

Community Background Report

Liberty City

County

Miami-Dade

Boundaries

North: Northwest 79th Street
South: Northwest 36th Street
West: Northwest 19th Avenue
East: Northwest 7th Avenue

Community Type

Neighborhood

History

Liberty City, also sometimes called “Model City”, is historic as the first Black suburban neighborhood of the City of Miami. The neighborhood’s name comes from the Liberty Square Housing Project, which was begun in 1934 and opened in 1937, during President Roosevelt’s administration. This new development of apartment units was intended to relieve the overcrowding and slum conditions existing in Overtown, and the related spread of disease within Overtown’s boundaries and beyond.

Liberty City and the adjacent Brownsville neighborhood thrived during the 1940s and 1950s as middle-income Black communities. The construction of Interstate 95 in Overtown and the decline in official racial restrictions, brought about by Civil Rights reforms, caused drastic changes in Liberty City during the 1960s. Increasing numbers of lower-income elderly people and welfare-dependent families migrated to Liberty City after their displacement from inner city Overtown, turning the area into a dangerous, low-income ghetto. There was a large-scale flight of middle- and higher-income Blacks, and other Blacks like West Indian Americans, to suburban areas like Florida City and Miami Gardens in southern and northern Dade County, respectively. Crime became prevalent in the neighborhood as the 1960s and 1970s saw race riots in Liberty City, notably in 1968 during the Republican National Convention held in Miami Beach, and later in 1980, following the acquittal of police officers charged with the brutal killing of a Black man after a traffic stop. Liberty City became associated with the music and culture of Southern Hip Hop in the 1990s and 2000s, exemplified by the “Miami Bass” genre.

Liberty City has a Neighborhood Enhancement Team, known as the “Model City NET”. Along with other neighborhood associations, it is listed in the City of Miami governmental website, with contact information given.

The Model City Service Center is located at the Miami Police North District Substation in Liberty Square, and contact information is available in the City of Miami governmental website.

Community Dynamics

According to U.S. 2010 Census and American Community Survey 2015 5-year data, Liberty City has a population of 34,136, 63% of which are working age from 18 to 64. The average per capita income is \$14,405, which is much lower than Miami-Dade County's average per capita income of \$28,823. The population is 18% Hispanic and 82% non-Hispanic. Furthermore, 14.8% of the population is White (including Hispanic White), 82.5% is Black, and 2.7% Others. A non-English language is spoken by only 4.4% of the population. Regarding education level, 61% of the population has less than a high school education, which is much higher than Miami-Dade County's 48.86%. Foreign-born individuals make up 17% of the population, out of which 32% are naturalized citizens, while 68% are not U.S. citizens. Of the foreign-born residents, 56% are from the Caribbean, and 38% are from Mexico and Central America.

Business Landscape

“Climate gentrification” is increasing real estate values in parts of Miami at higher elevations, such as Liberty City, and decreasing values in lower-elevation areas. By 2017, Liberty City, along with Little Haiti, started becoming more attractive to investors. A community land trust is planned, to maintain affordability for current residents. In comparison, home prices appreciated more slowly in 2018 in Miami Beach and lower-lying areas of Miami-Dade County.

The neighborhood does not have a well-defined downtown area, but important commercial corridors in Liberty City are Northwest 54th and Northwest 79th Streets, where they cross Northwest 7th and Northwest 17th Avenues.

Transportation

The Liberty City area is served by four Metrorail stations: the Northside Station on Northwest 79th Street, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Plaza Station on Northwest 27th Avenue, the Brownsville Station on Northwest 27th Avenue at Northwest 52nd Street, and the Earlington Heights Station on Northwest 41st Street. All of these stations are outside the neighborhood's boundaries, with the Earlington Heights Station being the closest.

The Liberty City neighborhood is also served by numerous Miami-Dade Transit bus lines, scattered throughout the neighborhood. The main transportation arteries in the area are: Northwest 7th Avenue/US 441 S, which forms the eastern boundary of the neighborhood, running north and south; Northwest 12th Avenue, which bisects the neighborhood, running north and south; Northwest 79th Street, which forms the northern boundary of the neighborhood, running east and west; Northwest 54th Street, which divides the neighborhood from east to west; the Airport Expressway/SR 112, which runs through the southern section of the neighborhood from east to west; and Northwest 36th Street, forming the southern boundary of the neighborhood, running east and west.

In June of 2019, the Miami City Commission approved a new Liberty City trolley route, to fulfill the neighborhood's needs for free transportation. An app is available to track the trolley's progress.

Reference

- 1.) U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2010). Statistical File 3: block group # 120860025021, 120860015012, 120860010043, 120860025023, 120860023002, 120860023001, 120860018022, 120860023003, 120860019043, 120860019042, 120860018012, 120860019033, 120860019041, 120860019031, 120860019014, 120860015021, 120860015011, 120860010042, 120860010045, 120860010041, 120860023004, 120860018023, 120860018011, 120860019032, 120860019013, 120860019012, 120860019011. Miami-Dade County, Florida. Url: <http://www.census.gov>
- 2.) U.S. Bureau of the Census. American Community Survey, 2011-2015 5-Year Data Profile. Url: <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/data-profiles/2015/>
- 3.) Google Maps, 2021. Url: <https://www.google.com/maps>
- 4.) Wikipedia. Liberty City (Miami), 2021. Url: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty_City_\(Miami\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty_City_(Miami))
- 5.) City of Miami. Neighborhood Associations Model City NET, February 10, 2020. Url: <https://www.miamigov.com/Government/Departments-Organizations/Neighborhood-Enhancement-Team-NET/Association-Model-City?BestBetMatch=liberty%20city%20net|d13b95b2-5146-4b00-9e3e-a80c73739a64|4f05f368-ecaa-4a93-b749-7ad6c4867c1f|en-US>
- 6.) City of Miami. Model City Service Center at North District Substation, January 6, 2021. Url: <https://www.miamigov.com/Government/Departments-Organizations/Neighborhood-Service-Centers-Formerly-NET/Neighborhood-Service-Centers-Formerly-NET/Model-City-Service-Center-at-North-District-Substation?BestBetMatch=model%20city%20cra|d13b95b2-5146-4b00-9e3e-a80c73739a64|4f05f368-ecaa-4a93-b749-7ad6c4867c1f|en-US>
- 7.) City of Miami. City Commission Approves New Liberty City Trolley Route, June 27, 2019. Url: <https://www.miamigov.com/Notices/News-Media/City-Commission-Approves-New-Liberty-City-Trolley-Route?BestBetMatch=liberty%20city%20trolley%20route|d13b95b2-5146-4b00-9e3e-a80c73739a64|4f05f368-ecaa-4a93-b749-7ad6c4867c1f|en-US>
- 8.) City of Miami. Liberty City Trolley Route - August 12th, 2019. Url: <https://www.miamigov.com/Services/Transportation/Liberty-City-Trolley-Route-August-12th-2019?BestBetMatch=liberty%20city%20trolley%20route|d13b95b2-5146-4b00-9e3e-a80c73739a64|4f05f368-ecaa-4a93-b749-7ad6c4867c1f|en-US>