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*An Atlas of the Downtown Neighborhood
of Pittsburgh 1977*



DOWNTOWN

PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOOD ATLAS

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INTRODUCTION

The Pittsburgh Neighborhood Alliance was formed in 1969 by a number of neighborhood organizations that were concerned with improving the city's neighborhoods and their relations with city government. The members of the Alliance recognized that in order to negotiate effectively with city government about such major concerns as public service needs, capital improvements and transportation, it was necessary to obtain accurate, up-to-date information about the neighborhoods. Unfortunately, this information was not available.

To remedy this situation, the Alliance developed its Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas project. First, the boundaries of the city's neighborhoods had to be determined. The Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas asked people attending community meetings to name and describe the boundaries of the neighborhoods in which they lived. This information was also provided by an Atlas-initiated survey. Responses from every voting district of the city were analyzed to assure citizen involvement at the neighborhood level. Seventy-eight neighborhoods were thus identified, each made up of one or more whole voting districts in order to comply with provisions in Pittsburgh's home rule charter relating to the election of community advisory boards.

The Atlas then gathered a body of useful and up-to-date information for every neighborhood. It is the beginning of a neighborhood information system that more closely reflects neighborhood boundaries as defined by residents instead of by public officials. In the past, statistics about sections of the city have been based on information published for relatively large areas such as census tracts. For the atlas, much of the material describing neighborhood characteristics came from figures compiled for smaller areas: voting districts or census blocks. As a result, detailed information is now available for neighborhoods whose boundaries differ substantially from census tract boundaries.

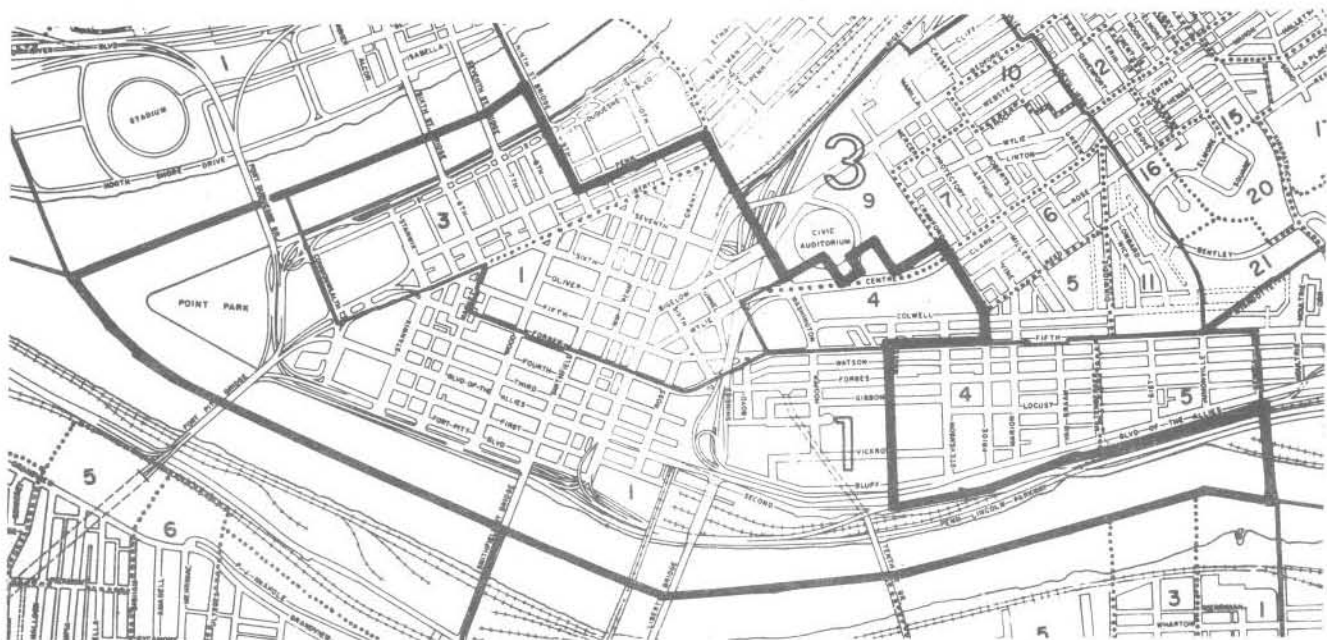
The information in this atlas provides an insight into current neighborhood conditions and the direction in which the neighborhood is moving. The best indicators showing the health of the neighborhood are provided by citizen satisfaction with the neighborhood, and changes in residential real estate transaction prices. Comparison of these statistics to those for the entire city provide a basis to begin understanding issues of neighborhood stability. In the years to come, as additional data are gathered for each of these indicators, trends will become more obvious.

It is important to recognize that neighborhood change is a complex process and that one indicator by itself may not be useful. Neighborhoods may be healthy regardless of their level of income, and therefore income-related statistics may not be useful guides by themselves. Neighborhoods must be viewed over time in terms of relative changes compared to the city as a whole, and any analysis of neighborhood conditions must focus upon all of the data in order to provide a comprehensive understanding.

To learn about specific sections of the neighborhood, figures by individual voting district or census tract may be obtained. Additional information on the neighborhood or the information system is available through the Center for Urban Research of the University of Pittsburgh, which has made an outstanding contribution to the development of this atlas.

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Downtown is 438.0 acres in size, containing 1.3% of the city's land and 0.6% of its 1974 population. When the neighborhood boundaries were determined, the neighborhood was made up of voting district #1, Ward 1; #1, Ward 2; and #4, Ward 3. (See Appendix for recent voting district changes.) The census tracts in the neighborhood are #101, #201, and #302.



NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY
DOWNTOWN

The history of Pittsburgh's Downtown begins with the struggle between the British and French for control of the vast North American inland.

Though George Washington, a 21 year old major in the Virginia militia, had been sent in 1753 to inspect the forks of the Ohio and to determine the area's potential for fortification, it was the French who first secured the site. Fort Duquesne was abandoned by them on November 24, 1757, as General John Forbes and his troops approached. Forbes renamed his conquest "Fort Pitt", honoring William Pitt, the King's first minister. Fort Pitt was to become the largest British frontier fortification.

Extension of the Mason-Dixon Line five degrees west, following British evacuation of the fort in 1772, settled a colonial boundary dispute and sealed Pennsylvania's claim to Pittsburgh. Early buyers of land were Isaac Craig, Stephen Bayard, Thomas Smallman and Devereux Smith. George Wood surveyed the area, laying out streets as far as what is now Grant Street. By 1786, Downtown had 36 loghouses, a few brick and stone buildings and six stores. Neither streets nor sidewalks were paved, and travel was by foot, horse or wagon. Ferries were used instead of bridges.

Pittsburgh's earliest settlers were English, Scottish and Irish, though there were also many Germans and Swiss. Black slaves and freemen were few. Residents were mostly young people able to endure frontier life. They relied on hunting, trapping and trade with the Indians. Later arrivals turned to agriculture. Presbyterianism was the dominant faith, although the area's first church services, during the French occupation, had been Roman Catholic. By 1800, Pittsburgh had several grist mills, a glass factory, a brickyard, boatyard, distillery, brewery and tannery. The settlement was incorporated as a borough in 1794, and as a city on March 18, 1816.

For the first quarter of the 19th century, Pittsburgh was a major waystation for goods in transit to the burgeoning markets to its west and south. However, the arrival of the railroad and a concomitant decline of the river trade, combined with competition of newer cities closer to western markets, began to lessen commerce's significance to Pittsburgh's economy. Ready availability of raw materials such as coal and timber had earlier encouraged industry in the city - iron, smelting, glassmaking, metal working, textiles, boat building. Secure in the competitive superiority of its raw materials, Pittsburgh turned more and more to heavy industry. The city was on its way to becoming what Charles Dickens termed "Hell with the lid off".

Following World War II, Pittsburgh was worn down, dirty and polluted, deservedly known as the "Smokey City". It lagged in both its highway program and mass transit. Housing was obsolete. A post war study published in the Wall Street Journal, "Our Big Cities Today and Tomorrow", rated Pittsburgh as Class D - the lowest. In this setting, the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, an alliance of major corporate power, came into being to give leadership to a "renaissance" effort, with R. K. Mellon the chief sponsor. Strong cooperation came with the dominant political leadership under David Lawrence.

Smoke and flood controls were instituted. Work began on the Penn-Lincoln Parkway, the first non-toll, limited access highway in Pennsylvania. Gateway Center was planned for a 23 acre site at Stanwix and Liberty devastated by a fire in 1946. Over the next twenty years, the Alcoa Building, Point State Park, Mellon Square, the Civic Arena, Heinz Hall, and the U. S. Steel Building, the tallest between New York and Chicago, were all added to Downtown.

Today, Pittsburgh is America's third largest corporate headquarters with Downtown the home of 17 firms that list among the top 500 industrial corporations in the nation.

DOWNTOWN

SUMMARY STATISTICS

	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
Population (1974)	3,107	479,276
% Change (1970-1974)	-16%	-8%
% Black population (1970)	6%	20%
Housing units (1974)	1,285	166,625
% Vacant	15%	6%
% Owner-occupied housing units (1974)	1%	54%
Average sales price of owner-occupied dwellings (1975)	(no sales)	\$23,518
% Residential real estate transactions with mortgages provided by financial institutions (1975)	0%	59%
Crime rate (1975)	0.864	0.053
Income index as % of city index (1974)	140%	
% Satisfied with neighborhood (1976)	47%	41%
Major neighborhood problems (1976)	Unsafe streets Poor roads	Poor roads Dog litter Burglary

CITIZEN SURVEY

The purpose of the citizen survey was to obtain attitudes about the quality of the neighborhood environment. Citizens were asked to respond to questions concerning the neighborhood as a whole, neighborhood problems, and public services. The attitudinal data, heretofore not available, are key indicators of the relative health of the neighborhood. By specifying neighborhood problems or public service needs, the information may be a useful guide for public investment or service delivery decisions.

The city-wide survey was mailed to a randomly selected sample of registered voters. Of approximately 35,000 households contacted, 9,767 responded. The sample provides a 5% response rate for each of the city's 423 voting districts. (See Appendix for a profile of the respondents as well as for statistics on voter registration.)

I. Neighborhood Satisfaction

Downtown residents are generally more satisfied with their neighborhoods than residents city-wide. Table 1 shows that 47% of the citizens responding to the survey were satisfied with their neighborhood compared to 41% in all city neighborhoods. When asked to state whether the neighborhood is better or worse than two years ago, 16% said that it was better which exceeded the city-wide response of 12%. Given the opportunity to move from the neighborhood, 55% said they would continue to live there compared to a response of 45% for the city as a whole. The responses to these satisfaction questions indicate a more positive attitude of residents toward their neighborhood compared to citizens city-wide.

TABLE 1

Neighborhood Satisfaction
Downtown

Question 1: Generally, how satisfied are you with conditions in the neighborhood?

	Satisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Neither (%)
Downtown	47	28	22
All neighborhoods	41	37	21

Question 2: Do you think this neighborhood has gotten better or worse over the past two years?

	Better (%)	Worse (%)	Not Changed (%)
Downtown	16	40	40
All neighborhoods	12	49	36

Question 3: If you had your choice of where to live, would you continue living in this neighborhood?

	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not Sure (%)
Downtown	55	22	13
All neighborhoods	45	32	18

SOURCE: Citizen Survey, 1976.

NOTE: The percent responses to each question do not add up to 100%. The difference is accounted for by the following: "don't know", "unable to evaluate", or no answer.

II. Neighborhood Problems

In order to identify specific neighborhood problems, residents were asked to consider twelve problems usually associated with urban communities and rate them for the neighborhood. Table 2 compares the problem ratings of the respondents from Downtown to those from all city neighborhoods. Areas of particular concern for the neighborhood include unsafe streets and poor roads.

III. Satisfaction with Public Services

Table 3 shows the satisfaction of Downtown residents with their public services and compares the responses to data for all city neighborhoods. City-wide, residents are least satisfied with street and alley maintenance. Downtown residents are more satisfied with respect to public transportation and the fire department, and less satisfied with respect to street and alley maintenance, and condition and cost of housing.

The Citizen Survey also asked the respondents to list the services with which they were the least satisfied and to explain the reasons for their dissatisfaction. Residents from Downtown gave the greatest number of reasons for dissatisfaction to the services listed below. Included is a summary of the major reasons for their dissatisfaction.

1. Street and alley maintenance: Poor maintenance; need for better street repair program.
2. Condition and cost of housing: Cost of housing too high; rents too high.
3. Public transportation: Need for more efficient transportation system; need better bus scheduling.

TABLE 2

Neighborhood Problems
Downtown

Problem Category	Problem Rating - Percent Response		
	<u>Not a Problem</u>	<u>Minor or Moderate</u>	<u>Big or Very Serious</u>
Unsafe streets			
Downtown	16	49	33
All neighborhoods	25	45	21
Vandalism			
Downtown	17	37	18
All neighborhoods	13	49	28
Rats			
Downtown	47	14	5
All neighborhoods	34	33	12
Burglary			
Downtown	20	38	19
All neighborhoods	14	44	29
Poor roads			
Downtown	33	33	22
All neighborhoods	17	41	33
Trash and litter			
Downtown	34	37	17
All neighborhoods	27	41	24
Vacant buildings			
Downtown	43	28	13
All neighborhoods	49	24	13
Undesirable people moving into the neighborhood			
Downtown	47	22	9
All neighborhoods	42	28	15
Stray dogs			
Downtown	59	16	5
All neighborhoods	25	38	18
Dog litter			
Downtown	51	22	9
All neighborhoods	21	38	32

SOURCE: Citizen Survey, 1976.

NOTE: The percent responses to each question do not add up to 100%. The difference is accounted for by the following: "don't know", "unable to evaluate", or no answer. The problem categories of alcoholism and drug abuse are not included in the table because the response rates to these questions were low.

TABLE 3

Satisfaction with Public Services
Downtown

Service	Percent Response		
	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>
Parks and Recreation			
Downtown	63	13	11
All neighborhoods	51	15	23
Schools			
Downtown	13	8	9
All neighborhoods	46	12	21
Street maintenance			
Downtown	34	20	37
All neighborhoods	32	15	49
Alley maintenance			
Downtown	25	12	28
All neighborhoods	20	13	39
Garbage collection			
Downtown	46	7	9
All neighborhoods	74	10	13
Police			
Downtown	58	17	13
All neighborhoods	51	17	23
Public transportation			
Downtown	65	15	13
All neighborhoods	61	11	23
Fire Department			
Downtown	71	12	0
All neighborhoods	78	7	3
Sewage system			
Downtown	59	7	0
All neighborhoods	63	10	13
Condition and cost of housing			
Downtown	39	15	29
All neighborhoods	44	17	22

SOURCE: Citizen Survey, 1976.

NOTE: The percent responses to each question do not add up to 100%. The difference is accounted for by the following: "don't know", "unable to evaluate", or no answer. Public health and mental health/mental retardation services are not included in the table because the response rates to these questions were low.

CRIME RATE

The crime rate for major crimes has increased over the last three years (Table 4). In 1973 the number of major crimes per capita was .469 compared to .864 in 1975. The crime rate in the neighborhood was greater than the city per capita rate of .053 in 1975.

TABLE 4

Crime Rate: Major Crimes
Downtown

<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Crimes</u>	<u>Crime Rate</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
1973	1,458	.469	.043
1974	1,942	.625	.047
1975	2,683	.864	.053

SOURCE: City of Pittsburgh, Bureau of Police.

NOTE: Major crimes are murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, and theft. The neighborhood crime rate is computed by dividing the number of crimes committed in the neighborhood by its adjusted population for 1974.

THE PEOPLE

Table 5 and Table 6 present data on the characteristics of the neighborhood population and compare them to city-wide statistics.

In 1974, the estimated population of Downtown was 3,107, down by 16% since 1970. This compares to a city-wide population decline of 8% during the same period. Information on the racial composition of the neighborhood is not available for 1974; however, the number of Black households in the neighborhood increased during the decade of the sixties, and the Black population was 5.8% of the neighborhood's population in 1970, compared to 20.2% for the city.

The average household size in the neighborhood was 1.42 persons in 1974, down slightly from 1.43 in 1970. The percentage of the population 65 years and older was 15.8% in 1970, compared to 13.5% for the city as a whole.

TABLE 5

Population and Household Characteristics, 1970 and 1974
Downtown

	Neighborhood		Pittsburgh	
	1970	1974	1970	1974
Population				
% Black	5.8%	....	20.2%	....
% 65 years and over	15.8%	....	13.5%	....
Households				
% One-person households	66.0%	69.9%	25.4%	25.5%
% Retired head-of-household	....	5.4%	....	26.3%
% Households with children	....	1.7%	....	32.7%
% Female head-of-household with children	....	0.3%	....	6.4%
% In owner-occupied housing unit	1.2%	0.7%	50.3%	54.2%
% Households changing place of residence within past year	....	42.4%	....	27.0%
Average household size	1.43	1.42	2.82	2.67

SOURCES: U. S. Census (1970) and R. L. Polk & Co. (1974).

NOTE: Dotted lines (....) indicate data unavailable for that year.

The turnover rate of households in the neighborhood exceeds that for all of the city's neighborhoods. During 1973, 42.4% of the households in the neighborhood changed their place of residence compared to a rate of 27.0% for the city. (The figures represent households who have moved within the neighborhood or city as well as those moving into or out of the neighborhood or city.)

Female-headed households with children in 1974 comprised 0.3% of the total households in the neighborhood compared to 6.4% for the city as a whole. In 1974, one-person households consisted of 69.9% of the total households in the neighborhood compared to 25.5% city-wide and to 66.0% for the neighborhood in 1970.

TABLE 6

Neighborhood Change: 1960-1970 and 1970-1974
Downtown

	<u>Number</u> <u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>	
		<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
Population			
1960	2,247		
1970	3,679	+64	-14
1974	3,107	-16	- 8
Households ¹			
1960	1,016		
1970	1,595	+57	- 6
1974	1,087	-32	-12
Black households ²			
1960	47		
1970	52	+11	+15
1974	(not available)		
Housing units			
1960	1,047		
1970	1,921	+83	- 3
1974	1,285	-33	-12

SOURCES: U. S. Census (1960; 1970) and R. L. Polk & Co. (1974).

NOTE: The population figures reported by Polk are adjusted to account for under-reporting. Population includes persons living in institutions and other group quarters, such as nursing homes, dormitories or jails. Differences in the population, household, or housing unit count between 1970 and 1974 are due primarily to changes occurring in the neighborhood. A small percentage of the difference may be accounted for, however, by variations in data gathering techniques. Census statistics were compiled from information provided by all city households answering a standard questionnaire either by mail or interview on or about April 1, 1970. R. L. Polk collected its information by a door-to-door survey carried out over a period of several months. (See Appendix.)

¹The number of occupied housing units equals the number of households.

²Non-white households in 1960.

NEIGHBORHOOD INCOME

The average family income in Downtown was \$33,600, 320% of the city average, for the year 1969.* R. L. Polk and Company computes an income index for each city census tract. This index, derived from the occupation of heads of households, was used to calculate the income index of the neighborhood. In 1974, the index for Downtown was 140% of the figure for the city as a whole.

Table 7 shows the number of neighborhood households receiving cash grants in 1974, 1975 and 1976 under the public assistance program of the Pennsylvania Department of Welfare. Public assistance in the form of food stamps, Medicaid, and various social services are also available to these households, as well as to other households in need. Public assistance payments were made to 8.7% of the neighborhood households in 1976, a lower proportion than for the city overall and an increase since 1974.

TABLE 7

Public Assistance: Households Receiving Cash Grants
Downtown

<u>Year</u>	<u>Neighborhood</u>		<u>Pittsburgh</u>
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1974	70	6.4	16.0
1975	93	8.6	17.2
1976	95	8.7	18.0

SOURCE: Allegheny County Board of Assistance.

NOTE: The percentages are based on 1974 Polk households. Only households receiving cash grants under Aid to Dependent Children, Aid to Dependent Children-Unemployed Parent; General Assistance, and State Blind Pension programs are tabulated. The count is of those on assistance as of April 5, 1974, February 28, 1975, and February 27, 1976; households whose grants were terminated between reporting dates are not included.

*Data not available for census tract #101; average income calculated only for the section of the neighborhood consisting of census tracts #201 and #302.

HOUSING

Table 6 shows that the number of housing units in Downtown increased during the decade of the sixties and decreased from 1970 to 1974. Of the occupied housing units, 0.7% were owner-occupied in 1974, compared to a city-wide rate of 54.2%. The vacancy rate for the neighborhood was 15.4% which was greater than the rate for the city as a whole. (See Table 8.)

The average value of owner-occupied housing in the neighborhood was \$17,700 in 1970, compared to a city-wide average of \$14,800.

A housing expenditure greater than 25% of household income is often considered to be excessive and a problem associated with low income households. In 1970, for the city as a whole, less than 1% of renter households earning \$10,000 or more a year spent 25% or more of this income for rent; of those earning less than \$10,000, 43.7% spent 25% or more of their income on rent. In Downtown, 38.0% of renter households in the lower income category paid out 25% or more of their income on rent. These percentages suggest a lack of housing choide for renters with limited incomes, both in the neighborhood and the city.

TABLE 8

Housing Characteristics, 1970 and 1974
Downtown

	<u>Neighborhood</u>		<u>Pittsburgh</u>	
	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>
Housing units				
% vacant	17.0	15.4	6.2	6.2
% One-unit structures	2.4	....	52.9	....
Occupied housing units				
% Owner-occupied	1.2	0.7	50.3	54.2
Average value: owner-occupied units ¹	\$17,700	....	\$14,800	....

SOURCES: U. S. Census (1970) and R. L. Polk & Co. (1974).

¹Average value rounded to nearest one hundred dollars.

REAL ESTATE AND MORTGAGE LOAN TRANSACTIONS

There were no sales of owner-occupied housing in 1975; however, the average sales price of owner-occupied housing was \$41,000 in 1974. (See Table 9.) Although the average price was greater than the city-wide average, the implications of this divergence are difficult to judge because of variations in the quality and size of the structures among city neighborhoods. As additional data are obtained, however, the trend in real estate prices for the neighborhood can be compared to the trend for the city as a whole in order to determine relative differences.

In order to evaluate the extent to which private lenders are involved in the neighborhood, the number of mortgage loans made on residential property each year must be divided by the number of residential real estate transactions for that year. The percentage of residential real estate transactions financed through financial institutions was 0% in 1975 in Downtown compared to a city-wide rate of 59%. As additional data become available, trends in lending activity within the neighborhood compared to other neighborhoods or to the city as a whole can be assessed.

TABLE 9

Real Estate and Mortgage Loan Statistics
Downtown

	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
Average sales price: owner-occupied dwellings ¹		
1974	\$41,000	\$21,582
1975	- - - -	\$23,518
Number of residential mortgages		
1973	4	
1974	1	
1975	none	
% Residential real estate transactions with mortgages provided by financial institutions		
1974	8%	58%
1975	0%	59%

SOURCE: City of Pittsburgh, Department of City Planning.

¹No sales in this category for 1975.

APPENDIX

a. Data Sources: Information for the atlas was obtained from the 1960 and 1970 U. S. Census of Population and Housing; R. L. Polk and Company's "Profiles of Change" for Pittsburgh in 1974; Pittsburgh's Department of City Planning and Bureau of Police; the Allegheny County Board of Assistance, and Department of Elections and Voter Registration; Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission; and the Citizen Survey conducted by the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas.

b. Voting District Changes: In October, 1976, the County Department of Elections changed a voting district in Ward 2 which had the effect of enlarging the neighborhood. The section of voting district #2, Ward 2, from 9th Street to 11th Street (a non-residential area in the Strip District neighborhood) was added to voting district #1 north of Liberty Avenue to create a new voting district #3 in Downtown. No changes were made to district #1 south of Liberty Avenue or to the neighborhood voting districts in Ward 1 and Ward 3.

c. Methodology: The neighborhood boundaries were determined on the basis of whole voting districts. However, census tracts do not usually correspond exactly with voting district boundaries, and simplifications were made where necessary to facilitate data collection efforts.

The opinions and characteristics of survey respondents, as well as voter registration, were recorded by voting district and then compiled for Downtown by the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas in conjunction with the Center for Urban Research, University of Pittsburgh. All other statistics tabulated for the neighborhood were compiled from data available by census tract.

To compensate for under-reporting, the 1974 figure for the neighborhood population has been increased by 1.11, a factor that was derived from the U. S. Bureau of the Census 1973 population estimate for Pittsburgh. An additional adjustment has been made where applicable, since Polk and Co. does not count persons living in institutions or other group quarters. To arrive at the total estimated population for 1974, the neighborhood population was further increased by adding the number of persons in group quarters for the neighborhood according to the 1970 Census.

d. Characteristics of the Sample: In Downtown, 76 citizens answered the questionnaires. Based on the number of replies to each question, the characteristics of the respondents can be generally described as follows: an average age of 52; 51% female; 3% Black; 88% with at least four years of high school education; 1% homeowners; and an average of 8 years in the neighborhood. The median household income falls in the range of \$10,000 to \$14,999; the average household size is 1.76 persons; and 95% of the households have no members under 18 years old living in the home.

The total sample (all respondents to the survey) was over-represented by homeowners (68% compared to 50% for Pittsburgh in 1970) and under-represented by Blacks (14% compared to a city Black population of 20% in 1970).

e. Voter Registration: In November, 1976, 1,949 residents of the neighborhood were registered to vote, an increase of 106 (+5.8%) since November, 1975. In this period, city registration increased by 1.3% to 233,028.