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City of Fort Lauderdale

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Community Background Report
City of Fort Lauderdale

Boundaries
North: McNab Road
South: Near State Road 84
East: Coastline
West: I-95, portions stretch out westward from I-95, some reach State Road 7

Community Type: Municipality

Report Last Updated: May, 2011

History
In 1896 the Florida East Coast Railway reached southward to the area known as "New River Settlement" that would become known as Fort Lauderdale. [1] The connection to the rail line allowed the settlement to grow in size eventually incorporating in 1911 as the City of Fort Lauderdale. [2] It is interesting to note that the city of Fort Lauderdale is named after a fortification built during the Second Seminole War on the banks of the New River. [3]

The City of Fort Lauderdale emerged as the County's principal city and quickly became the county seat of the newly formed Broward County in 1915. [4] Like many other cities in the area, the City of Fort Lauderdale experienced its first major development during the Florida land boom of the 1920s and later suffered the fallout of the 1926 Hurricane, the worst hurricane ever to hit Fort Lauderdale. As a result, the land boom came to an end and sent the area into an economic depression only to be coupled with the Great Depression of the 1930s a few years later. [5]

The city's economic recuperation had much to do with having become a major US military base during the World War II. At the end of the war, service members returned to the area and the city experienced an explosive and sustained growth; by the 1960s, the population growth placed the City of Fort Lauderdale among the nation's fastest growing cities. [6]

Today, the City of Fort Lauderdale is the largest municipality in Broward County and is the seventh largest city in Florida. [7] Recently, the city has continued to grow through annexation. In 2000, the City of Fort Lauderdale annexed Palm Aire and Golden Heights which added 1,931 persons and 704 housing units to the city. [8] In 2002, the City of Fort

Lauderdale annexed both Melrose Park and the greater Riverland Area which added 12,493 people in 4,244 housing units to the city's population.[9]

In addition, the city is also home to and/or adjacent to the county's two important economic engines: Port Everglades and the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood Airport. Partially located within the City of Fort Lauderdale, Port Everglades is emerging as one of the nation's important seaport. Likewise, the city is immediately adjacent to Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood Airport with 67,000 passengers daily, 16,000 employees,28,000 ancillary jobs.[10]

Due to the nature of being the county's principal city, the City of Fort Lauderdale is also the home of many other important assets such as the 600,000 sq. ft. Fort Lauderdale Convention Center as well as recognized higher educational centers in Florida such as: Broward College, Florida Atlantic University, Florida International University.[11] In addition, the Riverwalk area serves as the cornerstone of the city's arts, science, cultural and historic district which features the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, Museum of Discovery and Science, Museum of Art and Old Fort Lauderdale Village and Museum.[12] It is interesting to note that in 2008, CNN Money and Fortune Small Business Report named the City of Fort Lauderdale among the top 100 cities in the U.S. to live and launch a business.[13] Many of the city's assets mentioned above contributed to its appeal and recognition.

Community Dynamics

Fort Lauderdale's beach became ground zero for the college spring break craze in 1961, a direct result of the hit movie Where the Boys Are.[14] The city remained a major destination for college spring breakers until the mid-1980s.[15] In fact, by 1985, approximately 370,000 students were descending on Fort Lauderdale –often referred to of "Fort Liquor-dale."[16] Shortly thereafter, the city began to proactively de-incentivize the spring break tradition in Fort Lauderdale by passing stricter laws against public drinking; furthermore, the city's mayor at the time went so far as to go on ABC's Good Morning America to tell students they were no longer welcome.[17]

With its spring break days clearly behind, the city now markets itself as the "Venice of America" due to its extensive system of waterways, including the New River, Intracoastal Waterway and a large number of canals.[18] The City of Fort Lauderdale has taken great care in reinventing itself and is now considered a resort community that's reaching its maturity.[19] Thus redevelopment has been and continues to be an important community issue.

Recently, a number of Fort Lauderdale neighborhood associations have called on the city to place a moratorium on its eight-year-old Planned Urban Development (PUD)—an innovative ordinance meant to encourage "unique" development.[20] Specifically, the neighborhood associations are concerned that PUD projects would allow large developments near their homes and, thus, alter the character of the neighborhoods.[21] On the other hand, PUD supporters say that the ordinance is a "saving grace that can breathe new life into a community" and claim that tens of millions of dollars in development

dollars are potentially at stake and millions of dollars in future property taxes and other projected income to the city.[22] The debate has recently become heated due to two high profile PUD projects: developers seeking to "supersize" Bahia Mar and to expand significantly First Presbyterian Church's presence in the Colee Hammock neighborhood.[23] Those projects carry price tags of $500 million and $20 million, respectively.[24] In addition to Bahia Mar, the city is also weighing another waterfront redevelopment plan for another prime public property along the Intracoastal—the International Swimming Hall of Fame. According to the City of Fort Lauderdale Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), the city is contemplating a new Aquatic Complex that would include: three competitive event pools with a retractable cover over a grandstand, a water park with slides and children's pools, a restaurant, an aquarium with a walk-through acrylic tunnel surrounded by water and marine life and a four-level parking garage with 262 spaces.[25]

The downtown area has also seen its share of redevelopment. For example, a successful redevelopment project geared for artists, the Village at Sailboat Bend, is a mixed-income community located within walking distance to downtown and located within one of the city's oldest neighborhoods.[26] In addition, attempts to improve downtown mobility may also be a catalyst for change in Fort Lauderdale's urban center. Currently, the Downtown Development Authority of Fort Lauderdale has spearheaded the effort to bring a $150 million streetcar system, the Wave, to downtown Fort Lauderdale.[27] It is projected that the Wave would bring business investment and a big increase in ridership - from the less than 100 riders who now use Sun Trolley's downtown routes to 6,000 streetcar riders per day.[28]

Despite the continued redevelopment efforts, the economic downturn has depressed the city's home values. The downturn in the housing market has led to close to half of Fort Lauderdale's borrowers owing more on their homes than the property is now worth.[29] Thus, it yet is unclear how the high proportion of "underwater" loans will affect Fort Lauderdale's efforts in redevelopment.

Demographic Highlights[30]

Since 2000, the City of Fort Lauderdale has experienced a slight decline in overall population and it is forecasted to continue to decrease through 2014.
The city's population in 2009 was 143,627 and the population density was 4,479 per square mile.[31] The city's population size represents 8 percent of the entire population in Broward County. Since 2000 the city has experienced a 5 percent decrease in overall population and forecasts indicate that the City of Fort Lauderdale will experience another 5 percent loss during the 2009-2014 period. Due to population decline the city is projected to have a population density of 4,426 per square mile in 2013. The city had a 68 percent family population in 2009.

In parallel to population decline, overall household growth has also slightly declined since 2000 and it is forecasted to continue to decrease through 2014.

The city had 64,010 households in 2009 and average two-person household; it is projected that household size will remain the same throughout 2013. In correlation to population decline, overall household growth has decreased 4 percent in the 2000-2009 period and forecasts indicates that the city will suffer another 5 percent decline through 2014.

The City of Fort Lauderdale had a high percentage of renter occupied units and vacant units.
In 2009, Fort Lauderdale had 73,663 housing units; of these, 87 percent were occupied housing units and 44 percent were renter occupied units.

The City of Fort Lauderdale's median household income was less than the county's median household income in 2009.
Median household income average in 2009 was 48,960, less than the county's $56,291.

The City of Fort Lauderdale's population projections indicate only very slight changes to its age groups by 2013.
The city's median age in 2009 was 40, slightly higher than the county's 38, and projections indicate that through 2013 the median age will increase to 42.
Projection forecasts show very slight changes to the city's age groups. The 17 and younger threshold will experience a 1 percent decline, the workforce age group 18 - 54 age group will have less than a one percent decline, and the 55 year age and older group will have a two percent increase in population through 2013.

In 2009, the majority of the city's population was White and projection trends indicate that they will remain the bulk of population regardless of a projected slight decrease in overall population. The Black and "Other Race" populations are expected to experience a slight uptick of one percent through 2013.
The bulk of the city's population (61 percent) in 2009 was White, 31 percent was Black while 7 percent were "Other Race" populations. It should be noted that 52 percent of the White population considered themselves Non-Hispanic. Approximately 12 percent of the city's population considered themselves Hispanic. However, projections show that the White population will decline by 2 percent through 2013. The greatest increase in overall population size will occur in the Black and "Other Race" populations by 1 percent each through the 2013 period. Furthermore, projections indicate that the Hispanic population will remain unaffected through the 2013 period.

In 2009, the majority of the city's residents were native U.S. Citizens, spoke English and had either a High School or some College or College/Graduate Degree.
In 2009, the vast majority (76 percent) of the city's residents were native U.S. Citizens while 15 percent were foreign-born and only 9 percent were naturalized citizens. Also, 75 percent spoke English, 13 percent spoke "Other Indo-European Languages," and 10 percent spoke Spanish. Over half (64 percent) of the city's population had a high school, some college or college degree in 2009.

Transportation Trends

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

Percent of the employed population travel time to work, 2014

	City	County
Work at Home	4 %	4 %
Less than 15 minutes	24 %	16 %
15-29 Minutes	37 %	33 %
30-59 Minutes	27 %	38 %
60+ Minutes	7 %	8 %

Average household transportation costs

	City	County
2009	$8,158.73	$8,836.33
2014	$9,936.92	$10,880.30

Average household transportation costs in public transportation

	City	County
2009	$497.59	$555.02
2014	$626.37	$721.64

Forecasted percent of vehicles per household, 2014

	City	County
0 vehicles	10 %	7 %
1 vehicle	49 %	40 %
2 vehicles	33 %	40 %
3 vehicles	7 %	10 %
4+ vehicles	2 %	3 %

Forecasted percent employed individuals means of transportation to work, 2014

	City	County
Car, Truck, Van to Work	88 %	93 %
Public Transportation to Work	4 %	2 %
Other Transportation to Work	4 %	2 %
Work at Home	4 %	4 %

The information provided below briefly summarizes transportation trends, services, or projects in the City of Fort Lauderdale:

Sun Trolley - Fort Lauderdale's Community Bus Service
The City of Fort Lauderdale trolleys are environmentally-friendly bio-diesel vehicles that are wheelchair accessible and have bicycle carriers. The Sun Trolley is administered by the Downtown Fort Lauderdale Transportation Management Association (DFLTMA),

which is a 501(C) 3 non-profit organization that has been serving Fort Lauderdale with community transportation since 1992. For information log onto: http://www.suntrolley.com/.

The Wave: Downtown Fort Lauderdale's Planned Streetcar System
The Wave is a 2.7 mile light rail system that will serve as a local circulator in Downtown Fort Lauderdale and replace the rubber-tire trolley; cost estimates are about $50 million a mile.[32] The connectivity rail will have 10 stations reflective of the character of the specific area, which will be solar powered and will feature real time information (technology that communicates when the next vehicle will be arriving at the station) and informational kiosks displaying destinations/attractions in the downtown, as well as upcoming community events.[33]

In 2004**,** a Downtown transit and pedestrian mobility study was completed through partnerships with the Downtown Development Authority of Fort Lauderdale (DDA), the City of Fort Lauderdale, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), FDOT, Broward County, the Broward MPO, the Clean Air Cooperative, the Downtown Fort Lauderdale Transportation Management Association (TMA) and Tri-Rail that resulted in the need to invest in transit and pedestrian improvements in downtown. One of them most important goals to achieve was to improve connectivity and the pedestrian realm.[34]

In July 2010, the Wave received a boost from the US House of Representatives that budgeted $1.8 million for the light-rail system in the nation's spending plan for 2011.[35] The appropriations bill must pass the full House and Senate and be signed by President Obama before the funds can be released.[36]

Special Events

The City of Fort Lauderdale posts its ongoing events on the city's Website at: http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/calendar/calendar.asp

A sample of the Cities annual events are listed below:

Boat Show- In 2010 the City celebrated the 51st International Boat Show usually takes place in October/November. The show features more than 3 billion dollars worth of boats, yachts, super yachts, electronics, engines and thousands of boating accessories from every major marine manufacturer and boat builder worldwide. The Boat Show encompasses more than 3 million square feet of space, both on land and in water, and is all connected by the Show's Transportation Network of water taxis, riverboats and bus shuttles. For more information log onto: http://www.showmanagement.com/fort_lauderdale_international_boat_show_2010/event/

Winter Fest Boat Parade - The festival is a boat promenade along the Intracoastal Waterway through Fort Lauderdale. Vessels sail north along the Waterway's passage between the mainland and the barrier beaches. The parade's route begins at Port

Everglades, near the 17th Street Causeway south of downtown Fort Lauderdale it passes through grandstands set up for prime viewing at Birch State Park (near Sunrise Blvd) and the parade ends at Lake Santa Barbara in Pompano, just north of the city. For more information please visit: http://www.winterfestparade.com/[37]

Backyard Bash - The Fort Lauderdale Down Town Development Authority (DDA) sponsors this event in April and in June. Frequent celebrations are planned to be held in the new Peter Feldman Park. For more information log onto: http://www.ddaftl.org/Events.php and http://www.ddaftl.org/view/pdf/BackyardBashPromo.pdf

St. Patrick's Day Parade and Festival - Takes place in March between 11:30am and 9:00 pm at Huizenga Plaza. The focus of this event is to be family oriented, fun and provide the community with unique experiences to last a lifetime in the heart of downtown Fort Lauderdale. For more information log onto: http://www.ftlaudirishfest.com/

Air Lauderdale Beach Fest - The Fort Lauderdale Air Show came back to Fort Lauderdale 2010. After being canceled due to lack of sponsorship in 2009. It takes place in April and has been re-launched as "Air Lauderdale Beach Fest". For more information please visit: http://www.airlauderdale.com/

Riverwalk/Esplanade Urban Market - is a green market that runs from Saturday, April 24, 2010 through Friday, December 31, 2010. It is located at Esplanade/Riverwalk. For more information contact: Genia Ellisat at 954-205-9648 or email ellisjazz@bellsouth.net. For more information log onto http://www.ddaftl.org/view/pdf/UrbanMarket.pdf or http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/calendar/calendar.asp

Las Olas Gourmet Market - Takes place every Sunday July through September at 1201 East Las Olas Blvd. For more information contact Laura Mogilewskia at 954-258-8382 or email at laura@lasolasboulevard.com.

Las Olas Movies Under The Stars - Family-themed movies every Wednesday night throughout the summer (July and August). Located at Riverside Hotel Lawn (corner of ELO and SE 8 Street). For more information contact Laura Mogilewski at 954-258-8382 or email at laura@lasolasboulevard.com

Bank of America Star Light Musicals - The annual Bank of America Starlight Musicals Concert Series takes place in August from 7 to 10 p.m. This free, outdoor concert series takes place on the football fields in Holiday Park, located at 1300 E. Sunrise Boulevard. Residents and visitors are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, picnic baskets, family and friends to the park for live entertainment under the stars. For more information, please visit http://fortlauderdale.gov/events/starlight/starlight.htm

Fourth of July Spectacular - The City of Fort Lauderdale hosts a daylong Independence Day celebration with family activities from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Fort Lauderdale Beach

across from the Oasis Cafe, located at 600 Seabreeze Boulevard. After dark, the city's annual fireworks presentation starts at 9 p.m. off of A1A and Las Olas Boulevard. For more information please call 954-828-5363 or visit the City's web site: http://fortlauderdale.gov/events/july4/index.htm

Business Landscape

In 2009, the City of Fort Lauderdale had a 17 percent unemployment rate.[38] Of those residents that were employed, the majority worked the following industries: Arts, Entertainment, Accommodations and Food Services (14 percent), Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative Services (14 percent) and Retail Trade (10 percent).[39] The City of Fort Lauderdale's major employers are: AutoNation, BankAtlantic, Bank of America, Broward County School Board, Broward General Medical Center, Citrix Systems, Ed Morse Automotive Group, Governmental Agencies (City, County, State, Federal), Holy Cross Hospital, Kaplan University, North Broward Hospital District, Republic Industries, Spherion, CBSSports.com, Sun-Sentinel (Tribune Company).[40]

Once known strictly as a tourism-based economy, Fort Lauderdale now supports a diverse range of industries, including marine, manufacturing, finance, insurance, real estate, high technology, avionics/aerospace, and film and television production.[41] In fact, marine commerce is now considered the leading industry in Greater Fort Lauderdale and Broward County; the area is also world renowned port of call for the yachting industry.[42] In addition, Fort Lauderdale has emerged as one of the fastest growing markets for global trade, with more than 40 percent of local businesses engaged in or supporting international commerce and the city remains at the forefront of South Florida's emerging "Internet Coast," a region that is home to more than 6,000 high technology firms. [43]

The following list illustrates the type of large-scale projects and business environment that currently makes up the City of Fort Lauderdale's business landscape:

Boat Show[44]

Recently celebrating 50 years, the annual Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show is an event that began as a regional exhibition and has grown to what promoters say is the biggest show in the world. In the 2009 show, there were more than $3 billion worth of boats and accessories spread across more than 3 million square feet of space on land and water. The show has long been a foundation of the city's economy and in 2007 it was estimated to have had a $500 million impact. Despite the economic downturn, the boat show managed to improve its performance –particularly with the large and expensive boats.

Also worthy to note is that the Bahia Mar resort and marina property, which hosts the boat show, is attempting to win approval for a $512 million redevelopment. As mentioned previously, the project would require an approval for a PUD and has been met opposition for neighbor residents. Among the reasons for the opposition are the concerns that the development would acerbate an already intolerable traffic situation on A1A, the

only highway on the beach.[45] If the plans are approved by the city, the new development would be called Bahia Mar Park and is envisioned to have one of the area's largest hotels (franchised to Waldorf Astoria), two upscale condominium buildings, retail and restaurants.[46]

Water Park[47]
In June 2010, the city commission endorsed a plan for a $110 million water park for the area around Fort Lauderdale's Lockhart Stadium- an existing 18,500 seat stadium plus the nearby Fort Lauderdale Stadium would be incorporated into the park to create a sports village. The Broward County Sports Hall of Fame would get a permanent home on the property. Virtual golf, baseball and softball simulators are also planned. The economic impact is estimated at $400 million. The city commission's vote means Fort Lauderdale will now negotiate a deal with the developer.

Port Everglades's 20-year Expansion Plan[48]
The seaport is undertaking a $2 billion expansion to prepare for an expected increase in cargo, fuel and cruise passenger traffic over the next 20 years, a massive investment that is expected to boost up the economy and create jobs in the area.

The 20-year expansion plan for Port Everglades sees port cargo volumes rising spurred largely by growing business with Brazil and other nations in Latin America and the Caribbean. It also forecasts cruise traffic to exceed 5 million passengers yearly by 2029. The seaport just completed its largest capital project ever: a $75 million expansion of a cruise terminal to host the world's largest cruise ship, Royal Caribbean's 5,400-passenger Oasis of the Seas. Currently, it is estimated that Port Everglades produces an $18 billion a year economic impact in South Florida, supporting 10,000 direct jobs and contributing to 185,000 jobs from indirect business.

Related Links

City of Fort Lauderdale
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us

City of Fort Lauderdale CRA
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/EconomicDevelopment/cra.htm

Fort Lauderdale DDA
http://www.ddaftl.org/

Greater For Lauderdale Visitors Bureau
http://www.sunny.org/

Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce
http://www.ftlchamber.com/

Riverwalk Trust
http://www.goriverwalk.com/

A1A Corridor Conceptual Streetscape Study
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/a1a_corridor_study.htm

Central Beach Master Plan
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/central_beach_masterplan.htm

Davie Boulevard Corridor Master Plan
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/davie_corridor_masterplan.htm

Downtown Master Plan
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/downtown_masterplan.htm

Downtown New River Master Plan
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/downtown_newriver_mp.htm

North US 1 Urban Design Plan
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/nus1_design_plan.htm

Riverside Park Neighborhood Character Plan
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/riverside.htm

South Andrews Avenue Master Plan
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/south_andrews_masterplan.htm

Annexation Rezoning of Melrose Park and Riverland Road Area
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/melrose_riverland_rezoning.htm

Comprehensive Plan
http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/planning_zoning/comp_plan.htm

The Wave: Downtown Fort Lauderdale's Planned Street Car System
http://www.wavestreetcar.com

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http://www.fortlauderdalehistorycenter.org/history_of_ft_lauderdale.html
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http://fulltext.fcla.edu//DLData/SN/SN01480340/0011_003/file5.pdf
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www.fortlauderdalehistorycenter.org

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[10] Florida Trend, "Fort Lauderdale and Broward County", http://www.floridatrend.com/article.asp?page=4&aID=50876

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[12] Ibid.

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[18] Fort Lauderdale History Center. "Fun facts about Broward County & Florida" www.fortlauderdalehistorycenter.org

[19] Sun-Sentinel. "Historian hired for city's centennial." July 22, 2010

[20] Broward Bulldog. "Worried neighbors seek moratorium on controversial Fort Lauderdale development law." June 22, 2010 www.browardbulldog.org

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] City of Fort Lauderdale CRA http://ci.ftlaud.fl.us/economicdevelopment/cra.htm

[26] Builder. "Cultural creative." December 2009. http://www.builderonline.com/infill-development/cultural-creative.aspx

[27] South Florida Business Journal. "Fort Lauderdale DDA: streetcars will spur mass transit, development." June 27, 2008. www.southflorida.bizjournals.com

[28] Ibid.

[29] Sun-Sentinel. "Mortgage rates at record lows, but who can get them" July 26, 2010 www.sun-sentinel.com

[30] All information in this section is from Simply Maps unless otherwise indicated. Please note that there may be a slight round-off error.

[31] According to the US Census Bureau's 2009 Population Estimate, the City of Fort Lauderdale's population was 184,982.

[32] The Wave, History http://www.wavestreetcar.com/project_details and Sun-Sentinel. "Downtown rail wins funding from congressional budget committee." July 22, 2010. www.sun-sentinel.com

[33] The Wave, History http://www.wavestreetcar.com/project_details

[34] The Wave, Project Details, http://www.wavestreetcar.com/project_history

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