Florida International University
FIU Digital Commons

1-1-2011

Naranja

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.fiu.edu/mpo_dade

Recommended Citation

Community Background Report

Naranja

County

Miami-Dade

Boundaries

North: S.W. 256 Street
South: S.W. 272 Street
West: S.W. 142 Avenue
East: S.W 137 Avenue

Community Type

Neighborhood

History

The story of Naranja began over 100 years ago in 1904. It was destined to become one of the "railroad towns" along Henry Flagler's Florida East Coast Railroad. Naranja (Spanish for orange) was so named because of the many orange groves in the area. Some records indicate that a major citrus canker epidemic in 1913 destroyed most of the crops (Naranja Neighborhood Service Center).

In 1926, the unnamed hurricane ended what was becoming a major land boom in this tiny South Florida community, hurting the local economy. In 1935, another devastating hurricane of category 5 status claimed the lives of hundreds in the Florida Keys, and left the railroad in shambles. The original vision of Naranja as a railroad town was never materialized. Like many of the small town and village surrounding it, Naranja remained a small and calm agriculture-based community for the most part. That is, until development starting emerging south of Miami-Dade County during the 1960's and 1970's. New buildings, both residential and commercial began to dot the area. All seemed well for the area, with most of the military from the nearby Homestead Air Force Base living within the community (Naranja Neighborhood Service Center).

In 1992, once again the course of history for Naranja was changed by a hurricane. This time Hurricane Andrew devastated most of the area. While the surrounding areas to the north and south of Naranja quickly rebounded, it would take twelve years for Naranja to rebuild (Odalis,

2006). According to Naranja's community residents, Naranja's transition is to be celebrated. Community leaders are optimistic that the area is now poised for new economic growth, and feel strongly that Naranja will play an important role in reshaping the future of South Miami-Dade County (Naranja Neighborhood Service Center).

Community Dynamics

According to 2000 Census figures, there are 4,034 people, 1,196 households, and 875 families residing in Naranja. The racial makeup of Naranja is 32.99% White, 57.54% African American, 0.42% Native American, 1.39% Asian, 0.15% Pacific Islander, 3.89% from other races, and 3.62% from two or more races. 26.97% of the population are Hispanic or Latino of any race.

Naranja's population is greatly composed of single-family homes and the area has a low per capita income, $7,346, compared with Miami-Dade County's $26,780 per capita. The education level is also lower than the County's, with 60 percent of the population having no schooling, more specifically 33 percent of the area's population has attained a High School diploma, and only 15 of that same 33 percent went on and acquired college education. Althought 42.3% of families are below the poverty line and have the lowest median income Household income, Naranja is statistically one of the safest neighborhood in Miami-Dade County.

Naranja's population is considered a commuter community with 45 percent of its workforce traveling out of Naranja to work and more than half of the working population drives 30 minutes or more. In partial response to the traffic problems that arose during past Hurricanes evacuations and a growing population, Naranja recently opened a new segment to the South Miami-Dade Busway. The extension to the bus only lanes runs from Southwest 112th Avenue and Southwest 200th Street in Cutler Ridge to Southwest 264th Street in Naranja, and includes an additional five stops along the way, with nodes to the communities it crosses (Elysa Batista, Miami Herald 2005).

Sources

"Naranja, Florida." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia.* 6 March 2006, 00:24 UTC. 9 Feb 2006, 16:10
http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=TheHammocks,_Florida&oldid=34043308

U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2000). Statistical File 3, P31 and P32 for Census Tracts 0103.00 and 0112.01. http://www.census.gov

Mederos Odalis. Metropolitan Dade County Department of Human Services: Office of Community Services.

Mederos Odalis. Naranja Neighborhood Service Center. Telephone interview. 7 March 2006