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## Demographic Features of Neighborhood Change in Pittsburgh

■ *By Sabina Deitrick and Christopher Briem*

The recently released 2010 Census confirms major changes in Pittsburgh's population, including population shifts that reverse previous trends. UCSUR has been engaged in analyzing population transitions in our region over the decades and has updated previous population studies with 2010 results.

In this article we focus on population trends and changes by neighborhood and age. By breaking down population change into distinct components of neighborhood geographies and age cohorts, a more complicated picture of a "shrinking city" is revealed. The City of Pittsburgh distinguishes ninety neighborhoods, which are the basis of the neighborhoods in this study.

The first major aspect of population change from the 2010 Census is the continuing trend of population decline in the city of Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh lost nearly nine percent of its

population between 2000 and 2010, or 28,859 residents. This sixth decade of population loss marks Pittsburgh as one of the long-term "shrinking cities" in North America.

Second, while population loss for the city of Pittsburgh was generally expected from Census projections, the composition of that loss is not even across neighborhoods. Some neighborhoods in Pittsburgh have lost population for seven decades, while in others population decline has become a more recent phenomenon. Additionally, some neighborhoods in Pittsburgh registered population growth.

Between 2000 and 2010, population increased in fourteen neighborhoods in the city of Pittsburgh, largely concentrated in the near North Side and Strip District along the Allegheny River and parts of the East End centered in Oakland (see Figure 1). Additional population growth was registered in

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## Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Illegal Dump Survey Program

■ *By Todd Couch*

A common, but little recognized problem for many residents in Pennsylvania is illegal dumpsites. While illegal dumping occurs in rural areas, with few people nearby, in Pennsylvania, many urban residents live within one mile of an illegal dumpsite.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, an organization formed with a merger of PA Cleanways, conducts county surveys of illegal dump sites in Pennsylvania. The mission of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is empowering Pennsylvanians to make our communities clean and beautiful.

The Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Illegal Dump Survey Program began in 2005 to assess and document illegal dump sites across the 67 counties in the state. The surveys educate state, county, and local officials, as well as citizens, about the problem of illegal dumping and provide valuable data for cleanup efforts.

The University Center for Social and Urban Research (UCSUR) has been doing the mapping of dumpsites for the

program since it began. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has now surveyed 55 of the 67 counties in the Commonwealth, discovering a total of 5,759 illegal dumpsites, containing an estimated 17,088 tons of trash (which does not include private or farm dumps). These sites have all been mapped, with the results showing that Pennsylvania has an extensive problem with illegal dumping across the state (see Figure 1).

Surveying a county for illegal dumpsites is no easy task. The entire process stretches over a full year, beginning in July when Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful contacts municipalities and key stakeholders to share information and ends the following June, with the publication of the final report of the survey results. Over the course of that year, surveyors are hired and trained and locations of known dumpsites are gathered. Surveyors drive virtually every public roadway in the county, collecting information on known and unknown sites. The data are then entered into a database and verified, and the reports are written.

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neighborhoods in the West End and Southside. The remaining 76 neighborhoods in Pittsburgh experienced some degree of population loss.

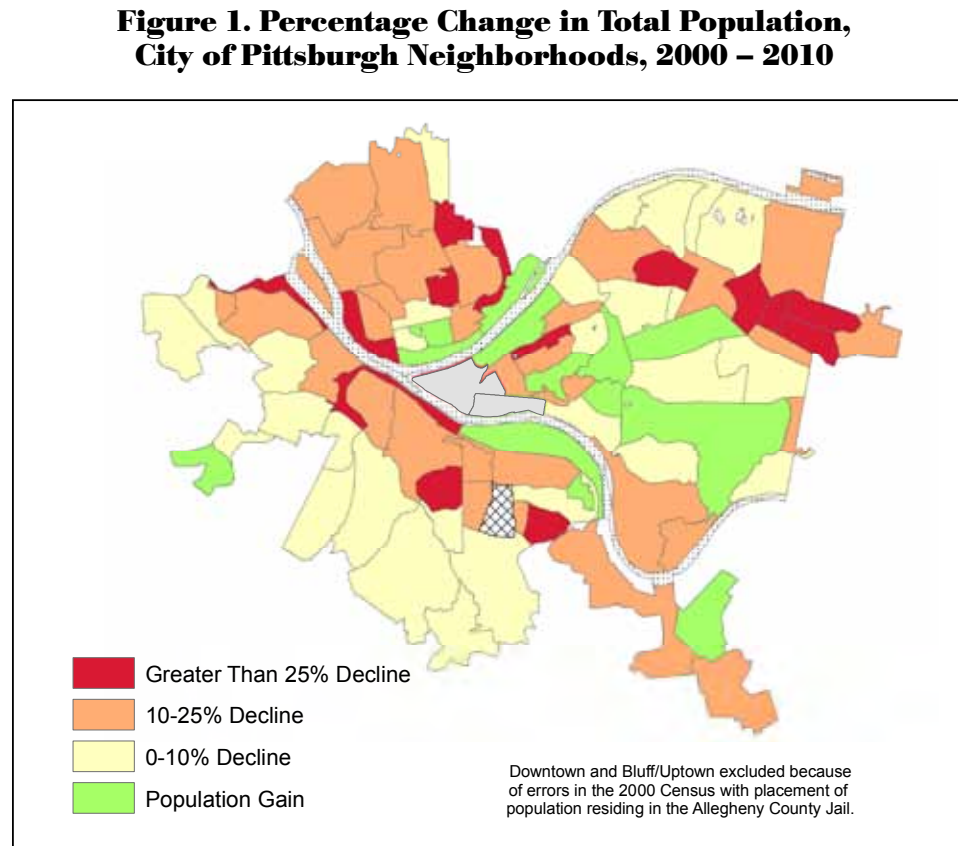
Large scale population decline was concentrated in a small set of neighborhoods on the North Side and East End. In some of these neighborhoods, a significant reduction of the number of public housing units occurred during the decade, so a concomitant decline in neighborhood total population would not be unexpected.

Third, population change varied across age cohorts, with two broad age groups increasing population in the city, young adults and “baby boomers” (see Table 1). Across age groups, major shifts in trend stood out:

1. The number of young adults in the city of Pittsburgh between the ages of 18 and 24 increased by 17.2 percent, or 8,334 persons, between 2000 and 2010, and
2. The number of older Pittsburgh residents, aged 65 and above, dropped by 23.4 percent or nearly 13,000 residents between 2000 and 2010.

These changes in the first decade of the 21st century reversed long standing trends in the city. For the latter part of the 20th century, economic restructuring had a distinct impact on the demographic composition of the city of Pittsburgh and its environs. Since the collapse of the steel mills in the early 1980s and the profound decline in manufacturing employment in the region, Pittsburgh became famous for the large scale out-migration of young workers.

At the same time, older residents were much less mobile and more likely to remain in the region, thus “aging in place” and increasing both in number and share of the population.



And though the share of the elderly in the total population reached its peak in the 1990s, Pittsburgh remained older than the national average, and the perception of Pittsburgh as an “older place” persisted.

Thus, Pittsburgh had a relatively unusual age composition compared to the United States following the massive loss of manufacturing jobs in the early 1980s. In 1990, while 12.5 percent of the U.S. population was aged 65 or older, the figure was 17.9 percent in the city of Pittsburgh and 17.4 percent in Allegheny County (see Figure 2).

As the number of residents aged 65 and over in Pittsburgh declined in the 2000s, their share of the city’s population fell to 13.8 percent, compared to 13.0 percent in the United States. Allegheny County maintains a slightly higher figure, but with the coming retirement of the baby boom generation, Pittsburgh now looks more like the United States, on average, than in the immediate post-steel era. Since the middle of the 20th century, it was “older” than the United States until the present time.

With a decrease of 12,883 Pittsburgh residents aged 65 and over in the 2000s, the implications for neighborhood population change in the city of Pittsburgh are also significant.

Between 2000 and 2010, the number of residents aged 65 and over increased in just seven neighborhoods in Pittsburgh (see Figure 3); the rest of the neighborhoods registered population declines in this group. In 39 neighborhoods, the decline in the number of residents aged 65 and over decreased by more than 25 percent.

On the other hand, the number of young adults between ages 18 and 24 increased in fifty city neighborhoods (see Figure 4). In 32 of them, the increase was 10 percent or more.

**Table 1. Population, City of Pittsburgh, 2000 - 2010**

Age cohort	Population		Change	
	2000	2010	Number	Percent
0 – 17	66,508	49,799	-16,709	-25.1
18 – 24	49,461	57,745	8,284	16.8
25 - 44	95,730	83,730	-12,000	-12.5
45 - 64	67,830	72,279	4,449	6.6
65 +	55,034	42,151	-12,883	-23.4
Total	334,563	305,704	-28,859	-8.6

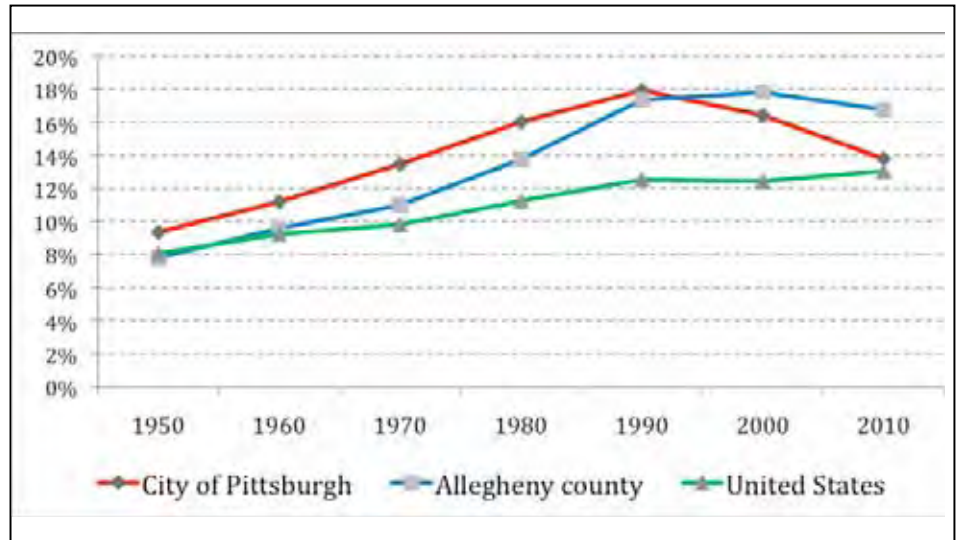
**Figure 2. Share of Total Population Aged 65 and Over, City of Pittsburgh, Allegheny County and the United States, 1950 – 2010**

We find that the increase in young adults in Pittsburgh was concentrated in particular neighborhoods across the city in the 2000s.

Generally, neighborhoods that recently added new housing units, coupled with containing a supply of housing attractive to students and young adults, registered an increase in both total population and the number of residents between the ages of 18 and 24. This includes neighborhoods in or near Pittsburgh’s higher education institutions—the Southside Flats, Central and North Oakland, Squirrel Hill South, and the Bluff. With a few exceptions, neighborhoods that saw an increase in total population between 2000 and 2010 also registered an increase in the number of young adults in the decade.

The young adult population has become increasingly important to understanding current and population trends in the city of Pittsburgh. The increased number of young adults generally matches enrollment increases in local higher education institutions and is certainly important for neighborhoods and their vitality.

The changes in age composition in Pittsburgh today make it a different city than it was in the latter part of the 20th century. The share of the population of Pittsburghers aged 65 and over matched United States averages in 2010,

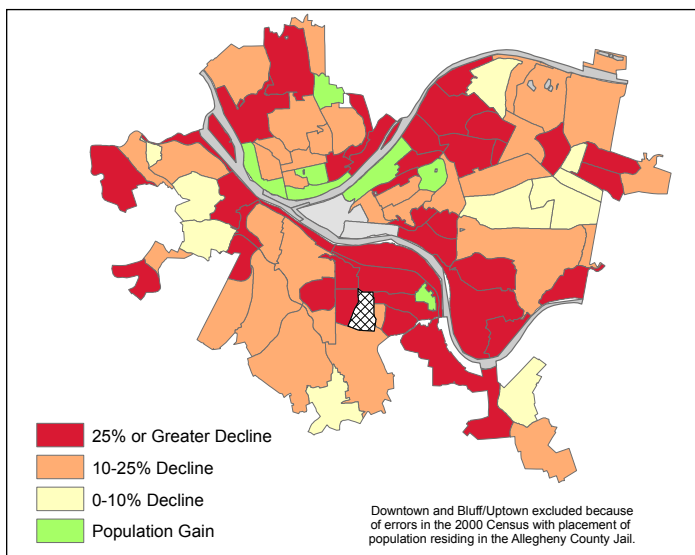


as their total numbers decreased by nearly a quarter in the 2000s.

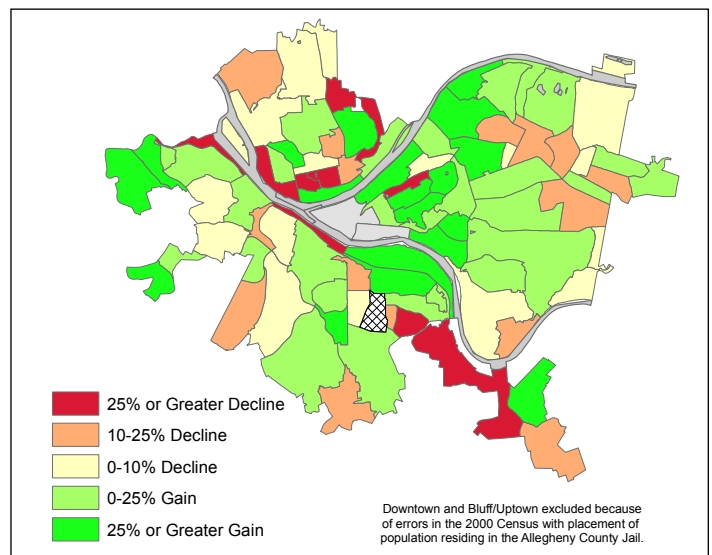
Young adults, on the other hand, mark an age cohort that is increasing in population and, thus, contributing to neighborhood change across the city. Just as Pittsburgh left its smoky past decades ago, recent population changes are revealing a city leaving its “old” image, as well.

*UCSUR will continue to focus on important population shifts and their implications for the continued impacts on neighborhood transition in Pittsburgh. See more at: [www.ucsur.pitt.edu/neighborhood\\_reports\\_acs.php](http://www.ucsur.pitt.edu/neighborhood_reports_acs.php).* ■

**Figure 3. Percentage Change in Population Aged 65 and Over, City of Pittsburgh Neighborhoods, 2000 – 2010**

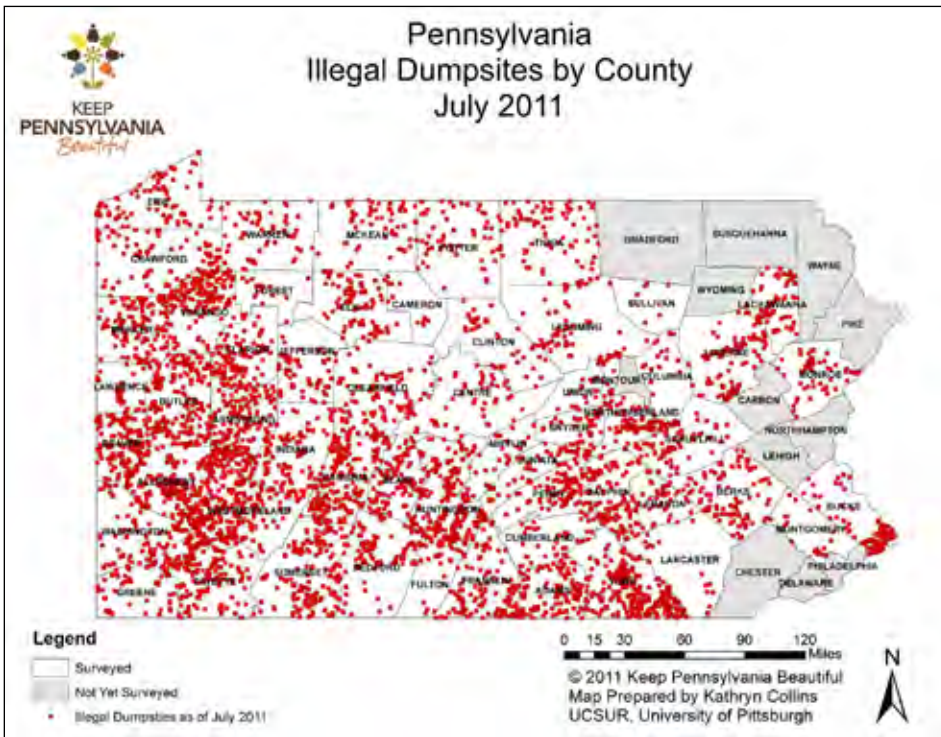


**Figure 4. Percentage Change in Population Aged 18 – 24, City of Pittsburgh Neighborhoods, 2000 – 2010**





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With extensive understanding and review, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has found that their work is the first such comprehensive illegal dump survey of a state ever performed.

UCSUR produces a set of related maps for each county's Illegal Dump Survey Final Report. The first map plots dumpsites by municipality, showing the specific location of each one (see Figure 2). The second map plots dumpsites by population density to show the intensity of dumpsites across a county. A third map positions the surveyed dumpsites by environmental features, such as waterways, greenways, and parks. A corresponding table lists each dumpsite and its site characteristics. The maps are a clear and important device to show trends in illegal dumping and priority areas of concern.

In addition to the county maps and state overview, maps can be made for specific municipalities. Figure 3 shows the results of 2009 survey data for Allegheny County specifically mapped for the city of Pittsburgh. Significant concentrations of illegal dumping are found in the city's east, south, and west neighborhoods.

In addition to the valuable information on dumpsites from each county surveyed, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has found important conclusions across the 5,759 illegal dumpsites in the Commonwealth:

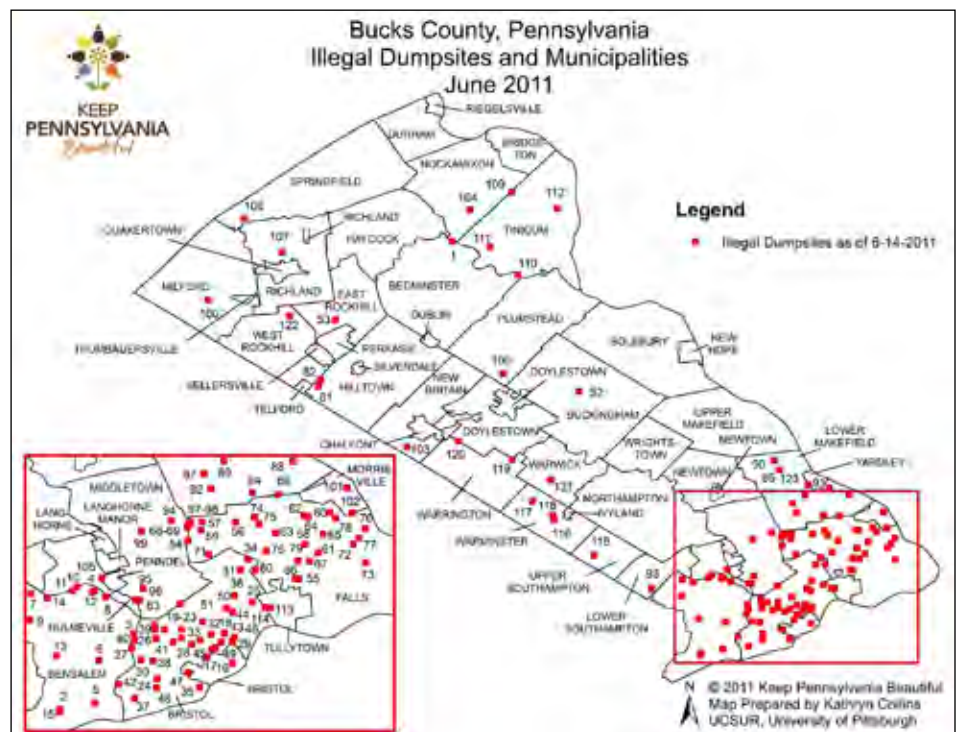
- Over 50 percent of municipalities surveyed had at least one illegal dumpsite.
- Nearly one third of the illegal dumpsites were in or within 50 feet of a waterway.
- Active dumping was still occurring on 79 percent of the illegal sites.
- Three quarters of the dumpsites contained less than 2.5 tons of trash.

- Seventy percent of the sites contained tires.
- Over two thirds of the dumpsites contained household trash.
- Recyclables were found in 62 percent of the dumpsites.

Municipal services, such as mandatory curbside trash collection, curbside recycling, and drop-off recycling for each municipality is also included in the report.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's illegal dump surveys are being used on the local, county, and state levels. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and its affiliates, along with other environmental groups and government entities, have been using the survey to prioritize cleanups and educate the public.

Organizations are using the survey to leverage funding for cleanups as they are now able to show that illegal dumping is a problem in their community, county, or watershed. Through partnerships, several counties and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful affiliates have made it their goal to get every dumpsite remediated. In the city of Pittsburgh, Allegheny CleanWays has cleaned 78 of the 279 sites identified in the 2009 survey through cleanups and developing programs such as DumpBusters to target the sites. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful estimates that it costs roughly \$800 per ton for cleanup and removal of a site.





Committed funding for the Illegal Dump Survey Program has been a strong component to its success. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has funded surveys statewide. The Richard King Mellon Foundation and the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds have funded surveys in the western half of the state. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has also received funding from local level programs, as well.

The illegal dump survey of the state will be completed in 2013. Review the final reports at [www.keppabeautiful.org/IllegalDumpSurveys.aspx](http://www.keppabeautiful.org/IllegalDumpSurveys.aspx).

*Todd Crouch is program manager of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and has been involved in the dumpsite survey since 2007. The recent mapping displayed here was conducted by Graduate School of Public and International Affairs doctoral candidate Kathryn Collins. ■*

## Fall 2011 Urban and Regional Brown Bag Seminar Series

The Urban and Regional Analysis program conducts a seminar series on issues of importance to urban and regional scholars and practitioners. All seminars are held at UCSUR at 3343 Forbes Avenue (across from Magee Women's Hospital) from Noon–1:30 p.m. The public is invited.

1. Karl Schlachter, Senior Vice President and Senior Project Manager, McCormack Baron Salazar, Inc.

*"Neighborhood Revitalization: Keys to Success and Future Challenges"*

**Thursday, September 22, 2011**

Karl Schlachter is a Pitt alumnus with over twenty years of experience in multifamily

housing development. His talk will center on repositioning distressed urban real estate, using examples from his work in the Hill District and East Liberty in Pittsburgh and other sites in the United States.

2. Alan Mallach, Senior Fellow, National Housing Institute and Visiting Scholar, Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia

*"Shrinking Cities: What Can Be Done?"*

**Friday, October 7, 2011**

Alan Mallach has been engaged as a practitioner, advocate, and scholar in the fields of housing, planning, and community development for nearly forty years. Author of many works on housing and planning, he served as

director of housing and economic development for Trenton, N.J. from 1990 to 1999. His talk will center on the policies many communities are now adopting in response to population loss.

3. Yilan Xu, Yilan Xu, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Economics, University of Pittsburgh

*"Do Local Anti-predatory Lending Laws Work? Evidence from Cleveland"*

**Friday, November 18, 2011**

Yilan Xu's research explores home mortgage lending, banking regulation, and credit ratings. She received her Bachelor's degree in economics from Zhejiang University in China.

# Foreclosures in Pittsburgh's Hilltop Neighborhoods

■ *By Bob Gradeck*

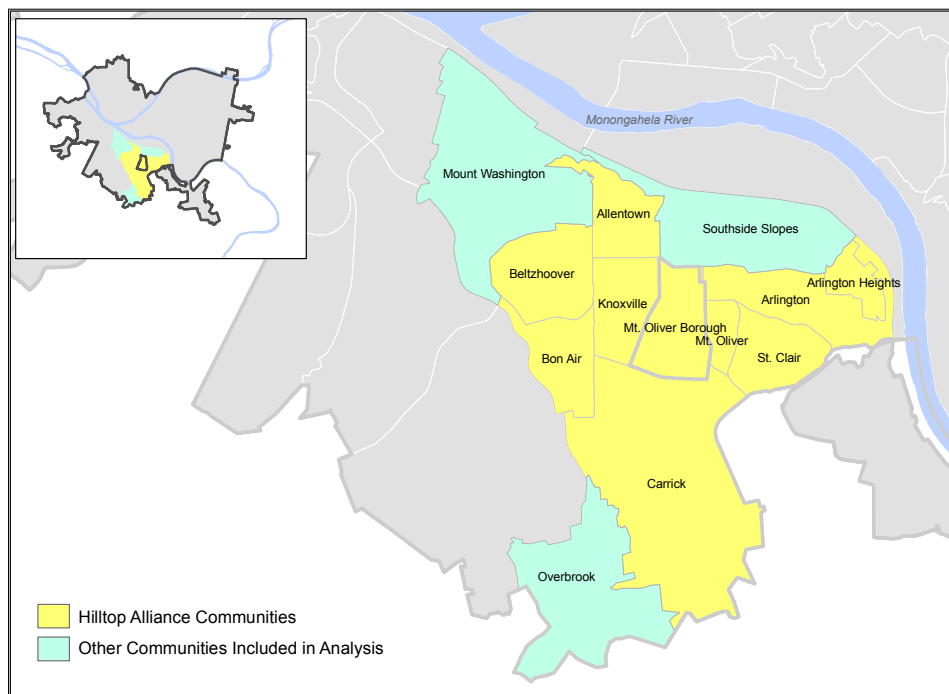
Foreclosure continues to be a growing issue in the Pittsburgh region, with many communities facing much higher rates of properties in foreclosure than the region's average. UCSUR has recently completed work on foreclosure in South Pittsburgh's Hilltop neighborhoods, an area where many stakeholders fear that concentrated foreclosed properties in the community is accelerating neighborhood decline, creating blight, and threatening redevelopment efforts.

This article continues applied research on foreclosure in the Pittsburgh region (see PEQ June 2009, September 2010). Data from the Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System (PNCIS), housed at UCSUR, were used to paint a much clearer picture of foreclosure in the Hilltop neighborhoods and document effective practices that can be adopted to prevent foreclosure and combat foreclosure-related blight.

Neighborhood revitalization efforts across the Hilltop are centered in the Hilltop Alliance, a collaborative community organization dedicated to supporting the efforts of neighborhood-based organizations preserving and building community assets. This foreclosure study encompassed the ten communities in the Hilltop Alliance, plus three adjacent Pittsburgh neighborhoods (see figure).

Community organizations focus on residential property foreclosures for many reasons. Owners of foreclosed properties can see their savings depleted, credit ruined, and relocation leaving them in much less desirable housing situations. Foreclosures can lead to increased vacancy, blight, and crime, which in turn can depress property values and place additional financial stress on local municipalities that bear the burden of

## Hilltop Alliance Communities, Pittsburgh



increased demolition and public safety costs. Foreclosed properties have also created widespread opportunities for housing investors to purchase properties at a steep discount, which can pose a problem if these new owners do not invest in their properties or employ effective management practices (see PEQ, Sept. 2010).

From 2006 to 2010, 1,167 residential properties in the Hilltop, or 5.7 percent of all residential properties were subject to at least one foreclosure filing in Allegheny County's court system (see Table 1). Data available in the PNCIS helped to demonstrate some common features across foreclosures in the community. Properties going

into foreclosure in the Hilltop were more likely to have been recently purchased. Most of those residents falling into foreclosure in the Hilltop neighborhoods were homeowners rather than property investors.

In 2009 and 2010, 68 percent of all foreclosure filings in the Hilltop were initiated by just ten plaintiffs, led by Wells Fargo Bank, US Bank NA, Bank of America, Deutsche Bank, and Citimortgage Inc. Only one of these ten lenders was not based in Pittsburgh. In many cases, the lenders involved in the foreclosure did not originate the loan, but instead purchased the mortgage on the secondary market. Wells Fargo, one of the largest financial institutions in the United States, was involved in 57 filings in 2009 and 2010, the largest number of foreclosure filings on Hilltop properties by any lender.

Many of the properties that have recently gone into foreclosure in the Hilltop became vacant soon after the foreclosure process started. In early 2011, NeighborWorks Western Pennsylvania, a nonprofit housing counseling organization, attempted to reach Hilltop homeowners with a foreclosure filing in 2009 or 2010

**Table 1: Residential Parcels with a Foreclosure Filing, Hilltop, City of Pittsburgh, and Allegheny County, 2006-2010**

Place	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Hilltop	325	277	302	256	219
City of Pittsburgh	1,376	1,149	1,234	1,113	906
Allegheny County	4,557	3,937	4,317	4,116	3,604

*PNCIS, from Allegheny County Department of Court Records and Allegheny County Office of Property Assessments*



**Table 2: Distressed and Non-Distressed Sales Prices and Share of Total Sales, Hilltop, City of Pittsburgh, and Allegheny County, 2009**

Place	Non Distressed Sales Average	Distressed Sales Average	Distressed Sales as % of Total
Hilltop	\$41,512	\$13,354	19.8%
Pittsburgh	\$81,531	\$18,707	12.9%
Allegheny County	\$98,308	\$30,090	11.1%

Source: Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System, University Center for Social and Urban Research.

*Distressed sale:* Transaction of any property with a foreclosure filing in the current or just prior calendar year of the sale.

*Non-Distressed Sale:* Transaction of any property not involved in a foreclosure filing in the current or just prior calendar year of the sale.

to help them resolve the foreclosure. In just that short time, returned letters indicated that nearly one-third of these foreclosed properties were already vacant. Not surprisingly the work suggests that most properties are occupied at the time of the initial foreclosure filing, but become vacant as the property moves through the foreclosure process.

Many residential housing sales in the Hilltop communities were tied to a property recently in foreclosure. The PNCIS was used to create a measure of “distressed residential property sales,” made up of recent sales of foreclosed properties.

In 2009, 20 percent of residential properties sales in the Hilltop involved a property with a foreclosure filing in 2008 or 2009, a figure higher than either the city of Pittsburgh or Allegheny County (see Table 2). The Hilltop communities of Knoxville, Allentown, Mt. Oliver Borough, and Arlington saw at least one-quarter of 2009 real estate transactions related to a property in foreclosure.

Properties involved in a foreclosure also sell for considerably less than properties not involved in a foreclosure. Hilltop properties related to a foreclosure sold for an average of \$13,354 in 2009, while properties not related to a foreclosure sold for an average of \$41,512. Even in higher-value neighborhoods, such as Mt. Washington, Overbrook, and the South Side Slopes, properties involved in a recent foreclosure sold for less than \$20,000, on average.

These sales price differentials can have an impact on property values, appraisals, assessments, and confidence in the market.

The report concluded with steps the Hilltop Alliance and its partners can take respond to foreclosure in South Pittsburgh.

**1. Promote housing counseling to homeowners**

Recent studies have shown that borrowers working with housing counselors are over 60 percent more likely to prevent foreclosure. The Hilltop Alliance and its partners are encouraging homeowners in foreclosure to contact trained housing counselors as soon as problems arise. Continued data collection and analysis can help to guide outreach efforts.

**2. Serve as a broker to transfer properties to responsible new owners or a land bank and develop an investor strategy**

Many investors view steeply-discounted foreclosed properties as an attractive investment. Out-of-area owners and investors have made it challenging for community organizations to encourage the transfer of properties to responsible new owners. While the Hilltop Alliance is not interested in developing property or long term ownership, it can acquire property by developing relationships with mortgage lenders and servicers, receive property directly from private owners, and secure

**Mt. Oliver Borough’s data now available on PNCIS**

The Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System (PNCIS) has expanded. Over the winter, the PNCIS assisted the Hilltop Alliance by collecting data from Mt. Oliver Borough and entering it into the PNCIS. Adding Mt. Oliver Borough data has enabled consistent analysis of neighborhood conditions across all Hilltop communities. Data on Mt. Oliver’s crime, tax delinquency, property inspections, and other property conditions are now available on the PNCIS Web site ([www.ucsur.pitt.edu/pncis.php](http://www.ucsur.pitt.edu/pncis.php)).

property through municipal tax foreclosure or treasurers sales. Properties can then be transferred to responsible new owners or a land bank. Given the large number of foreclosed properties that are now in the hands of investors, communities across the country, such as Cleveland, have developed data-driven strategies to encourage and support private investors who improve their properties, while holding investors who fail to improve or maintain their properties accountable.

*The report “Foreclosure in South Pittsburgh’s Hilltop and Effective Responses” is now available on UCSUR’s Web site, at [www.ucsur.pitt.edu/files/frp/Hilltop%20Foreclosure%20Final%20Report%20July%202011.pdf](http://www.ucsur.pitt.edu/files/frp/Hilltop%20Foreclosure%20Final%20Report%20July%202011.pdf)*



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