



**Palm Beach  
CIVIC ASSOCIATION**  
PROTECTING THE QUALITY OF LIFE SINCE 1944

# **PBCA-LRP Future Business Interim Report**

**01/29/19**



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## Background

**Last season, the PBCA Long Range Planning Committee (the LRP) together with the Palm Beach Chamber of Commerce formed the Future Business Sub-Committee to identify and assess specific vulnerabilities & opportunities relating to the Town's business community over the next 10-20 years.**

### **Objectives:**

- **Help prepare Town officials to develop plans and take immediate actions which ensure Palm Beach (PB) has healthy durable businesses**
- **Sensitize Town's business community on actions it can take to survive & thrive**
- **Determine how best to communicate local business's role in to the community**



## **Work To Date**

- **Identified relevant 10-20 year trends impacting PB**
- **Reviewed Town policies/regulations affecting the business community**
- **Analyzed Town business statistics and metrics**
- **Participated in last year's Town "Business Workshop"**
- **Studied best practices employed in other similar communities**
- **Documented anecdotes concerning Town-business interactions**
- **Developing a vision of the business community circa 2035**
- **Conducted an electronic survey of how Town residents feel about the business community**



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## **PBCA-LRP - Future Business Survey**

**Purpose--Help Ensure the Town's Business Community  
Suitably Contributes To Its Residents' Future  
Quality of life ("QoL")**

**01/29/19**

## **Survey Methodology**

**Electronic survey conducted from 06/22/18 through 08/17/18.**

**Roughly 75% of responses came from an email list compiled by the PBCA (roughly a 6% response rate); the balance derived from other e-mailings and PBCA promotional materials.**

**This yielded 323 completed questionnaires.**

- Respondents appear broadly representative of the entire Palm Beach residential community.**
- Results generally varied only marginally across respondent segments.**



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**FOR AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF PALM BEACHERS, THE TOWN'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY IS AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTOR TO THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE**

**MOST RESPONDENTS SEE THE MAJOR REDEVELOPMENTS OF ROYAL POINCIANA PLAZA AND ROYAL POINCIANA WAY AS QUITE POSITIVE**

**A SIZABLE MAJORITY SEE THE CONTINUING HEALTH OF THE WORTH AVENUE AND SOUTH COUNTY BUSINESS DISTRICTS AS IMPORTANT**

**LOOKING AHEAD, A STRONG MAJORITY OF RESPONDENTS PREFER A MORE ROBUST TOWN BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

**ATTRACTING MORE VISITORS IS IMPORTANT TO ACHIEVING A MORE SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

**For An Overwhelming Majority of Palm Beachers, the Town's Business Community is an Important Contributor to Their Quality of Life**

**Over 85% place great or high importance on sustaining and supporting Town businesses—support is very high across all respondent segments**

**By >10:1, respondents believe the Town's business community enhances their quality of life (QoL) versus diminishes it.**

**In particular, the business community provides convenience (83% of respondents) and a "sense of community" (51%). Over 40% value the selection and high quality of goods/services as well as the contribution the business community makes to Town revenues.**

## **Most Respondents See the Major Redevelopments of Royal Poinciana Plaza and Royal Poinciana Way As Quite Positive**

**Half of respondents rate the redevelopment of Royal Poinciana Plaza “highly positive” and only 19% see this as negative-to-neutral.**

- Support is highest among younger respondents, those living north of Wells Road, those with higher income and those employed full/part time.***

**73% see the ongoing redevelopment of Royal Poinciana Way as positive or highly so. Only 11% see it negatively.**

- Positivity is highest among those living north of Wells Road and those professing expert computer literacy***

## **A Heavy Majority See The Continuing Health of the Worth Avenue and South County Business Districts As Important**

**76% deem the Worth Avenue business district as important to their QoL while only 3% don't.**

- Those living south of Sloan's Curve place a bit less importance on this business district***

**And, 63% believe filling South County business district vacancies is of major or great importance while only 7% see little or no importance.**

## **Looking Ahead, A Strong Majority of Respondents Prefer a More Robust Town Business Community-Part 1**

**54% think the Town has too few businesses and only 4% see too many.**

- *Support for more businesses higher among younger respondents and a bit lower among retirees.*

**Nearly two-thirds see the continuing concentrated development of WPB and associated traffic as raising the importance to them of Town businesses.**

- *Growing importance more often cited by the younger, higher-income & full-time employed; also those north of Wells Road and those with single-family houses.*

## Looking Ahead, A Strong Majority of Respondents Prefer a More Robust Town Business Community-Part 2

**E-commerce is not seen as a threat to the local business community by the average respondent.**

- *Surprisingly, younger respondents are more likely to see e-commerce raising the importance of local businesses.*

**Respondents would frequent Town businesses more if it were not for:**

- **Difficulty with transportation/parking (59% of respondents)**
- **Unavailability of what they need, inadequate variety or too expensive (roughly 40% each)**

## Attracting More Visitors is Important To Achieving A More Robust Business Community—Part 1

### How respondents would like to see the Town business community in 10-15 years:

**42% favor a much more robust business community kept healthy by attracting visitors without inconveniencing local residents.**

- *The most robust outlook was favored a bit more by those living south of Sloan's Curve.*

**A third would prefer enough additional businesses to fill vacancies**

**10% are content with the same number and mix of businesses and vacancies.**

**In contrast, only 12% would like to see a more restricted business community.**

## **Attracting More Visitors is Important To Achieving A More Robust Business Community—Part 2**

**56% feel welcoming visitors is positive to their QoL and a similar number believe the Town should do more to attract visitors year round.**

**Only 14% see welcoming visitors as a negative and even fewer think the Town should do less to attract visitors year-round.**

**Yet, respondees on average see only a small positive change in how welcoming Palm Beach is to visitors over the past 10 years.**

- Younger respondents and those residing south of Sloan's Curve tend to favor welcoming more.***

## Attracting More Visitors is Important To Achieving A More Robust Business Community—Part 3

Support is even stronger (74%) for the Town to do more to attract visitors off-season with only 5% opposed.

- *Support is strongest among those residing south of Sloan's Curve. Other strong segments are those who are in residency 0-6 months and those who have lived in PB for 15 years or less.*

55% believe the Town should stage off-season events to attract visitors as well as to entertain year-round Town residents. Respondents endorsed other specific ways to strengthen the sustainability of the Town business community:

- Better mid-town walking paths and signage for visitors (40%)
- Beautification of the Royal Poinciana median strip (37%)
- Interactive searchable on-line database of Town businesses goods and services (37%)
- More efficacious home-delivery of local-business goods & services (27%)
- More open-market zones (27%)



## Respondent Profile

### Age

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| <45   | 5%  |
| 45-60 | 17% |
| 61-75 | 52% |
| >75   | 26% |

### Years In Palm Beach

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| 0-5   | 11% |
| 6-15  | 32% |
| 16-25 | 26% |
| 26-35 | 16% |
| >35   | 15% |

### Household Size

|    |     |
|----|-----|
| 1  | 17% |
| 2  | 66% |
| 3  | 7%  |
| 4+ | 10% |

### Residence Type

|           |     |
|-----------|-----|
| Condo     | 56% |
| Townhouse | 4%  |
| House     | 40% |

### Occupancy Status

|           |     |
|-----------|-----|
| Homeowner | 91% |
| Renter    | 9%  |

### Residence Location

|           |     |
|-----------|-----|
| North End | 22% |
| Midtown   | 42% |
| South End | 28% |

### Annual Residency (months)

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| 0-3   | 6%  |
| 4-6   | 20% |
| 7-9   | 32% |
| 10-12 | 42% |



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## **PBCA-LRP Future Business Interim Report** **Executive Summary**

## **Executive Summary-Part One**

**RESIDENTS SEE A HEALTHY AND MORE ROBUST BUSINESS COMMUNITY AS VITAL TO THEIR QOL AND ARE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT RECENT ROYAL POINCIANA DEVELOPMENTS**

**BY THE MID-2030'S, CHANGING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR, E-SHOPPING, TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND CONTINUING WPB DEVELOPMENT WILL IMPACT THE WAYS TOWN BUSINESSES INTERACT WITH THEIR CUSTOMERS**

**THE TOWN GOVERNMENT HAS BEGUN TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC ISSUES WHICH HAVE CHALLENGED LOCAL BUSINESSES**

**NEWER TECHNOLOGIES CAN HELP BUSINESSES PREPARE FOR EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS AND ENSURE PALM BEACH HAS A SUITABLE COMPLEMENT OF DURABLE BUSINESSES**

## **Executive Summary-Part Two**

### **THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY AND THE TOWN SHOULD TAKE SPECIFIC ACTIONS AND PLAN NOW TO ENSURE PALM BEACH HAS HEALTHY, DURABLE DISTINCTIVE BUSINESSES**

- **Advance Town Policies & Procedures Towards Encouraging the Prosperity and Sustainability of the Business Community**
- **Make Palm Beach Business and Recreation More Welcoming and Attractive**
- **Start Transforming Palm Beach into a “Smart Town”**
- **Begin Planning For Longer-Range Renewal**
- **Establish an Ongoing Business Advisory Task Force**
- **Further Improve Town Business Community Coordination Mechanisms**



## **Additional Findings and Conclusions**

**Business vacancy rates are an issue in some Town areas**

**Most Town businesses have little/no physical security or advanced cyber-attack protection;  
Some lack cyber-attack/terrorism insurance**

**RP Plaza and RP Way revitalizations demonstrate positive change**

**Over the past year, the Town has begun to improve its dealings with the business community**

**But, no collective vision has been achieved of how the business community should look circa 2035 & how to get there**

**Businesses have only begun to realize benefits IT advances can bring to Town infrastructure**

**By 2035, autonomous transportation as a service (TaaS) will transform the ways individuals interact with local businesses/employers and lead to substantial parking reductions**

## Recommendations

### **(1) Advance Town Policies/Procedures Toward Encouraging the Prosperity and Sustainability of Local Businesses**

- **Educate all Town stakeholders about importance of a vibrant business community to PB QoL**
- **Support businesses without placing undue pressure on Town resources or residents**
- **Simplify Town-business interactions e.g. permitting, code enforcement, ARCOM**
- **Modernize outdated codes**
- **Automate routine processes—e.g. forms completion, billing, payments**
- **Consider whether the “Town Serving” requirement & associated workloads make sense going forward**



## Recommendations

### **(2) Make Palm Beach Business and Recreation More Welcoming and Attractive**

- **Provide attractive signage and walking paths**
- **Install public art and extend beautification--e.g. the RP median**
- **Provide a hotline and single point of visitor contact**
- **Consider annual off-season events to attract visitors**
- **Streamline/ standardize parking availability and fees**
- **Consider developing quality open-market zones especially as new space becomes available**
- **Consider offering cross-business personalized shopping services to high net-worth residents/visitors**

## Recommendations

### **(3) Start Transforming Palm Beach into a “Smart Town”**

- **Ensure the timely completion of undergrounding & bring Comcast and ATT backbone fiber to the commercial districts.**
- **Install smart street lighting for ambience, security and savings**
- **Consider measures to foster Commercial/Residential mixed-use developments**
- **Cultivate connectivity, multigenerational interaction and social engagement**
- **Create a Palm Beach web portal with an Amazon-like local product/service database, online shopping and the scheduling of automated deliveries. Also provide a companion mobile app**
- **Sponsor a mobile app to alert residents and potential visitors to bridge openings**
- **Sponsor an app to help visitors tour Palm Beach by auto or bike**

## Recommendations

### **(4) Begin Planning For Longer-Range Renewal**

- **More accurately determine the number, composition & flow of business visits**
- **Prepare to operate a public-private autonomous-vehicle transportation service(s)—delivering people-to-business (PTB), business-to-people (BTP) & government to/from working locations**
- **Develop plans to capitalize on sizable TaaS-driven parking-space reductions**
- **Consider shared drone-service feasibility for immediate home delivery/pick-up**
- **Explore the deployment of zoned electricity micro-grids for outage backups**
- **Sensitize/educate local businesses to make their assets more resilient/redundant to cybersecurity, terrorism and extreme weather events**
- **Work with property owners to develop targeted business recruiting mechanisms for filling vacancies and new space with distinctive, sustainable businesses**



## Recommendations

### **(5) Establish an Ongoing Business Advisory Task Force (the "BATF")**

- **Absorb the work done by this sub-committee and take it forward**
- **Monitor and measure the Town's progress in serving the business community**
- **Develop a vision of how the business community should look in 2035 and how best to get there**
- **Include representatives from each of the business and residents associations and from Town management**
- **Meet frequently throughout the "season"**
- **Report to the Town Council periodically**



## **Recommendations**

### **(6) Further Improve Town Business Community Coordination Mechanisms**

- **Liaison between local businesses and Town government**
- **Work closely with predesignated key personnel in each department to expedite business interactions**
- **Assist businesses relocating to Palm Beach**
- **Coordinate with County TDC staff to ensure PB gets suitable benefits**
- **Serve on and provide staff support to the Business Advisory Task Force**
- **Participate in business community longer-range planning**

## **Draft-Residents' Vision Of The PB Business Community's Role Circa 2035**

**We are a peerless community of engaged proud residents...  
enjoying a superb quality of life...  
enhanced by our proximity to our Town's vibrant prosperous business districts...  
each comprised of distinctive thriving individual business entities...  
in properties owned and developed by far-sighted entrepreneurs...  
attracting and serving the many visitors who enjoy our world-class lodging, restaurants, shopping, recreation and ambience year round.**

## Next Steps

- **Reach agreement on tangible steps—both near and longer-term--the Town will take to support the business community**
- **Mobilize the business community to undertake certain developmental projects on their own behalf—e.g. web portal, mobile apps**
- **Establish the ongoing Business Advisory Task Force to drive the fulfillment of Palm Beach’s vision for its business community**