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# City of Palm Beach Gardens

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# Community Background Report

## City of Palm Beach Gardens

### Boundaries

North: 150<sup>th</sup> Street

South: Bee Line Highway

East: Prosperity Farms Road

West: 125<sup>th</sup> Ave

**Community Type:** Municipality

### History

The City of Palm Beach Gardens, the largest municipality in Palm Beach County, occupies 56 sq. miles in the northern part of the county. The city is located 80 miles north of Miami and 14 miles north of West Palm Beach, and has a population of over 41,000 as of 2009.<sup>1</sup>

On March 20, 1959 John D. MacArthur, multimillionaire insurance magnate and landowner, announced his vision for Palm Beach City, a “garden-city” of 4,000 acres and 55,000 people. At the time of incorporation, when permission for use of the name Palm Beach City was denied, MacArthur chose Palm Beach Gardens instead. MacArthur was a lover of nature, and envisioned Palm Beach Gardens as a city full of waterways, rolling terrain and rich foliage. The story of the famous banyan trees, located at the entrance to the new city at the intersection of Northlake Boulevard and MacArthur Boulevard, speaks to this. When MacArthur heard that an 80-year-old banyan tree was to be cut down in a nearby neighborhood, he decided to purchase and move the tree to Palm Beach Gardens. The tree weighed 75 tons, was 60 feet tall and had a limb spread of 125 feet. It took two cranes and two cargo trailers to move the tree to its new home on April 26 of 1961. With some adventures (for more information on the banyan trees please see <http://pbgfl.com/content/72/90/2144.aspx>), the tree was finally planted in the hole that had been prepared for it. The move cost MacArthur \$30,000 and over 1,000 hours of labor. A second, younger and lighter banyan joined the first the following year<sup>2</sup>, and the two giants continue to grace the entrance to the city to this day.

The care taken and money spent to build this community of rolling terrains, waterways and magnificent foliage attracted many prestigious investors. In 1964-1965 MacArthur attracted the Professional Golfers’ Association (PGA) to Palm Beach Gardens, where tournaments were held until 1971. There are 12 golf courses within the city, and the PGA still has its headquarters here.<sup>3</sup>

The City of Palm Beach Gardens has grown steadily since the late 1950s, and experienced rapid development in the 1960s. However, the city’s population has not yet reached

the 55,000 residents envisioned by MacArthur. A new wave of development was triggered in the late 1980s, when the 1.3million-square-foot Gardens Mall opened. Development advanced again in 1999 when the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation sold 5,000 acres of land within the city. The City Council, entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring quality development in keeping with the city’s slogan “Growing Together in the Gardens,” reached agreements with the purchasers to manage this new growth. Today Palm Beach Gardens has over 30% of its land mass dedicated to green space, with recreation programs tailored to residents of all ages, an award-winning Art in Public Places program, and a pro-active business climate.<sup>4</sup>

## Community Dynamics

A major influential player in the commercial community of Palm Beach Gardens is the not-for-profit John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

The comprehensive plan for the development of Palm Beach Gardens is called “Our Vision – A Strategic Plan”. It is the result of hard work and input from many: the City Council, the Blue Ribbon Visioning Committee, city staff, and innumerable citizens of Palm Beach Gardens. Some of the goals and objectives outlined in this document are “to create a sense of identity that establishes Palm Beach Gardens as a community”, “to create gathering places in the city” and “to create pathway linkages throughout the city”.<sup>5</sup> The document is to govern the process of development until 2015.

The City of Palm Beach Gardens has a well-organized website with a lot of information about community dynamics on its numerous pages. Please visit <http://www.pbgfl.com>.

## Demographic Highlights<sup>6</sup>

***The population of Palm Beach Gardens has been increasing and is projected to continue increasing.***

Between 2000 and 2009 the population of Palm Beach Gardens grew by 18%, reaching 41,644. It is projected to grow another 6% by 2014.

***The overwhelming majority of residents of Palm Beach Gardens are White and non-Hispanic.***

In 2009 91% of residents of Palm Beach Gardens classified themselves as White, 2.6% classified themselves as Black, and 3% classified themselves as Asian. 92% of residents of Palm Beach Gardens classified themselves as non-Hispanic.

***The overwhelming majority of residents of Palm Beach Gardens speak English and are native-born citizens.***

In 2009 87% of Palm Beach Gardens residents spoke English, 6% spoke Spanish, and 5% spoke another Indo-European language. 88% of the city’s residents were native-born citizens, 6% were naturalized citizens, and 6% were non-citizens.

***The median household income in Palm Beach Gardens is considerably higher than in Palm Beach County.***

In 2009-the median household income in Palm Beach Gardens was \$44,167, compared to Palm Beach County's \$62,114. The average household income in Palm Beach Gardens was \$120,606, compared to Palm Beach County's \$91,726, compared to the USA's \$72,730.

***More than 1/4 of all homes in Palm Beach Gardens were built after 1999.***

Almost 28% of all homes in Palm Beach Gardens were built after 1999, as compared to 23% in Palm Beach County, and 20 % in all of the USA.

## **Transportation Trends<sup>7</sup>**

Palm Beach Gardens can be reached directly from the Intracoastal Waterway, Interstate 95, and the Florida Turnpike, providing residents and visitors with ample entry and exit points. Amtrak service is located in West Palm Beach, approximately nine miles away.

The tables below illustrate projected transportation trends in the City of Palm Beach Gardens.

Average household transportation costs:

2009: City, \$9,946.67/County, \$9,162.52

2014: City, \$12,189.60/County, \$11,276.10

Average household transportation costs for public transportation:

2009: City, \$725.67/County, \$607.69

2014: City, \$931.98/County, \$783.55

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

Work at home: City, 6 percent/County, 5 percent

Less than 15 minutes: City, 25 percent/County, 20 percent

15-29 minutes: City, 44 percent /County, 37 percent

30-59 minutes: City, 21 percent /County, 31 percent

60+ minutes: City, 5 percent /County, 7 percent

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

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

Public Transportation to Work: City, 0.18 percent / County, 1 percent

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

Forecasted number of vehicles per household, 2014:

No vehicles: City, 3 percent / County, 6 percent

1 vehicle: City, 38 percent / County, 41 percent

2 vehicles: City, 47 percent / County, 42 percent

3 vehicles: City, 10 percent / County, 9 percent

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

## Special Events

The Palm Beach Gardens Department of Parks and Recreation publishes a yearly brochure with details about special events and recreation activities in the city. For more information, please visit <http://www.pbgfl.com/content/76/default.aspx> or email [recinfo@pbgfl.com](mailto:recinfo@pbgfl.com). Below is a sample of events listed as of February, 2011.

**Grillin' in the Gardens** – This annual March event celebrates the art of barbecue with live music, entertainment and a barbecuing competition, held at the City Municipal Complex.

**Veterans' Day Celebration** - Held each year in November, this event celebrates veterans with a patriotic concert and ceremony.

**Gardens Gift and Craft Show** –The holiday-season craft show takes place each December at the Burns Road Recreation Center and showcases vendors in over 100 booths.

**Daddy-Daughter Date Night** –At this yearly event in February girls and young women can enjoy a special evening of dancing, dinner and games with their dad, grandpa or uncle. Usually held at the Burns Road Gym, the 2011 Date Night had to be held at the Palm Beach Gardens Doubletree Hotel to accommodate increased attendance.

**Egg Extravaganza** –The City of Palm Beach Gardens holds an annual Easter egg hunt for the little ones.

**Gardens Games** – In 2011 Palm Beach Gardens will host the first annual Gardens Games – a Florida Senior Games qualifier. The Florida Senior Games is an annual event of competitive and recreational events for men and women aged 50 and older. For more information about Gardens Games please contact Justin Lucas at (561)630-1100 or Susan Foley at (561)628-3951.

**Gardens Green Market** – 2010 marked the 9<sup>th</sup> season of the Gardens Green Market. Featuring live entertainment, produce, plants, flowers, handmade crafts and prepared food and drink items, the event takes place each Sunday in Gardens Park, rain or shine, October through April. For more information please visit <http://www.pbgfl.com/content/76/144/default.aspx> .

## Business Landscape

Though the recent economic downturn has affected Palm Beach Gardens, the city remains focused on achieving sustainable economic development through a balanced and diversified economy.<sup>8</sup> In January of 2009 the City of Palm Beach Gardens filed a request for approval of “Phase II”, a 681-acre planned community focused on biotechnology and bioscience research industries. This sector is already a major player in the Palm Beach Gardens economy. Among the largest employers in Palm Beach Gardens are BIOMET 3i, Inc., Belcan Engineering Group, Anspach Companies, CH2M Hill Inc., the Professional Golfers Association of America (PGA), the Forbes Company, Florida Blood Centers, LRP Publications, Cross Match Technologies, Catalfumo Construction and Gold Coast Distributors.<sup>9</sup> In 2009 the top

employment sectors were education, health and social services (20 percent), professional, scientific, management and administrative service (15 percent), finance, insurance, real estate and rental and leasing (10 percent), arts, entertainment, accommodation and food services (11 percent), and retail trade (11 percent).

## Sources

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<sup>1</sup> SimplyMap. <http://www.simplymap.com>.

<sup>2</sup> City of Palm Beach Gardens. The History of the Banyan Trees. <http://pbgfl.com/content/72/90/2144.aspx>.

<sup>3</sup> City of Palm Beach Gardens. City History. <http://www.pbgfl.com/content/72/90/default.aspx>.

<sup>4</sup> City of Palm Beach Gardens. <http://www.pbgfl.com/>.

<sup>5</sup> City of Palm Beach Gardens. “Our Vision – A Strategic Plan”. <http://www.pbgfl.com/content/72/94/default.aspx>.

<sup>6</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all statistics in this section downloaded from <http://www.simplymap.com>.

<sup>7</sup> Unless otherwise noted, all statistics in this section downloaded from <http://www.simplymap.com>.

<sup>8</sup> City of Palm Beach Gardens. City of Palm Beach Gardens Comprehensive Plan. <http://www.pbgfl.com/content/74/118/1343/1346/2669.aspx>.

<sup>9</sup> Palm Beach County Business Development Board. Palm Beach County Top Employers. <http://www.bdb.org>.