

Analysis of Lee County trends (compared to national and state trends) in modes of transportation to work: 2000-2009

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Last month, the U.S. Census Bureau released 2009 American Community Survey (ACS) data, which is an annual household survey of about 3 million addressees. The survey includes information on “journey to work”, which allows us to track the trends between the decennial Census, which asks the same question.

Although this is one of the best sources for tracking trends in walking, biking, or taking transit to work, there are several limitations in using the ACS data. It is important to note that “transportation to work” is only a small share of all trips, especially for walking and bicycling. For example, bicycling’s share of all trips is nearly three times larger than bicycling’s share of commuter travel. Therefore, it is important not to interpret the ACS commuter percentages as the proportion of all trips.

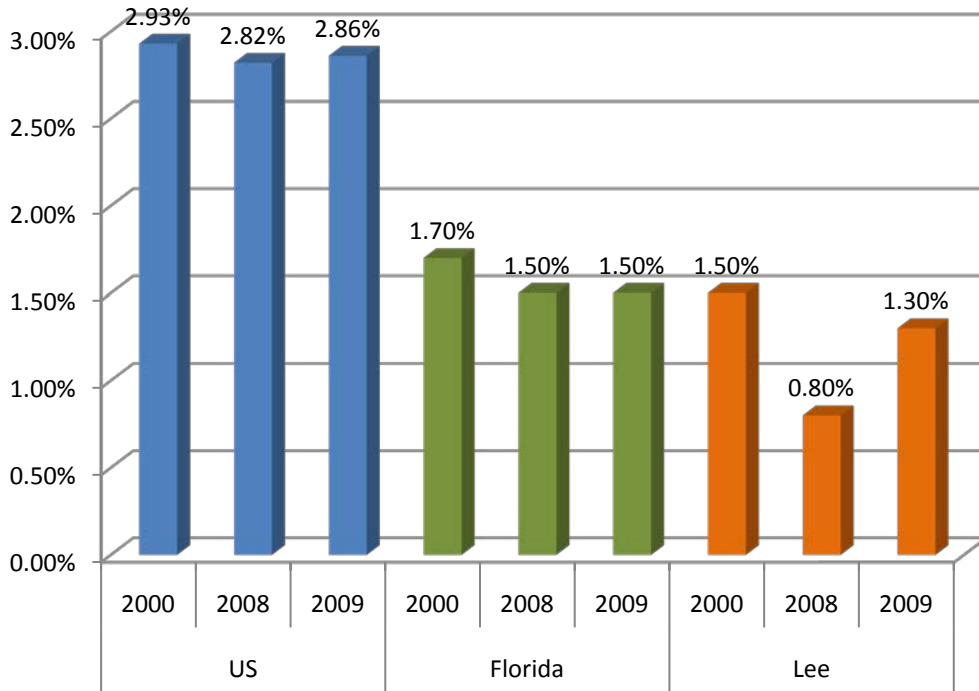
In addition, the ACS and the decennial Census undercount bicycle and walking commuting levels. They ask for the principal mode of travel the worker usually used to get from home to work during the previous week. So, if they biked 2 days but drove 3 days, they would not be counted as a cyclist.

Finally, it is important to note that the results of the ACS are only estimates based on population samples, and some estimates have large margins of error.

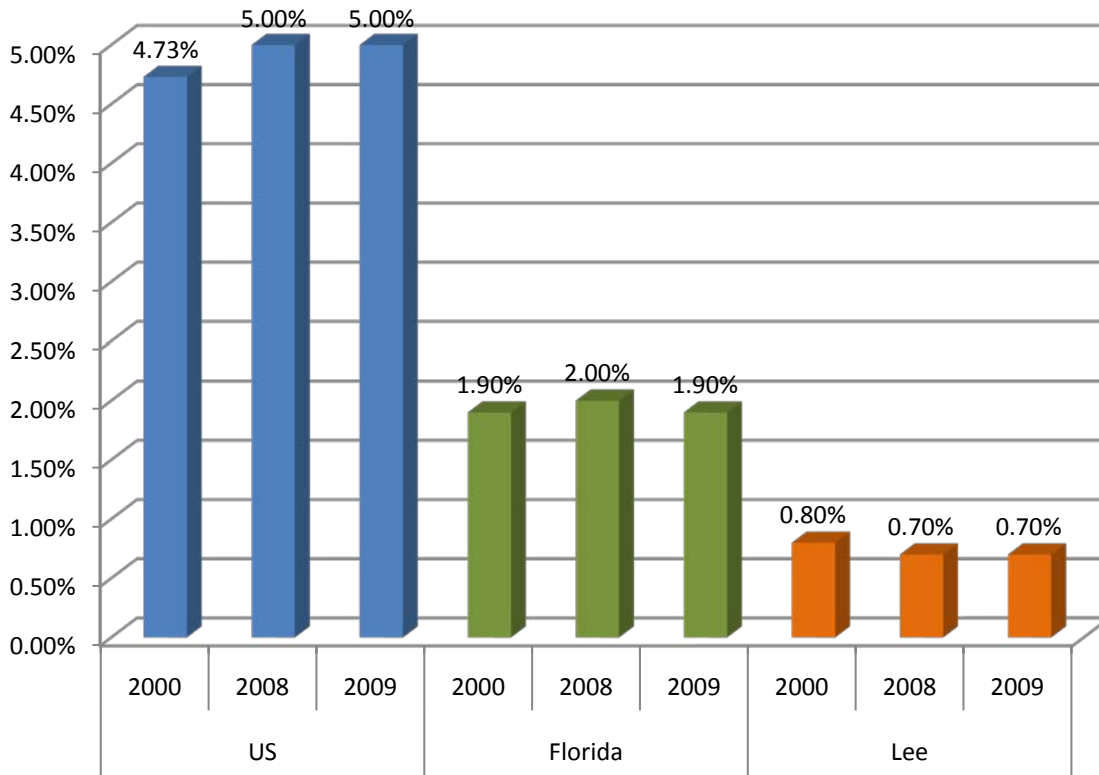
The attached graphs (and chart) show the Lee County trends, compared to national and state trends, in modes of transportation to work. Here are the highlights:

- The percentage of people walking to work has declined slightly at all levels (national, state, and Lee County) between 2000 and 2009. However, Lee County’s share continues to be less than half of the national share (1.3% vs. 2.86%), and about 13% less than Florida’s overall share. However, Lee County’s share almost doubled from 2008 to 2009, returning closer to its 2000 level. [Note: the 2008 number could have been an aberration or estimating problem.]
- The percentage of people taking public transit to work held steady at all levels between 2008 and 2009. However, the greatest contrast between the national level and the Florida and Lee County levels occurs with the share of people taking public transit to work. Nationally, a worker is 2.6 times more likely to take public transit to work than someone who lives in Florida. In Lee County, the national share is over 7 times greater than Lee County’s share.
- Only on the measure of biking to work does Florida and Lee County out perform the national levels. While biking to work has increased substantially since 2000 at all levels (national, state, county), the rates between 2008 and 2009 held steady at the national level, while it increased 18% in Florida and 20% in Lee County.
- Looking at all forms of alternative transportation, Lee County’s share increased 30% between 2008 and 2009. Although our use of alternative modes of transportation to work is substantially below the national and state levels, at least the numbers are moving in the right direction.

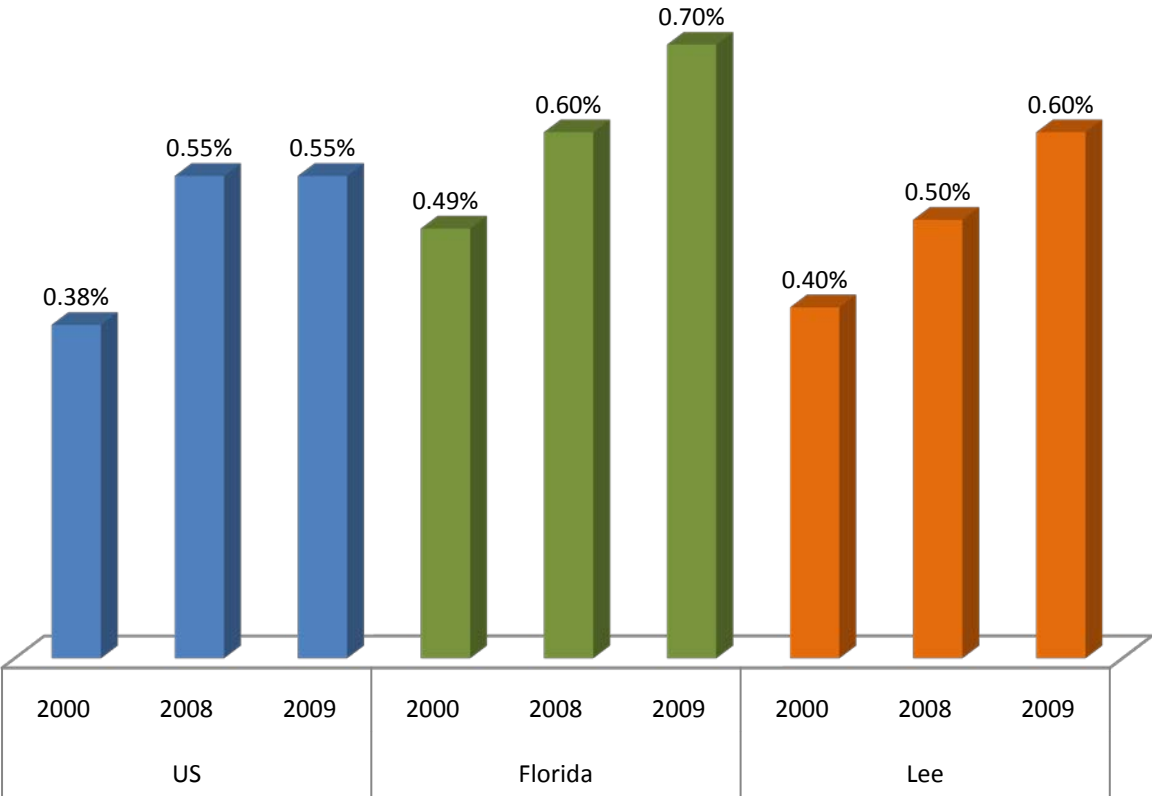
U.S. Census and ACS: Walk to Work



U.S. Census and ACS: Public Transit to Work



US Census and ACS Survey: Biking to Work



	2000 Natl	2000 FL	2000 Lee	2008 Natl	2008 FL	2008 Lee	2009 Natl	2009 FL	2009 Lee
Drive Alone	75.7%	78.8%	78.7%	75.5%	79.4%	77.0%	76.1%	79.3%	73.9%
Public Transp	4.73%	1.9%	0.8%	5.0%	2.0%	0.7%	5.0%	1.9%	0.7%
Walked	2.93%	1.7%	1.5%	2.82%	1.5%	0.8%	2.86%	1.5%	1.3%
Biked*	0.38%	0.49%	0.4%	0.55%	0.6%	0.5%	0.55%	0.7%	0.6%

Name of Table: Means of Transportation to Work

2000 is Census

2008 & 2009 are from ACS

*for breakout of biking numbers in 2000, numbers from 2000 Supplementary Survey
Summary Tables—Means of Transportation to Work (Table # P047)

Djl: 10/5/10