Town of Bay Harbor Islands

County

Miami-Dade

Boundaries

See interactive map

Community Type

Municipality

History

The Town of Bay Harbor Islands is made up of two islands separated from the mainland by Biscayne Bay and connected via the Shepard Broad Causeway. These two islands were originally known as Broadview and Bay Harbor and are now referred to as the West and East Islands, respectively. The West Island features single-family homes, while the East Island hosts the business district, the Ruth K. Broad Bay Harbor K–8 Center, and multi-family housing. On the mainland side, Bay Harbor Islands is bordered by the City of North Miami, while to the east lie Bal Harbour Village and the Town of Surfside. To the south lies the exclusive Indian Creek Village. Bay Harbor Islands has a total area of 0.6 square miles, including 0.2 square miles of water.

Bay Harbor Islands was the creation of the Russian-born lawyer Shepard Broad. In 1945 he acquired two undeveloped mangrove islands off 96th Street on the west side of Miami Beach. Using his own funds along with down payments on the sale of lots, Broad filled in the islands for development. He was joined in the venture by a prominent businessman, Benjamin N. Kane, for whom the town's main thoroughfare is named.

The town was incorporated on April 28, 1947, and on June 15 of that same year the first building permit was applied for. Shepard Broad was elected the first mayor of the town and served twenty-six consecutive years until his retirement from office in 1973. In 1951 the Broad Causeway was opened, joining the islands with the mainland of northern Miami-Dade County. In 1953 the present municipality was created by the Florida Legislature and approved the same year by the town's voters. Bay Harbor Islands has a

council-manager form of government, with a council of seven elected members.

The town has maintained Broad's original zoning scheme. The 103-acre West Island is dedicated solely to single-family unit development, while the 150-acre East Island has multi-family dwellings and a small business district offering a variety of goods and services.

The East Island also features one of the largest concentrated collections of mid-century Miami Modern architecture of the 1940s and 1950s, including historic buildings designed by Morris Lapidus, Henry Hohauser, and Charles McKirahan. These historic places are endangered due to pressure from development.

Residents can enjoy four municipal parks, tennis courts, and a branch of the Miami-Dade County Public Library. The Morris N. Broad Community Center is the headquarters of the Community Services Department, providing a robust program of activities throughout the year. Offerings include yoga, tai chi for seniors, computer classes, soccer, Zumba, and outdoor movies.

Detailed Town Council agendas and meeting minutes, as well as video recordings of meetings, are available via the municipal website.

Community Dynamics

As of 2020, Bay Harbor Islands had a population of 5,832. The median age was 37.2 and the median household income was $99,063. Between 2019 and 2020 the population of Bay Harbor Islands declined from 5,861 to 5,832, a reduction of .495%. At the same time, the median household income rose from $78,169 to $99,063, an increase of 26.7%. Regarding ethnicity in 2020, 40.2% of the population was White non-Hispanic, 30.5% was White Hispanic, 15.1% was Multiracial Hispanic, 6.93% was Other Hispanic, and 3.72% was Black. None of the households in Bay Harbor Islands reported speaking a non-English language at home as a primary language, and 76.6% of the population were US citizens. As of 2020, 48.7% of the residents of Bay Harbor Islands 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 42.2%, indicating that the rate has been increasing. In 2020, the median property value was $466,000 and the homeownership rate was 48.2%.

Business Landscape

The East Island contains the business district, mostly centered along Kane Concourse. Banks, professional offices, restaurants, lodging, and a small selection of shops are here.

Transportation Characteristics

The Town of Bay Harbor Islands has only one major artery, the Kane Concourse. This roadway crosses the southern portion of each of the two islands at the level of 96th Street, which separates the municipalities of Bal Harbour and Surfside on the barrier island to the east. Kane Concourse connects to the mainland via the Broad Causeway and to the barrier island to the east via a short bridge. The rest of the roadways are smaller streets that form an incomplete grid pattern. Broadview Drive circles the West Island and Bay Harbor Drive circles the East Island. Miami-Dade Metrobus line G runs on Kane Concourse on both islands. The Bay Harbor Islands Metrobus route has one stop on Kane Concourse, a stop at each end of East Island, and one stop at the southern end of West Island.

The town operates seven municipal parking lots.

Bay Harbor Islands is approximately 30 minutes driving distance northeast from Miami International Airport, and 35 minutes from the port of Miami.

According to DATA USA 2020 statistics, most people in Bay Harbor Islands drove alone to work, with an average commute time of 29.8 minutes. The average car ownership was two cars per household.

Sources

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5. Town of Bay Harbor Islands. Agendas & Meeting Recordings, 2022. Url: https://fl-bayharborislands.civicplus.com/129/Agendas-Meeting-Recordings

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