GENERAL INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

The City of Fort Lauderdale is situated on the southeast coast of Florida, centrally located between Miami and Palm Beach. Encompassing more than 33 square miles with a population of 150,175, Fort Lauderdale is the largest of Broward County's 29 municipalities and serves as the county seat. Embraced by the Atlantic Ocean and enhanced by a myriad of inlets, the City visually more than lives up to its designation as the "Venice of America." If beauty and a semi-tropical climate were the only factors that counted, Fort Lauderdale would be ranked among a stellar group of urban areas. However, the City's attributes go far beyond its natural splendors.

The world famous Fort Lauderdale Beach, which underwent a $26 million renovation, is now home to an array of sidewalk cafes, clubs, shops and boutiques including the popular Beach Place retail and entertainment complex. Featuring the City's award winning wavewall and signature beach front promenade, Fort Lauderdale Beach is punctuated by lush landscaping and decorative lighting that accentuate the many moods of the Atlantic Ocean.

Three miles inland is downtown Fort Lauderdale's Riverwalk, a $12.5 million, brick-paved linear park which winds along the New River and attracts more than 1.5 million visitors each year. Riverwalk has emerged as the hub of Fort Lauderdale's arts, science and cultural scene featuring such amenities as the Broward Center for the Performing Arts, Museum of Discovery and Science, Blockbuster IMAX Theater, Museum of Art and the new Las Olas Riverfront retail, restaurant and entertainment center.

Downtown Fort Lauderdale's Central Business District continues to experience rapid growth, fueled by numerous office, residential, commercial and mixed-use projects in various stages of development. In addition to its prominent corporate and financial institutions, the area is home to Broward Community College, Florida Atlantic University, Florida International University, the national award winning Broward County Main Library, federal, county and school district offices.

A gentle climate, spectacular natural setting and educational, cultural and entertainment facilities all combine to make Fort Lauderdale the focal point of Broward County. With more than 1.3 million residents, Broward is the 20th largest county in the United States. In a larger geographic context, South Florida's tri-county area, composed of Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties, has a combined consumer market of more than 4 million people, accounting for 31% of Florida's population.

Corporate executives remain enthusiastic about Fort Lauderdale as evidenced by the increasing number of domestic and international businesses that have moved their corporate and Latin American headquarters to the City. Companies appreciate the City's accessibility, satisfying lifestyle, well-educated labor pool and advanced communication technologies. The supportive business environment created by the City's public and private sector leaders, enables businesses to prosper.

Fort Lauderdale has received numerous national awards and designations and has consistently ranked as one of the nation's most desirable cities, according to *Money* magazine's annual survey of the "Best Places to Live in the United States."

The culmination of Fort Lauderdale's infrastructure improvements, coupled with hundreds of millions of dollars in private sector investment, has enabled the City to successfully transform itself into a year round leisure destination for families, domestic and international visitors, as well as a world class business center for finance, commerce and international trade.