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## A Report Upon Scope of the City Plan and the Economic Background, West Palm Beach, Florida

Harland Bartholomew & Associates

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A Report Upon

# **SCOPE OF THE CITY PLAN**

and

# **THE ECONOMIC BACKGROUND**

**WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA**

Prepared for

**CITY COMMISSION**

and the

**CITY PLANNING BOARD**

By

**HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES**

**CITY PLANNERS**

**SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI**

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November, 1951.

# HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES

CITY PLANNERS - CIVIL ENGINEERS - LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

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City Commission  
City Planning Board  
West Palm Beach, Florida

Gentlemen:

We are pleased to submit herewith the first of a series of reports that will constitute your Comprehensive City Plan.

The first phase of this report is primarily for the citizens. They should understand just what the current planning program will comprise and how it is being undertaken. Their interest in and support of the final plan will have an important relationship to the benefits received therefrom.

The second phase of the report is concerned with the economic background of the city. This indicates the probable future character of the community and the data also reveals excellent possibilities for a substantial amount of future growth.

During the preparation of this report, we have received most helpful assistance from various officials, organizations and individuals, all of which is gratefully acknowledged.

Respectfully submitted,

Harland Bartholomew and Associates

By *Russell H. Riley*

RHR:pm



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## SCOPE AND OBJECTIVE

Urban communities are very complex organizations. They contain a vast number of different types of private buildings. There are also many public buildings and public facilities such as streets, schools and parks. In addition, there are miles of underground utilities such as sewers, water mains, gas and electric lines which are seldom seen by the average citizen. Each community is a complicated collection of man-made structures and facilities.

Many millions of dollars have been expended in building the City of West Palm Beach. Privately owned structures -- industries, stores, hotels and residential facilities -- probably represent a current investment of nearly \$100,000,000. Additional millions have been expended upon the streets, sewers and the public structures and facilities.

A city is a large corporation in which the citizens are the stock owners and the City Commissioners and other governmental agencies are the Board of Directors. When it is realized that this tremendous corporation is developed and administered by several, rather than a single public agency, and by countless individuals, each of which usually proceeds according to his own desires and plans with very little consideration of the interest or needs of the other agencies or of the entire city, it is quite remarkable that our American communities are as satisfactory as they are. Certainly, no large industry or business corporation would conduct its affairs without the aid of detailed records of past performance and carefully studied programs for future activities.

It is therefore imperative that a careful study be made of the existing conditions and probable future requirements of the city and that a general plan be prepared showing how the unsatisfactory conditions can be corrected and how the future needs can gradually be provided for. This is the major objective of the current Planning Program.

City planning has extended through many exploratory and adjusting phases, until today it has emerged as a comprehensive study of all areas affecting, or which will be affected by, the city's future growth as well as a careful analysis of all of the city's major physical facilities. It has grown from an experimental and sometimes wishful undertaking to a definite engineering science that utilizes data, standards and carefully prepared estimates. Modern city planning is based on thorough knowledge of sound facts and is not an idealistic scheme.

#### Existing Conditions and Problems

The beauty and many natural advantages of the Palm Beach Area are widely recognized. Local citizens speak proudly of West Palm Beach and boast of its advantages yet practically all will agree, at least privately, that it contains many defects and that many improvements and changes are necessary.

Because of the large number of winter tourists, more buildings, utilities and public services are required than are necessary to serve the normal, local population. The elongated shape of the city and the problems that have handicapped expansion to the west also present difficulties in securing urban development conforming to modern standards. Traffic problems are particularly acute during winter months because of large volumes of through traffic, an inadequate street system and the absence of good by-pass routes. Like practically all cities of similar size, the business district needs additional

parking space for cars of employees and customers. The increased amount of leisure time, the large number of winter visitors, and the absorption of vacant land for urban development have resulted in need and demand for more park and recreational facilities. Much new urban development, which should logically be within the city, is now occurring beyond the corporate limits, particularly to the southwest. Citizens are continually demanding, and usually justly so, additional public services and facilities. These in turn require new public buildings and equipment. In addition to the new facilities that are becoming necessary, there is the need for replacing old facilities which become worn out or obsolete.

In brief, there is a continuous need for new facilities and for replacing or enlarging existing facilities. Urban areas are never static, they either must progress or recede. In order to meet the needs and to insure that the new facilities or replacements can be provided without repeating past mistakes, it is necessary to have a carefully prepared plan based on sound facts which will indicate the logical extent and organization of the future community. The plans that have been prepared to guide future development west of the city can now be supplemented by plans that will guide new growth and redevelopment within the present city.

#### What the Comprehensive Plan Comprises

The Comprehensive Plan now being prepared for West Palm Beach is primarily concerned with the many physical facilities which must be provided and maintained by the public agencies such as the City Commission, the County School Board and other public agencies. These include major streets, off-street parking areas, elementary and high schools, parks, playgrounds and similar recreational areas, sanitary and storm water facilities and the



water mains, public buildings, including the administrative and cultural buildings such as an auditorium and library, as well as service facilities such as fire stations, storage yards and the like. In addition to facilities which are provided and maintained by the public agencies, there are other important physical improvements over which the public agencies have some control and which will influence the growth and development of the community. The more important of these are the railroads, including main lines, yards, freight and passenger stations, truck terminals and bus lines which provide transportation for local citizens.

The Comprehensive Plan is primarily concerned with the location, character and extent of the above physical facilities rather than with the details of their improvement or with their administration. For example, the plan will contain recommendations regarding the location of elementary and high schools and the area that should be included in the sites, rather than with the details of the educational facilities that are provided thereon.

To insure that these physical facilities will be properly related to both the existing and probable future population, it is necessary that the city plan include careful studies and forecasts as to how much population can be reasonably expected both within and near the present corporate limits during the next 25 or 30 years -- the normal period that a city plan considers. Studies are also made regarding the amount of area the future population will absorb and where the future urban area should be located.

The plan must also be concerned with the location and preservation of the major use districts, such as commercial and business districts and the several types of residential development. Otherwise, there would be little assurance that the residential and other use districts will be properly related to the proposed physical improvements that are so necessary for their

desirability, efficiency and economy. For example, a very different type of street is required in a business district than in residential areas. Likewise, schools, playgrounds and parks are essential in residential areas, yet are not needed and in fact, would be inappropriate in industrial sections.

The final phase of the plan includes an evaluation of the many proposed physical improvements to determine which are most seriously needed in the immediate future and which would reflect the maximum benefits to the entire community. Preliminary cost estimates are made of these necessary projects and careful study is also given to the community's ability to finance them. Any necessary adjustments can then be made in the program to conform to the financial limitations and a comprehensive program of improvements is finally agreed upon which can be carried out without any undue financial burden during the next several years.

#### How the Plan is Prepared

The making of a city plan is very similar to the preparation of an architectural plan for a new residence, store or industry. Decisions must first be made regarding the size of the building and agreement reached regarding the location and size of the several rooms -- this conforms to the population and zoning studies of the comprehensive plan. Next, the architectural plan must show the location and size of the physical elements such as doors, windows, electrical wiring, plumbing and the like. Those making the comprehensive city plan must likewise decide upon the location and size of the physical facilities such as streets, schools, parks and public buildings. Finally, estimates and a program of construction are agreed upon. Thus, the preparation of a city plan is a technical process like the preparation of an architectural plan for a building or the preparation of engineering plans for a sanitary sewerage system.

Members of the City Planning Board, which under the City Charter, are responsible for preparing the plan, are thoroughly trained in their own endeavors, but seldom have either the experience or the time to compile the necessary data and to make the technical studies. Consequently, in common with other cities of similar size, the City of West Palm Beach has engaged planning engineers to perform the necessary technical work in preparing the local city plan.

The engineers will compile data regarding past growth and the location, extent and character of existing physical facilities, such as streets, sewers, schools and public buildings. The existing conditions will be compared with commonly accepted standards for each facility which will clearly indicate their defects or adequacies. Studies will then be made as to how the existing conditions can gradually be changed, corrected or possibly relocated to provide more satisfactory service.

Preliminary reports regarding the findings and needs of these several phases of the plan will be presented to the Planning Board and City Commissioners. These reports will contain a discussion of the existing conditions with their adequacies or defects, will explain the future needs and describe the reasons for the proposed improvements. These preliminary reports will be submitted upon the following subjects:

- ✓ 1. Economic Background and Population
- ✓ 2. Land Use and Zoning
- 3. Major Streets and Parkings
- 4. Transportation and Transit
- 5. Schools and Parks
- ✓ 6. Public Buildings and City's Appearance

✓ 7. Housing, Including Redevelopment.

8. Public Works Program and Administration of the Plan.

After each report has been submitted, work will be started upon the following phase of the planning program. In the meantime, the Planning Board can study the findings and recommendations of the report just submitted. It would also be desirable for the Board to appoint a series of advisory committees to assist it in these studies. Such advisory committees would consist of local citizens and officials primarily selected because of their interest in and knowledge of the individual subjects and also because of their willingness and ability to devote time to this important undertaking. After the advisory committee has made its recommendations, including any revisions or readjustments they deem desirable, the Board could discuss each proposal with the engineers and decisions could be reached on the best possible solution for each phase of the plan in accordance with local conditions and desires. Thus, the preparation of a Comprehensive Plan for West Palm Beach is a project for the entire community and it should receive very thorough consideration before it is presented to the City Commission for official action.

The City Plan will be a general scheme to guide the growth, development and redevelopment of West Palm Beach over a long period. It should also be understood that the Plan Commission is primarily a fact finding and recommendatory body. It merely advises upon the carrying out of the plan and it is the public agencies and particularly the City Commission, that will have the responsibility for financing and carrying out the necessary improvements. Thus, the citizens will not only have a part in preparing the plan, but they will have a decided voice through their duly elected public agencies in carrying out the plan. Even the regulatory measures, such as the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and others that may be officially adopted as a part of



the plan are the responsibility of the City Commission and become effective only when adopted by them.

### Potenetial Benefits of City Planning

The major objectives of any comprehensive plan is to gradually improve the city so that it will provide better living and working conditions. Adequacy, efficiency and improved appearance of the various details of the city's structure are paramount, and economy is a major factor. Practically all communities are now confronted with serious problems of governmental cost, and a comprehensive city plan is one of the most important means of insuring economy in governmental activities and in preserving property values, which are the basic source of governmental income. Contrary to a rather frequent impression, a city plan is not intended to foster large expenditures, but instead is a means of insuring economies. Improvements must be made from time to time, and the major function of a city plan is to provide means for them to be made in the most economical manner and with the assurance that they will not soon become obsolete and need replacing or that they will duplicate other similar facilities.

Although city planning has sometimes been criticized as a visionary activity, and in other instances as the imposing of the desires of a few upon the masses, a modern planning program contains none of these defects. Instead, the preparation of the plan can, and should be, a very sound, democratic process concerned only with the welfare of the entire city.

## ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

American cities have grown because they have provided certain essential functions and services. Some cities have grown primarily because of industrial development. Others are dominantly trade and financial centers. Some, such as the communities along the Florida east coast, have developed primarily as resort centers. In large metropolitan areas, many of the suburban towns are residential communities where the citizens who work in another portion of the area reside. The larger communities usually have a combination of industry, retail trade and other facilities which afford employment opportunities. It is essential to determine the factors that have influenced the past growth of population in West Palm Beach and particularly to determine what conditions and factors will influence future growth.

### Natural Advantages

The average temperature during the first three months of the year ranges from 68° to 71°, and there are about two inches of rainfall per month. These are ideal conditions for one of the major functions of the community, namely a winter resort.

In addition to the desirable temperature and small amount of rainfall during the winter resort season, the climate is also excellent for year-round living and is particularly favorable for the raising of agricultural products and livestock. The amount of rainfall together with sound irrigation practices and the long growing season, as well as the range in soils from rich muck to fine sandy loam, is most conducive to agriculture production. Further, the dangers of frost are very rare, with the United States Weather Bureau recording only seven killing frosts in the spring and only eight in the fall over a thirty year period.

The lower east coast of Florida does have the danger of hurricanes which generally occur in the month of September or October. However, the residents have made substantial progress in reducing the losses of life and property with sound protective measures.

#### Transportation Facilities

The West Palm Beach area has a good system of transportation facilities connecting with all parts of the country. The Federal, State and County highways accommodate large volumes of autos and trucks. While improvements are desirable as will be discussed in later reports, the highway and street system compare favorably with the systems in other Florida cities.

Two important railroads serve the area, namely, the Florida East Coast and the Seaboard Railway. Both provide passenger and freight service, the amount of which is related to seasonable and local demands.

The area also has the advantage of a modern port which is located immediately beyond the northern city limits of West Palm Beach. A large volume of freight passes through this port with direct railroad movement via car ferries operating to and from Havana, Cuba. There are also adequate terminal facilities for private boating with new piers and docking facilities along the west shore of Lake Worth containing excellent accommodations and being located only a few minutes walking distance from the center of the West Palm Beach business district.

The Palm Beach area also has a large, modern airport. Two airlines, namely the Eastern and the National, which provide commercial air service in the Palm Beach area, the amount of which service is adjusted to seasonal requirements. Bahamas Airways also operates into and out of this port. Recently, the airport has been taken over by the air transport service of the armed forces and a substantial amount of employment will be provided by this operation.

### Utilities

The area is served by water, electricity, artificial gas and telephones. The utility service is generally adequate with the possible exception of the gas supply during the peak winter season. There is no reason why all of the utilities cannot be expanded as local growth warrants. It is possible that the city may be served eventually with natural gas which would result in substantial advantages.

In summary, the existing natural advantages such as climate, rainfall and soil, together with the transportation and utility facilities present no handicaps for future growth and actually provide many favorable conditions and advantages that should encourage and facilitate more local population increase than in many other American communities.

### Tourist Trade

The Palm Beach area was first developed as a resort, and tourist trade continues to be a very important factor in the local economy. An advantage of tourist trade is that practically all of the money spent by the tourists goes directly into almost every local trade channel.

A major disadvantage of the tourist industry is its seasonable nature. In Florida, the peak season is during the winter months, and the local temperature and rainfall are ideal during this period. The concentration of persons within the area during the peak season requires extensive accommodations and services which are not fully used during the balance of the year. This is particularly true of living accommodations and utilities. It results in higher costs than would be necessary with a more balanced usage. Attempts are now being made to attract additional summer visitors to Florida so as to allow a more balanced use of facilities. Some progress has been made, and there are now far more summer visitors than in earlier years. However, because of



the summer climate and the absence of ocean beaches in West Palm Beach, there is little probability that the summer tourist trade will ever approach that of the winter season. Any increase in summer tourist trade will be beneficial, however, and should be encouraged.

#### Tourist Attractions

The climate and beaches, particularly ocean beaches, are the major attractions for tourists in the State of Florida. This is evidenced by the large concentration of tourist facilities along the coast, especially in the southern part of the State. The local area has the advantages of both of these although West Palm Beach does not have direct ocean frontage. The city is, however, within very convenient driving distance of the ocean beaches and has much frontage along attractive Lake Worth. While the lake is not now available for swimming because of sewage pollution, this condition should be corrected in the future. The lake is intensively used for boating and has many attractions for tourists.

A second major attraction for tourists is recreational activities. This should be varied and should include active outdoor sports such as hunting, swimming and golf as well as more passive games and social activities. The West Palm Beach area has many such facilities. Fishing and hunting opportunities are excellent, and there are several good golf courses in the area. West Palm Beach also provides a number of recreational facilities for tourists in the public parks, especially in Flagler Park near the business district. There is, however, a need for enlarging these activities in the future, and a large area is needed where varied activities can be enjoyed by large groups.

A third requirement for the success of the tourist industry is an adequate amount of living space of the required type and character. The city has more than 2,000 rooms in hotels and apartment hotels, but the largest

concentration of hotel rooms is in the Town of Palm Beach. Apartments and rooming houses provide the majority of the tourist accommodations in West Palm Beach. A number of facilities are also available in duplexes and in garage apartments. Motor courts or motels are comparatively new but are becoming quite popular. Early in 1951 there were 13 motor courts within the city. In 1948, Palm Beach County had a total of 126 motor courts providing 1,390 living units, whereas Dade County then had only 116 tourist courts which provided 1,674 living units.

Tourist accommodations in West Palm Beach can be generally described as of the medium class rather than the luxury type, but there is a wide range in types of accommodations and in the rents during the peak season. While some of the hotels and apartments are completely occupied during the peak season, there is no apparent shortage of tourist accommodations at present, and additional tourists could be handled. However, this does not imply that no additional facilities will be needed. The number of tourists should continue to increase and attractive, modern facilities, renting at moderate, rather than luxury rates, will encourage the increase.

#### Summary and Potentialities

From the standpoint of the tourist business, the name "Palm Beach" reflects prestige and character throughout the country. Many persons are attracted to the West Palm Beach area because of this widespread recognition of the local development and its advantages. It is essential that these present advantages be continued in the future and if West Palm Beach is to gain maximum benefit from its natural potentialities, it must gradually improve its attractions and accommodations for tourists.

In view of the trend in the national economy and the government's tax policies, the city is fortunate that it accommodates tourists with moderate,

rather than high, incomes for the former should afford maximum possibilities for future increases. However, the city does gain advantages from wealthy tourists who visit Palm Beach, and will undoubtedly continue to do so in the future. The tourist business should continue to increase in West Palm Beach and to be an important factor in the local economy. However, the relative importance of the tourists business may be slightly less in the future as agricultural and industrial activities increase.

#### Wholesale and Retail Trade

Wholesale and retail trade are important factors in the economies of urban areas. They normally bring a substantial amount of income to communities, return profits upon capital investments and provide employment. Furthermore, they prove an important source of tax income for public agencies.

Both wholesale and retail trade in Florida have shown substantial increases during the last 20 years. They are now on a sound basis, unlike the speculative one that prevailed during so much of the state's early boom period. The following is a discussion of the present and probable future importance of these activities in the Palm Beach area.

#### Wholesale Trade

The volume of wholesale business in West Palm Beach increased from \$9,158,000 in 1939 to \$33,074,000 in 1950 - an increase of 261%. This increase was not as great as that in some of the larger Florida cities, particularly Miami, Orlando and Jacksonville. It was, however, more rapid than that of the country as a whole, and was also greater than the increase in Palm Beach County. This indicates that West Palm Beach is the major wholesale center for the Palm Beach area.

Between 1939 and 1948, 25 new wholesale houses were established in West Palm Beach, and 474 additional persons were employed. In 1948, local

wholesale firms employed a total of 860 persons and had an annual payroll of \$2,668,000. While this is by no means the largest source of employment within the Palm Beach area, it is an important one.

With the anticipated increase in population, there should be further increases in the volume and employment possibilities of the local wholesale trade. However, the rate of increase in local wholesale trade was less rapid than that in some of the larger Florida cities. With the continued improvement of highways and transportation facilities, this increase for the local area should continue to be less rapid than that in cities such as Jacksonville and Miami. Even so, wholesale trade should continue to provide an important source of employment and will require additional space in the industrial districts.

#### Retail Trade

The volume of retail trade in the City of West Palm Beach has shown an almost phenomenal increase during the last eleven years. It is now one of the major sources of income and employment. The large increase in the volume of retail sales is partly due to the increased price of commodities, but this has accounted for only a portion of the growth. Retail sales in Florida have increased far more rapidly than those of the country as a whole, and while the increase in Palm Beach was not quite as rapid as that in the state, it was substantially above the average of the country.

While the total volume of sales in West Palm Beach ranked it seventh among eleven of the large cities within the state, this is generally in line with the size of the different communities. A more pertinent fact is that the city ranks second among the eleven communities, and only slightly below Miami Beach in volume of retail sales per family. Of particular importance is the fact that West Palm Beach has the highest standing in effective buying power



per family. Retail sales are very high in the Palm Beach area in relation to the population. This is partially due to the tourist trade and partially to the large trade area.

The large volume of retail sales in West Palm Beach further indicates that it is the major shopping center for the entire county, including the nearby communities of Lake Worth and Riviera Beach. This practice can and should continue in the future.

In addition to the volume of sales is the important fact that local retail trade employed 3,809 persons in November, 1948. It is estimated that such employment now approximates 4,200 persons. It is clearly evident that retail trade is one of the most important factors in the local economy.

With increases anticipated in the local and county population as well as in the tourist trade, there is no reason why retail trade should not continue to be a major source of income and employment. Three basic conditions, however, largely determine whether these potentialities can be fully utilized. The first is good modern stores and modern merchandizing practices. This is primarily the responsibility of the merchants, and there is no reason why it cannot be satisfactorily accomplished. The second requirement is adequate off-street parking space within and near the shopping centers. This is an extremely difficult problem, particularly near the central business district, but additional parking space can and should be made available. This is primarily the responsibility of the city officials, but it will require the cooperation and assistance of the local merchants. The third major requirement for continued increase in retail sales is an adequate system of major streets and bus routes, making it convenient for the customers to reach the major shopping centers. As will be discussed in a later report, the existing street system is not entirely satisfactory and many improvements should be made in the future.

These are not impossible to accomplish and the city officials, as well as the county and state highway departments, should assume the major responsibility therefor.

### Agriculture

The State of Florida has experienced a marked increase in agricultural production during the last 20 years. In 1950, it ranked 23rd among the 48 states based on gross cash income from farming. According to estimates prepared by Sales Management's current Survey of Buying Power, Palm Beach County, in 1950, ranked third in the agricultural production of the state's 67 counties. Cash income from farm product marketing during the year was \$29,128,000.\*

Palm Beach County has two basic types of soil; namely, the organic soil of the hinterlands and the coastal sandy loam. The latter type of soil requires extensive fertilizing and here it is the local practice to utilize practical hydroponics, a new science or practice of growing plants by controlled use of water and chemical fertilizer. The local sandy loam comprises a strip approximately 50 miles long, extending westward from the ocean for a distance varying from 3 to 15 miles. Winter temperatures in this area are several degrees warmer than in the muck lands of the everglades. It thus possesses some decided advantages as its losses from frost during the past winter were not as severe as those in the glades.

Vegetables are the major product in the coastal area. During the past winter, approximately 18,000 acres were planted for this use. The majority of them are planted in time to be harvested early in the year and thus command high prices with little competition from other sections of the country. With the

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favorable temperatures and the use of commercial fertilizers, it is also possible to produce more than one crop per year.

Vegetables are also produced in the muck lands of the everglades as are other crops, especially sugar cane. For example, approximately 30,000 acres are now used for growing sugar cane in the Okeechobee area of which 23,000 acres are within the limits of Palm Beach County. In addition to the danger from freezing, another problem of farming in the everglade areas is pest control. This can increase production costs in some years to such an extent that profits are very limited. Beans, celery and mixed vegetables predominate in the vegetable production.

The cattle and dairy industry has also grown very rapidly in Palm Beach County during the last several years. Breeds of the Brahman, Aberdeen Angus, Shorthorns, and Devons, bred with the native Florida cows, thrive in the climate and on the land that 20 years ago was believed to be the nemesis of the cattle industry. Extensive forests, marshes and cut-over areas provide the major part of the grazing land. However, local cattle men are discovering greater profits can be realized by planting pastures and thereby furnishing a better grade of beef.

The trend of cattle production in Palm Beach County is revealed by the increase in the number of cattle and calves from 6,614 in 1940 to 17,400 in 1945, an increase of 163 percent. No data is available regarding the increase during the last five years, but it undoubtedly has been substantial. There was a 53 percent increase in the volume of milk produced between 1940 and 1945 in Palm Beach County. Thus, while the increase in the dairy industry is not as spectacular as that in beef cattle production, it is substantial and should continue in the future.

The excellent opportunities for increasing agricultural production can be an important factor in the economy of West Palm Beach. It insures diversification of the sources of income of the area, which is a major advantage. Secondly, it will provide additional income, much of which should be attracted to the wholesale and retail markets in West Palm Beach. Finally, some employment should be provided by these activities either in production, or in handling and processing. Thus, the agricultural potentialities of the county should encourage future population increase in the West Palm Beach area.

### Industry

There are several types of industrial employment that will influence the urban economy. For the purposes of this report, industry is divided into three major types; namely, manufacturing, the local port, and the construction industry.

#### Manufacturing

Florida has not experienced as rapid an increase in manufacturing as it has in retail and tourist trade and in agriculture. In 1947, the state contained 2,807 manufacturing establishments, an increase of 120 percent since 1899. Much of the manufacturing activities in the state are concentrated in the larger urban areas of Jacksonville, Tampa and Miami.

Palm Beach County ranked seventh of all Florida counties in the number of manufacturing establishments in 1947, having a total of 91 plants. Of these, only one employed more than 100 persons. The number of persons employed in local manufacturing activities was 1,229, or substantially less than the number employed in retail activities.

Data reveals that in 1948, the majority of the employment in the county's manufacturing establishments was in those using local resources, particularly food and lumber. Printing is also an important activity. Since this included



the entire county, a large number of food processing plants were located in the Okeechobee area rather than in West Palm Beach. While no current data is available, there have undoubtedly been substantial increases in manufacturing employment in the county during the last two years, for several large processing plants have been established in the Okeechobee area. Others are now under construction.

In 1947, the City of West Palm Beach accounted for 74.7 percent of the value of manufactured products in the entire county. The following data indicates the importance of manufacturing in West Palm Beach compared with the other five largest manufacturing cities in the state.

City	No. of Establish- ments 1947	No. of Employees 1947 (av.)	Value Added by Manufacture (Thousands)		Adjusted % In- crease*
			1939	1947	
Miami	380	7,086	\$11,066	\$35,288	61%
Jacksonville	267	12,221	24,310	65,219	35%
Tampa	267	14,417	21,422	51,839	22%
St. Petersburg	98	1,241	2,051	5,572	37%
Orlando	93	1,717	1,976	6,668	71%
WEST PALM BEACH	54	917	1,330	4,216	60%

\*Corrected for changes in commodity prices 1939-1947.

The importance of manufacturing is less in West Palm Beach than in any of the other cities mentioned. However, the value of the local manufactured products is substantial. The city showed a great increase in the value of its manufacturing between 1939 and 1947, exceeded only by Miami and Orlando in this group.

Manufacturing activities should increase in the West Palm Beach area, but there is no indication that large industries will ever be established or that manufacturing will predominate in the city's economy. The absence of extensive sources of raw materials and the distance from large markets probably

are the major reasons why large plants would not locate within the corporate limits. Actually, because of the importance of the tourist trade and the necessity of maintaining desirable residential districts, it would not be advantageous to attract the larger and more obnoxious type of industry. This does not, however, preclude the desirability of attracting the lighter types of industry, which will afford additional employment and further diversify and balance the economy of the area.

The increase in agricultural activities within the county will provide an important source of raw materials that should attract a number of processing establishments. These will probably be located nearer the center of the production area rather than in the city. The desire to escape city taxes will be another reason for such location. However, these plants will be advantageous to the economy of the West Palm Beach area.

The city should also attract a number of industries because of its excellent climate, good living conditions and good supply of labor. Another marked advantage of the city is its proximity to a market area of very high quality. The city should be a very logical location for manufacturing plants that will produce sport clothes of all types, ladies shoes and accessories. The proximity to the textile mills in Georgia and the Carolinas is another advantage for the establishment of plants producing sport clothes. There should also be excellent possibilities for manufacturing jellies, syrups and preserves because of the proximity to the raw materials. These types of plants would not be objectionable in the fundamentally residential community, yet should supply substantial future employment.

Even with the city's excellent possibilities for the establishment of additional manufacturing plants, much effort will be necessary to actually obtain them. Fortunately, existing organizations are already actively engaged

in promoting industrial growth and expansion. In addition to the Chamber of Commerce, is the Palm Beach County Resources Development Board. Both of these organizations appear to be well organized and active and their continued efforts should result in substantial benefits to the area's economy in the future.

#### Port of Palm Beach

The Port of Palm Beach, located immediately north of the city, is one of the largest such facilities in Florida's central coastal area. It provides employment for more than 115 persons, and thus is one of the most important single sources of employment in the West Palm Beach area.

The port is very modern, containing warehouses and docking and rail-to-port facilities. The West Indian Steamship Company's fleet of car ferries operates between the port and Havana, Cuba. The large majority of the port's trade is handled by this line and it affords unusually efficient and rapid transportation. The value of shipments through the local port is higher than in either Jacksonville or Miami. Farm machinery is one of the principal items exported to Cuba. The imports are primarily fruits, vegetables and sugar.

New car ferries are now available for operation to and from this port and the volume of shipping should increase substantially in the future. The port should not only continue to be an important source of employment and influence in the area's economy, but it should also assist in attracting additional industries, especially those that produce for the Cuban markets or process products received from that country.

#### Construction Industry

Because of rapid growth and development, the construction industry has been one of the major sources of employment throughout the entire state. This is particularly true of the West Palm Beach area. In 1948, there were 3,307 persons employed in construction activities in Palm Beach County. This

accounted for 14.4 percent of all the county's employment, whereas the national average in the construction industry was 5.6 percent of the country's total employment.

During the 1949-1950 fiscal year, a total of 1,139 dwelling units were erected in the City of West Palm Beach. This represents nearly 800 dwellings per 10,000 families in comparison with the average for all urban areas of only 294 dwelling units per 10,000 families. Even during the first nine months of 1951, permits were issued for 360 new single-family residences.

The current limitations on construction will undoubtedly result in less construction during the current fiscal year, and it is possible that the past year may have been the peak year of residential construction in the West Palm Beach area for some time. However, a substantial population increase is indicated, and consequently, additional residential construction should be anticipated in the future. Furthermore, industrial construction should continue at a rapid rate, particularly outside the urban area. Thus, while the percentage of total employment represented by the construction industry may decrease in the future, there is every indication that, except for an economical depression, such as occurred in the 1930's, the construction industry will continue to be an important source of employment in Palm Beach County and particularly in West Palm Beach.

### Summary

The preceeding discussion of major factors influencing the area's economy indicates that excellent possibilities exist for new growth. Cf particular importance is the fact that the future economy should be more diversified and balanced than that of the past. Concentrated and sustained efforts on the part of the local officials and organizations will be necessary to fully achieve the potentialities.



