

Business



Choosing to locate your business in Northwest Orange County and the Apopka area could be one of the smartest business decisions you make. From its agricultural roots, the community is rapidly emerging as a widely diverse business center. Newer entries into our economy include laser technology and integrated electronics to support wireless communications, and new-age materials for the construction industry.

The area's diverse work force, excellent infrastructure, easy access to all means of shipping and a pro-business attitude of government and citizens alike, provides your business every opportunity to thrive.

Currently, the growing of indoor foliage accounts for a large portion of Apopka's economy. According to figures from the USDA Statistical Service, Florida grows more foliage plants than all other states where foliage data is available, and Apopka-area growers account for three-fourths of the smaller size foliage grown in the state. Each year, the foliage industry in the Apopka area creates millions of dollars in production and sales. In addition to indoor foliage, area growers specialize in cut flowers, blooming plants, roses and bulbs. With nationwide distribution and fast-developing Canadian and European markets, this industry is growing by leaps and bounds. Apopka has truly earned its place in the world economy.

Why are so many businesses relocating or expanding in Central Florida?

According to the Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission, you're not alone when you consider relocating or expanding your business in Orange County. In the past year, 7,984 business start-ups were reported in the County, as well as countless business expansions and relocations from other areas across the country. Based on statistics such as this, it is anticipated that Orange County will gain more jobs than any other county in Florida through at least 2010. No wonder so many businesses choose to **"Come Grow With Us."**

Web Resources:

Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce
www.apopkachamber.org

City of Apopka
www.apopka.net

Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission
www.business-orlando.org

Orange County Government
www.orangecountyfl.net

Enterprise Florida
www.eflorida.com

In addition to the growth of the local foliage industry and related services, much of this explosion of growth has come in the high-tech sector. The Central Florida Research Park and University of Central Florida, both located in Orange County, support a large and diverse high-tech industrial base. Significant sectors of the local economy include simulation and training, telecommunications, microelectronics manufacturing, software development, lasers and electro-optics.

In the Apopka area, technology leaders like Sprint and Sawtek (a TriQuint Semiconductor company) showcase the importance of high technology and manufacturing in local economic growth.

The Orlando Metropolitan Area is a wonderful place to grow a strong and thriving business. Each day, business opportunities expand for area companies. As a matter of fact, each week the Metropolitan Orlando area has an estimated:

- \$488 million in retail sales
- 1,085 new adult residents
- 615,307 air travelers
- 479 residential building permits
- \$602 million total buying income
- 24 new businesses
- 321 new jobs
- 831,981 visitors

Source: Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission, 2002



One of the reasons businesses choose to relocate or expand their businesses in Orange County and the Apopka area is the favorable tax treatment:

Taxes

State Personal Income Tax	None
Inventory Tax	None
Intangible Tax	1%
Personal Property (millage rate)*	15.1243 – 21.4002
Corporate Income Tax (apportioned)	5.5%
Sales Tax on Purchases	6%

*Note: Real Property is assessed at 100% of value. Florida has a \$25,000 homestead exemption. Millage rate is dollars per \$1,000 of assessed value. Personal property (excluding personal household items) is assessed at “just value” according to schedules established by owners and local tax assessor.

Source: Orange County Tax Collector – 2001

In addition to the favorable tax treatment local businesses receive, there are many additional tax benefits available. These include Orange County and State of Florida incentives, as well as City of Apopka initiatives. Within Orange County, Apopka offers a lower tax rate than the Orange County average, which can boost the bottom line of businesses that locate here.

Economic Incentives from Orange County and State of Florida for Business:

Orange County Incentives

Orange County Commissioners have provided inducements to those companies creating a significant impact on the economy. Companies receiving incentives in the past have typically been well-established, high tech, high impact and high value-added corporations. They include Indra, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and Siemens Shared Services.

Orange County also has Enterprise Zones which provide additional incentives for qualifying companies investing in these zones.

State Tax Incentives

- No state personal income tax
- No sales tax on food and medicine
- No state-level ad valorem tax
- No inventory tax
- No ad valorem tax on goods-in-transit
- Exemptions from sales tax on manufacturing machinery and equipment used in production
- Exemptions from sales tax on electricity used during the manufacturing process
- Sales and use tax exemptions for research/development costs



- No sales tax on containers/packaging/materials incorporated into a final product
- No sales tax on boiler fuels
- Sales tax exemptions for the motion picture, television and recording industries
- Tax refunds up to \$3,000 per job created for qualified target industries
- Direct tax relief on motion picture, video and sound recording equipment purchased or leased to be used exclusively by the producer as an integral part of production activity

State Financing Incentives

- Industrial Revenue Bond (IRB) financing authorized for industrial use
- Enterprise Bonds for Industry Program is an independent financing corporation that promotes financing for small manufacturers at attractive rates
- Enterprise Florida provides capital for start-ups, expansions, technology-transfer and businesses seeking to export goods and services
- Florida First Capital Finance Corporation is a non-profit corporation certified to issue SBA debentures
- International transactions exempted from documentary stamp tax and international banking transactions from intangible tax

Summary of Benefits For Businesses Choosing the Apopka Area:

- Favorable Tax Treatment
- Low total millage rate
- Local Police, Fire/Emergency Services
- Local permit processing when needed
- Local business support through Chamber of Commerce and area business resources
- City and County Utilities readily available

Enterprise Zone

- Jobs Tax Credit
- Property Tax Credit
- Community Contribution Tax Incentive Program
- Credits Against Sales Tax For Job Creation
- Sales Tax Refund for Business Machinery and Equipment Used in an Enterprise Zone
- Sales Tax Exemption for Electrical Energy Used in an Enterprise Zone

Lake Apopka Redevelopment Plan

- Potential for impact fee credits

Enterprise Florida

- Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund Program (QTI)
- Quick Response Training Program (QRT)
- Economic Development Transportation Fund

Wages Program

- Tax Credits
- Customized Training
- On-the-job training
- Untried Workers Program
- Earned income tax credits for workers
- Work Supplementation

Business Building Resources

Apopka Area Chamber of Commerce
(407) 886-1441

Apopka City Hall
(407) 703-1700

City of Apopka Community Development
(407) 703-1712

**Metro Orlando Economic
Development Commission**
(407) 422-7159

Better Business Bureau
(407) 621-3300

**University of Central Florida Small
Business Development Center**
(407) 823-5554

Apopka Planning and Zoning
(407) 703-1712

Electricity - Florida Power
(407) 629-1010

Natural Gas - Lake Apopka Natural Gas
(407) 886-1177

Occupational Licensing/Code Enforcement
(407) 703-1712

Orange County Utilities
(407) 836-7000

Water and Sewer - City of Apopka
(407) 703-1727

Waste Collection/Recycling
(407) 703-1731