

# Community Background Report

## Edgewater

### County

Miami-Dade

### Boundaries

North: Northeast 36th Street

East: Biscayne Bay Intracoastal Waterway

South: Northeast 17th Terrace

West: Florida East Coast Railway

### Community Type

Neighborhood

### History

Edgewater is located just north of downtown and east of Wynwood within the City of Miami. As the name suggests, it is located on the water, more precisely on Biscayne Bay. The area has one business corridor, Biscayne Boulevard, with mostly one and two level storefronts. Area developers, looking to capitalize on Biscayne Boulevard's recent road and water improvements, are investing in mixed use buildings along Biscayne Boulevard, and higher residential buildings in the neighborhood's interior. Recently opened residential buildings show a mix of residential and commercial uses, typically with retail space or restaurants on the first levels. The City of Miami is implementing a new zoning approach, Miami 21, which will increase the height of structures along Biscayne Boulevard. Edgewater is a neighborhood separated from Wynwood by the railway and its development patterns. The height and density of residential structures increase as one moves closer to the Bay, closer to Northeast 17<sup>th</sup> Terrace and closer to Northeast 36<sup>th</sup> Street.

### Community Dynamics

As of 2000 Edgewater had a population of 15,000 in 6,200 households. The median household

income was \$11,300. The racial makeup of the neighborhood was 60% Hispanic, 18% Black or African American and 22% Anglo. The percentage of people that speak English not well or not at all made up 25% of the population. Locals, those born in Florida, were 28% of the population. The percentage of people born in another state was 21% and the percentage of foreign born residents was 44%. The ethnic composition of this neighborhood is steadily changing with young professionals moving from Miami Beach and elsewhere. The number of local residents will continue to decrease.

The neighborhood has continued to attract high-rise development, building near six thousand condos between 2000 and 2009. Edgewater now has between twenty and thirty high-rise buildings. Approximately ten of these are between thirty and fifty levels in height. Smaller and older apartments and condominiums also populate the neighborhood. Smaller lots often have one and two level homes built in the 1920s to 1950s and some of these are of historic significance. A number of these have been demolished and are kept by developers as vacant lots until there are sure signs of real estate market stability. In 2010, a number of high-rise towers that were issued certificates of occupancy between 2007 and 2010 were found to have low levels of occupancy. Other developers have still not sought occupancy certificates for completed buildings. The Neighborhood of Edgewater Association of Residents serves this neighborhood and has recently showed interest in using vacant land as parks, communicating with developers as they build parking garages for large developments along Biscayne Boulevard and expressing their displeasure with skyscraper-sized electronic billboards.

Edgewater is served by Margaret Pace Park, which is between Northeast 20<sup>th</sup> Street and Northeast 17<sup>th</sup> Terrace on Biscayne Bay. This park of eight acres has high-rise towers to the west and is bound by the Bay to the east.

## **Business Landscape**

Businesses along the Biscayne Boulevard Corridor seek the completion of construction along the corridor and the availability of parking. The FDOT construction is estimated to end in December of 2011 and will bring new sidewalks, landscaping, drainage, curbs, gutters and lighting. However, this has also brought temporary blackouts, interruptions in water service, street closures, high volumes of traffic and limited access to area businesses. Retail shops, restaurants, markets, offices and grocery stores have complained but they can do no more than wait it out. FDOT and City officials have held public meetings more regularly to update businesses and residents of construction progress. There are plans for a parking garage off of Biscayne Boulevard and Northeast 26<sup>th</sup> Street.

## Sources

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