



## Site selector singles out Estero

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No one knew Estero until Hertz came to town.

Now the small village between Fort Myers and Naples is on the radar of many consultants who help large corporations locate offices nationwide. The area gained notoriety after car rental giant Hertz announced it was moving its global headquarters there from New Jersey in 2013. A new corporate campus on U.S. 41 near Coconut Point Mall is nearly complete.

A prominent corporate relocation firm, New Jersey-based The Boyd Co., recently named Estero one of three top regional locations for a hypothetical administrative operation with 500 employees in a 125,000-square-foot building. The other two locations are Blue Ash, Ohio, a Cincinnati suburb, and Minden, Nev., on the northwest side of the state, bordering California. "Lee County is well-positioned to attract corporate offices," says John Boyd, the principal of the firm.

Boyd cited lower tax burdens, airline service and availability of a bilingual labor force as pluses for Estero and Florida. Estero's proximity to Naples, where many top executives have second homes, is another advantage. "A lot of decisions concerning Florida's future are made in Naples," says Boyd.

But Boyd, who has also talked up Tampa as a prime urban site for corporate relocations, cautioned that competition for companies is broader than neighboring counties in the state. "A lot of developers and politicians have a parochial approach to economic development," Boyd says.

In other words: Florida isn't the only place in the country that offers low taxes.