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City of Greenacres

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Community Background Report

City of Greenacres

Boundaries

North: Summit Boulevard

South: L-14 Canal

East: Military Trail

West: Pinehurst Drive

Community Type: Municipality

History

Located 5 miles from the Atlantic Ocean in Southeast Florida, Greenacres is the tenth largest city of the 38 municipalities in Palm Beach County. It is governed by a mayor and a 5-member city council. The City of Greenacres was founded in 1923 by Massachusetts native Lawrence Carter Swain, who moved to the area with his family in the early 1920s.¹ The residential boom in the Town of Palm Beach and other coastal resort towns had generated a lot of housing for the wealthy, but there were few homes available for the middle class. Determined to provide a community for the middle class, Mr. Swain began purchasing property in the area, accumulating nearly 1,000 acres, which were divided into sections or “plats”. Plat II, half a mile west of Military Trail, became the “Original Section” of the city and is there to this day.² The city was officially incorporated as “Greenacres City” in 1926, making it one of the oldest cities in Palm Beach County. The name was chosen by Mr. Swain’s office staff, which also chose the city’s slogan—“A Good Place to Live”.²

The first recorded devastating hurricane, known as “the Big Blow”, hit Greenacres on September 19, 1926. The second such storm hit two years later almost to the day, on September 16, 1928. Both hurricanes caused great damage to Greenacres. For a short period in the 1940s Greenacres lost its status as a municipality, when a group of disgruntled residents petitioned the state legislature, resulting in the loss of the city charter. In 1947 the community was reestablished as a city and reincorporated.²

In the 1980s Greenacres became the seventh largest and fastest growing city in central Palm Beach County. After a referendum held in 1984 several new buildings were constructed, including the new city hall on 10th Avenue North, a public safety complex and several recreation centers, which made Greenacres more popular. In the 1990s, the city’s residents voted to change its name to the City of Greenacres and annex portions of unincorporated Palm Beach County, all of which fueled rapid development and population growth.²

Community Dynamics

The City of Greenacres has approximately 30,000 residents. Beginning in 2000, Greenacres underwent several enhancement and beautification projects. These included the construction of a community center, major parks, and the annexation of property south of the city. Other improvements included the construction of a municipal complex and a new public works facility. The city continues to be one of the fastest growing municipalities in South Florida.²

The National Arbor Day Foundation has recognized the efforts of the City of Greenacres to plant and maintain trees in public spaces by giving it a “Tree City USA” designation for 18 consecutive years. America’s Promise-The Alliance for Youth, the nation’s largest alliance dedicated to children and youth, recognized Greenacres as one of the “100 Best Communities for Young People” in 2007 and 2008.² The city is considered to be a well-planned, safe and attractive community, with an efficient and effective local government.

The city has 16,685 dwelling units providing diversity in type (single family, condominiums, villas, townhomes and apartments) and price range.

Demographic Highlights³

The population of Greenacres has been increasing and is forecasted to continue increasing.

Between 2000 and 2009 the population of Greenacres increased by 11%, reaching 30,662. The population is forecasted to grow another 4% by 2014.

The overwhelming majority of residents of Greenacres are White and non-Hispanic.

In 2009 80% of residents of Greenacres classified themselves as White, 7% classified themselves as Black, and 2% classified themselves as Asian. Only 25% of residents of Greenacres classified themselves as Hispanic. By 2014 Greenacres’ White population is projected to decrease slightly (from 80% to 77%) and its Black and Hispanic populations are projected to increase slightly (from 7% to 8% and from 26% to 29%, respectively).

The overwhelming majority of residents of Greenacres speak English and are native-born citizens.

In 2009 72% of residents of Greenacres spoke English. Spanish was the second most commonly spoken language among 21% of residents. As of 2009 79% of residents of Greenacres were native-born US citizens.

The median household income of residents in Greenacres is lower than that of the rest of Palm Beach County.

In 2009 the median household income in Greenacres was \$48,177, whereas the median household income in Palm Beach County was \$62,114.

Greenacres has a lower percentage of college-educated residents than Palm Beach County.

In 2009 18.5% of residents of Greenacres had a college or graduate degree, whereas this statistic for Palm Beach County was 30%.

More than 1/3 of all housing in Greenacres was built in the years between 1980 and 1990.

36% of all housing in Greenacres was built between 1980 and 1990. The pace of construction slowed in the 1990s and picked up again after 1999. 24% of all housing in Greenacres was built after 1999.

Transportation Trends⁴

The tables below illustrate projected transportation trends in the City of Greenacres:

Average household transportation costs:

2009: City, \$8,412.53/County, \$9,162.52

2014: City, \$10,346.30/County, \$11,276.10

Average household transportation costs for public transportation:

2009: City, \$461.52/County, \$607.69

2014: City, \$587.50/County, \$783.55

Forecasted travel time to work for the employed population, 2014:

Work at home: City, 2 percent/County, 5 percent

Less than 15 minutes: City, 15 percent/County, 20 percent

15-29 minutes: City, 39 percent /County, 37 percent

30-59 minutes: City, 37 percent /County, 31 percent

60+ minutes: City, 7 percent /County, 7 percent

Forecasted means of transportation to work for employed individuals, 2014:

Work at Home: City, 2 percent/County, 5 percent

Car, Truck, Van to Work: City, 95 percent / County, 92 percent

Public Transportation to Work: City, 0.5 percent / County, 1 percent

Other Transportation to Work: City, 2 percent / County, 2 percent

Forecasted number of vehicles per household, 2014:

No vehicles: City, 4 percent / County, 6 percent

1 vehicle: City, 49 percent / County, 41 percent

2 vehicles: City, 38 percent / County, 42 percent

3 vehicles: City, 7 percent / County, 9 percent

4+ vehicles: City, 2 percent / County, 2 percent

Special Events

The Greenacres Department of Leisure Services maintains a list of special events in the community at http://www.ci.greenacres.fl.us/dept_leisure/community_events.htm . For more information please call the Department at (561)642-2181. Below is a listing of events posted as of December 2010.

Salsa Fest (Palms West Chamber of Commerce)

DATE: November 19 - 21, 2010

TIME: Friday 5:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m. – 10 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

LOCATION: Greenacres Community Park (2905 Jog Road)

Lunch with Santa (Greenacres Kiwanis Club)

DATE: December 11, 2010

TIME: 11:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Greenacres Community Center (501 Swain Blvd.)

Fiesta de Pueblo (Puerto Rican/Hispanic Chamber of Commerce)

DATE: March 18 - 20, 2011

TIME: Friday 6:00 – 10:00 p.m., Saturday & Sunday 12:00 noon – 10:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Ira Van Bullock Complex (Martin Ave, just south of 10th Avenue North)

Daddy Daughter Date Night –Spend an enchanted evening with your special date and enjoy food, dancing & games.

DATE: February 19, 2011

TIME: 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Greenacres Community Center

Egg'stravaganza—Hunt for special prize eggs, go on a hay ride and enjoy pictures with the Easter Bunny.

DATE: April 23, 2011

TIME: 10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

LOCATION: Greenacres Community Park (2905 Jog Road)

Rock n'Roll Sunday (Nam Knights)—The annual benefit for Veterans is a celebration of Rock n'Roll, classic cars and motorcycles.

DATE: May 22, 2011

TIME: 12:00 noon – 6:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Greenacres Community Park (2905 Jog Road)

Ignite the Nite—A 4th of July celebration with entertainment, children’s activities, food, and fireworks display.

DATE: July 4, 2011

TIME: 5:30 – 10:00 p.m.

LOCATION: Greenacres Community Park (2905 Jog Road)

Business Landscape

The top employment sectors in Greenacres are education, health and social services (18 %), professional, scientific, management, and administrative (13 %), retail trade (11 %) and arts, entertainment, accommodation and food services (11 %).⁵

Over 700 small and medium businesses operate in Greenacres. Commercial establishments offer a variety of services, and are mainly located along Lake Worth Road, Forest Hill Boulevard, Tenth Avenue North and Jog Road.

Sources

¹Greenacres. Palm Beach County History Online. <http://www.pbchistoryonline.org/page/greenacres>.

²About Greenacres—History. City of Greenacres Website. <http://www.ci.greenacres.fl.us/index.htm>

³Unless otherwise noted, all statistics in this section downloaded from <http://www.simplymap.com>

⁴ Unless otherwise noted, all statistics in this section downloaded from <http://www.simplymap.com>

⁵ SimplyMap.