# 2010 Census Almost Here: Or, All You Want to Know About the Upcoming Census but Were Afraid to Ask

■ *By Christopher Briem*

2010 will be a census year across the United States. Workers have already been hired for early phases of the decennial census to complete projects including the verification of mailing addresses and identifying the location of housing units across the nation.

Throughout the spring expect to hear more news on the census and increased hiring of temporary enumerators. Individual questionnaires will begin to be mailed before then, but the official Census Day is April 1, 2010. Data reported as part of the decennial census should reflect information as of that date.

The 2010 Census involves significant changes compared to the decennial census of 2000. Most significantly, there will be no 'long-form' version of the census. All households will receive one form with a total of ten questions, repeated for each member of a household, on the following:

- Name
- Sex
- Age
- Date of birth
- Hispanic origin
- Race
- Household relationship
- If you own or rent your home

Using only this short form represents a major change from the data collection in 2000. In recent decades, the census had two versions. Most households received what was called the "short form," which had ten total questions to be answered for every member of a household.

One in six households received the "long-form" questionnaire, which had a more extensive set of questions on the household, housing unit, and individuals. In the 2010 census,

# Unemployment in Pittsburgh by Educational Attainment in the Current Recession

■ *By Christopher Briem*

UCSUR has compiled information from the Current Population Survey (CPS) to track impacts of the current recession on the Pittsburgh region's labor force.

Examining labor force unemployment rates by levels of educational attainment reveal substantial differences. Workers with more education typically exhibit significantly lower rates of unemployment compared to the labor force with less education. The Pittsburgh region is currently defined as the seven-county Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).

The data here reflect local and national trends in the labor-force status of the population age 25 and older. When studying groups with different educational attainment, the standard is to exclude the youngest working-age population, so as to not conflate those still enrolled in educational programs with those who have completed most of their education.

In the Pittsburgh region in the 3rd quarter of 2009, the population with an educational attainment of some college or an associate's degree registered the lowest unemployment rate at 3.1 percent. The unemployment rate for those with at least a bachelor's degree was higher at 4.6 percent, while those with only a high school diploma had an unemployment rate of 7.1 percent.

Nationally, unemployment rates by educational attainment were lower in the Pittsburgh region compared to comparable national unemployment rates in the 3rd quarter of 2009 for all levels of education shown (Figure 1).

The sample frame of the CPS and the low number of non-high school graduates in the Pittsburgh labor force make it impossible to estimate a comparable monthly unemployment rate for those lacking a high school degree.

Despite lower unemployment rates for higher levels of

all households will receive the same ten question questionnaire.

The census bureau will make several attempts to contact every household in the nation. The U.S. Postal Service will begin an initial mail out of the census questionnaire in March of 2010. A sample of the census questionnaire to be mailed out is shown here.

If the census does not receive a response, a replacement questionnaire will be mailed out. If a household doesn't mail back a questionnaire by the third week of April 2010, a trained Census Bureau enumerator will attempt to visit the household to collect the information required from a knowledgeable household member. Enumerators will try six times, if necessary, to reach a knowledgeable household member, visiting housing units multiple days at different hours. If enumerators can't contact a household, they will seek other information to determine the occupancy of housing units and to estimate the number of people in the household.

The census will separately compile information on the population living in group quarters and those in institutionalized settings. These groups include the population residing in prisons, college dormitories, and others in institutionalized settings who will not receive the household questionnaires themselves. Data will be collected via their respective institutions. Certain populations, such as the homeless, will be enumerated via canvassing methods across the nation.

One main goal of the Census Bureau is to get as many households to return the mailed questionnaire as possible. The costs of conducting the census vary directly with the response rate expected. Having census enumerators visit individual households is a much more expensive operation. Encouraging a high response rate to the mailed-out questionnaires is one of the primary goals of many Complete Count Committees that have been set up across the nation by local governments and other organizations.

The elimination of the long-form questionnaire will have many implications for census data users. The long form collected data on a broad range of socioeconomic topics. These data were reported for both large areas, such as the nation or states, but also for small areas down to the census tract or census block group level. With

the elimination of the long form, the decennial census will no longer be the source for a lot of socioeconomic data at all levels of geography.

One reason the long form has been eliminated from the decennial census corresponds with the introduction of the American Community Survey (ACS) program over the last decade. The ACS is different from the decennial census in that it is not an enumeration of the entire population, but a sample-based program. The sample frame is such that smaller levels of geography require aggregating multiple years worth of data in order to report statistically significant data. The ongoing rollout of the ACS-compiled data started with information for states and the nation as a whole and has progressed to reporting data for smaller geographies.

In 2008, the ACS released its first multi-year estimates based on ACS data collected from 2005 through 2007. These three-year estimates of demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics will be available for geographic areas with a population of 20,000 or more, including the nation; all states and the District of Columbia; all congressional districts; approximately 1,800 counties; and 900 metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas, among others.

For areas with a population less than 20,000, five-year estimates will be become available in the future. The first five-year estimates, based on ACS data collected from 2005 through 2009, are expected to be released in 2010. These data, when they become available, will not reflect conditions in 2010, but should be interpreted as an average over the five-year collection period.

## U.S. Census 2010 Form (Form D-61)

**United States Census 2010**

This is the official form for all the people at this address. It is quick and easy, and your answers are protected by law.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

**Use a blue or black pen.**

### Start here

The Census must count every person living in the United States on April 1, 2010.

Before you answer Question 1, count the people living in this house, apartment, or mobile home using our guidelines.

- Count all people, including babies, who live and sleep here most of the time.

The Census Bureau also conducts counts in institutions and other places, so:

- Do not count anyone living away either at college or in the Armed Forces.
- Do not count anyone in a nursing home, jail, prison, detention facility, etc., on April 1, 2010.
- Leave these people off your form, even if they will return to live here after they leave college, the nursing home, the military, jail, etc. Otherwise, they may be counted twice.

The Census must also include people without a permanent place to stay, so:

- If someone who has no permanent place to stay is staying here on April 1, 2010, count that person. Otherwise, he or she may be missed in the census.

**1. How many people were living or staying in this house, apartment, or mobile home on April 1, 2010?**

Number of people =

**2. Were there any additional people staying here April 1, 2010 that you did not include in Question 1?** Mark ☒ all that apply.

- ☐ Children, such as newborn babies or foster children
- ☐ Relatives, such as adult children, cousins, or in-laws
- ☐ Nonrelatives, such as roommates or live-in baby sitters
- ☐ People staying here temporarily
- ☐ No additional people

**3. Is this house, apartment, or mobile home —** Mark ☒ ONE box.

- ☐ Owned by you or someone in this household with a mortgage or loan? Include home equity loans.
- ☐ Owned by you or someone in this household free and clear (without a mortgage or loan)?
- ☐ Rented?
- ☐ Occupied without payment of rent?

**4. What is your telephone number?** We may call if we don't understand an answer.

Area Code + Number

OMB No. 0607-0919-C: Approval Expires 12/31/2011.

Form **D-61** (1-15-2009)

USCENSUSBUREAU

**5. Please provide information for each person living here. Start with a person living here who owns or rents this house, apartment, or mobile home. If the owner or renter lives somewhere else, start with any adult living here. This will be Person 1.**
What is Person 1's name? Print name below.

Last Name

First Name            MI

**6. What is Person 1's sex?** Mark ☒ ONE box.
- ☐ Male  ☐ Female

**7. What is Person 1's age and what is Person 1's date of birth?**
Please report babies as age 0 when the child is less than 1 year old.
Print numbers in boxes.

Age on April 1, 2010      Month     Day     Year of birth

➡ NOTE: Please answer BOTH Question 8 about Hispanic origin and Question 9 about race. For this census, Hispanic origins are not races.

**8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?**
- ☐ No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- ☐ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
- ☐ Yes, Puerto Rican
- ☐ Yes, Cuban
- ☐ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin — Print origin, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on. ↗

**9. What is Person 1's race?** Mark ☒ one or more boxes.
- ☐ White
- ☐ Black, African Am., or Negro
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native — Print name of enrolled or principal tribe. ↗

- ☐ Asian Indian  ☐ Japanese  ☐ Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Chinese  ☐ Korean  ☐ Guamanian or Chamorro
- ☐ Filipino  ☐ Vietnamese  ☐ Samoan
- ☐ Other Asian — Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on. ↗   ☐ Other Pacific Islander — Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on. ↗

- ☐ Some other race — Print race. ↗

**10. Does Person 1 sometimes live or stay somewhere else?**
- ☐ No  ☐ Yes — Mark ☒ all that apply.
  - ☐ In college housing  ☐ For child custody
  - ☐ In the military  ☐ In jail or prison
  - ☐ At a seasonal or second residence  ☐ In a nursing home
  -   ☐ For another reason

➡ If more people were counted in Question 1, continue with Person 2.

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After the 1990 census, the Census Bureau estimated that Allegheny County was undercounted by slightly more than 4,742 people, with an estimated 8 percent undercount of African Americans in the county. The white population in the county was estimated to be slightly over counted.

The Census Bureau did not release similar estimates for over/undercounting after the 2000 census. However, an independent organization, the Census Monitoring Board, came up with estimates of the undercount.

That commission estimated that the 2000 Census undercounted the population in Allegheny County by approximately 5,700 people. Recently, the Pew Charitable Trusts released a report focused on specific cities and estimated that the city of Pittsburgh itself was slightly over counted in the 2000 Census.

Over and undercounting is caused by many factors, including lack of response and inability to track down people, including homeless persons. Overcounting can be caused by multiple homeownership or the double counting of college students or for other reasons.

Local governments and other entities are working to ensure accurate counts. Federal and state expenditures are often tied to population counts at the local level. The Census Bureau estimates that $400 billion in annual federal appropriations are linked to population counts, and certain federal expenditures are distributed based on the population count for services like education, transportation, health care, and job training.

When the census is completed, the Census Bureau will first report data on the population counts for individual states. This state-level population count is required by law to be delivered to the president by the end of 2010. This information is required by the Constitution to be used for the reapportionment of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

By law, the Census Bureau completes delivery of detailed redistricting data to states by the end of March 2011. Detailed data will include enumeration of the voting age and total population by race and gender, down to the census block level, typically the smallest level of geography that the census reports tabulates data for public reporting. Subsequent data tabulations will follow in 2011 and later.

## Census Timeline:

**March 2010:** Initial Census questionnaires mailed out via the U.S. Postal Service
**April 1, 2010:** Census Day: Information reported for the decennial census should reflect the status of the populations as of this day.
**April 2010:** Replacement questionnaires mailed out to households that do not return census questionnaires.
**April–May 2010:** Group quarters enumeration
**May–July 2010:** Non-response follow-up
**December 2010:** State population counts delivered to the president for apportionment purposes.
**March 30, 2011:** Detailed data reported to the states for congressional redistricting.

## Links:

**Census Bureau:** www.census.gov
**Census 2010:** 2010.census.gov
**Census 2010 Blog:** blogs.census.gov/ 2010census
**American Community Survey:** www.census .gov/acs/www

With the elimination of the long form, the decennial census will no longer be the source for a lot of socioeconomic data at all levels of geography.

educational attainment, the ongoing recession has seen a substantial increase in the unemployment rate in Pittsburgh for those with a bachelor's degree or higher.

In recent years, this group typically had an estimated unemployment rate of 2 percent or lower, even through the 3rd quarter of 2008, which was already well into the current recession as defined by the National Bureau of Economic Research. Since the middle of 2008, however, the unemployment rate for those with college degrees has been steadily increasing in the region (Figure 2).

The varying unemployment rates within the Pittsburgh region, by level of educational attainment, are affected by the different composition of the local labor force compared to the nation.

While the overall composition of the labor force looks similar to the national average, younger workers in the Pittsburgh region have, on average, higher levels of educational attainment compared to the rest of the U.S.

In the Pittsburgh region, over half the labor force between the ages of 25 and 34 has a bachelor's degree or higher; this compares to 35 percent for the nation. In the U.S., over 11 percent of the labor force age 25 and older does not have a high school diploma while in the Pittsburgh region, the figure is estimated to be just 2 percent (Figure 3).

The CPS is a monthly sample-survey the federal government uses to track unemployment for the nation, states, and metropolitan regions. The CPS has been conducted in the United States every month since 1940, when it began as a Work Projects Administration project. It has been expanded and modified several times since then.

Contrary to a popular belief, unemployment rates are not compiled only from those who are receiving or requesting unemployment benefits via unemployment insurance (UI) programs administered by state or federal programs. Unemployment insurance information relate only to persons who have applied and are eligible for such benefits.

The official unemployment rate counts all those who are actively seeking work, which can include those whose UI benefits have run out or those who are otherwise ineligible for benefits. The unemployment rate in the U.S. does not count those who have stopped seeking work, including those who might want work, but have ceased to actively seek a job. Such "discouraged workers" are a growing proportion of the workforce during recessions and are not captured by standard unemployment-rate calculations.

**Figure 1. Unemployment Rate by Educational Attainment, Civilian Labor Force— Pittsburgh MSA and United States, 2009Q3**
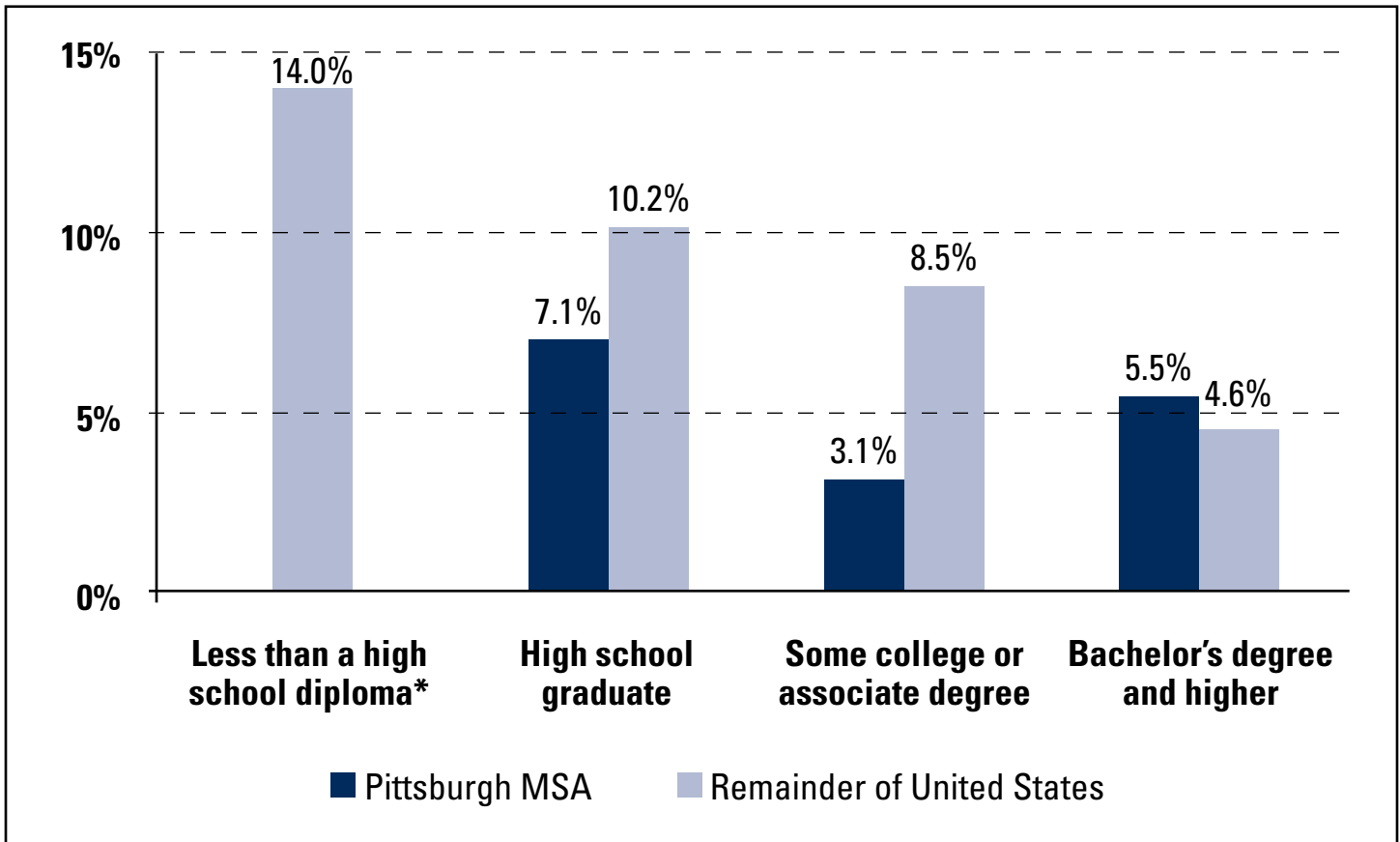


*The Pittsburgh region labor force with less than a high school diploma is too small to calculate an unemployment rate from the Current Population Sample (CPS).

**Figure 2. Unemployment Rate for the Civilian Population Age 25 and Over by Educational Attainment and Quarter—Pittsburgh MSA, 2007–2009Q3**
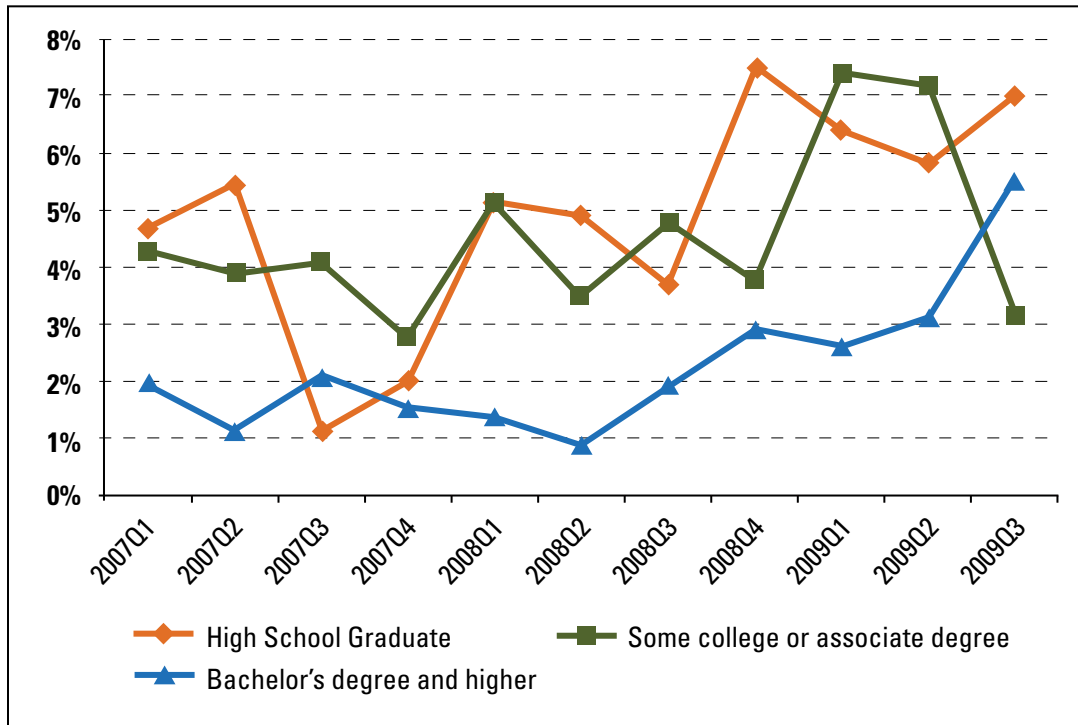


**Figure 3. Composition of the Civilian Labor Force by Educational Attainment— Pittsburgh MSA and United States, October 2009**
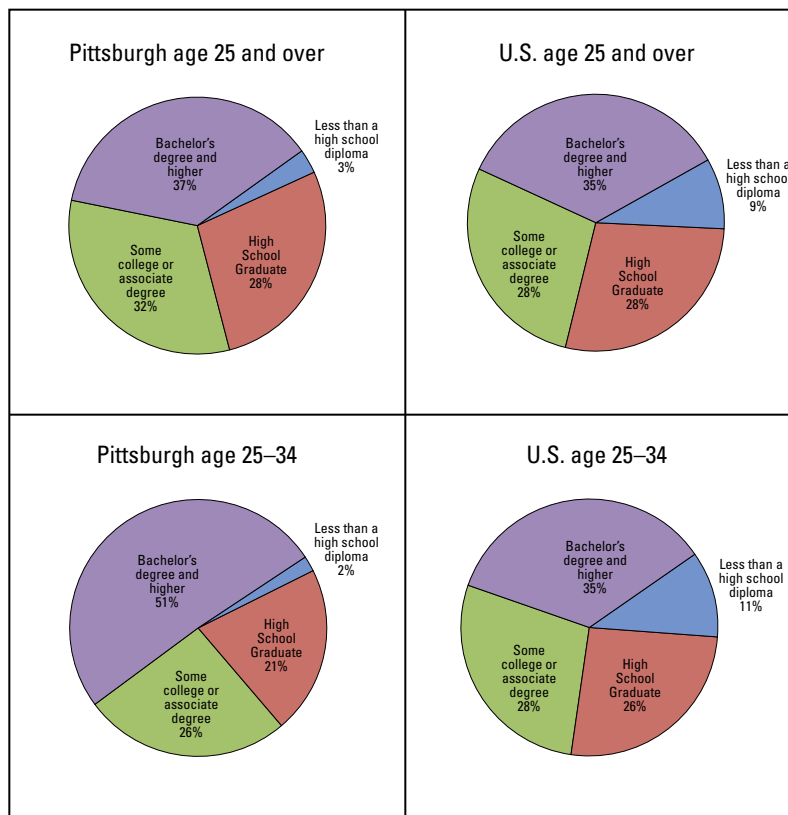
# The Challenges of Vacant Property: New Data and Information Available Through the Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System

■ *By Sabina Deitrick*

The Pittsburgh region, including the city of Pittsburgh, continues to be confronted by vacant property. Vacant property can pose a daunting challenge for renewal. Neighborhoods and communities face continued battles with unattended houses, decaying conditions, and deteriorated lots. Local governments and school districts lose revenue when property is unvalued or undervalued or when taxes aren't paid. But, first, what is vacant property?

There is not one definition of vacant property, vacant land, or abandoned property. Nearly ten years ago, Michael Pagano and Ann O'M. Bowman reported, from their U.S. national survey work on vacant land, that the term is "both broad and imprecise."

Labeling can vary across municipalities. The term "vacant land" can refer simultaneously to unbuildable land, steep slopes, parks, preservation areas, reserved land, and agricultural land. Vacant properties include lots with abandoned buildings, land-banked properties, and properties waiting lease or sale.

Though residents may have a good idea of what property in their neighborhoods is vacant,

This article draws information from the Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System (PNCIS). PNCIS, housed at UCSUR, brings together over 60 neighborhood and property-level indicators from a variety of administrative sources to support neighborhood revitalization and community improvement. UCUSR operates PNCIS in agreement with the Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development (PPND), a leader in community development in the city of Pittsburgh. PPND was instrumental in securing the financial support to build PNCIS and expand it and develop it over the years. *See Pittsburgh Economic Quarterly,* March 2008 and March 2007.

reflecting on the term requires understanding multiple meanings.

While certain types of vacant land with blight and abandonment can be a detriment to property values, other types of vacant land can add value to properties. Hillsides, slopes with views, parks, and natural settings provide a less common, but positive view of vacant land and properties.

Finally, some forms of vacant land and vacant property have been rechanneled into positive uses by transformations like urban gardening, land banks, and other less formal, but no less engaged, landscape improvements.

One of the most important steps for any area or neighborhood is to avoid or lessen the prospects of properties becoming abandoned and vacant. Keeping properties viable is a cost-effective strategy compared to the costs of abandonment.

When possible, redevelopment and revitalization efforts can bring problem properties back to productive use. Local and state government, residents, community development corporations, private developers, banks and lenders, foundations, and other investment sources have been critical in improving properties and sites across the Pittsburgh region for decades. From redeveloped brownfields to small scale infill projects, many formerly derelict properties and vacant land are now viable, attractive and productively reused.

This still leaves us with crucial questions regarding the number and location of abandoned or vacant properties. Most importantly for many neighborhoods, how many properties are there and where are the vacant buildings scarring their neighborhood fabric?

The Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System (PNCIS) provides a source to begin to answer these questions.

Understanding local property conditions begins with good information, and the PNCIS includes many variables on property conditions

in the city of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.

PNCIS has recently acquired a new data source -- the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) database on vacant addresses, available in agreement from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This set of quarterly information includes data on residential and commercial property addresses, vacant property addresses, and what the USPS calls "No-Stat" addresses.

"Vacant" addresses have been designated by USPS delivery staff as not collecting mail for 90 days or longer and have been identified as unoccupied. "No-Stat" addresses are not ready for occupancy for a number of reasons, including rural vacant addresses, property under construction, and urban addresses identified by a USPS carrier as not likely to be active for some time.

Both categories of vacancy are further broken down by the duration of inactivity, from three months or less to 36 months or more of vacancy. The USPS began counting length of vacancy and "No-Stat" status on addresses in 2005.

The "No-Stat" category reflects local conditions. High growth areas and deteriorating places can both show high numbers in the "No-Stat" category, the former reflecting new construction, while the latter reflects properties suffering from long-term vacancy and abandonment.

PNCIS has taken the USPS data source to examine likely problematic properties in the city of Pittsburgh. Given that new construction is not likely in many of the city neighborhoods experiencing deteriorating and challenging conditions, we combine the "not ready for occupancy" data with data for addresses that have been vacant for more than one year to show problematic vacancy by census tract.

The USPS data show that of nearly 160,000 residential addresses in the city of Pittsburgh, 11,030 are classified as "vacant" by the USPS

and another 8,995 are in the "No-Stat" category. Since the category "vacant" includes properties awaiting new leases and sales, we eliminated addresses that were vacant for one year or less.

Combining the remaining properties, we find 17,550 vacant or estimated to be vacant residential addresses in the city of Pittsburgh. This represents 11 percent of the USPS residential addresses in the city.
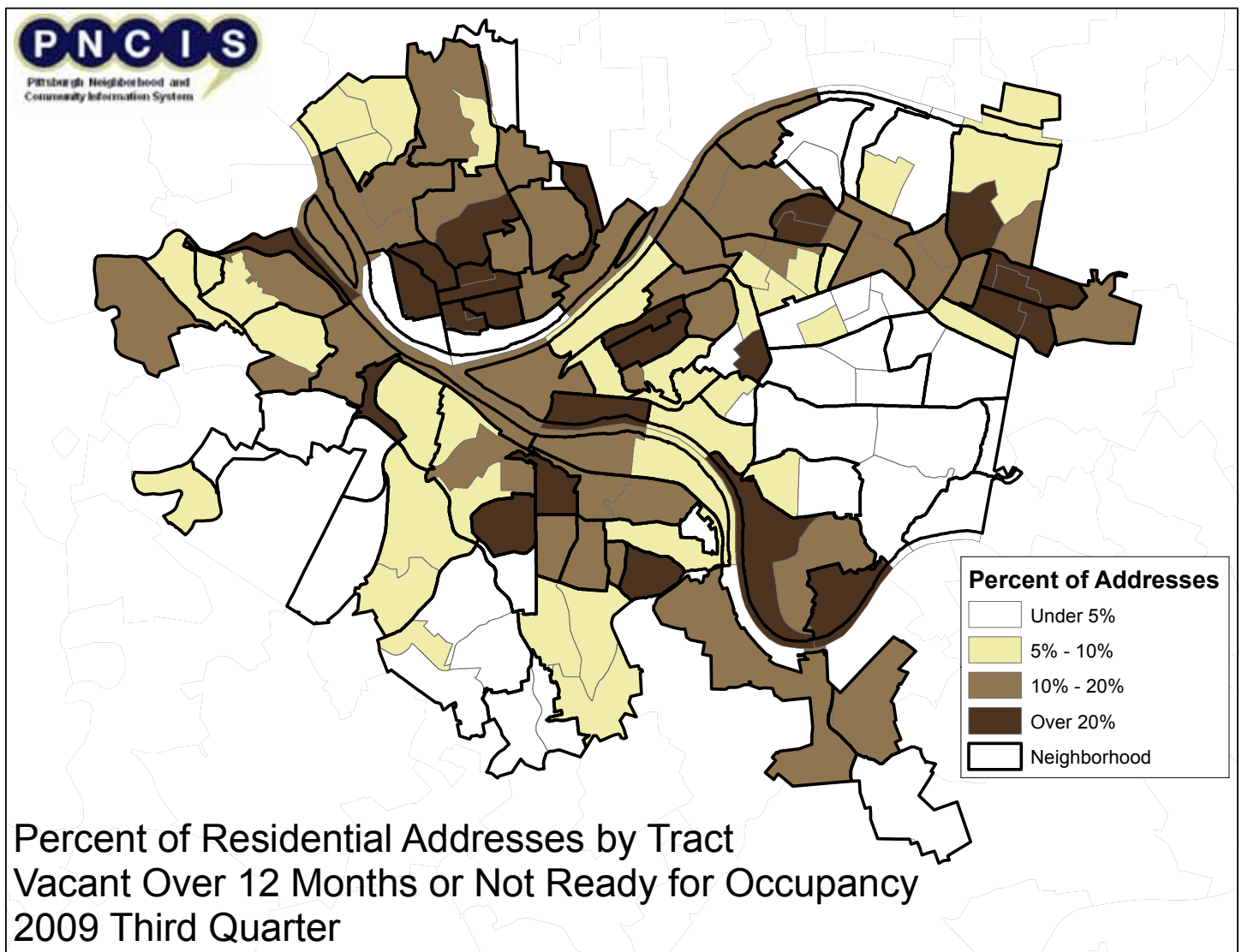
Upon further examination, geographic concentrations of these problematic properties occur in select neighborhoods in the city of Pittsburgh. In some of our neighborhoods (by census tract), over 20 percent of residential addresses fall into this grouping. The levels of vacant property show the distressed status of these neighborhoods and the need for continued revitalization efforts.

Data, such as the USPS, is available in the PNCIS for groups working to improve their neighborhood conditions. This information can be combined with data on tax liens, foreclosure proceedings, utility shutoffs, and physical inspection to investigate further vacant property issues.

In the coming year, PEQ will continue to analyze PNCIS information to help neighborhoods understand their conditions and develop effective strategies.

*More information can be found at: HUD User www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/usps.html, and PNCIS www.pghnis.pitt.edu.*



**Percent of Addresses**
- Under 5%
- 5% - 10%
- 10% - 20%
- Over 20%
- Neighborhood

Percent of Residential Addresses by Tract
Vacant Over 12 Months or Not Ready for Occupancy
2009 Third Quarter

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