

7408

*An Atlas of the West End Neighborhood  
of Pittsburgh 1977*



**WEST END**

# 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.

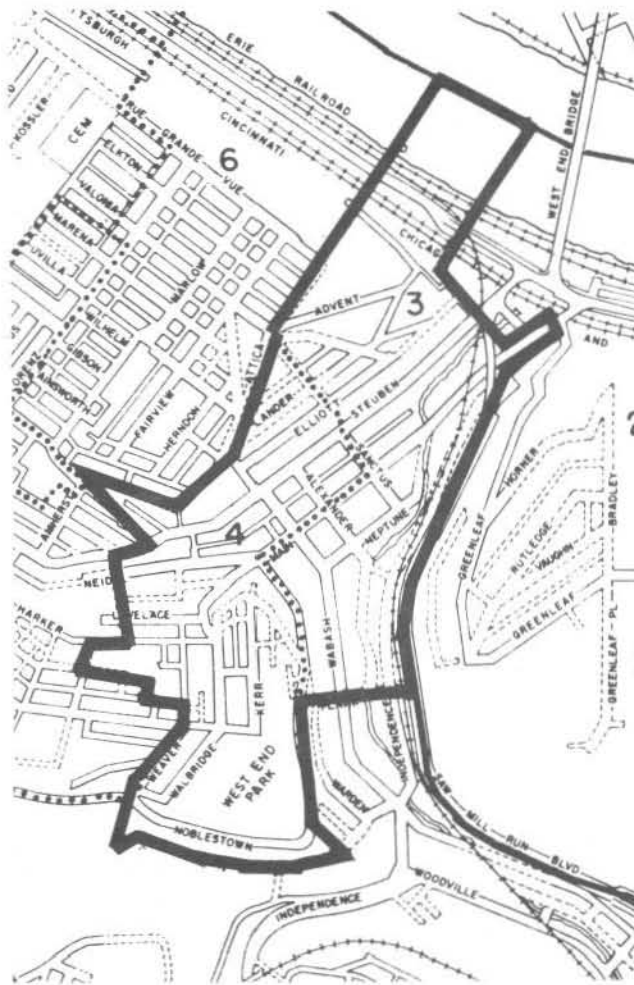
The information in this atlas provides an insight into current neighborhood conditions and the direction in which the neighborhood is moving. The best indicators showing the health of the neighborhood are provided by citizen satisfaction with the neighborhood, and changes in residential real estate transaction 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

West End is approximately 1.9 miles west of downtown. It is estimated to be 126.2 acres in size, containing 0.4% of the city's land and 0.3% of its 1974 population. The voting districts in the neighborhood are #3 and #4, Ward 20. (See Appendix for a listing of the neighborhood's census tracts.)



NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY  
WEST END

Situated on the floor and westerly slope of the Saw Mill Run Valley, where the creek runs into the Ohio River, West End had its origins as the "Warden and Alexander's Plan of Temperanceville Village", St. Clair Township, Allegheny County. This plan of lots, covering 96 acres, was plotted in 1839. The tract was purchased from the Daniel Elliott family, which had owned several hundred acres of land south of the river beginning in 1785 and operated a saw mill at the mouth of the creek.

The site was a natural one for settlement. Industrial development, which has become the hallmark of Pittsburgh, had already started on the south side of the Ohio and included a glassworks (1796), a salt well, and the Pittsburgh Iron Works (1833) along River Road (now West Carson Street). A high quality coal was mined in the vicinity. The stream provided water power for grist mills and saw mills. The proximity of Temperanceville to the Ohio gave it ready access to a water transportation route and the abundant supply of local lumber was supplemented by logs which were floated down the Allegheny River. By 1820, two private toll roads ran through the lower valley.

From 1839 until incorporation as a borough in 1860, and annexation to Pittsburgh in 1873, development progressed rapidly in Temperanceville, mirroring on a smaller scale the growth of the nearby cities of Pittsburgh, Allegheny and Birmingham. The Sheffield Iron Works (1848) occupied a site adjacent to the Pittsburgh Iron Works and later merged with the Crucible Steel Company; the Eagle Iron Works (1850) was built at Steuben and West Carson Streets; and a glass factory was located on South Main between Mill and Alexander Streets. Oil refineries, supplied with crude oil brought by river from northern Pennsylvania wells, were operated on Wabash Street. Illuminating gas and salt were produced in the town.

The growth of transportation facilities complemented and fostered continued industrial, commercial and population growth. A new highway was built in the area in 1849. Around the time of the Civil War, railroads and street railways began to expand. Following a building boom of residential and combined residential-commercial units in the 1890's, many improvements were made in West End, often initiated by the West End Board of Trade. The second branch of the Carnegie Library system opened in 1899. Main streets were paved with cobblestones, new water mains were installed and land was purchased by the city for West End Park.

By 1900, the population of West End-Temperanceville, the city's 36th Ward, was 3,725, almost one thousand more residents than in 1880. West End was a thriving commercial and transportation center interspersed with industrial plants, its history influenced by the realization of the industrial potential of the Pittsburgh region as a whole. West End was also influenced by the immigrants who poured into the region for jobs in mills and factories, displacing the early English and Welsh settlers. In 1930, 60% of the population of census tract 20-1 (the valley floor from the traffic circle to Plank Street, the hillside from the creek to Elliott Street) was either foreign or had non-native parents (1,037 out of 1,723 persons). Four hundred and forty were of Polish descent. Most of the other residents had origins in Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Great Britain, Russia or Lithuania.

WEST END

Summary Statistics

	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
Population (1974)	1,490	479,276
% Change (1970-1974)	Less than -1%	-8%
% Black population (1970)	22%	20%
Housing units (1974)	549	166,625
% Vacant	12%	6%
% Owner-occupied housing units (1974)	54%	54%
Average sales price of owner-occupied dwellings (1975)	\$14,619	\$23,518
% Residential real estate transactions with mortgages provided by financial institutions (1975)	39%	59%
Crime rate (1975)	0.040	0.053
Income index as % of city index (1974)	99%	
% Satisfied with neighborhood (1976)	19%	41%
Major neighborhood problems (1976)	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

West End residents are generally less satisfied with their neighborhood than residents city-wide. Table 1 shows that 19% 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, 5% said that it was better which was less than the city-wide response of 12%. Given the opportunity to move from the neighborhood, 33% 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 negative attitude of residents toward their neighborhood compared to citizens city-wide.

TABLE 1

Neighborhood Satisfaction  
West End

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

	<u>Satisfied (%)</u>	<u>Dissatisfied (%)</u>	<u>Neither (%)</u>
West End	19	43	38
All neighborhoods	41	37	21

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

	<u>Better (%)</u>	<u>Worse (%)</u>	<u>Not Changed (%)</u>
West End	5	67	29
All neighborhoods	12	49	36

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

	<u>Yes (%)</u>	<u>No (%)</u>	<u>Not Sure (%)</u>
West End	33	43	19
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 respondents from West End to those from all city neighborhoods. An Area of particular concern for the neighborhood includes **poor roads**.

## III. Satisfaction with Public Services

Table 3 shows the satisfaction of West End 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. West End residents are more satisfied with respect to the fire department, and less satisfied with respect to street and alley maintenance and the sewage system.

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 West End 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; problems with potholes.
2. Police: Insufficient police services; not enough police protection.



TABLE 2

Neighborhood Problems  
West End

Problem Category	Problem Rating - Percent Response		
	<u>Not a Problem</u>	<u>Minor or Moderate</u>	<u>Big or Very Serious</u>
1. Unsafe streets			
West End	24	43	19
All neighborhoods	25	45	21
2. Vandalism			
West End	10	48	29
All neighborhoods	13	49	28
3. Rats			
West End	19	29	10
All neighborhoods	34	33	12
4. Burglary			
West End	19	43	14
All neighborhoods	14	44	29
5. Poor roads			
West End	5	38	48
All neighborhoods	17	41	33
6. Trash and litter			
West End	24	52	19
All neighborhoods	27	41	24
7. Vacant buildings			
West End	29	38	14
All neighborhoods	49	24	13
8. Undesirable people moving into the neighborhood			
West End	29	33	19
All neighborhoods	42	28	15
9. Stray dogs			
West End	24	38	29
All neighborhoods	25	38	18
10. Dog litter			
West End	24	29	29
All neighborhoods	21	38	32

SOURCE: Citizen Survey, 1976 .

NOTE: The neighborhood percentages do not add up to 100%. The difference is accounted for by the following responses: "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  
West End

Service	Percent Response		
	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied
1. Parks and Recreation			
West End	67	14	19
All neighborhoods	51	15	23
2. Schools			
West End	52	14	19
All neighborhoods	46	12	21
3. Street Maintenance			
West End	19	10	62
All neighborhoods	32	15	49
4. Alley Maintenance			
West End	5	14	57
All neighborhoods	20	13	39
5. Garbage Collection			
West End	67	19	10
All neighborhoods	74	10	13
6. Police			
West End	52	5	38
All neighborhoods	51	17	23
7. Public Transportation			
West End	62	5	29
All neighborhoods	61	11	23
8. Fire Department			
West End	86	5	5
All neighborhoods	78	7	3
9. Sewage System			
West End	38	10	43
All neighborhoods	63	10	13
10. Condition and Cost of Housing			
West End	33	14	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/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 decreased over the last three years (Table 4). In 1973 the number of major crimes per capita was .047 compared to .040 in 1975. The crime rate in the neighborhood was less than the city per capita rate of .053 in 1975.

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TABLE 4

Crime Rate: Major Crimes  
West End

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Major Crimes</u>	<u>Crime Rate</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
1973	70	.047	.043
1974	70	.047	.047
1975	60	.040	.053

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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 population of West End was estimated to be 1,490, down by less than 1% 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 22.1% of the neighborhood's population in 1970, compared to 20.2% for the city.

The average household size in the neighborhood was 2.81 persons in 1974, up from 1970. The percentage of the population 65 years and older was 13.7% in 1970, compared to 13.5% for the city as a whole.

TABLE 5

Population and Housing Characteristics, 1970 and 1974  
West End

	<u>Neighborhood</u>		<u>Pittsburgh</u>	
	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>
Population				
% Black	22.1%	....	20.2%	....
% 65 years and over	13.7%	....	13.5%	....
Households				
% One-person households	26.3%	23.2%	25.4%	25.5%
% Retired head-of-households	....	25.1%	....	26.3%
% Households with children	....	35.6%	....	32.7%
% Female head-of-household with children	....	3.8%	....	6.4%
% In owner-occupied housing unit	47.3%	54.3%	50.3%	54.2%
% Households changing place of residence within past year	....	38.1%	....	27.0%
Average household size	2.80	2.81	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, 38.1% 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 3.8% of the total households in the neighborhood compared to 6.4% for the city as a whole. In 1974, one-person households consisted of 23.2% of the total households in the neighborhood compared to 25.5% city-wide and to 26.3% for the neighborhood in 1970.

TABLE 6

Neighborhood Change: 1960-1970 and 1970-1974  
West End

	<u>Number</u> <u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>	
		<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
Population			
1960	2,257		
1970	1,496	-34	-14
1974	1,490	Less than -1	- 8
Households <sup>1</sup>			
1960	677		
1970	528	-22	- 6
1974	475	-10	-12
Black Households <sup>2</sup>			
1960	75		
1970	92	+23	+15
1974	(Not available)		
Housing Units			
1960	736		
1970	588	-20	- 3
1974	549	- 7	-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.)

<sup>1</sup>The number of occupied housing units equals the number of households

<sup>2</sup>Non-white households in 1960.

NEIGHBORHOOD INCOME

The average family income in West End was \$10,000, 95% 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 occupations of heads of households, was used to calculate the indome index of the neighborhood. In 1974, the index for West End was 99% 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 17.9% of the neighborhood households in 1976, a slightly lower proportion than for the city overall and an increase since 1974.

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TABLE 7

Public Assistance: Households Receiving Cash Grants  
West End

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<u>Year</u>	<u>Neighborhood</u>		<u>Pittsburgh</u>
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1974	76	16.0	16.0
1975	81	17.1	17.2
1976	85	17.9	18.0

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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 the 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 #2009; average income calculated only for the section of the neighborhood consisting of part of census tract #2007, part of #2008 and part of #2011.

HOUSING

Table 6 shows that the number of housing units in West End decreased during the decade of the sixties and decreased from 1970 to 1974. Of the occupied housing units in the neighborhood, 54.3% were owner-occupied in 1974, compared to a city-wide rate of 54.2%. The vacancy rate in 1974 for the neighborhood was 11.5% which was greater than the city-wide rate.

The average value of owner-occupied housing in the neighborhood was \$8,800 in 1970, compared to a city-wide average of \$14,800.

TABLE 8

Housing Characteristics: 1970 and 1974  
West End

	<u>Neighborhood</u>		<u>Pittsburgh</u>	
	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1974</u>
Housing units				
% Vacant	10.2	11.5	6.2	6.2
% One-unit structures	52.4	....	52.9	....
Occupied housing units				
% Owner-occupied	47.3	54.3	50.3	54.2
Average value: owner-occupied units <sup>1</sup>	\$8,800	....	\$14,800	....

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

<sup>1</sup>Average value rounded to nearest one hundred dollars.

REAL ESTATE AND MORTGAGE LOAN TRANSACTIONS

The average sales price of owner-occupied housing was \$14,619 in 1975. (See Table 9.) Although the average price was less 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 39% in 1975 in West End compared to a city-wide rate of 59%. The implications of the difference between the two rates are difficult to discern because of variations in risk factors and income levels among city neighborhoods. However, 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  
West End

	<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Pittsburgh</u>
Average sales price: owner-occupied dwellings		
1974	\$12,888	\$21,582
1975	\$14,619	\$23,518
Number of residential mortgages		
1973	7	
1974	6	
1975	6	
% Residential real estate transactions with mortgages provided by financial institutions		
1974	39%	58%
1975	39%	59%

SOURCE: City of Pittsburgh, Department of City Planning.



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. Neighborhood Census Tracts: #2009; and parts of #2007, #2008 and #2011.
- c. Methodology: The opinions and characteristics of survey respondents, as well as voter registration, were recorded by voting district and then compiled for West End by the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas in conjunction with the Center for Urban Research, University of Pittsburgh. Other material in the atlas was drawn from statistics tabulated for city census tracts or census blocks.

The neighborhood boundaries, which were determined on the basis of whole voting districts, do not conform exactly to census tract boundaries, so minor boundary adjustments were made wherever possible to simplify data collection efforts. In West End and in other parts of the city where substantial portions of a census tract fall in more than one neighborhood, the neighborhood characteristics for 1960 and 1970 were arrived at by adding together data for the census blocks in the neighborhood, item by item. The statistics from sources other than the U. S. Census were made available only by census tract, not by census block; therefore, a method for prorating the data among neighborhoods was developed. The procedure allocated data for each neighborhood containing partial census tracts on the basis of the proportion of total tract population, households, or housing units contained in each sub-section.

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 West End, 21 citizens answered the questionnaire. Based on the number of replies to each question, the characteristics of the respondents can be generally described as follows: an average age of 49; 48% female; 10% Black; 63% with at least four years of high school education; 55% homeowners; and an average of 26 years in the neighborhood. The median household income falls in the range of \$10,000 to \$14,999; the average household size is 3.57 persons; and 75% 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, 437 residents of the neighborhood were registered to vote, a decrease of 30 (-6.4%) since November, 1975. In this period, city registration increased by 1.3% to 233,028 persons.

In the process of collecting data for this publication, the Pittsburgh Neighborhood Atlas staff was assisted by many community organizations. The following list reflects those organizations that we were able to make contact with in West End:

West End-Elliott Citizens Council  
70 Neptune Street  
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15220 (December, 1967)  
922-2522

West End-Elliott Community Development  
Corporation  
70 Neptune Street  
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15220 (March, 1974)  
922-1950

West End-Elliott Cluster of SWIM  
(South West Interchurch Ministry)  
West End United Church of Christ  
1028 Chartiers Avenue  
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15220  
921-5776

Note: Dates in parenthesis indicate when organization started.