

Cutler Bay

County

Miami-Dade

Boundaries

North: Southwest 184th Street

South: Southwest 232nd Street

West: South Dixie Highway/US 1

East: Biscayne National Park

Community Type

Municipality

History

The Town of Cutler Bay was named after Massachusetts native Dr. William Cutler, who encouraged the settlement of the area after visiting around 1880. In the early 1900s the Florida East Coast Railway was extended south to the area then known as Cutler, near what is now the Charles Deering Estate. Cutler was where people settling in the undeveloped Homestead area went to get their supplies.

In 1992 Hurricane Andrew made landfall near Cutler Ridge. The storm left the area almost totally destroyed, with nearly every building suffering major damage.

In May of 2002 the Cutler Bay Steering Committee met to discuss the formation of a municipal advisory committee. The new committee would advise on the incorporation of the Cutler Ridge area into the Town of Cutler Ridge. The movement to incorporate was spurred in part by efforts to recover from Hurricane Andrew. In November 2005 voters approved the charter and chose the name "Cutler Bay" for the county's 35th municipality, over "Cutler Ridge". Cutler Bay is governed by a five-member town council and operates under a council-manager form of government.

The town's northern border runs along Southwest 184th Street (Eureka Drive) east of US 1 to the coast. The southern border is Southwest 232nd Street, north of Black Point Marina, the largest public marina in the Miami area. The town's boundaries include the northeast section of Biscayne National Park, the

area formerly known as Cutler Ridge to the west, and the neighborhood of Lakes by the Bay to the east. The town is bordered to the north by the Village of Palmetto Bay, to the west by unincorporated South Miami Heights, and to the southwest by unincorporated Goulds.

Due to Cutler Bay's location in a flat, low-lying coastal wetland area on Biscayne Bay, the area is prone to flooding. During the rainy season, Cutler Bay's many canals, channels, and lakes are frequently full of water, and the groundwater table is also full and close to the surface. Flood hazards include rainfall from tropical storms, hurricanes, and other heavy rain events. The municipal website for the Town of Cutler Bay includes a flood awareness page with detailed information on flood hazards, protection of natural wetlands for flood mitigation, advice on building responsibly, and general flood preparedness.

Community Dynamics

As of 2020, Cutler Bay had a population of 43,928. The median age was 38.4 and the median household income was \$75,699. Between 2019 and 2020 the population of Cutler Bay declined from 44,222 to 43,928, a reduction of 0.665%. At the same time, the median household income rose from \$75,101 to \$75,699, an increase of .796%. Regarding ethnicity in 2020, 53.7% of the population was White Hispanic, 26.1% was White non-Hispanic, 10.4% was Black, 2.9% was Other Hispanic, and 1.49% was Asian. None of the households in Cutler Bay reported speaking a non-English language at home as a primary language, and 86.2% of the population were US citizens. As of 2020, 42.1% of the residents of Cutler Bay were born outside the US, which is much higher than the national average of 13.5%. In 2019, the percentage of foreign-born citizens was 40.8%, indicating that the rate has been increasing. In 2020, the median property value was \$304,100 and the homeownership rate was 66.1%.

Business Landscape

Single-family residential development is the predominant land use in Cutler Bay, with commercial development concentrated along US 1 on the town's western boundary and, to a lesser extent, along Old Cutler Road in the central section of the town. Southland Mall is located on US 1 at the far western edge of Cutler Bay, anchored by Macy's, the Regal Cinema, and a selection of big box stores. Developers Electra America and BH Group have unveiled preliminary plans for the redevelopment and reinvention of the mall. The 80-acre, \$1 billion redevelopment will be one of the largest projects of its kind in the Southeast and will be called "Southplace City Center." A YouTube video

dated September 2022 appears in the business section of the Town of Cutler Bay municipal website, with Mayor Tim Meerbott giving a brief overview of the scheme. It includes expanded retail space, dining and entertainment venues, and an initial 450 apartment units. Groundbreaking for the residential units is scheduled for mid-2023. There are tentative plans to expand the residential component to over 4,000 units over the next seven years. In addition, there will be medical office space, a band shell, green space, and a grand new entrance from US 1. There will be a pedestrian friendly bridge connecting the community to the new rapid transit bus system known as the “South Dade TransitWay”, under construction since 2022. Bike paths, pedestrian walkways, and trolley stops will help minimize the use of cars. The project is expected to bring a significant number of jobs and substantial revenues to the area.

Cutler Bay is served by multiple area business associations, including the Cutler Bay Business Association, Accelerate South Dade, and the South Dade Chamber of Commerce.

Transportation Characteristics

Cutler Bay has five main transportation arteries. US 1/South Dixie Highway and the Ronald Reagan Turnpike run along the town’s western edge and carry the most traffic. Old Cutler Road and Southwest 216th Street carry traffic through the central part of the town. Southwest 184th Street/Eureka Drive forms the town’s northern boundary.

Cutler Bay is an automobile-dominated area. According to DATA USA 2020 statistics, most people in Cutler Bay drove alone to work, with an average commute time of 43.3 minutes. The average car ownership was two cars per household.

Situated within the Town of Cutler Bay are three regionally significant private and public structures, which together serve as a catalyst for regional transportation development. The Southland Mall, the South Dade Government Center, and the Dennis C. Moss Cultural Arts Center comprise a nucleus on the town’s western edge, requiring adequate public transportation connectivity to minimize regional traffic.

The South Dade TransitWay, an ongoing bus transportation project scheduled for completion in March of 2024, will run along the western border of Cutler Bay on the network’s South Corridor. It is being built as part of Miami-Dade County’s SMART mass transit plan. There will be 14 stations along the South Corridor, featuring amenities normally associated with rail transit. The

stations will be air conditioned and are designed for conversion to rail use in the future if demand hits certain levels.

The South Dade TransitWay extends from the Dadeland South Metrorail Station to the Southwest 344th Street Park-and-Ride/Transit Terminal, and it provides a mobility connection between the Miami Central Business District and the Village of Pinecrest, the Village of Palmetto Bay, the Town of Cutler Bay, the City of Homestead, and Florida City.

There are two free local transportation services available in Cutler Bay. “GO Connect” is an on-demand public transit service that provides residents and visitors with rides, booked through a mobile app, to and from the South Dade TransitWay and anywhere within the Town of Cutler Bay boundaries. The “Town Circulator” bus is another free option, stopping at all bus stops along its route, which follows the Miami-Dade Metrobus line #200. Users can view the progress of buses in real time online.

The Town of Cutler Bay was awarded a grant from the Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) to prepare a Transportation Master Plan Update in 2021. This study of the existing and future conditions of the transportation system within the town, including the roadway networks, the transit system, and the pedestrian and bicycle networks, was intended to determine how each interacts with the existing and future land uses.

The plan entailed using public engagement in the generation of transportation solutions. Four public involvement workshops were held in 2021. As a result, a project bank of multi-modal solutions was developed. Probable costs for these were determined and the projects were prioritized and placed in an implementation plan. This update to the transportation master plan was intended to help develop an additional list of multimodal transportation projects and policy initiatives that could be undertaken in the future.

The Town of Cutler Bay Transportation Master Plan Update was published in August of 2021 and appears in its entirety on the Cutler Bay municipal website.

Sources

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