

HISTORY OF BLACK GROVE: A Planning Model for America

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History of Black Grove

Black Grove was once an integral part of, but is now excluded from, the affluent community of Coconut Grove in Dade County, Florida. The existing community of Black Grove is approximately one mile square and has a stable population of about 10,000 people. Highway U.S. 1 runs in a northeasterly direction and forms both the northern and western borders of the area. The eastern border is MacDonald Street. A wall of cyclone fencing and concrete blocks, from near Main Highway to near Dixie Highway on LeJeune Road, defines the southern border of Black Grove.

Although the Black Grove environment is characterized by lack of basic services, it has a manageable scale, a good

proportion of land and people, and is basically well planned, with an organic center and distinct boundaries that give it cohesion.

Black Grove is small as compared with other ghettos throughout the country. Yet it is representative of the other "Black Groves" of America. A census, now in process, will soon give us up-to-date figures. It is estimated that out of a total population of 8,000 in the Black Grove area, 95 percent are black. Seventy percent of the people of Black Grove own their own homes. In recent years housing has deteriorated and rows of apartment structures have been built on small sites on the main street of Grand Avenue. These concrete monsters are now severely overcrowded, and provide the barest of needs beyond shelter.



In Black Grove, 70 percent of the people own their own homes. Many of these second- and third-generation residents feel a strong, deeply rooted sense of community. (Photo by John Massey)