

City of Florida City

County

Miami-Dade

Boundaries

North: Southwest 328th Street/West Lucy Street

South: Southwest 360th Street

West: Southwest 192nd Avenue

East: Southwest 167th Avenue

Community Type

Municipality

History

The municipality of Florida City is in southern Miami-Dade County, just south of Homestead and east of Everglades National Park. It is the southernmost municipality in the South Florida metropolitan area.

Although Florida City was not a planned development of the Florida East Coast railroad, the arrival of the railroad helped nurture the city. The first settlers, from Topeka, Kansas, had originally settled in Homestead but in 1910 they moved out into the wilderness area that became Florida City. Many southern families seeking homesteads followed. In 1913 the Michigan-based Model Land Company purchased 22,000 acres in the area. They advertised heavily in Detroit to attract northerners to their “Garden of Eden”. New settlers from Michigan named the area Detroit, but soon became dissatisfied with their purchases. Conflict developed with the southern families and the Detroiters moved back north. In 1914 the city was incorporated and renamed Florida City.

By 1922 Florida City had grown to a population of over 800, with a drug store, a hardware store, and a three-story hotel. South of the town was the largest ice plant in the state and a lumber mill, but most of the city’s economy was based on farming. Florida City’s eastern boundary was extended to Biscayne Bay in 1925. However, due to lack of development in the newly added area, the landowners successfully petitioned to have the city restored to its original boundaries. The hurricane of 1926 leveled several buildings and greatly damaged others. The area’s economy returned to agriculture alone.

During the tourist season, visitors to the area can learn about the early 20th century settlement of southern Miami-Dade County at the Florida Pioneer Museum, located at 826 North Krome Avenue in Florida City.

Florida City suffered catastrophic damage again in August 1992, when Hurricane Andrew struck South Florida.

Community Dynamics

As of 2020, Florida City had a population of 11,855. The median age was 28.6 and the median household income was \$37,556. Between 2019 and 2020 the population of Florida City declined from 11,928 to 11,855, a decrease of .612%. At the same time, the median household income rose from \$35,253 to \$37,556, an increase of 6.53%. Regarding ethnicity in 2020, 51.3% of the population was Black, 35.7% was White Hispanic, 6.6% was Other Hispanic, 3.11% was Multiracial Hispanic, and 1.73% was White. None of the households in Florida City reported speaking a non-English language at home as a primary language, and 78.8% of the population were US citizens. As of 2020, 29.3% of the residents of Florida City were born outside the US, which is higher than the national average of 13.5%. In 2019, the percentage of foreign-born citizens was 26.8%, indicating that the rate has been increasing. In 2020, the median property value was \$172,100 and the homeownership rate was 25.3%.

Business Landscape

Florida City is primarily a Miami suburb and a major agricultural area. In addition, the city caters to travelers going to and from the Florida Keys and the Everglades and offers a variety of outlet shopping opportunities. Lodging, restaurants, and stores are clustered mostly around the point where the Ronald Reagan Turnpike and US 1 converge.

Although Florida City is largely zoned for agricultural and residential use, there is a sizeable “general commercial” zone surrounding the point where the turnpike meets US 1.

The city has a Community Redevelopment Agency, created jointly by the City of Florida City and Miami-Dade County in 1995. The CRA provides needed infrastructure to businesses desiring to locate within the Community Redevelopment Area. Past projects have funded water and sewer lines, street upgrades, sidewalks and handicap access, deceleration lanes, and landscaping. The agency has a program that assists new and existing businesses to improve the appearance of an existing building façade, and a program to assist a new

business with the cost of physically setting up the business in the Community Redevelopment Area. The agency also funds streetscape projects in residential portions of the Community Redevelopment Area, including new streets, drainage, curbs and gutters, sidewalks, and landscaping.

A map of the Florida City Community Redevelopment Area is available online via *miamidade.gov*.

Transportation Characteristics

Florida City is at the eastern end of the only road running through Everglades National Park, which terminates at Flamingo. It is also the last stop on the mainland north of the Florida Keys.

The main transportation arteries in Florida City converge at the center of the municipality. The southern terminus of the Homestead Extension of the Ronald Reagan Turnpike meets US 1/Northeast 1st Avenue/South Dixie Highway just north of West/East Palm Drive, another major roadway, running east and west. Miami-Dade Transit buses (lines #38, #301, #302, and #344) operate on US 1/South Homestead Boulevard/Northeast 1st Avenue, running north and south. Miami-Dade Transit buses also run on West/East Palm Drive, on Redland Road/Southwest 187th Avenue, on Northwest 6th Avenue, and on Southwest 328th Avenue. The South Miami-Dade Busway runs roughly north and south through the west/central portion of Florida City.

In recent years, the Florida City Community Redevelopment Agency focused its efforts on a roadway transportation issue, as described in their 2020-21 Annual Report:

“Arguably, the single most important economic MAINTENANCE effort of FY 2020-21 and continuing into 2022 is the struggle to deny the construction of a proposed flyover of the Florida Turnpike at Palm Drive and US Highway 1. CRA and City officials have mounted a vigorous campaign to stop the flyover component, universally viewed by both the public and private sectors as being an existential threat to the continued viability of the commercial corridor. This opposition campaign will be a multi-year focused political necessity.”

The campaign against the flyover, which would have been detrimental to the South Dade business corridor, resulted in the abandonment of the project by state transportation officials, as announced by Miami-Dade County in October of 2021.

According to DATA USA 2020 statistics, most people in Florida City drove alone to work, with an average commute time of 35.1 minutes. The average car ownership was two cars per household.

Sources

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