year percentage increase in taxable sales out of the five counties at \$7.4 million in March

2022, up 35 percent from March 2021, but 2 percent below the February 2022 total. All cited data are seasonally adjusted.

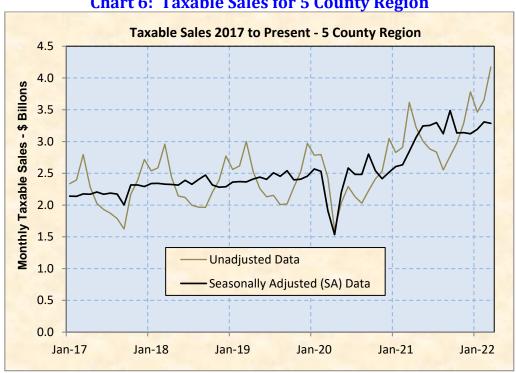


Chart 6: Taxable Sales for 5 County Region

Source: Florida Department of Revenue, Office of Tax Research

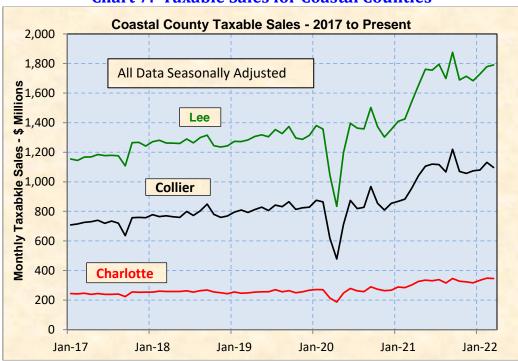


Chart 7: Taxable Sales for Coastal Counties

Source: Florida Department of Revenue, Office of Tax Research

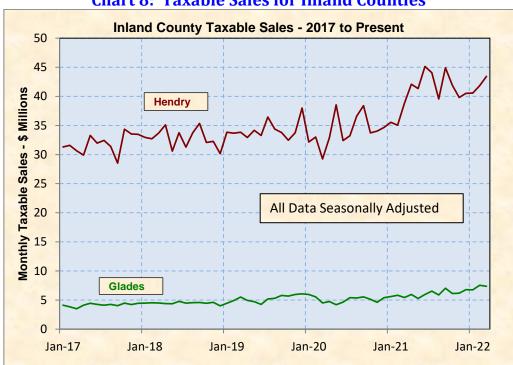


Chart 8: Taxable Sales for Inland Counties

Source: Florida Department of Revenue, Office of Tax Research

Workforce – Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment

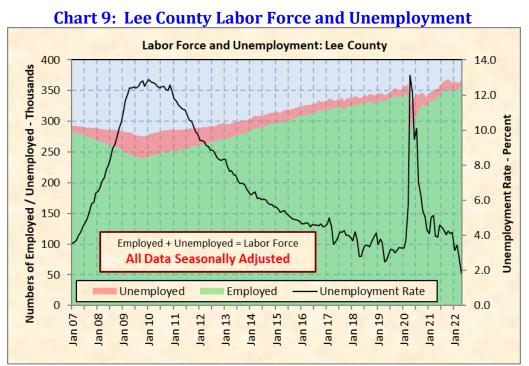
Charts 9-13 show total persons employed and unemployed, and the resulting unemployment rates seasonally adjusted by the RERI, for each county from January 2007 through April 2022. Between March and April 2022, the number of employed persons in Southwest Florida increased by 11,393 while the number of unemployed persons decreased by 5,677. The region's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate decreased by 0.9 percentage points from 2.8 percent in March 2022 to 1.9 percent in April 2022. Seasonally-adjusted employed workers for the region were up by over 26,000 compared to April 2021, while the number of unemployed was down by over 12,000. The total labor force increased by 5,716 from April 2021 to April 2022, with growth mainly concentrated in the coastal counties.

Lee County's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was 1.9 percent in April 2022, down 0.9 percentage points from March 2022, and down 2.1 percentage points from April 2021 (Chart 9). The unemployment rate in Collier County was 1.8 percent in April 2022, down 0.8 percentage points from the prior month, and down 1.6 percentage points compared to April 2021 (Chart 10). Charlotte County's unemployment rate was 2.1 percent in April 2022, down 1.0 percentage point from the prior month, and down 2.0 percentage points compared to April 2021 (Chart 11).

Hendry's unemployment rate was 4.0 percent in April 2022, down from the previous month by 0.1 percentage points, and down 2.7 percentage points from the April 2021 measure (Chart 12).

Glades County had an unemployment rate of 2.4 percent in April 2022, down from the previous month by 0.3 percentage points and 1.9 percentage points below April 2021 (Chart 13).

The state of Florida's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 3.0 percent in April 2022, down 0.2 points from the March 2022 rate, and down 2.1 percentage points from April 2021. The United States unemployment rate was 3.6 percent in April 2022, unchanged from March 2022, and down 2.4 percentage points from April 2021. Both Florida and United States employment figures are seasonally adjusted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and seasonal adjustment by RERI

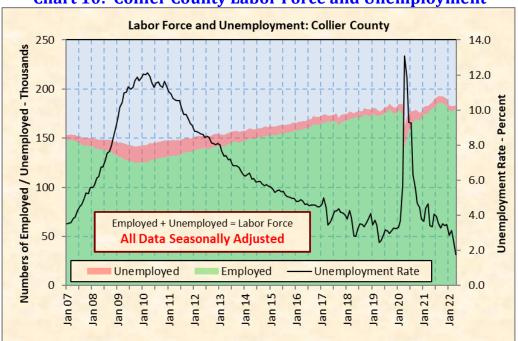


Chart 10: Collier County Labor Force and Unemployment

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and seasonal adjustment by RERI

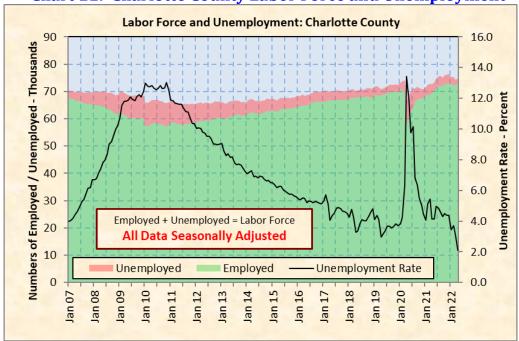


Chart 11: Charlotte County Labor Force and Unemployment

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and seasonal adjustment by RERI

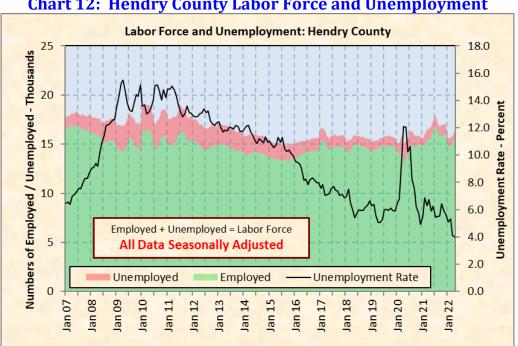


Chart 12: Hendry County Labor Force and Unemployment

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and seasonal adjustment by RERI

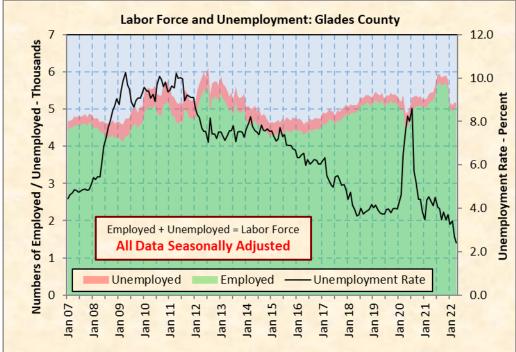


Chart 13: Glades County Labor Force and Unemployment

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and seasonal adjustment by RERI

Single-Family Building Permits

The Southwest Florida coastal counties issued 1,628 single-family building permits in April 2022, an increase of 164 permits (11 percent) over April 2021 and up 117 permits (8 percent) from March 2022. Lee County issued 919 permits in April 2022, an increase over both the 845 permits issued in April 2021 and the 837 permits issued in March 2022 (see Chart 14). In Collier County, 255 permits were issued in April 2022, a decrease of 157 permits (38 percent) from April 2021, and down 78 permits (23 percent) from March 2022 (see Chart 15). Charlotte County recorded 454 permits issued in April 2022, an increase from the 207 permits issued in April 2021, and up from the 341 permits issued in March 2022 (see Chart 16). Charlotte County was the only coastal county to show a positive 13-month trend in April.

Hendry County issued 67 single-family building permits in April 2022, down from the 70 permits issued in April 2021. In the month of April 2022, the four-county total went up by 6 percent compared to March 2022.

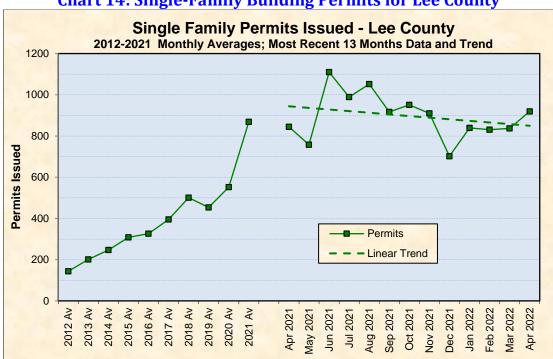


Chart 14: Single-Family Building Permits for Lee County

Source: Local Building and Zoning Departments, including Fort Myers, Cape Coral, and Unincorporated Lee County, Bonita Springs, Estero, and Fort Myers Beach permits

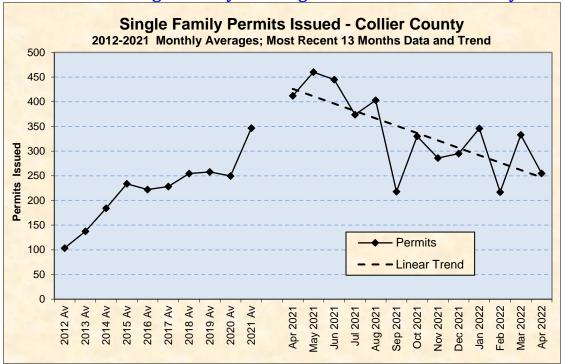


Chart 15: Single-Family Building Permits for Collier County

Source: Collier County Growth Management Department, includes unincorporated Collier County permits only

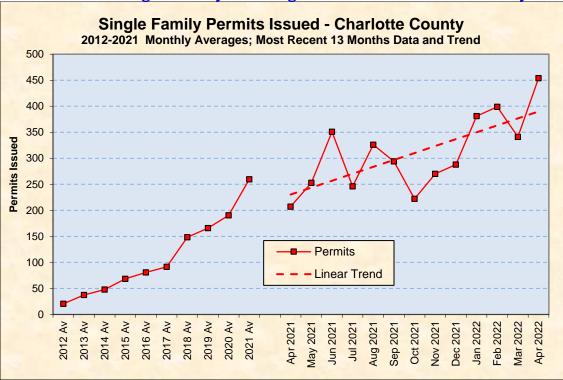


Chart 16: Single-Family Building Permits for Charlotte County

Source: Charlotte County Economic Development Organization, includes unincorporated Charlotte County permits only

Existing Single-Family Home Sales and Median Prices

Charts 17-19 show existing single-family home sales by Realtors® for Lee, Collier, and Charlotte Counties. Each solid line represents median prices plotted against the scale on the right side, and the bars show the number of homes sold with the scale on the left side. The broken lines show the linear trends in numbers of homes sold and median prices.

The coastal counties had a total of 2,817 single-family home sales in April 2022, a decrease of 18 percent from April 2021 and a 2 percent decrease from March 2022. All three counties continued to see increases in median prices over the past year, with increases ranging between 29 and 37 percent.

Single-family home sales in Lee County totaled 1,621 units in April 2022, a decrease of 290 units (15 percent) from April 2021. The median price in Lee County increased from \$355,000 to \$470,000 over the same period (see Chart 17). Collier County single-family home sales registered 618 units in April 2022, a decrease of 279 units (31 percent) compared to April 2021. The median price in Collier County rose by \$195,625 from \$680,000 in April 2021 to \$875,625 in April 2022 (see Chart 18). Charlotte County reported 578 existing single-family home sales for April 2022, down 11 percent from the 648 units sold in April 2021. The median price in Charlotte County was \$410,000 in April 2022, up \$110,000 (37 percent) over the same month last year (Chart 19).

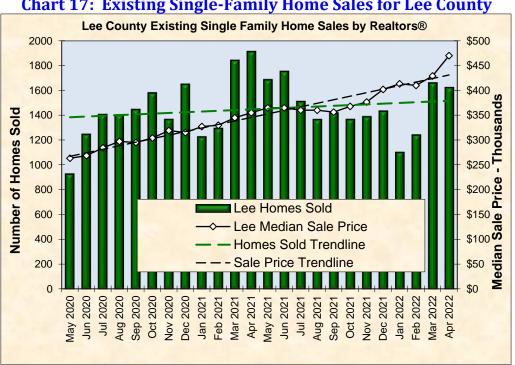


Chart 17: Existing Single-Family Home Sales for Lee County

Source: Florida Realtors® Cape Coral-Fort Myers MSA

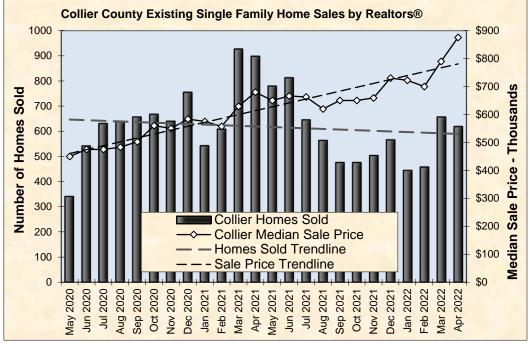


Chart 18: Existing Single-Family Home Sales for Collier County

Source: Florida Realtors® Naples-Immokalee-Marco Island, Florida MSA

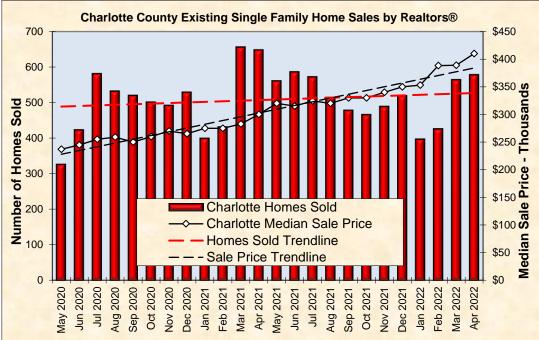


Chart 19: Existing Single-Family Home Sales for Charlotte County

Source: Florida Realtors[®] Punta Gorda, Florida MSA

Realtor® Active Listings

Active listings are provided by the Realtors[®] residential listings database and provides a look into the number of properties for sale on the market. These figures include single-family residential homes, condominiums, and townhomes, and exclude pending listings where a pending status is available.

Active listings in the coastal counties reported 4,352 residential properties listed for sale in April 2022. Listings in the area increased by 22 percent over March 2022 and was 5 percent above the April 2021 measure.

Active listings in Lee County increased to 2,007 units in April 2022, up 19 percent from March 2022, and 1 percent above the April 2021 measure (Chart 20). Collier County reported 1,671 units listed for sale in April 2022, a 27 percent increase from the previous month, and 3 percent above the same month last year (Chart 21). Charlotte County active listings increased to 674 units in April 2022, up 22 percent from the prior month and 30 percent above April 2021 (Chart 22).

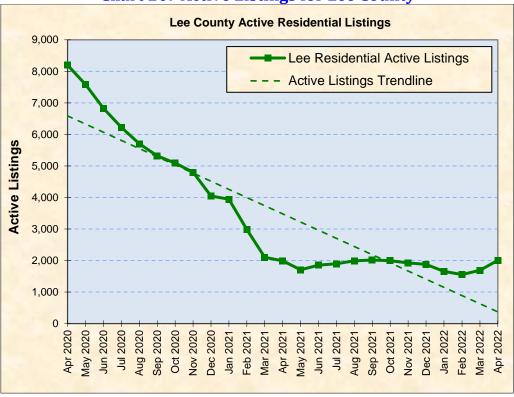


Chart 20: Active Listings for Lee County

Source: Realtor.com residential listings database

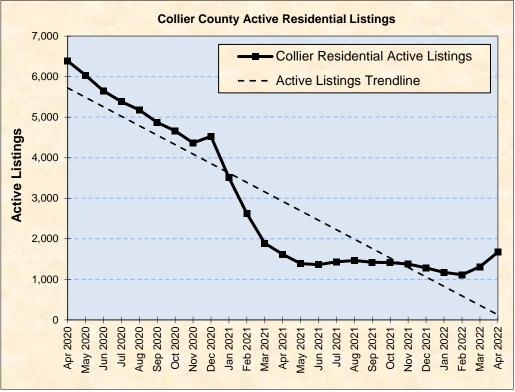


Chart 21: Active Listings for Collier County

Source: Realtor.com residential listings database

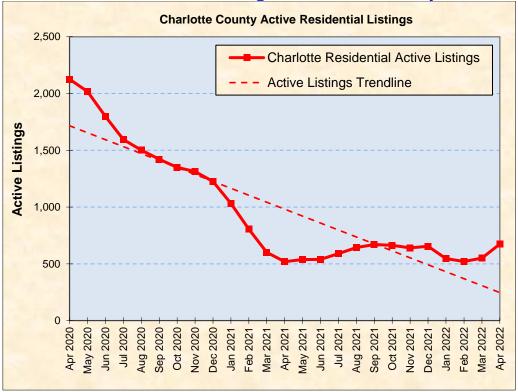


Chart 22: Active Listings for Charlotte County

Source: Realtor.com residential listings database

Consumer Sentiment Index

Charts 23 and 24 shows monthly data and linear trend lines over the last six years for both the Florida Consumer Sentiment Index ("CSI") reported by the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) and for the United States Index of Consumer Sentiment ("ICS") reported by Thomson Reuters/University of Michigan.

The U.S. Index of Consumer Sentiment fell in May 2022, dipping 6.8 points from the previous month to 58.5. "This recent drop was largely driven by continued negative views on current buying conditions for houses and durables, as well as consumers' future outlook for the economy, primarily due to concerns over inflation," noted Joanne Hsu, director of the University of Michigan Survey of Consumers. "At the same time, consumers expressed less pessimism over future prospects for their personal finances than over future business conditions. Less than one quarter of consumers expected to be worse off financially a year from now. Looking into the long term, a majority of consumers expected their financial situation to improve over the next five years; this share is essentially unchanged during 2022."

Florida's Consumer Sentiment Index dropped in May 2022, slipping 2.0 points to 61.5 from April's revised figure of 63.5. "Consumer sentiment among Floridians has not improved since the beginning of the year. In fact, consumer sentiment has been on a downward trajectory since July 2021, one month after the annual rate of inflation first indicated signs of soaring prices across the board with annual rates exceeding 5%," Hector H Sandoval, director of the Economic Analysis Program at the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research, said in the May 31, 2022 edition of <u>Florida Consumer Sentiment Index</u>. "Looking ahead, we expect consumer sentiment to remain weak in the coming months as the effects of higher interest rates are yet to be felt throughout the economy, and as global challenges including rising food and energy prices, the war in Ukraine, and COVID-induced lockdowns in China remain a concern."

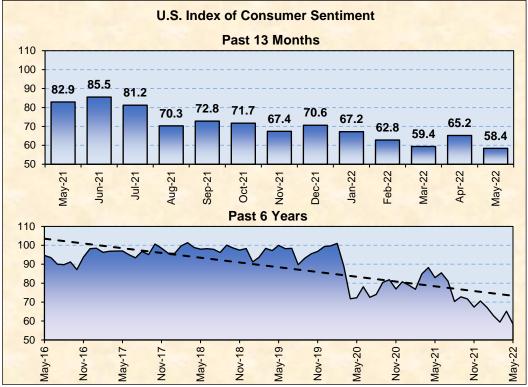


Chart 23: U.S. Index of Consumer Sentiment

Source: Thomson Reuters/University of Michigan

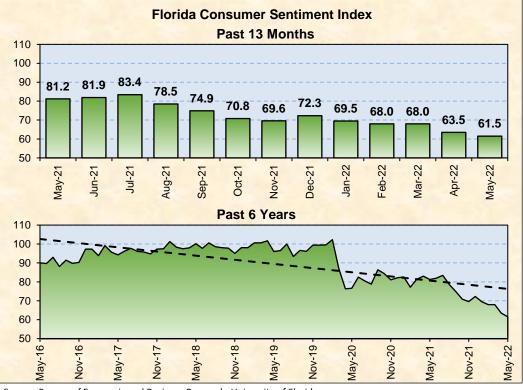
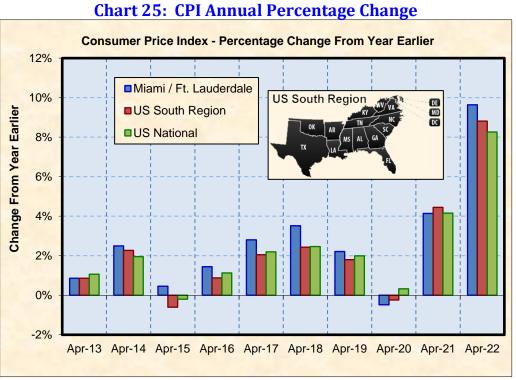


Chart 24: Florida Consumer Sentiment Index

Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida

Consumer Price Index

Chart 25 shows that year-to-year changes in consumer price indices ("CPI") through April 2022 increased compared to a year ago. The Miami/Ft. Lauderdale CPI increased by 9.6 percent from April 2021 to April 2022, while the US South Region had an 8.8 percent increase over the same period. CPI for the nation increased by 8.3 percent in April 2022 compared to April 2021.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Components of the Miami-Fort Lauderdale Consumer Price Index for the 12 months ending April 2022 are shown in Chart 26. Increases in transportation continue to outpace the rest of the components, increasing by 19.6 percent from April 2021 to April 2022. The region also saw increases in prices for both other goods and services (13.2 percent increase in April 2022 over April 2021) and housing (10.5 percent increase over the same period).

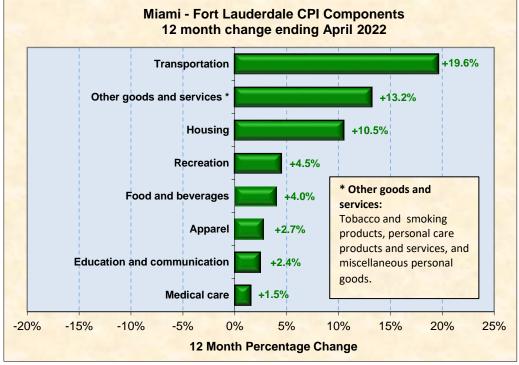


Chart 26: Miami-Fort Lauderdale CPI Component Percentage Change

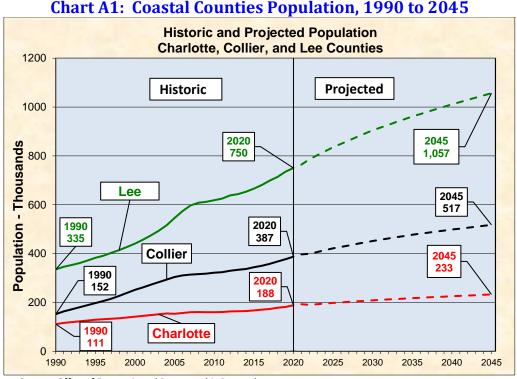
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Appendix

The data presented in this appendix are not released on a monthly basis. The first two charts, Charts A1 and A2, show historic population growth through 2020, as well as projections updated annually by the state of Florida's Office of Economic and Demographic Research, working in conjunction with the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research. The second two charts, Charts A3 and A4, depict historic measures of U.S. GDP growth rates and unemployment as well as projections by the Federal Reserve's Federal Open Market Committee and are updated quarterly. Charts A5 through A8 show regional GDP for the coastal counties (published annually), while Chart A9 depicts the FGCU Industry Diversification Index for Southwest Florida and the state, which is updated quarterly.

Regional Population Last Updated: September 2021

From 1990 to 2020, regional population grew at a compound average rate of 2.6 percent per year. Over the 30 year period, the compound average annual rates of growth were 2.7 percent in Lee County, 3.2 percent in Collier County, 1.8 percent in Charlotte County, 2.0 percent in Glades County, and 1.6 percent in Hendry County. The right-hand sections of Charts A1 and A2 show projected population increases from 2020 to 2045, at substantially lower rates than those experienced between 1990 and 2020. Projected growth for the five-county region averages 1.2 percent per year, resulting in a population increase of 35.5 percent from 2020 to 2045. This would add over 489,000 residents to the region, and bring the total to 1,869,848. Lee County's population is projected to grow an average of 1.4 percent per year, Collier County at 1.2 percent, and Charlotte County at 0.9 percent. Projected growth rates for the inland counties are substantially lower; the population in both Hendry and Glades County are projected to grow at an average of 0.6 percent per year between 2020 and 2045.



Source: Office of Economic and Demographic Research

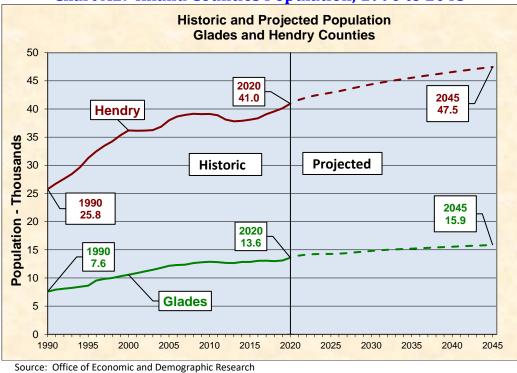


Chart A2: Inland Counties Population, 1990 to 2045

National GDP and Unemployment Last Updated: April 2022

Charts A3 and A4 depict both historical trends and the Federal Open Market Committee's projections for national Gross Domestic Product ("GDP") and Unemployment. The FOMC's projections are released quarterly and reflect the assessments of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors and of Federal Reserve District Bank presidents, with the March 2022 figures shown in the following charts. The dotted lines depict the highest and lowest projections—or the range of all projections—while the darker blue area within the dotted lines depict the central tendency forecast within those projections.

Chart A3 illustrates both historical GDP and GDP projections for the United States. The impact Covid-19 had on GDP can be seen in the chart, dropping to -3.4 percent in 2020 before rising to 5.7 percent in 2021. Both the ranges and central tendencies are projected to migrate toward the 2 percent level in the long-run ("LR"). Real GDP growth rates are based on the change from the fourth quarter of one year to the fourth quarter of the next year.

The overall high and low projections (shown as ranges below and denoted by the dotted lines) show that all members of the FOMC expecting GDP to decline in 2022, with expectations ranging between 2.1 and 3.3 percent. This decline in expectations for GDP is largely influenced by the elevated 2021 GDP level. Furthermore, the board members believe that GDP growth will range

from 2.0 to 2.9 percent in 2023 and between 2.0 to 2.9 percent in 2024. In the long-run, GDP growth is expected to range somewhere between 1.6 percent and 2.2 percent.

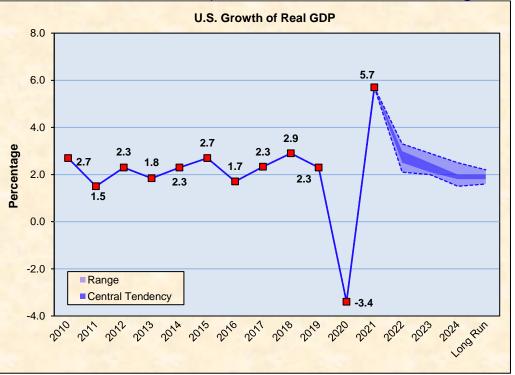


Chart A3: Historic and Projected GDP Growth, 2010 to Long Run

Source: Historical data obtained from Bureau of Economic Analysis. Projected data obtained from Federal Reserve Open Market Committee Meeting Statement, March 16, 2022.

Chart A4 depicts unemployment trends since 2010. The unemployment rate in 2021 was 5.4 percent, down 2.7 percentage points from 2020. FOMC members believe unemployment will continue to improve in 2022, with predictions ranging from 3.1 percent to 4.0 percent. These projections were consistent the following two years, with unemployment rate expectations ranging between 3.1 and 4.0 percent in 2023 and 2024. In the long run, the unemployment rate is expected to range between 3.5 percent and 4.3 percent. Compared to these national numbers, unemployment rates in Florida and Southwest Florida tend to be more volatile, falling lower when national unemployment is falling and rising higher when national unemployment is rising.

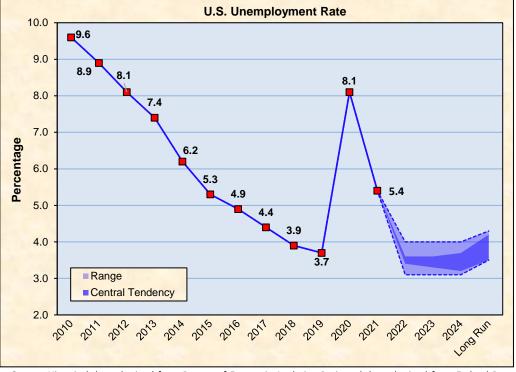


Chart A4: Historic and Projected Unemployment, 2009 to Long Run

Source: Historical data obtained from Bureau of Economic Analysis. Projected data obtained from Federal Reserve Open Market Committee Meeting Statement, December 15, 2021.

The next quarterly release of projections for GDP and Unemployment will be released following the FOMC meeting scheduled in June 2022. These projections will be updated in the July 2022 edition of *Regional Economic Indicators*.

Regional GDP Last Updated: February 2022

Charts A5 shows Chained GDP growth by industry for the Southwest Florida coastal counties. The Covid-19 pandemic hit a number of industries in the region, with declines in transportation and warehousing (37.2 percent decrease from 2019 to 2020), arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (19.7 percent decrease), other services (10.6 percent decrease), professional and business services (3.6 percent decrease) and retail trade (2.7 percent decrease). Industries such as agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (26.4 percent increase), utilities (15.1 percent increase) and mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (8.6 percent increase) saw improvements over the year.

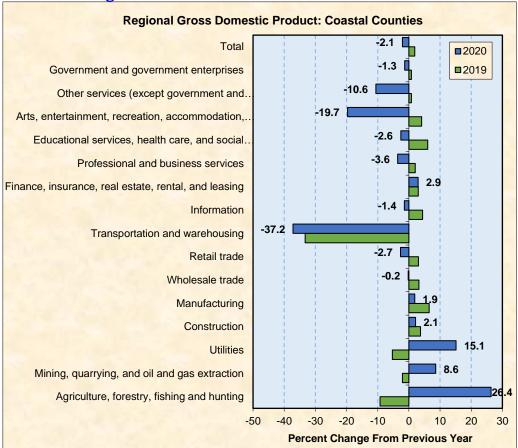


Chart A5: Regional Gross Domestic Product for Coastal Counties

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Charts A6 shows Chained GDP by industry for Lee County. Several industries were impacted by Covid-19 in 2020, with the largest GDP declines being experienced by transportation and warehousing (47.5 percent decrease), arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (18.2 percent decrease), other services (11.3 percent decrease), educational services, health care and social assistance (5.3 percent decrease) and professional and business services (4.2 percent decrease). The industries that saw the largest growth in 2020 include agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (38.1 percent increase), utilities (14.5 percent increase), mining quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (8.7 percent increase), construction (3.8 percent increase), and finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing (2.7 percent increase).

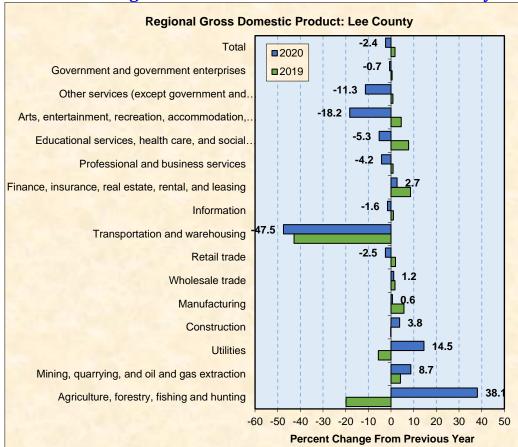


Chart A6: Regional Gross Domestic Product for Lee County

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Charts A7 shows Chained GDP by industry for Collier County. From 2019 to 2020, the industries with the largest declines in GDP include arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (21.8 percent decrease), mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (17.3 percent decrease), other services (10.7 percent decrease), government and government enterprises (4.0 percent decrease) and professional and business services (3.3 percent decrease). Over the same period, industries that grew the most include agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (26.3 percent increase), utilities (5.5 percent increase), manufacturing (3.5 percent increase), finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing (2.8 percent increase), and educational services, health care and social assistance (2.6 percent increase).

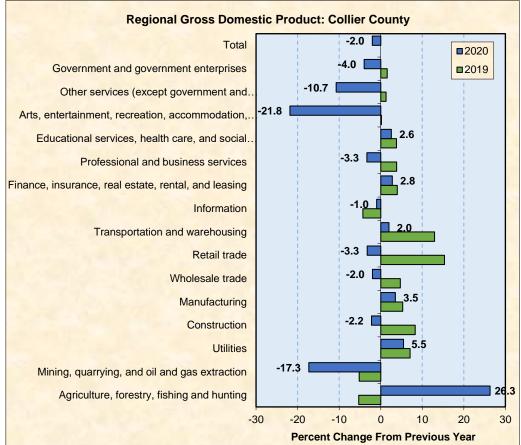


Chart A7: Regional Gross Domestic Product for Collier County

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Charts A8 shows Chained GDP by industry for Charlotte County. From 2019 to 2020, industries that saw the largest impact in GDP growth include transportation and warehousing (27.5 percent decrease), arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services (18.1 percent decrease), other services (6.1 percent decrease), educational services, health care and social assistance (5.5 percent decrease) and information (2.2 percent decrease). Over the same period, the industries with the largest increases in GDP include utilities (56.3 percent increase), mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction (30.0 percent increase), agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting (11.8 percent increase), construction (8.8 percent increase), and finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing (4.7 percent increase).

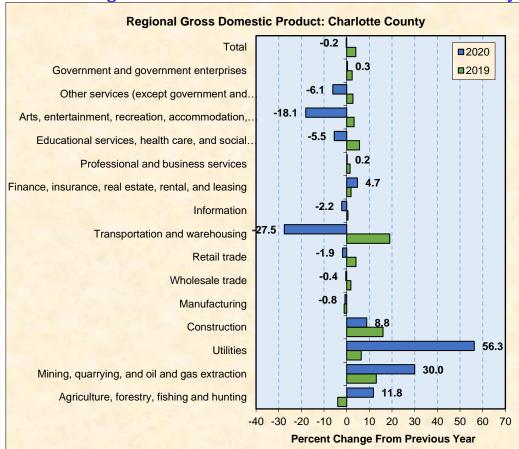


Chart A8: Regional Gross Domestic Product for Charlotte County

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Industry Diversification Index Last Updated: April 2022

The FGCU *Industry Diversification Index (IDI)* measures the degree to which a region's workforce is concentrated in few industries or dispersed into many. The *IDI* is computed quarterly by the Regional Economic Research Institute's Industry Diversification Project, which tracks industry

diversification by Metropolitan Statistical Area, workforce region, and state. (For more details, please go to fgcu.edu/cob/reri/idp).

The *IDI* can be between 0 and 10, with a higher index denoting a more industrially diverse workforce and a lower one denoting a less industrially diverse workforce. Industry diversification is an important factor explaining our state and region's tendency to overheat during expansions in the business cycle and overcorrect during contractions in the business cycle.

Chart A9 shows the industry diversification index for the Southwest Florida workforce region and the state of Florida. During the third quarter of 2021, the *IDI* for Southwest Florida measured at 5.28 ranking it as the 9th most industrially diverse workforce region in the state of Florida (out of 24). Meanwhile, the state of Florida had an *IDI* of 5.22, ranking Florida as the 28th highest state in the nation in industry diversification, although below the national average of 5.36.



Source: FGCU Industry Diversification Project, Calculated by the RERI, using data from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages