

# Community Background Report

## Belle Meade

### County

Miami-Dade

### Boundaries

North: Waterway between Northeast 78th Street and Northeast 77th Street

South: Northeast 72nd Terrace

West: Biscayne Boulevard

East: Biscayne Bay

### Community Type

Neighborhood

### History

Belle Meade is an upper-middle class neighborhood of the City of Miami, located in what is known as the Upper Eastside. It is bordered on the south by the Bayside neighborhood, on the north by the Shorecrest neighborhood, and on the west by the Little River neighborhood, with Biscayne Bay to the east. It is a private, gated community. This is one of Miami's older neighborhoods, but in the 1920s and 1930s, Belle Meade extended further to the west of Biscayne Boulevard and further south. The neighborhood is now an isolated, exclusive enclave of 136 acres. Many surrounding neighborhoods are noticeably poorer, though they have a similar housing stock. This is a neighborhood of mostly single-family homes built from the 1920s to the current year. Many of the older homes have been refurbished and maintain original architectural facades.

Belle Meade has a "mini park" on Northeast 76th Street, which serves the community by providing a safe space for children. With picnic tables, barbecues, a playground, and nighttime lighting, this park is an unofficial 'town hall'. Local efforts have won a designation of the park as a dog park, allowing pets to roam the grounds without leashes.

According to a 1920 map of Miami, the land east of the line of Northeast 10th Avenue and most of Belle Meade Island was originally mangroves. The land north of 76th Street to Little River was shown as "prairie". In the course of planning Belle Meade, the land contours were manipulated, but there is visual evidence that the entire neighborhood slopes gradually down to sea level from a high point along Biscayne Boulevard. Northeast 7th Avenue is a natural low point, where rainwater accumulates, and there is evidence of another high point along Northeast 8th Avenue. When Belle Meade Island was separated from the mainland in 1925, a portion of the canal was cut through this hammock, and evidence is visible on the canal side of 815 and 825 Northeast 76th Street.

Furthermore, stone cut when the canal was dug was probably used to line the riverfront retaining walls. Some of these walls survive upstream of Belle Meade Island. In 2017, a proposal for massive upgrades by the City of Miami for mitigation of sea level rise and storm water flooding was put forward. Belle Meade was included in the proposal, with improved drainage and pumps indicated. As of 2020, the Belle Meade neighborhood was still subject to heavy flooding and required pumping.

## Community Dynamics

According to U.S. 2010 Census and American Community Survey 2015 5-year data, Belle Meade has a population of 906, 62.1% of which are working age from 18 to 64. The average per capita income of \$72,931 is much higher than Miami-Dade County's average per capita income of \$28,823. The population is 54.1% Hispanic, and 45.9% non-Hispanic. Furthermore, 88.82% of the population is White (including Hispanic White), 1.37% is Black, and 9.8% Others. A non-English language is spoken by only 1.14% of the population. Regarding education level, 32.45% of the population has less than a high school education, which is lower than Miami-Dade County's 48.86%. Foreign-born individuals make up 42.23% of the population, and 37.57% of the population are naturalized citizens, while 62.43% are not U.S. citizens. Of the foreign-born residents, 55.67% are from the Caribbean, and 24% are from South America.

## Business Landscape

This is a strictly residential neighborhood, without commercial property. The single-family character of the neighborhood is ensured by a strong homeowner's association. Historic designation has been considered by neighborhood residents in 2004 and in 2011, but residents were divided on this issue.

## Transportation

Belle Meade is isolated from thru traffic. It is bound by natural barriers on two sides, and it is gated. Belle Meade, along with other Miami neighborhoods, has recently added speed-limit signs to its streets, with a limit of 25 MPH.

## Reference

1. U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2010). Statistical File 3: block group # 120860013021. Miami-Dade County, Florida. Url: <http://www.census.gov>
2. U.S. Bureau of the Census. American Community Survey, 2011-2015 5-Year Data Profile. Url: <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/data-profiles/2015/>
3. Wikipedia, Upper Eastside, 2020. Url: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upper\\_Eastside](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upper_Eastside)
4. City of Miami, Belle Meade Mini Park, 2020. Url: <https://www.miamigov.com/Residents/Parks-Directory/Belle-Meade-Mini-Park>

5. City of Miami, City of Miami 25 MPH Phase II Program – District 5, 2020. Url: <https://www.miamigov.com/Government/Departments-Organizations/Office-of-Capital-Improvements/Signature-Projects/City-of-Miami-25-MPH-Program/City-of-Miami-25-MPH-Phase-II-Program-%E2%80%93-District-5?BestBetMatch=belle%20meade|d13b95b2-5146-4b00-9e3e-a80c73739a64|4f05f368-ecaa-4a93-b749-7ad6c4867c1f|en-US>
6. Miami Herald.com, City of Miami Inter-Office Memorandum of July 19, 2017. Url: <https://www.miamiherald.com/latest-news/article162522868.ece/binary/BACKUP%20DETAIL%20MIAMI%20FOREVER%20GENERAL%20OBLIGATION%20BOND.pdf>