

Community Background Report

Little Havana

County

Miami-Dade

Boundaries

North: Miami River

South: Southwest 11th Street

West: Southwest 22nd Avenue

East: Interstate 95

Community Type

Neighborhood

History

The area known as Little Havana (Spanish: Pequeña Habana) was originally a lower-middle class Southern neighborhood and was largely Jewish in the 1930s. In the 1960s, large numbers of Cubans fled the Castro regime, bringing a new wave of exiles to the area. Many of these immigrants expected their stay to be temporary and hoped to return to Cuba when Castro was deposed. By 1970, however, the neighborhood was more than 85% Cuban, with Castro remaining in power. Cubans began permanently settling in neighborhoods across Miami, with Little Havana as the focal point for new arrivals and for Cuban business owners. In the 1980s and 1990s, significant numbers of new immigrants from Nicaragua, Honduras, and other Central American countries began arriving, to add to the mix of residents in Little Havana. Despite increasing diversity, most neighborhood businesses are still Cuban owned. Although the percentage of the population with Cuban origins has dropped, Little Havana remains the best-known Cuban exile neighborhood in the world, with “Calle Ocho” at its center. It is characterized by its street life, restaurants, music and other cultural activities, small business enterprises, political passion, and great warmth among its residents. In 2015, Little Havana was included in the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s annual list of the 11 Most Endangered Places. In 2017, the Trust designated it as a national treasure.

Community Dynamics

According to U.S. 2010 Census and American Community Survey 2015 5-year data, Little Havana has a population of 51,586, 64% of which are working age from 18 to 64. The average per capita income is \$15,122, which is much lower than Miami-Dade County’s average per capita income of \$28,823. The population is 95.3% Hispanic, and 4.7% non-Hispanic.

Furthermore, 90.6% of the population is White (including Hispanic White), 5% is Black, and 4.4% Others. A non-English language is spoken by only 24.2% of the population. Regarding education level, 58.2% 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 74% of the population, out of which 32.2% are naturalized citizens, while 67.8% are not U.S. citizens. Of the foreign-born residents, 42.8% are from the Caribbean, 46.2% are from other Central American countries and 7.6% are from South America.

Business Landscape

Little Havana's commercial corridors are many, considering its size. Commercial property is located along Northwest 22nd, 17th, and 12th Avenues, and along Northwest 7th, Southwest 1st, Southwest 8th and West Flagler Streets. These corridors are characterized by businesses such as restaurants, botanicas, small shops, car dealerships, music stores and cigar factories.

Little Havana has a Neighborhood Enhancement Team, as well as a wide variety of neighborhood and homeowner associations, and groups concerned with the Miami River. The list of groups, with contact information given, is available in the City of Miami governmental website.

CAMACOL (The Latin Chamber of Commerce of the United States) is headquartered in Little Havana, at 1401 West Flagler Street. Their website displays their stated goal: "The Latin Chamber of Commerce of the United States, CAMACOL is the largest Hispanic business organization in the State of Florida and one of the most influential minority business groups in the United States. For nearly five decades, CAMACOL's mission is to foster the entrepreneurial spirit of Florida's Hispanic and minority communities, and as such, it conducts programs to strengthen local business activity, promote economic development, facilitate international commerce, and serve the civic needs of the community and state."

Transportation

In October of 2020, The City of Miami Commission approved a resolution aimed at making the streets of Little Havana safer. Four pedestrian priority zones were designated, to cover an area within a quarter mile of Little Havana schools. According to the City of Miami governmental website, "Little Havana has the highest number of pedestrian crashes in the County according to the Florida Department of Highway Safety Motor Vehicles crash data provided by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). Data for the five-year trend shows that between 2012 and 2017 there were 293 pedestrian crashes and 12 fatalities. Planned improvements will include new crosswalks on school routes, pedestrian signals with lead time for people crossing ahead of cars and narrower crossings at intersections and on designated greenways."

The main transportation arteries in Little Havana include Interstate 95, which forms the neighborhood's eastern boundary, Southwest 8th Street (Calle Ocho/Tamiami Trail/US 41) and West Flagler Street in the heart of the neighborhood, and the Dolphin Expressway to the far north. Miami-Dade Transit bus lines run throughout the neighborhood, on the major streets. The

City of Miami free trolley circulates in Little Havana, and forms a loop running on Southwest 8th Street and West Flagler Street.

Reference

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- 5.) City of Miami. Neighborhood Associations Little Havana NET, 2021. Url: <https://www.miamigov.com/Government/Departments-Organizations/Neighborhood-Enhancement-Team-NET/Association-Little-Havana?BestBetMatch=little%20havana%20community%20redevelopment|d13b95b2-5146-4b00-9e3e-a80c73739a64|4f05f368-ecaa-4a93-b749-7ad6c4867c1f|en-US>
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- 8.) City of Miami. Trolley Maps, Little Havana Trolley Map, 2021. Url: https://www.miamigov.com/files/assets/public/document-resources/pdf-docs/trolley-maps/little_havana_trolley_map508.pdf