

Invest:

Miami 2017

An in-depth review of the key issues facing Miami-Dade's economy
featuring the exclusive insights of prominent industry leaders



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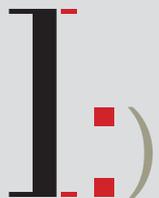
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A Brighter Future For NoMi



Downtown North Miami Mixed-Use Development



Enchanted Forest Elaine Gordon Park, North Miami



2017 Music in the Plaza featuring Monica



Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), North Miami



Solè Mia Miami



North Miami Public Library



North Bayshore William Lehman Park



NorthMiamiFL.gov

North Miami:

The revitalized North Miami Community Redevelopment Agency is just one part of the continued efforts to turn the City of North Miami back into an economically vibrant city. Those efforts will pay off with the SoLē Mia mixed-use development, a planned Chinatown and infrastructure development projects all promising to bring new businesses to the area, with dividends that will crucially pay off for the city's residents.





A city on the move: ■

With a history that dates back more than 150 years, the City of North Miami has seen turbulent times, but in recent years it has become an attractive prospect for those looking to live and work in South Florida. New construction with important private sector developments are ensuring the city's growth doesn't lose momentum

The City of North Miami is located in northeast Miami-Dade County, along the northern reaches of the Biscayne Bay waterfront. It lies 20 miles south of the City of Fort Lauderdale and 10 miles north of the City of Miami and is situated along the I-95 corridor. It takes 30 minutes by car to reach Fort Lauderdale and 20 minutes to arrive to Miami via I-95 and Biscayne Boulevard.

North Miami is also conveniently located close to multiple airports and seaports along the I-95 corridor such as Miami International Airport and PortMiami to the south and Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport and Port Everglades to the north. It has easy access to areas for relaxation, entertainment and tourist and cultural attractions, such as beaches and museums, furthermore, it has a station for the Florida East Coast Railway. North Miami is the sixth-largest city in Miami-Dade and has one of the youngest and most ethnically diverse populations.

■ Small beginnings

North Miami's early history began in the 1890s with a small settlement called Arch Creek. Its population continued to grow in the early 20th century aided by Florida land projects, and it was eventually incorporated as the Town of Miami Shores in 1926. It changed its name to the Town of North Miami in 1931. Returning veterans and young families led to a population boom following World War II, causing a rapid expansion of the town, quickly followed by its municipal services.

By the early 1950s, the area was one of the fastest growing towns in the county, and to manage the fast growth in the area, voters approved the adoption of a charter and took on a new name. This led the Florida Legislature to enact an official statute on May 27, 1953, to change the name of the city to its current iteration and incorporate it as the City of North Miami. To accommodate the needs of the swelling community, (■■■)

Open for business

How the City of North Miami is attracting commercial interest to create positive growth

Smith Joseph

Mayor — City of North Miami

What are the most important aspects of the North Miami comprehensive plan?

To me, the single biggest opportunity from the plan is the height increase that we have implemented as part of our North Miami downtown development campaign. The new height restrictions should encourage more development projects downtown as well as bring more activity to the area.

Another aspect of the plan is that we are the first city to take on the leading role in dealing with the threat of rising sea levels. Global warming is a major concern and, as a city government, it is important to take the appropriate steps to address these concerns. As part of community planning and development, we have policies in place for existing construction and programs to pinpoint buildings that may be at risk if we should have any incident of sea-level rise.

My vision is to have a city that is resilient and able to withstand any adverse weather or climate change that will cause damages. I'm very proud of the fact that we took the leading role after Miami-Dade County.

What are the city's current strategies to continue to attract and retain businesses?

Attracting new business or having them join this community is one of our highest priorities. As mayor, I started a campaign to bring businesses and tackle unemployment in our city. Our unemployment rate was at 9.8 percent. First, I made sure that the North Miami Community Redevelopment Agency (NMCRA) was extended. The NMCRA is key in attracting investment into the area, and it will benefit many of the small businesses planning to come to North Miami, even offering partial subsidies.

The Solê Mia Local Preference Office (LPO) managed by Garth Solutions will be very important in increasing community involvement, not only for residents but also small businesses. The LPO offers free job training and



scholarship opportunities to North Miami residents in addition to offering essential consulting services to local firms. These local businesses are part of the fabric of our city, so it's important to look after them. We have to make sure that they stay in the city and become part of the economic machine.

What would you identify as the biggest areas where new businesses or investors can get involved?

We have several main corridors. The main one is 125th street, heading east to west. West Dixie Highway is an area that I would really like to see developed. We need to attract more investment into these areas, because there is so much potential, but the city cannot develop it alone. We are trying to encourage public-private partnerships. ■

(■■■) its first high school, North Miami Senior High School, opened for the 1954 school year.

■ **On the up**

According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates from 2015, the population of North Miami is 62,435 up 4.7 percent from 2010. The city sits on approximately 8.4 square miles and has a diverse population, 58.9 percent of which are black, non-Hispanic, 32.6 percent white, non-Hispanic and 27.1 percent Hispanic. Some 49.9 percent of the population is also foreign born.

The city has an average of 3.3 people in each of its 18,302 households, and it currently has a median household income of \$36,537. North Miami continues to be a more affordable option to other cities in Miami-Dade, with house prices ranging from below \$200,000 to more than \$5 million. The city is also well known for its large Haitian-American and Caribbean population.

Once known as “The City of Progress,” North Miami is retaking its founding mantle and working toward increased growth through innovative projects and development-friendly municipal regulations.

The North Miami Comprehensive Plan, first initiated in 1989, continues with regular updates, now in its 28th year, is working to create and incentivize more business opportunities by rewriting land-use regulations to attract more restaurants, entertainments venues and retail space, as well as allowing for higher density.

■ **Mama mia!**

Central to the resurgence of economic development in North Miami are commercial projects that both create jobs and bring value to the area. The \$4-billion master development, SoLē Mia, is exemplary in this regard.

The project, a joint venture between real estate developers LeFrak and Turnberry Associates, will create 1.5 million square feet of commercial space and 4,390 residences just east of Biscayne Bay. It is on one of the largest sections of undeveloped land in South Florida.

The local preference requirement of the SoLē Mia project mandated a minimum of 10 percent of the estimated 14,000 short- and long-term jobs to residents of North Miami, with an actual target of 25 percent. This is being achieved with a series of job fairs held by SoLē Mia Local Preference Office, and as of the

fourth quarter of 2016, almost a third of all jobs had gone to North Miami locals.

The project started in June 2015 and is expected to open in 2018. Once complete SoLē Mia will consist of 3,755 residential units, a hotel and 1.5 million square feet of retail, commercial, office and auto sales. The first residential tower, which will consist of 400 units, will be rental.

■ **Well-ordered growth**

From large to small, public works projects continue in North Miami. Roads and alleyways are being resurfaced and seawalls and city-owned lots are

“ The SoLē Mia project will create residential, commercial and office space as well as job opportunities. ”



Michael Tillman
Managing Director — LeFrak

“ SoLē Mia is a joint venture between LeFrak and Turnberry Associates. We have developed a fantastic relationship with local authorities in North Miami and we look at them as our partners at SoLē Mia. Mayor Smith Joseph coined the term “the city on the move”, and I think it is a good description of the city. The administration has demonstrated its desire and willingness to update and modernize as seen by their recent revisions to the city’s Master Development Plan which calls for significant upzoning throughout the city. ”

being maintained. Streetscaping projects include plans to coordinate roadways, sidewalks, swales, landscaping and infrastructure improvements within the downtown district and along commercial corridors to improve access to businesses, walkability and to further beautify the city. Other projects include the improvement of neighborhood signage throughout the city, which will have the result of increasing property values, safety and sense of community.

On the more expansive side of development, in addition to the luxury SoLē Mia Miami project rising on Biscayne Bay, North Miami has been working on establishing its very own Chinatown Cultural Arts and Innovation District. The project will be South Florida's first Chinatown district, and will encompass 16 city blocks on 92 acres along the major north-south corridor of NW 7th Ave. adjacent to Interstate 95, encouraging tourism, economic growth through commercial development and technological innovation.

The city has been working in conjunction with advisors from Florida International University (FIU) while bringing in investors and advisors from China to be involved in the large municipal project. Elected officials from North Miami traveled with members of FIU for a graduation ceremony at the institution's hospitality campus in Tianjin and to speak to potential investors in the Chinatown project. The project was approved by the city council in early 2016, with a 12-person delegation of potential investors from China visiting in July of the same year. North Miami estimates \$30 million to \$40 million spent on infrastructure is expected from private investment.

More generally, the city is working with the private sector to encourage and facilitate sound real estate acquisitions, assemblage, development as well as public-private partnerships. It is incentivizing business opportunities by fast-tracking permits, providing grants for build outs and renovations as well as property tax breaks and tax credits in a variety of areas.

■ Easy on the pocketbook

Life in North Miami also will not break the bank, with one of the city's drawing points being that its rental market is more affordable than the surrounding areas. From 2011 to 2015, the median gross rent per month in North Miami was 11 to 17 percent less expensive than other areas in South Florida at \$985, compared to \$1,112 in Miami-Dade, \$1,087 in Fort Lauderdale and \$1,191 in Broward County to the north. The market for homebuyers is also advantageous, with the median value of housing units in the same period coming in at \$143,400, 30 percent less than in Miami-Dade. The city



Larry Spring Jr.
City Manager,
City of North Miami
Executive Director,
North Miami
Community
Redevelopment Agency

What incentives does North Miami offer to investors?

Through the North Miami Community Redevelopment Agency (NMCRA) we have a lot of incentive programs such as assistance for acquisition, buildout and renovation grants. Through the NMCRA we are able to help pay the county impact fees for businesses in North Miami. These figures can be high for some of these businesses and we are able to help them. One of our new programs with the NMCRA is tax rebates. We do it through a tax increment finance agreement where, if you bring your business and create a number of jobs, we will give you a rebate of a portion of the property taxes generated by the business.

How are cities such as North Miami setting a good example when it comes to combating crime?

We have seen a reduction in our crime over the past several years. Our police department engages in the community and tries to be responsive to get ahead in areas where we see potential issues. We have added a number of resource officers into downtown and into the 7th Ave. corridor. These officers will be on Segways so that they are accessible to the community. Their presence creates an air of safety, and they have been successful in stopping crimes. This then creates awareness. Crime has not been a great issue in our city.

What is your vision for North Miami?

My vision is to help internally with the things people don't see, such as improving our processes and making it easy to do business. We can provide incentives, attract businesses and provide basic services, but we also need to attract big projects. We are working diligently to invite the world into our city. We want to embrace the past and keep the charm of what was North Miami, with new developments and businesses. You have the opportunity to live, work and play in our city. We are open for business. ■

Larry Rice

President,
Johnson & Wales
University-North Miami



How can the universities better connect academia with industry to better facilitate praxis?

Generally speaking, all higher education has a desire to create a balance between theory and practice, or praxis. We know that is how students learn best. From my perspective, that is a good reflection of who we are at Johnson & Wales University (JWU). This is why we have been implementing project-based learning for some time now. Of course, the perfect combination is always aspirational, but it is our goal and where we want to be. For this, we have been investing our efforts in training our faculty members to better balance both.

For example, if a faculty member is specialized in research and theory, we will train him or her to also implement practical problem-solving, and vice versa. We train our professionals who are specialized in practical cases to also give theory the importance it deserves so students can maximize their learning opportunities.

JWU creates partnerships with industry. Our curriculum is designed in concert with industry, which serves as a great benefit to our students, as well as industry leaders seeking to hire top talent.

What efforts is JWU making to ensure diversity at the institution?

Diversity is not the end-game. It all begins with diversity. I believe that diversity becomes the foundation of any institution. We have created a campus environment that respects diversity in a high level. But I believe that hiring is just as important. It is not enough to say that we can bring in students who are reflective of a diverse environment. We have to be able to introduce them to individuals who provide that same level of variety.

We also integrate diversity into our programs. A good example of this is every year we collaborate with the Multicultural Foodservice and Hospitality Alliance. Recently, the Wall Street Journal published a ranking of diversity in the country and JWU came in No. 1 in South Florida and No. 3 in the nation. This is a reflection of our commitment to welcoming a diverse mix of students and faculty. ■

is hoping to attract young professionals and families with its new projects, working toward revitalization to increase the young and vibrant portion of its population with more young professionals.

The city is encouraging the private sector to build a healthy mix of luxury, market-rate, workforce, affordable and mixed-income housing to be able to meet the needs of all of the city's current and future residents. The city also works with the public sector to create affordable and mixed-income housing through the Community Development Block Grant Program, Home Investment Partnerships Program, State Housing Initiative Partnership, Neighborhood Stabilization Program and other funding available to the public sector.

■ Heading for transportation

Connectivity throughout Miami-Dade is a key issue for all areas. North Miami is in the process of linking the Tri-Rail Coastal Link network with a station at NE 125th Street to better connect the city to the denser urban areas of Fort Lauderdale and Miami and the greater South Florida area as a whole. This would help bring people to the city from surrounding areas, and ease the commutes of the many North Miami residents who work in downtown areas. Greater ease of access for the airports in Miami and Fort Lauderdale, giving out-of-state and international visitors direct access to North Miami is another positive outcome.

The city is currently working with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to ease and better coordinate traffic flows along the city's main thoroughfares of NE 125th St., Biscayne Boulevard, West Dixie Highway, NE 6th Ave., NW 7th Ave. and NW 119th St. Upcoming projects include providing raised medians and improving sidewalk connectivity on 119th Street. Improvements on 125th St. includes the installation of left turn lanes at NW 2nd Ave. and a dedicated right turn lane to access I-95 Safety will be further improved with features to restrict left turn movements to and from the side streets and along NW 125th St., upgrading traffic signals and improving drainage.

Design is currently underway for downtown improvements to NE 125th Street from NE 6th to NE 10th Ave., which will include landscaped bulb-outs, a median, new lighting and landscaping funded by an FDOT grant. The city is also participating in the design of improvements to intersections along Biscayne Boulevard to alleviate congestion. On NW 7th Ave., one lane in each direction is being taken out as part of a "road diet" that will allow for permanent on-street parking and additional landscape and

lighting to enhance walkability. The city is also working with FDOT to install medians and aesthetic features on 135th St. from NW 2nd Ave. to Biscayne Boulevard for safety and beautification.

Other transportation projects the city is undertaking include expanding bike paths and integrating them with existing ones to connect to the larger, regional network, while also installing more bike racks to make cycling in the city easier, safer and more convenient. It is also complementing the existing, free NOMI Express bus service, which is to be expanded with a downtown trolley circulator to better connect the city's public transportation options. Public-private partnerships will be utilized to create more public parking facilities in the parts of the city that are being revitalized, including downtown, while also implementing programs and strategies to encourage shared use of public and private parking facilities.

Increased intra- and inter-urban public transportation options will be available to both residents and visitors and will attract more businesses to the city in conjunction with business-friendly city initiatives. Better-designed and well-maintained road and parking facilities will then allow easy access to the city's new and existing businesses, increasing commerce and the city's tax revenues.

■ Staying well

North Miami has various healthcare options to choose from, including the Miami Beach Community Health Center North location and Jackson North Medical Center, part of Jackson Medical Systems, the Villa Maria Nursing Center, a Borinquen Medical Center, as well as urgent care and walk-in centers, such as a MD Now Urgent Care Walk-In Medical Centers and Walgreens Healthcare Clinic.

Miami Beach Community Health Center North is part of the Florida Department of Health. The center offers immunizations, clinical and nutrition services, wellness programs, community health planning, environmental health, emergency preparedness and response and infectious disease services.

Borinquen Medical Centers have grown to become a Comprehensive Primary Health Care, Dental and Behavioral Health Center serving Miami-Dade. It offers primary care such as internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology (OB/GYN), including delivery, family planning, nutrition, psychiatry and substance abuse services; specialty care such as podiatry, optometry, speech language and communication disorders treatments, and specialty services such as laboratory work and X-rays. The center also includes a pharmacy.



Rebirth of an agency

In September 2016, the North Miami Community Redevelopment Agency (NMCRA) was reauthorized by Miami-Dade County for a further 29 years. Commissioners voted for the NMCRA unanimously, a move that showed absolute confidence in the agency.

Established in 2005 by North Miami and Miami-Dade, the NMCRA is charged with eliminating conditions of blight that exist within the city and helping to improve the quality of life by developing physical, economic, educational, and social resources. The organization works over a community redevelopment area of 3,250 acres, approximately 60 percent of North Miami.

Its primary project is the city's new Chinatown Culture Arts and Innovation District, which will be located along the NW 7th Ave. corridor between NE 119th St. and NE 135th St. The city sent a delegation in conjunction with Florida International University in April 2016 to China for consultations to attract investors interested in the district's business opportunities. So far, 60 investors have come to North Miami to tour the area. It is the first municipality to pass legislation that delegates land specifically for a Chinatown district. The new district's master plan will be released in June 2017.

The city's work to secure a station for the new Tri-Rail Coastal Link rail network is in line with its priorities to better connect North Miami along the South Florida corridor to provide better access to local businesses and increase freedom of movement for its community.

Infrastructure and business incentives are not the whole picture, as the city also undertakes workforce development to connect residents with skills-training programs. These include educational opportunities, business retention and expansion to supporting local businesses through grants, technical assistance, business surveys and organizational resources.

The NMCRA is also active in identifying businesses to open in North Miami through site selection, marketing, public-private partnerships and incentive funding. The city's marketing works to create a sense of place by utilizing branding and marketing strategies to positively promote the area. These efforts are preparing the community to actively take part in the city's growth as skilled workers and new business owners. ■

Founded in North Miami more than 40 years ago, the Villa Maria Nursing Center is one of the most recognizable health institutions in North Miami. The 212-bed facility offers 24-hour care, a fenced, secure campus environment and a range of qualified health-care professionals including physical therapists, nurses and language pathologists. It is run as part of Miami-Dade Catholic Health Services and offers short-term rehabilitative care as well as long-term care.

■ **City of arts**

North Miami has rightly earned reputation for creativity and entertainment over the years, with over 70 music, video production and post-production businesses and over 250 entertainment-related businesses. The city features a wealth of arts and culture venues and events, chief among them being the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA), one of only four in the country.

The museum presents eight to 10 exhibitions annually and its permanent collection has some 350 works by established and emerging artist from the U.S. and abroad, and also hosts monthly Jazz at MOCA concerts. The city is in the process of revitalizing the museum, bringing in new curators and a new director.

The city also has a bustling movie industry and has been called the “Film Capital of the South.” It is home to a Greenwich Studios, South Florida’s largest studio facility and where the iconic “Miami Vice” television

series was filmed. It also offers waterfront access for filming. Some of the projects filmed in North Miami include HBO’s “Ballers,” “The Kardashians,” “Burn Notice” and “Graceland.” There are also a number of advertising studios.

There are 18 recording studios in North Miami, and one of them, The Hit Factory Criteria, was where The Eagles’ “Hotel California” was recorded. In line with

the city’s history of hosting many well-known artists, it is in the process of creating a district to be home to new venues to increase the space for up-and-coming artists to perform.

The 2016 North Miami Community Redevelopment Agency (NMCRA) Plan includes an initiative called Music City, which is an entertainment venue district to add to its already robust music recording industry, giving space to musicians to perform while

increasing residents’ access to entertainment and bringing in more entertainment businesses. A projected \$20 million to \$25 million has been slated for economic development initiatives, including the proposed Music City, as part of the plan, which is expected to go into effect over the next decade.

The city hosts the North Miami BrewFest, which features more than 30 of South Florida’s best local breweries and serves up more than 120 different drinks. It has been running for the past five years and attracted more than 1,000 people to the three-day

“ The North Miami BrewFest, features more than 30 of South Florida’s best local breweries. ”



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La Gran Fiesta is one of North Miami's many events celebrating the diverse heritage of the city.

event in 2016. The festival also has an educational aspect, bringing in academics from FIU and industry professionals to give seminars. The closest local establishment is the Wynwood Brewing Company in Miami to the south. Due to the lack of its own local brewer, North Miami has a focus on bringing micro-breweries to the city, actively recruiting three, including the Descarga Brewing Company. Mishka Vodka is also moving production from New York.

■ Building minds

North Miami is home to a range of education organizations and institutions of higher learning preparing

future professionals and business and community leaders, including FIU, Johnson & Wales University North Miami (JWU) and Barry University in nearby Miami Shores. The North Miami Educational Foundation, Inc. and Youth Opportunity Board (YOB) are also located in the city, providing opportunities for continuing education and development for youth and at-risk residents.

FIU is Miami's first and only four-year public research university and part of the 12-campus Florida State University system. It is designated as a top-tier institution and emphasizes research as a major component of its mission. The university's Biscayne Bay Campus in North Miami is its second largest, serving around 7,000 students. FIU offers 280 undergraduate majors, 81 master's programs and 34 doctoral programs as well as three professional degree programs.

JWU is a private, nonprofit and career-oriented university with four campuses in the U.S. Its North Miami campus offers associate's degrees, 20 bachelor of science degrees in programs such as business management, criminal justice, marketing and software engineering. It is also a leading educator in tourism and hospitality management. It also offers multiple MBA programs.

Barry University in nearby Miami Shores is a private Catholic institution with a diverse student body of 7,000. The university has more than 50 undergraduate programs that include accelerated bachelor's programs design for working adults, and more than 50 graduate programs.

The North Miami Educational Foundation, Inc. was established in 2012 and endeavors to help economically disadvantaged residents in the area achieve educational success. It provides scholarships for night school as well as English as a second language (ESL) courses.



Jimmy Tate

President — Tate Capital

“ I appreciate the outside-of-box thought process in regards to the proposed Chinatown project. In my opinion, it will create an economic boom for the west side of the city if the proposed concept is properly designed and professionally implemented. The key for its success is authenticity. They need to make sure that this themed designation district remains true to itself and the original intent. The city must control the commercial uses within this new Chinatown district to keep it real. ”

North Miami Youth Opportunity Board works with the city to bring in local high school students for summer internships in multiple fields. It will start a partnership in summer 2017 with the Miami Dade College Foundation to offer Hispanic and black men scholarships to go back to school with annual summer internships.

Healthy environment

Since 50 percent of North Miami sits below the floodline, the city has many environmentally friendly initiatives to lessen its impact on the environment and help counter and promote awareness of climate change. The city’s Green Business Rehabilitation Grants program aims to both meet environmental goals and create economic opportunity.

The citywide program provides up to \$5,000 in matching grants to businesses to encourage the installation of energy-efficient appliances, replace old light bulbs or light fixtures, fund solar panels, impact windows, insulation, A/C units, rooftops and other improvements. The intended economic impact of this program includes reducing energy costs and creating new employment opportunities.

North Miami is also an Arbor Day Foundation-designated Tree City USA. The program helps “communities manage and expand their public trees” and maintain an urban tree canopy to help stave off climate change with the added effect of beautifying communities and raising property values.

Looking ahead

The future for North Miami will see expanded business and increased employment opportunities through the

city’s business-friendly initiatives and public-private partnerships, capitalizing on its existing industries while bringing in new ventures.

“Being in the restaurant business for 20 years, it is really refreshing to see how a city is willing to support local businesses to redevelop areas.” Cory Finot, co-owner of local French restaurant Café Crème told Invest: Miami, adding “Nobody believed that a restaurant would survive in this area. Now, it is a Miami hot spot.”

Transportation and infrastructure improvements and expansion are both increasing interconnectivity and quality of life through beautifying the city, helping to create a greater sense of pride in community. The development of the “city-within-a-city” of SoLē Mia Miami and the new Chinatown will create a wealth of commercial, retail, entertainment and residential opportunities serving new and existing residents and an increase in outside visitors.

Initiatives to counter climate change will help ensure that the city remains safe and productive for years to come without being negatively affected by wasteful energy use and its effects on the environment and sea levels. North Miami looks set to experience a population and business boom due to the projects already underway and those to come. ■

Capital Analytics would like to thank the City of North Miami for its contribution in compiling this chapter. To learn more, visit their website www.northmiamifl.gov



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