

# Florida's Cities



**Florida's cities, towns and villages are the centers of economic, social and cultural energy that enhance the quality of life enjoyed by Floridians.**

## > WHAT IS A CITY IN FLORIDA?

Municipalities are corporations. They were created because of the self-determination of their residents. Incorporation starts as a grassroots effort, and the process is not easy nor quick. As a municipal corporation, each city has a council or commission (board of directors) elected by the citizens (stockholders). All cities have a charter detailing their elections, administrative structure and scope of services.

## > WHY CITIES ARE CREATED

Most often, a city is created because its founders wanted an unavailable service or services at increased levels as well as local control of how they were being governed.

Cities and services go hand in hand. City services include water, wastewater, stormwater utilities, police, fire prevention and EMS, road building and maintenance, parks and recreation, land-use codes, planning and code enforcement, animal control, solid waste and recycling, neighborhood services, libraries and cemeteries.

Cities are citizen-driven representative democracies. The services a city provides are determined by the desires and needs of citizens through community engagement and input.

## > HOME RULE

More than 50 years ago, Floridians voted to include municipal Home Rule powers in the state Constitution.

Florida has 411 cities. They range in population from Marineland (8) to Jacksonville (907,093); in location from Key West to Fernandina Beach to Pensacola; and makeup, as they can be urban like Miami and rural like Caryville. One size does not fit all when it comes to cities in the Sunshine State.

Home Rule gives each city the flexibility to craft its laws specifically to its own unique needs. This is the embodiment of Local Voices Making Local Choices. This right means any city can adopt its laws so long as the law doesn't conflict with state or federal law. >

**LOCAL  
VOICES  
MAKING  
LOCAL  
CHOICES**

## > MUNICIPAL REVENUES

Even with constitutional Home Rule power, Florida's Constitution limits taxation authority to the Legislature, and several revenue sources for both counties and cities are capped in amount and restricted for use.

Florida's cities receive an average of half of their revenues from user fees and charges for service. The largest sources of tax revenue come from the property tax; state-shared revenue, which includes a portion of the state sales tax and gas tax; and the public service tax, also called utilities tax. Cities also rely upon intergovernmental revenue, grants, license fees and permit fees.

## > FOCUSED ON EXCELLENCE

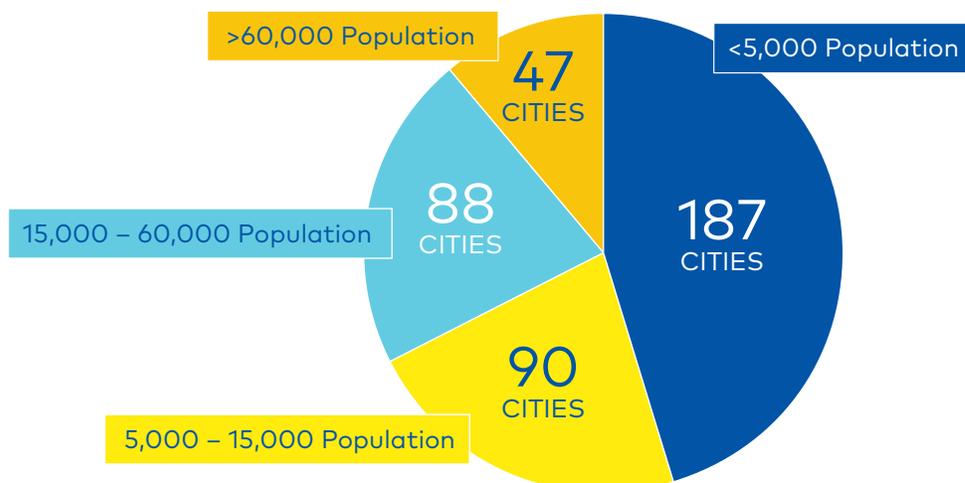
Cities are the only optional level of local government in Florida. Cities strive to provide their services both efficiently and effectively. Councils and commissions know their success often rests upon that bottom line and achieving their key goals with innovation to create a city that residents are proud to call their hometown.

## > QUICK FACTS

Number of municipalities	<b>412</b>
Number of elected municipal officials	<b>2,251</b>
Largest city	<b>Jacksonville</b> (Population 907,093)
Smallest city	<b>Marineland</b> (Population 8)
Median municipal population	<b>5,950</b>
Percentage of Floridians living in a city, town or village	<b>50.7%</b>

Source: Populations from 2018 BEBR

## > A BREAKDOWN OF FLORIDA CITIES BY POPULATION



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