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City of Tamarac

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Community Background Report

City of Tamarac

Boundaries

North: Southgate Boulevard (from Sawgrass Expressway) and Bailey Road (from NW 64th Avenue to State Road 7)

South: West Commercial Boulevard (from Sawgrass Expressway to NW 64th Avenue) and NW 44th Street (from NW 64 Avenue to State Road 7)

East: SW 81st Avenue and State Road 7, small portion between State Road 7 and Pompano Parkway

West: Sawgrass Expressway

Community Type: Municipality

Report Last Updated: May, 2011

History¹

The City of Tamarac was incorporated on July 19, 1963 into a 12 square mile city. Kenneth Behring, the founder and original developer of Tamarac, had moved to Florida from Wisconsin where he was a successful entrepreneur and businessman. One of his original businesses prior to moving to Florida was a car wash called “Car-A-Mat” – which is Tamarac spelled backwards. However, according to the Tamarac Historical Society, the name could have also come from the Tamarac Country Club that Mr. Behring belonged to at the time and was close by, from the name of a tree, or an Indian chief.

Mr. Behring was involved in land development projects in Florida and later in California where he built planned communities and other developments (including Tamarac).² It is interesting to note that by the late 1960s, Mr. Behring had become the largest single-family home-builder in the southeastern United States.³ As such, Mr. Behring was an important force in shaping the newly established city between 1962 – 1972.

According to the Tamarac Historical Society, Mr. Behring wanted to develop homes with small lots that offered the convenience and care-free lifestyle of a condominium, with the privacy of a single-family home. Since the City of Fort Lauderdale would not allow him to develop homes on the small lot size, he decided to acquire unincorporated land and establish his own city. The “carefree” aspect of the development became one of the main selling features of Tamarac in the early days and was marketed as the “maintenance free lifestyle” and was unique in that the “living” would be in unattached single-family homes. For relatively small monthly fee, residents were provided lawn maintenance, roof cleaning, house painting and use of the clubhouse and all

activities within the community –the types of services and amenities that made condominium living attractive.

The first subdivision in the eastern section of Tamarac, Tamarac Lakes, was originally founded as active retirement communities. Tamarac Lakes was developed into small single-family homes on small lots that were sold starting at \$8,990 and a \$23 a month fee for “maintenance-free lifestyle” amenities and services. These homes sold so quickly to snow-birds that several more neighborhoods quickly were developed using the same formula of 250 homes surrounding a common clubhouse.

As Tamarac began to spread westward, the Mainlands developed with same basic principles, but with slightly larger homes and adjacent to golf courses. Later, in 1968, the Woodlands were developed and considered the city’s “crowning achievement.” The Woodlands was a private golf course community with estate size lots appealing to more affluent residents and is where Mr. Behring settled his family until 1972 when he left Tamarac and relocated to California.

Community Dynamics

The City of Tamarac has evolved from a retirement community of snow birds to a more diverse city. In particular, Tamarac is grappling with changing demographics in terms of race, ethnicity, and age. One of the greatest changes has been in senior-citizen population. Twenty years ago, the U.S. Census reported that the average age rate in the city had decrease by a little over 10 years.⁴ However, it is important to note that despite these changes, the city’s median age remains older than the county. Currently the city’s population median age is 47, whereas the county’s median age of 38.⁵ Furthermore, it should be noted that recent data shows that the city’s population is expected to increase in the older age groups through 2013.⁶ Regardless, the demographic shifts can create community tensions. According to the Sun-Sentential, “the mix of young and old has been the source of neighborhood clashes as young families move into homes in neighborhoods once limited to seniors only.”⁷

Despite the growing pains caused by demographic shifts, the City of Tamarac’s quality of life has been acknowledged by the White House which designated the city a "Millennium Community" and the U.S. Conference of Mayors named it one of America’s most livable cities through its "City Livability Award" program.⁸ Furthermore, the City of Tamarac was one of the three Broward County cities were recognized by *Business Week* magazine as best places to raise children.⁹ In addition, Tamarac to boast the lowest crime rate for a city of its size in Broward County.¹⁰

Also worthy of mention is the city’s green initiatives. In 2008 the City of Tamarac was certified at the silver level as a Florida Green Local Government by the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC).¹¹ The City of Tamarac was the first municipality to be awarded this designation in South Florida and was also the first City in Broward to be certified.¹² In 2010, the City of Tamarac improved its FGBC designation to the Gold level; fewer than 13 local governments throughout the state hold the Gold level designation, and Tamarac is one of 3 in South Florida.¹³

In addition to its recognition for being a Florida Green Local Government, the City of Tamarac was also awarded by the Florida League of Cities with the Environmental Stewardship Award (one of three Florida Municipal Achievement Awards designed to recognize innovations and excellence in municipal government) has been recognized seventeen times as a Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation for the City's commitment to its "urban forestry."¹⁴

Demographic Highlights¹⁵

The City of Tamarac's population currently represents 3 percent of the County's overall population size and it is projected to slightly decrease through the 2009-2014 year period.

The City of Tamarac's current population is 56,596 and population density per sq. mile is 4,484.¹⁶ The family population in Tamarac is currently 75 percent. It is projected that there will a slight population decrease (1 percent) in the 2009-2014 year period.

Overall, households in the City of Tamarac are projected to grow through 2013.

As of 2009 there were 26,538 households in Tamarac with an average two-person household size. The household size falls in line with the county and it is projected to remain the same in the City of Tamarac throughout 2013. The city had a 4 percent increase in overall households between 2000 and 2009 and it is projected to have a 6 percent growth between the 2008-2013 year period. The median household income in 2009 was \$44,563, considerably less than the County's \$56,291.

The vast majority of housing units were owner occupied housing units and only 7 percent of units were vacant.

In 2009 Tamarac had 28,490 housing units of which 93 percent of them were occupied. The majority of the units are owner occupied—approximately 22 percent are renter occupied.

Tamarac's population is projected to get older --especially in the older age brackets. This is a reversal in a trend from just 20 years ago when the average age from the 1990 US Census population age declined by 10 1/2 years.¹⁷

Currently the City's population median age is 47, older than the County's median age of 38. The City of Tamarac's median age in 2013 is projected to be 53, much greater than the County's projected median age of 39.

In 2009 bulk of the City's population was White, spoke English and were Native Citizens.

The majority, 73 percent of Tamarac's population was White of which White Non-Hispanics make up 59 percent of the population. Approximately 19 percent of the city's population is Hispanic and 16 percent are Black. Projections indicate that White population in 2013 will remain the majority (76 percent) while Blacks will slightly decline to 13 percent. Hispanics are projected to slightly increase.

In 2009, the majority (76 percent) of the city's population were native citizens; 12 percent were naturalized US citizens and 13 were not a US Citizen. The majority of the city's population, 75 percent spoke English, followed by 15 which spoke Spanish while 8 percent spoke Indo-European languages.

Transportation Trends¹⁸

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

Percent of the employed population travel time to work, 2014

	City	County
Work at Home	2 %	4 %
Less than 15 minutes	16 %	16 %
15-29 Minutes	35 %	33 %
30-59 Minutes	39 %	38 %
60+ Minutes	7 %	8 %

Average household transportation costs

	City	County
2009	\$8,151.86	\$8,836.33
2014	\$9,988.23	\$10,880.30

Average household transportation costs in public transportation

	City	County
2009	\$451.24	\$555.02
2014	\$571.46	\$721.64

Forecasted percent of vehicles per household, 2014

	City	County
0 vehicles	8 %	7 %
1 vehicle	53 %	40 %
2 vehicles	33 %	40 %
3 vehicles	5 %	10 %
4+ vehicles	1 %	3 %

Forecasted percent employed individuals means of transportation to work, 2014

	City	County
Car, Truck, Van to Work	94 %	93 %
Public Transportation to Work	2 %	2 %
Other Transportation to Work	2 %	2 %
Work at Home	2 %	4 %

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

Extensive Fixed-Route Services¹⁹

Broward County Transit provides seven routes in the city that allow residents to circulate within Tamarac or travel to the rest of the county. Wider travel is possible through Tamarac's transit center within a shopping center at the intersection of two major roads. From that point, visitors and residents are able to travel across the county and to Palm Beach County or south to Miami-Dade County. This system provides Tamarac residents about 7,800 rides a week and slightly over 404,000 rides a year. The reduction in automobile traffic stemming from use of the bus system eliminates three to four serious accidents a year and reduces 24 tons of automobile emissions from the atmosphere.

Dial-A-Ride²⁰

The Tamarac Social Services Department provides a demand-response or dial-a-ride system that allows elderly residents to call in advance for transportation between their homes and medical offices or shopping centers. This system provides about 32,000 rides a year, further reducing accidents and pollution. Office of Social Services telephone contact number is 954-597-3642 or for transportation issues, to register for our Transportation Program, or to schedule appointments for rides, please call the Transportation Office direct line at 954-597-3649.²¹

The City of Tamarac in addition to its many recognitions, also won the 2009 STAR Award from the Beverly Foundation for their Great Escape program, which awards \$10,000 and will allow the city to install a senior transportation program.²² The Great Escape program was initiated in 2004 to transport seniors on a weekly basis to popular destinations such as museums, local attractions and shopping malls as well as vital, life sustaining destinations such as pharmacies and banks.²³ The STAR Award will be used to expand the city's current senior transportation by adding monthly Great Escape trips to provide seniors opportunities to experience cultural, social and wellness activities in which they would otherwise not be able to participate.²⁴

Expansion of Pedestrian Ways²⁵

The city also encourages the development of pedestrian ways to further reduce traffic congestion by providing this alternative mode of transportation. In fact, the city recently obtained funding to construct just over 11 miles of new sidewalks. This will allow for parts of the existing sidewalk system to be connected with parks, shopping centers, and new residential development. The majority of employed individuals own a motorized vehicle and take anywhere from 15 minutes to 60 minutes of commute time to work.

Bikeways Study²⁶

The 2007 City of Tamarac Integrated Bikeway/Walkway System Feasibility Study was a first step towards establishing an integrated bikeway/walkway system providing safe connectivity between city facilities, schools, shopping areas, residential areas and Broward County's Greenway. The feasibility study assessed current conditions, the practicality of implementing such a program and offered suggestions. The City of Tamarac is presently reviewing the findings of the feasibility study in hopes of designing a bikeway/walkway system that is safe and efficient for Tamarac residents. Notwithstanding the establishment of a comprehensive bikeway/walkway system, the city provides for bicycle travel through the use of bike-lanes and wide paved shoulder areas. Pedestrian traffic is facilitated by sidewalks along all major roadways.

State Road 7 (ST7) North Lauderdale-Tamarac Charette

The SR7 North Lauderdale-Tamarac Charette is part of a series of charattes focused on the entire length of SR7 in Broward County. The series' main goals are to create a plan for redevelopment and to accommodate future mass transit. The SR 7/U.S. 441 Collaborative was the impetus of this planning effort, and its membership includes the fourteen local governments that span the Broward County section of SR 7 and ex-officio members. The collaborative is facilitated by the staff of the South Florida Regional Planning Council. Specifically, the North Lauderdale-Tamarac Charrette looks at the redevelopment of SR 7 between Kimberly Boulevard and Commercial Boulevard. Completed in 2006, the charrette report includes the following features:

1. forge a unique identity for the corridor
2. landscape and aesthetic improvements
3. consider a long-term redevelopment strategy for the corridor
4. illustrate transit/multi-modal options along SR 7
5. investigate traffic issues at McNab Road and SR 7 Turnpike exit
6. bus shelter designs
7. better integration of the Fort Lauderdale well fields corridor
8. test urban school prototypes
9. overall road connectivity - better internal mobility

Special Events

The City of Tamarac regularly updates the calendar of events. For more detailed information regarding any of the city events, please visit: <http://www.tamarac.org/welcome/events-calendar.aspx> and for sponsorship opportunities, please visit: <http://www.tamarac.org/media/127442/sponsorship%20book-final.pdf>

Below is a sample of the reoccurring special events held in the City of Tamarac:

All American Celebration- Independence Day is celebrated every 4th of July from 6pm – 9pm at the Tamarac Sports Complex (9901 NW 77 Street). The event features rides and games, special appearance by Uncle Sam & Betsy Ross and fireworks display. Please call Parks and Recreation at 954-597-3620 for additional information.

Dive-In Movies- approximately 350 residents meet once a quarter at the Caporella Aquatic Center (9300 NW 58th ST) at 8:30PM to see an outdoor movie. Please see the sponsorship book for more information: <http://www.tamarac.org/media/127442/sponsorship%20book-final.pdf> or call the call the Tamarac Parks and Recreation Department at 954- 597-3620.

Father's Day Fishing Tournament- children and their fathers celebrate a “Day on the Lake” fishing with each other the Saturday before Father's Day. The event is held at Caporella Park (9300 NW 58TH ST) from 9am to 12 pm. Please see the sponsorship book for more information: <http://www.tamarac.org/media/127442/sponsorship%20book-final.pdf> or call the call the Tamarac Parks and Recreation Department at 954- 597-3620.

Princess Party- is an event for girls ages 5 to 11 years old; are refreshments and games are provided. The party takes place the 3rd Saturday in August at the Tamarac Community Center

(8601 West Commercial Blvd) at 11 am. Please see the sponsorship book for more information: <http://www.tamarac.org/media/127442/sponsorship%20book-final.pdf> or call the call the Tamarac Parks and Recreation Department at 954- 597-3620.

Tamarac Turkey 5K Trot- every Thanksgiving morning, the race takes place from 7:30am – to9:00am. The race begins at Tamarac City Hall (7525 NW 88 Avenue) and winds through the Woodmont neighborhood. Please see the sponsorship book for more information: <http://www.tamarac.org/media/127442/sponsorship%20book-final.pdf> or call Parks and Recreation at 954-597-3620 for additional information.

Twilight Concert Series- is a concert series in February, March and April that bands and solo artists from all over the state of Florida. The concerts are held at the Tamarac Sports Complex (9901 NW 77th St.) from 7-9PM. For more information, call the Tamarac Parks and Recreation Department at 954- 597-3620.

Veteran’s Day Parade and Celebration- this city event on November 11th features a parade beginning at City Hall (7525 NW 88 Avenue), traveling north on Pine Island and then east on Southgate Boulevard. Immediately following the parade is a traditional Veterans Day Ceremony. Please see the sponsorship book for more information: <http://www.tamarac.org/media/127442/sponsorship%20book-final.pdf> or call the call the Tamarac Parks and Recreation Department at 954- 597-3620.

Other city events include: Classical Concert (2nd Friday in April), Memorial Day Ceremony (May), Spring Fest (Saturday before Easter), Peter Cottontail’s Wet N Wild Egg Hunt (two Saturdays before Easter), Spook-A-Lot for Tots (2nd Saturday in October), Halloween Hoopla (Halloween night), Santa’s Workshop (2nd Saturday in December), Holiday Lighting Ceremony (1st Wednesday in December), and Senior Dances (Every Thursday). For more information regarding these events, please visit: <http://www.tamarac.org/media/127442/sponsorship%20book-final.pdf> or call the Special Events Manager at 954-597-3635.

The city publishes a Quarterly newspaper called the **Tam-A-Gram**. http://www.tamarac.org/media/150734/tag_july-sept_2010_web%20version.pdf

Annually the city publishes: The Tam-A-Gram Extra Hurricane Guide, the Water Quality Report, Annual Report and Calendar, Tam-a-Gram Extras, and other informational pieces as needed including brochures, pamphlets, and event flyers.

For more information on publications and media related questions contact: Andrew Berns Public and Economic Affairs Officer, (954) 597-3513, andyb@tamarac.org or Chad Quinn Public Information Specialist, (954) 597-3523, chadq@tamarac.org.

Business Landscape

The majority (18 percent) of the City of Tamarac's workforce population are employed in the Educational, Health and Social Services industries, 13 percent in Retail Trade and 12 percent is employed in the Professional, Scientific, Management, and Administrative Services.²⁷ In 2009, 16 percent of Tamarac's population was unemployed.²⁸

High Performance Organization (HPO) Standards

The City of Tamarac has undertaken the High Performance Organization (HPO) standards by utilizing the Florida Sterling framework for its business development and community. The HPO pushes the City of Tamarac to increase its capacity and "organizational fine-tuning and development, historically relegated to the private sector".²⁹

500-acre Tamarac Commerce Park

Within this park is Westpoint, a mixed-use business project with a pre-developed master plan that calls for a 150-room hotel, office and retail sites, and 26 acres of lakes.³⁰ Some of the City's major employers are: City Furniture, University Hospital and Medical Center, Mayor's Jewelers Corporate Offices, Convergys, Toshiba, Zephyrhills³¹

According to the City's Economic Development Department, City Furniture has invested \$45 million in a one-million-square-foot corporate headquarter and regional distribution center. Furthermore, it is projected that the park may include or be surrounded by Arch Aluminum and Glass, L.C., Aurafin, Covergys, Sonnys Enterprises, Inc., Interplex Sunbelt Inc., Culligan Water.³²

National and regional businesses³³

The City Commission first adopted the initial five year Economic Development Strategy in February of 2001. The City's Economic Development Strategy emphasizes the retention of existing businesses, facilitates the redevelopment of commercial areas, and seeks to attract new businesses. Upon the recommendation of the City Manager and approval of the City Commission, incentives may be provided to new businesses. Companies that have been recruited to Tamarac most recently include City Furniture's corporate offices and regional distribution facility, Convergys, Hampton Inn, Inn Town Suites, Toshiba, The Sun-Sentinel, Mayors Jewelers corporate offices, Cheddars Casual Cafe and Applebee's.

Related Links

City of Tamarac

<http://www.tamarac.org/>

Strategic Plan

<http://www.tamarac.org/strategic-plan.aspx>

Current Development List, as of June 2010

<http://www.tamarac.org/media/149387/june%202010%20current%20development%20list.pdf>

Tamarac’s Chamber of Commerce
<http://www.tamaracchamber.org/>

State Road 7 North Lauderdale-Tamarac Charrette
http://www.tcrpc.org/departments/studio/sr_7_collaborative/n_lauderdale_tamarac.htm

Sources

- ¹ Unless otherwise stated, all information in this section is from the Tamarac Historic Society, <http://tamarachistoricalsociety.blogspot.com/>
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- ⁴ Community Development Department, City of Tamarac, <http://www.tamarac.org/city-departments/com-development--code/demographics.aspx>
- ⁵ Simply Maps
- ⁶ Simply Maps
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- ⁸ Sun Sentinel, “Tamarac Real Estate.” 2007 <http://web.archive.org/web/20070314171538/http://www.sun-sentinel.com/classified/realestate/community/sfl-homespot-tamarac,0,7833813.story>
- ⁹ Broward Alliance. “Broward cities ranked top for raising children” 2009. <http://www.browardalliance.org/index.php?src=news&refno=777&category=Press%20Releases>
- ¹⁰ City of Tamarac. “Welcome.” <http://www.tamarac.org/city-departments/city-manager/economic-development/goals-and-objectives.aspx>
- ¹¹ Greater Fort Lauderdale Broward Alliance, “Tamarac Named First Green Government in South Florida” 2008. <http://www.browardalliance.org>
- ¹² Green Initiatives, The City of Tamarac, <http://www.tamarac.org/green-initiatives/transportation.aspx>
- ¹³ The Broward Alliance, “Tamarac Certified a Gold Level Green Local Government” 2010. <http://www.browardalliance.org>
- ¹⁴ The Broward Alliance, “Arbor Day Foundation Names Tamarac Tree City USA® Community: this marks the seventeenth year the City has been named a Tree City USA.” 2010. <http://www.browardalliance.org/>
- ¹⁵ All statistics are derived from Simply Maps unless otherwise stated. Please note that figures have been rounded and may produce slight round-off errors.
- ¹⁶ Please note that the US Census Bureau’s 2009 Population Estimates for the City of Tamarac estimate that the population is 59,655.
- ¹⁷ Community Development Department, City of Tamarac, <http://www.tamarac.org/city-departments/com-development--code/demographics.aspx>
- ¹⁸ All statistics are derived from Simply Maps unless otherwise stated. Please note that figures have been rounded and may produce slight round-off errors.
- ¹⁹ U.S. Mayors Conference, “Promoting Traffic Safety by Encouraging Increased Transit Ridership.” http://www.usmayors.org/bestpractices/traffic/best_traffic_initiative_tamarac.htm
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ City of Tamarac, <http://www.tamarac.org/city-departments/parks-and-recreation/social-services.aspx>
- ²² The Broward Alliance, “Tamarac Wins Senior Transportation Service Award—2009 STAR Award from the Beverly Foundation Helps Reinstate Program Cut from Budget.” 2009. <http://www.browardalliance.org>
- ²³ Ibid.
- ²⁴ Ibid.
- ²⁵ U.S. Mayors Conference, “Promoting Traffic Safety by Encouraging Increased Transit Ridership.” http://www.usmayors.org/bestpractices/traffic/best_traffic_initiative_tamarac.htm

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