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SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

# CITY FOCUS

Southwest Florida,

THE NEXT PARK CITY, UTAH

Better never settles

# SOUTHWEST FLORIDA, THE NEXT PARK CITY UTAH?

*When Lifestyle Becomes the Economy*

## Constraint Creates Demand

At the core of both Park City and Southwest Florida's growth stories is a shared constraint that is often misunderstood as a limitation, but in reality acts as a defining advantage.

Park City is bounded by mountains and protected forest preserves. Southwest Florida is shaped by the Gulf, wetlands, and the Everglades. In both cases, expansion is naturally restricted. But those same barriers are exactly what create the appeal.

In Park City, the landscape delivers scenic elevation, wildlife, and a lifestyle built around outdoor recreation, skiing, and a curated mix of upscale shopping and boutique experiences. In Southwest Florida, the draw is different but equally powerful. Beaches, year-round warm weather, and access to natural ecosystems create a lifestyle centered on water, wellness, and outdoor living, complemented by a growing presence of high-end retail and dining.

The result in both markets is the same. These are not places people move to because of employment first. They move for the lifestyle, and increasingly, they are choosing to stay.

That shift from seasonal or second-home markets to full-time residency is what transforms a destination into an economic driver. It creates a durable live, work, play environment where demand is not just sustained, but compounded over time.

## Lifestyle First. Jobs Follow.

At first glance, Park City and Fort Myers could not look more different. One built on ski slopes and elevation, the other on sunshine and shoreline. But beneath that contrast is the same economic engine. People do not move there for jobs. They move there for lifestyle, and the jobs follow.

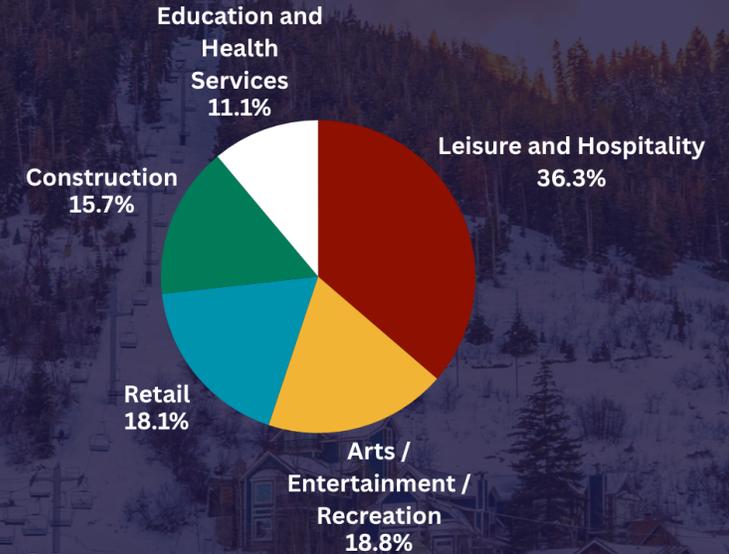
Park City proved this model a decade ahead of where Fort Myers sits today. What started as a resort-driven second-home market evolved into a year-round ecosystem of wealth migration, remote work, and service expansion. High-income households arrived first. Then came the supporting layers. Boutique office users, hospitality concepts, healthcare, and eventually

institutional capital chasing limited land. The constraint was never demanded. It was geography. Supply was capped, and pricing power followed.

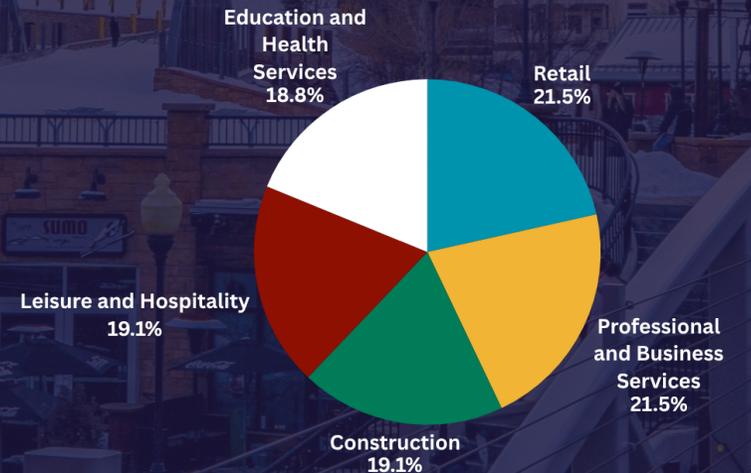
Fort Myers is running a similar playbook, but with a different constraint set. Instead of elevation, it is water, zoning friction, and infrastructure lag. Instead of ski season, it is year-round livability. And instead of a resort town scaling up, it is a mid-sized market being re-rated in real time. The key parallel is that in both markets, lifestyle is not a byproduct of growth. It is the catalyst.

Where the two markets begin to diverge is not in demand, but in what follows it.

## Park City Top 5 Performing Jobs



## Fort Myers Top 5 Performing Jobs



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## Where the Model Changes

Park City's growth was concentrated.

High-income households drove demand for boutique retail, financial services, legal, and hospitality. The workforce followed, but within a narrow band.

Southwest Florida is expanding differently.

The demand is broader. Healthcare, logistics, education, construction, and emerging technology sectors are all growing alongside residential demand. Infrastructure, medical investment, and mixed-use development are building a more complete ecosystem.

This is not just lifestyle demand. It is layered economic growth.



**A niche economy hinders workforce growth and slows demand across sectors.**

**A diversified economy accelerates workforce growth and expands demand across sectors.**



## A Different Growth Curve

Rather than a steady climb driven by a single demographic as seen in Park City, Fort Myers and the surrounding region are building toward a more dynamic model. One where lifestyle migration fuels not just pricing power, but long-term economic resilience. Park City showed what happens when that trend matures. Southwest Florida is showing what it looks like in motion.

## The Opportunity

For commercial real estate owners, the takeaway is simple but often missed: you don't wait for job growth to validate value - you track migration patterns and capital flows tied to lifestyle decisions. That's where pricing power starts. Park City showed what happens when that trend matures. Southwest Florida is showing what it looks like mid-cycle.

And for those paying attention, the opportunity sits right in that gap.

## Lee County Projected Job Growth 2025-2033

Industry	2025 Jobs	2033 Jobs *Projected	Percent Growth
Education and Health Services	36,961	42,966	16.2%
Professional and Business Services	46,331	52,951	14.3%
Construction	43,262	48,919	13.1%
Leisure and Hospitality	42,979	46,552	8.3%
Government	47,302	50,968	7.8%
Manufacturing	8,530	9,192	7.8%

\*Source 2025 US Bureau of labor Statistics

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