

GREATER HILL DISTRICT

MASTER PLAN

Community Action Team Meeting #2

Staff: Ose Akinlotan (City Planning), Josiah Gilliam (Mayor's Office of Equity/City Parks)

Leadership Circle: Reverend Paul Abernathy, Marimba Milliones, Claudy Pierre

Consultants: Brad B. & Erin I. (Mithun)

November 8, 2021

Overview

- Introductions
- Presentation
 - Overview of Community Resilience
 - Community Programs and Livability
 - Topics for future meetings
- Discussion
- Q&A



Community Discussion: What to Update, Expand, Add?

What Needs to be Updated or expanded?

Historic Preservation

Public Safety

Public Health

Public Facilities and Services

Public Art

What needs to be added?

Schools and Related Programs

Community Resilience



Neighborhood Plan Guide: <https://pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/neighborhood-planning-guide>

12

Community Resilience

"Resilience is the ability of a system (like a community) to absorb disturbance and still retain basic function and structure"



Resilient and Healthy Community

- Community members are physically and mentally well
- People can access health care, healthy foods, and services they need
- Folks are self-sufficient and can take care of each other during tough times
- Residents are engaged in the community and connected to each other



Community Resilience

- Focus on growing the capacity to “bounce back” from disruptions
- Engage and benefit all community members
- Consider all the challenges the community faces
- Tells us how complex systems—like human communities—can adapt and persist through changing circumstances.



Foundations of a Resilient Community

- People
- Systems Thinking--> THOUGHTS??
- Adaptable
- Transformable
- Livable
- Co-powerment



Objectives

- Build capacity
- Increase connectedness
- Foster cooperation



Neighborhood Stressors

What is a community stressor?

A community stressor is an event that negatively impacts a community physically, emotionally, or economically. Stressors differ by communities, but examples include:

Weather-related disasters
(e.g., hurricanes or severe snowstorms)

Economic downturns or high poverty rates

Gun violence or drug-related crimes

Environmental issues (e.g., climate change or global warming)

Levels:

- Individual
- Communal
- Structural



What's in your Original Plan (Initiatives)

Build capacity

- Quality Education Initiative
- Hill district Arts Plan
- Neighborhood Safety*
- Hill History Center**
- Hill District Homeowner/Tenant Support

Increase connectedness

- Neighborhood Safety*
- Housing Innovation Zone
- Hill District Workforce Development
- Hill District Business Incubator
- Play Spaces
- Ride To Work
- StreetScape improvement
- Comprehensive Parking
- Strategy
- Complete Streets Pilot

Foster cooperation

- Neighborhood Safety*



Community Goals

Community goals for the master plan were created based upon all previous planning efforts and revised to include additional community input. With these goals as a guide, a great variety of decisions can be made over time to create a vibrant neighborhood, while still ensuring a shared vision of the overall outcome.

BUILD UPON THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL LEGACY

The Hill District has been a setting for Black history-making from the 18th century to the present. Thus, the Hill will position itself as Pittsburgh's oldest African American neighborhood and retain its cultural and historical personality, which should not be lost due to market pressures and gentrification.

- Honor the historic and cultural legacy of African Americans in the Hill District with emphasis on the Lower Hill
- Include 'right of return' preferences for displaced individuals, families, organizations and businesses
- Use existing neighborhood resources first in revitalization
- Advance existing and create new relationships to move the Hill District forward
- Ensure that Hill District residents are empowered in planning for the community revitalization

FAMILY FRIENDLY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT

Housing developments must include an appropriate level of family housing including rental and for sale units affordable to various income levels in order to prevent displacement.

- Establish a target housing mix for new projects including appropriate levels of family-friendly housing
- Provide quality rental and ownership housing opportunities for a broad range of family sizes and incomes
- Use housing development as a catalyst for economic and community development
- New housing developments will prevent displacement of existing residents and businesses
- Family housing developments will include play spaces in close proximity to housing developments
- Housing developments will consider the impact of new developments on children and population density for local schools

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Community residents, organizations, and businesses will gain social and economic benefit from neighborhood revitalization efforts.

- Support economic activity that directly benefits Hill District residents and existing businesses.
- Ensure jobs for community members, the retention of current businesses, new opportunities for entrepreneurship and equity stakes for Hill District organizations
- Restore commercial vibrancy and strength by concentrating market demand and resources to:
- Renew Centre Avenue as a great "main street"
- Redevelop the Lower Hill as a mixed-use neighborhood
- Leverage Uptown's proximity to Oakland and Downtown
- Encourage live-work and at-home innovation projects

MAKE THE HILL DISTRICT A GREEN AND WELL-DESIGNED COMMUNITY

The Hill District will have a comprehensive strategy for sustainability and quality design.

- Create a comprehensive strategy for vacant land including urban gardening
- Leverage the Hill District's natural features as an economic asset for neighborhood development
- Use Hill District trails as green connections with a larger city network
- Establish high-quality recreation and open spaces

MOBILITY, TRANSPORTATION, AND PARKING

Ensure viable and affordable transportation access to all members of the community.

- Improve transportation networks and services to the city and within the Hill District
- New infrastructure should promote walkability, street accessibility for the disabled, and access to work, retail, and social amenities
- Create a well-planned parking strategy that supports new development while minimizing negative impacts on residents

Existing Conditions: How are We Doing?

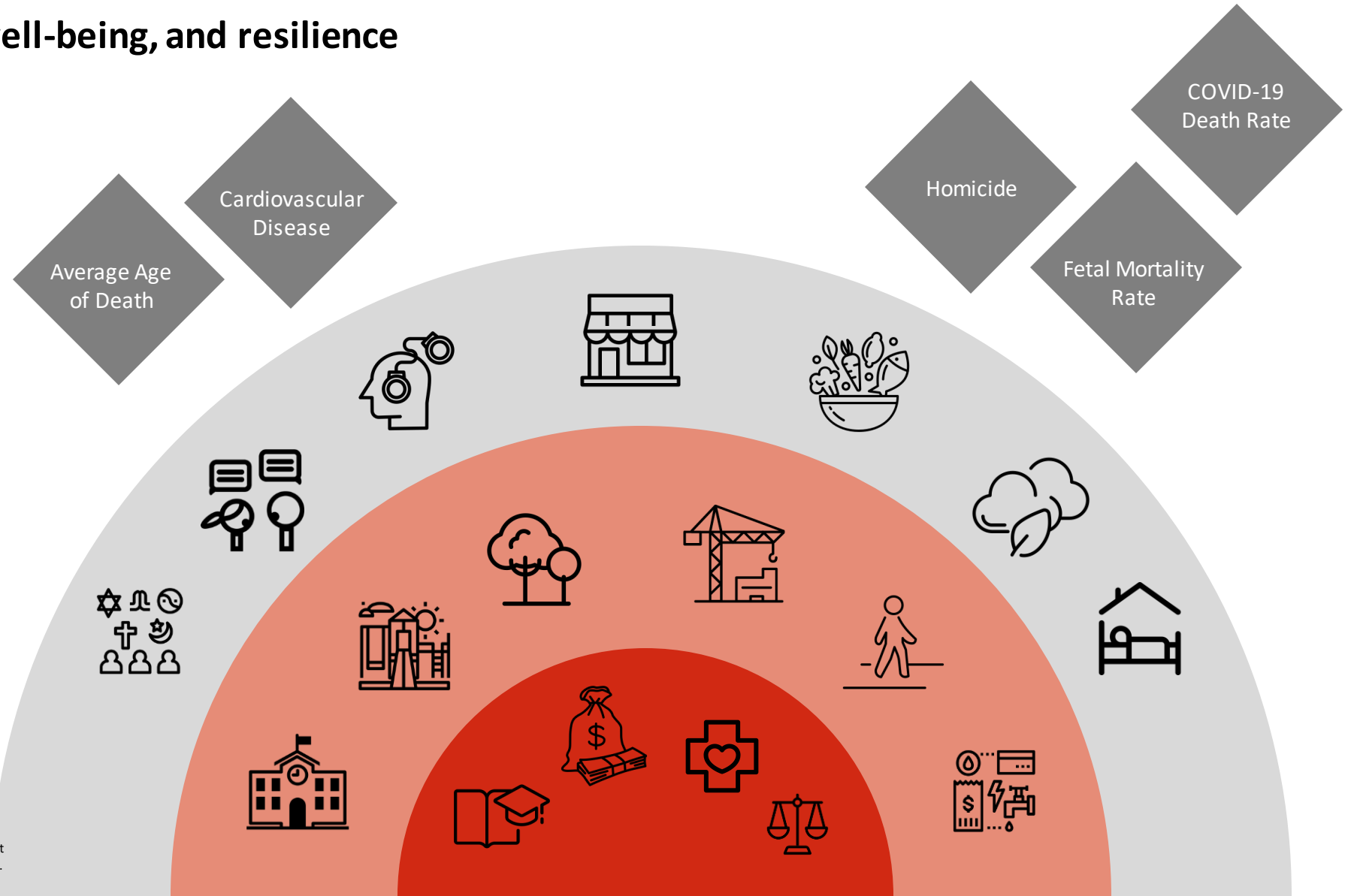
Outcomes are our health, well-being, and resilience

Root Causes whether Stressors or Change Agents can be chronic, or sudden...and happen at different levels.

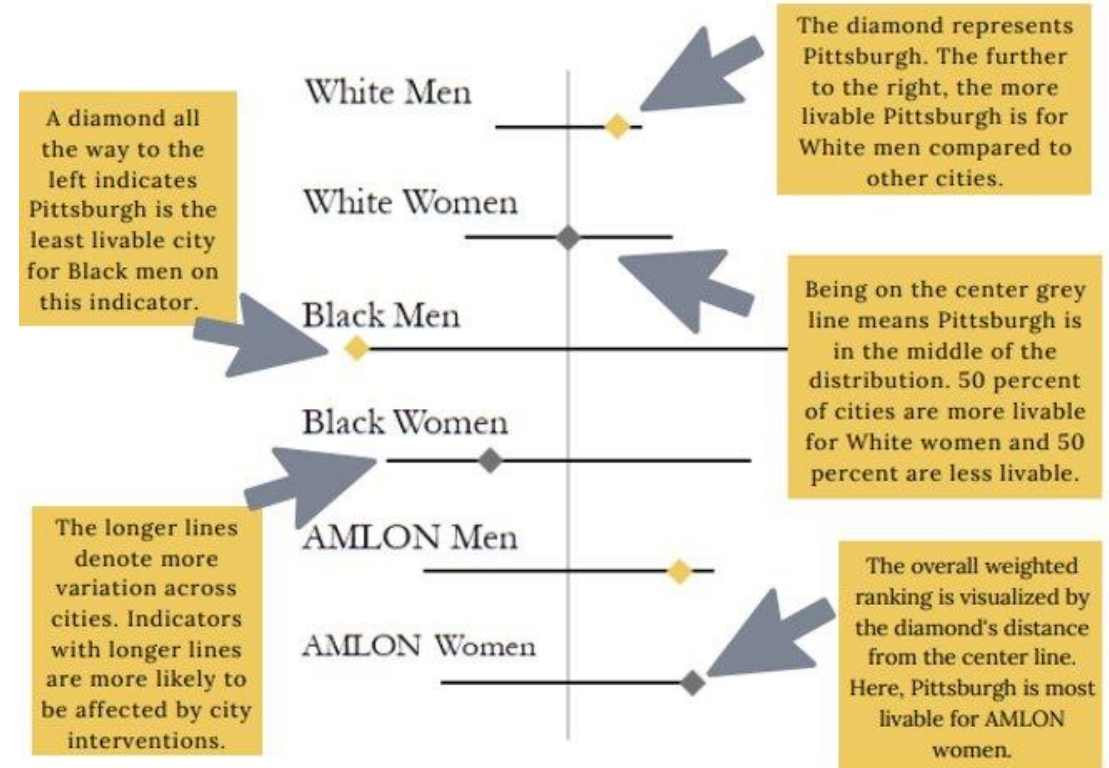
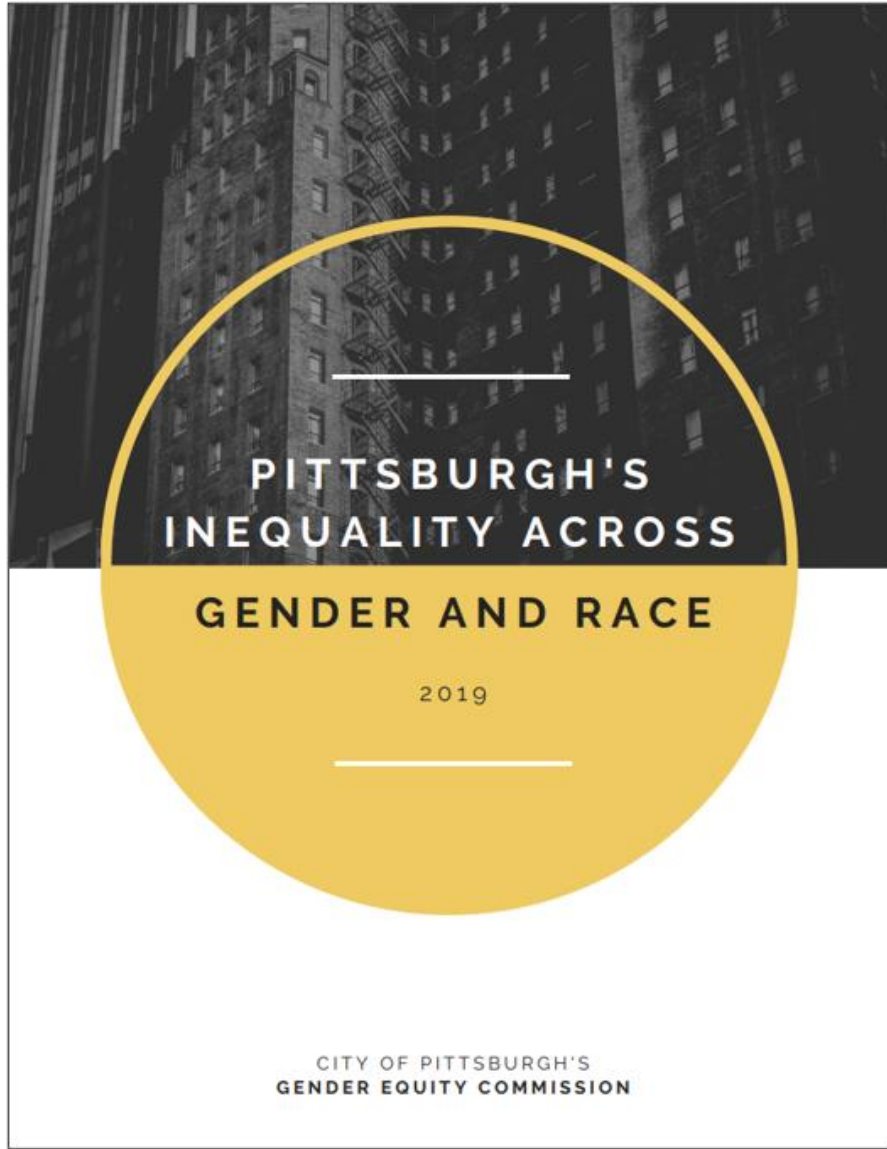
Individual
cooperation and inclusion
in fundamental resources

Communal
connectedness
to infrastructure and
living environment

Structural
capacity within
policies and systems



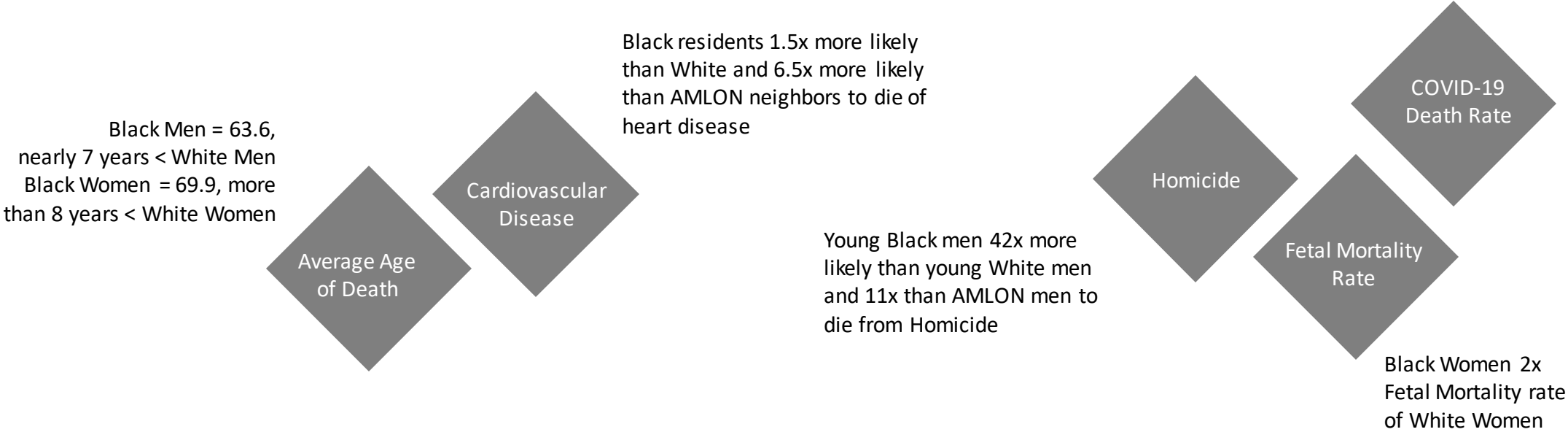
Racism is a public health crisis.



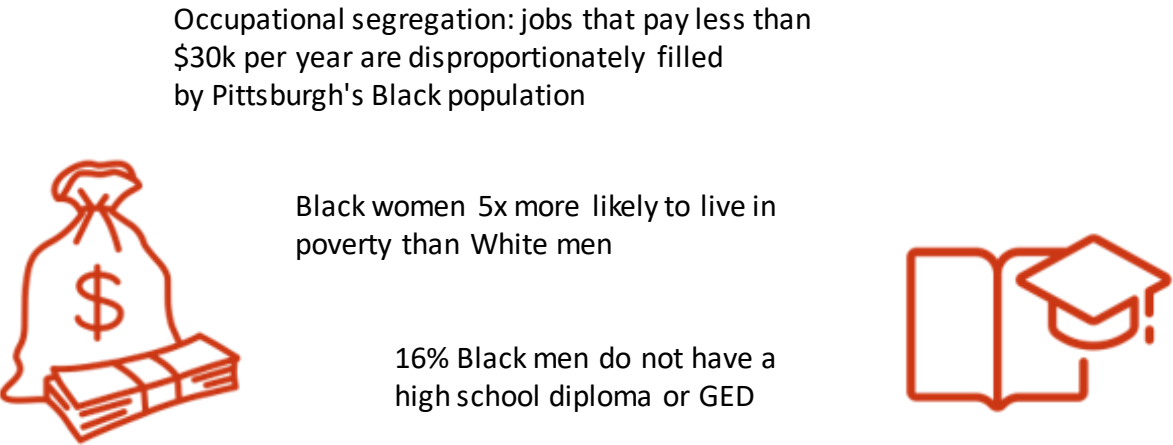
Outcomes are consistently different based on dimensions of identity: race/ethnicity, gender, language, immigration status, age, and ability.

How are We Doing as a City?

Outcomes



Root Causes



How are We Doing as a Community?

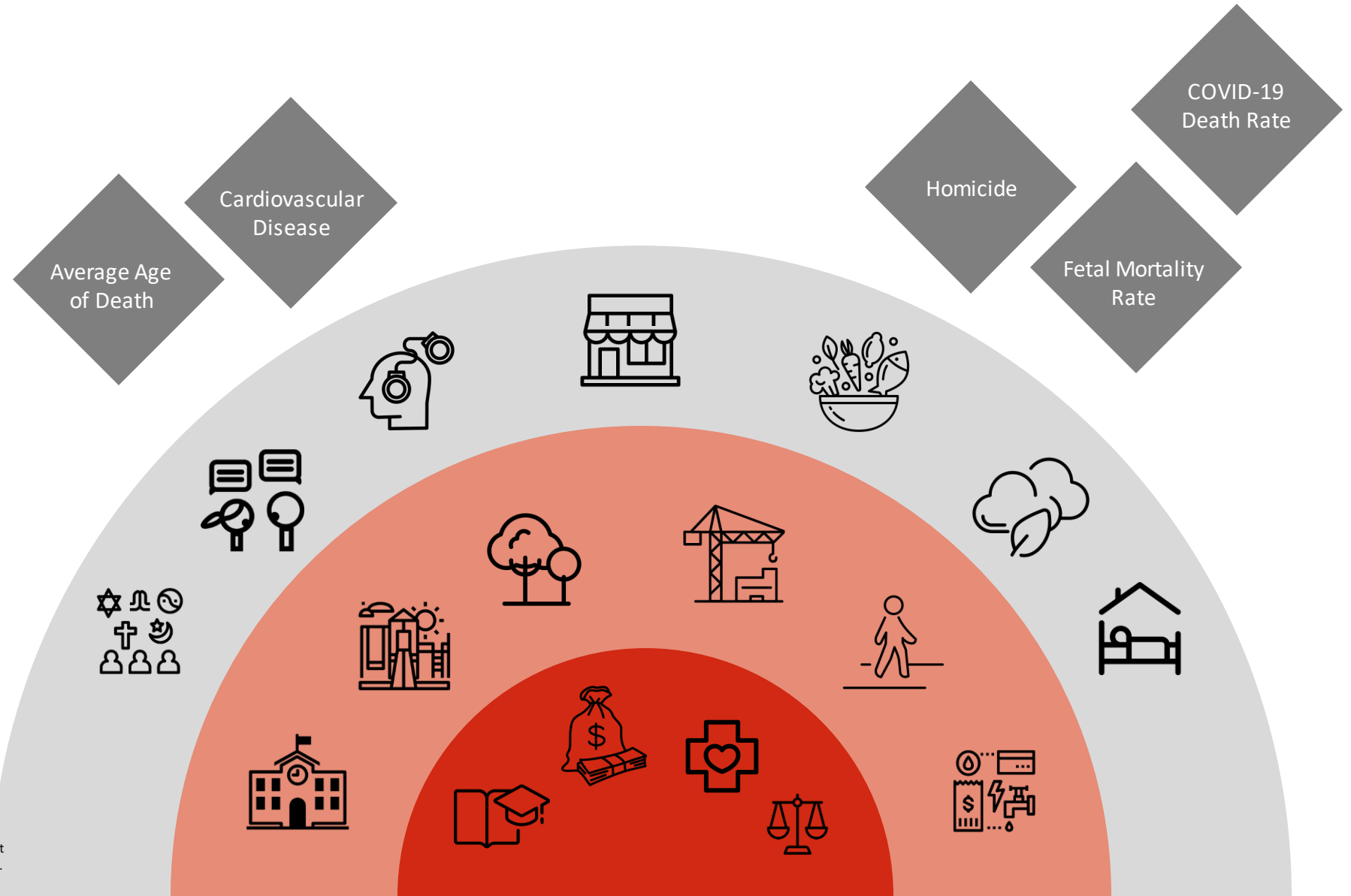
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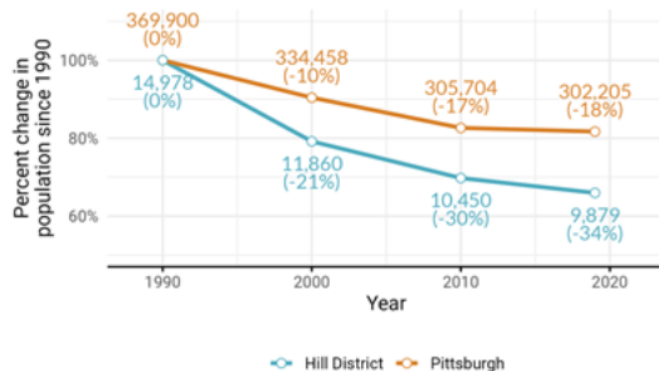
People

The Hill District has lost about 5,000 people since 1990, leaving the area with just two thirds of its population from 30 years ago.

Total population shrank in the City of Pittsburgh over this same period but to a much lesser extent. The Hill District lost 34 percent of its population since 1990, while Pittsburgh's overall population shrank by 18 percent.

Figure 3. Population Change, 1990-2019, Hill District and City of Pittsburgh, 2019

Source: NHGIS/US Census, 2019 ACS 5-year

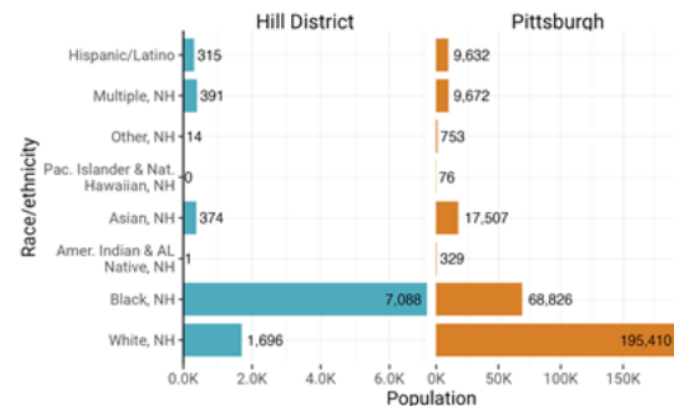


Just over 7,000 (about 72 percent) of Hill District's population identifies as Black, non-Hispanic/Latino.

The next-largest racial group, White, non-Hispanic residents, make up around 17 percent of the population. Apart from these two groups, the racial/ethnic make-up of the Hill District largely mirrors Pittsburgh.

Figure 5. Population by Race & Ethnicity, Hill District and City of Pittsburgh, 2019

Source: ACS 2019 5-year

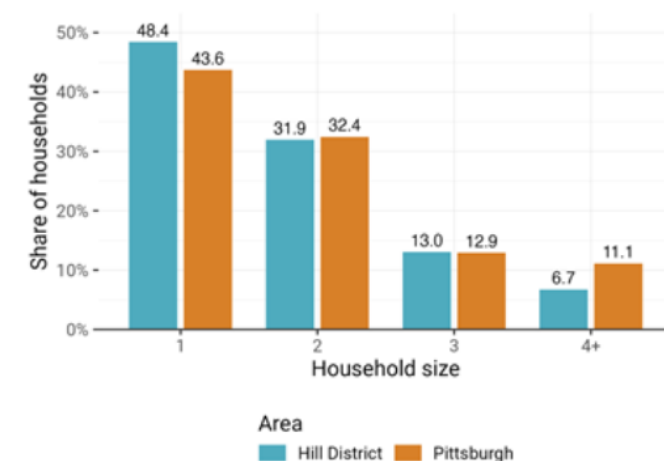


Nearly half of households in the Hill District are single-person households.

One-person households are the most common size of households in the Hill District, and they are somewhat more common here than they are in the city overall, while large households (4 or more members) are likewise less common. Two- and three-person households are roughly as common in the Hill District as they are in Pittsburgh.

Figure 8. Households by Household Size, Hill District and City of Pittsburgh, 2019

Source: ACS 2019 5-year

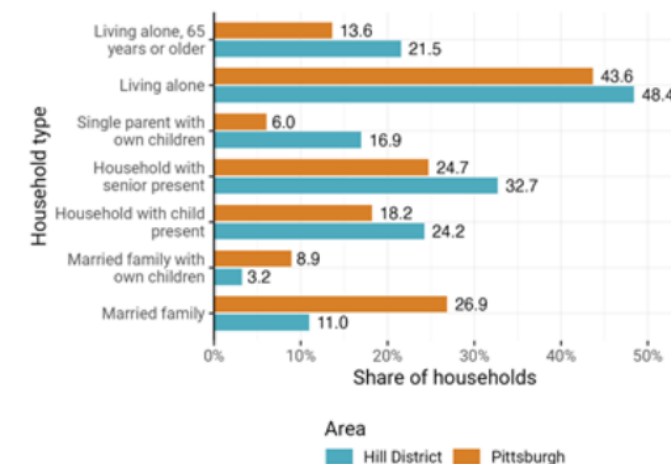


Single-parent and households with senior residents are more common in the Hill District than in the city as a whole.

Single-parent households are almost three times as common (17 percent of households) within the Hill District as they are in Pittsburgh as a whole (6 percent of households). Households with seniors (65 years or older) present, including those with a senior living alone, are more common in the Hill District than in Pittsburgh as a whole.

Figure 9. Household Composition, Hill District and City of Pittsburgh, 2019

Source: ACS 2019 5-year





Household Statistics

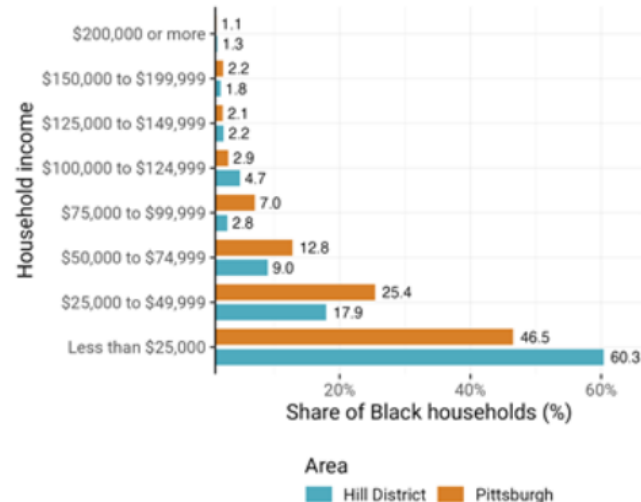
Households

Sixty percent of Black households in the Hill Districts make less than \$25,000 per year.

Among all Black households in Pittsburgh, those living in the Hill District are more likely to be extremely low income (earning less than \$25,000 per year). Households in the Hill District tend to be more economically unstable due to high unemployment and high receipt of public assistance (cash payments, as defined by the Census Bureau).

Figure 10. Distribution of Black Household Income

Source: ACS 2019 5-year

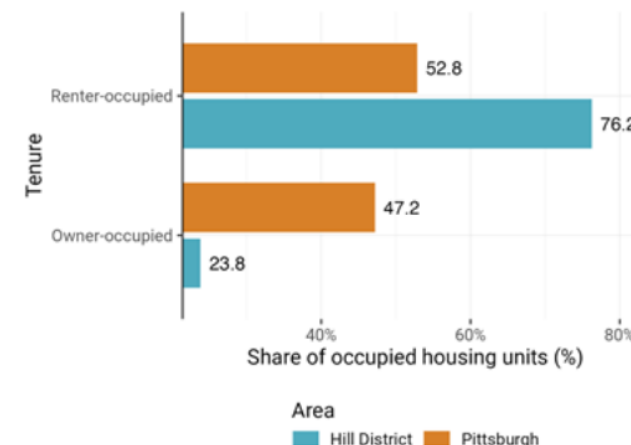


Just over three out of four households in the Hill District rent, compared to just over half of Pittsburgh households.

The Hill District has lower rates of homeownership than other communities across the City of Pittsburgh. This presents an opportunity to think about approaches for homeownership or shared ownership to support stability in the Hill District community.

Figure 6. Occupied Housing Units by Tenure, Hill District and City of Pittsburgh, 2019

Source: ACS 2019 5-year

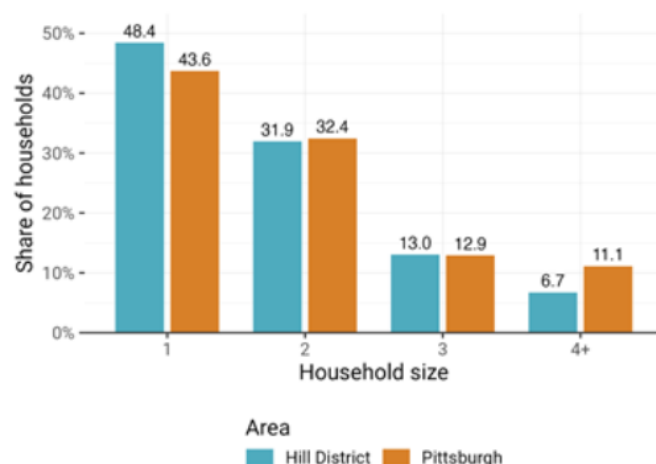


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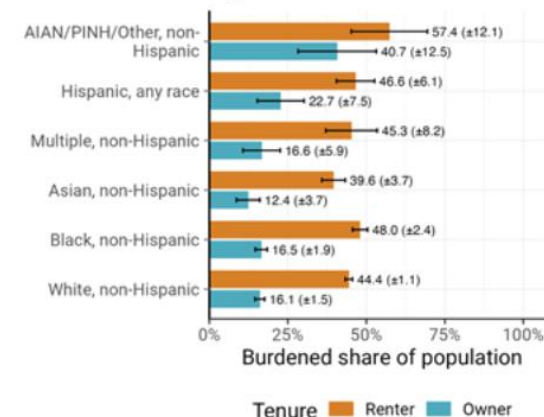
Almost half of Black renters in the Hill spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing.

Using the US Census microdata for the Hill District area PUMA, an estimated 48 percent of Black renters are housing cost-burdened (pay 30 percent or more of their gross income on rent), while 16.5 percent (plus or minus 1.9 percent) of the Black homeowner population is burdened.

*Since the Hill District area PUMA also encompasses large amounts of central, northern, and eastern Pittsburgh (see Figure 2), these estimates very likely downplay the levels of cost-burdening experienced by Hill District residents, particularly Black renter and owner households.

Figure 13. Housing Cost-Burden by Race/Ethnicity and Tenure, Hill District PUMA*, 2019

Source: ACS PUMS 2019 5-year

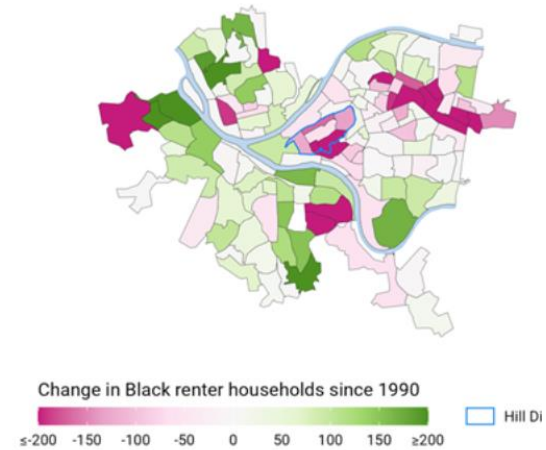


Since 1990 Black renter households decreased across much of Pittsburgh's east side neighborhoods like Hill District, Brushton and East Liberty.

The decline in renters is largely due to overall population decline within the Hill. Over this same time period, Black renters increased in many tracts on the north and south sides of Pittsburgh. No tract within the Hill District saw an overall increase in Black renter households since 1990.

Figure 15. Change in Black Renter Households, 1990-2019

Source: NHGIS, ACS 2019 5-year

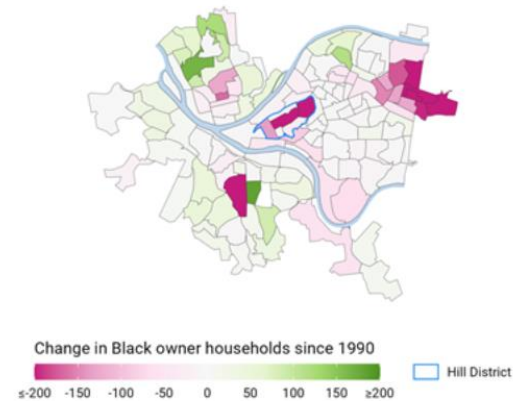


Similar to Black renter households, Black owner households have seen sharp decreases in numbers Hill District and other east side neighborhoods since 1990 (over 200 households per tract).

Some tracts on the north and south sides of the city have seen increases in Black owner households in that span of time, but not enough to balance the total losses across Pittsburgh, which indicates there's been a decline in Black homeownership in the City overall across this time period. Within the Hill District, areas in the Middle and Upper Hill saw the largest reductions in Black homeownership.

Figure 16. Change in Black Owner Households, 1990-2019

Source: NHGIS, ACS 2019 5-year



A photograph of a classroom. In the foreground, several students are seated at desks, facing away from the camera. They are looking towards the front of the room where a male teacher with a beard is standing and gesturing with his right hand. The classroom walls are decorated with various papers, posters, and circular diagrams. There are bookshelves filled with books in the background. The overall atmosphere is that of an active learning environment.

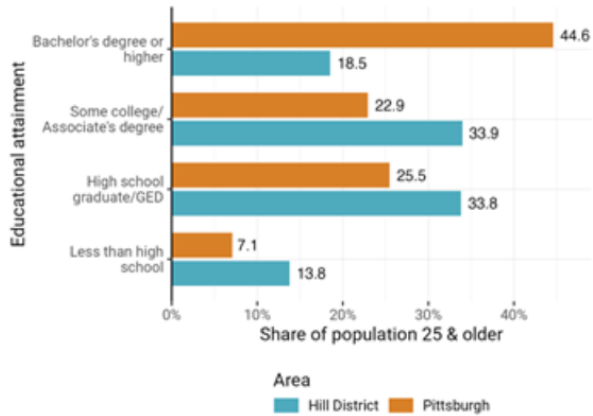
Education, Employment, and Living Environment

Hill District residents are much less likely to have completed a college degree.

Only 18.5 percent of the population 25 years or older have a bachelor's degree, compared to 44.6 percent of all Pittsburgh residents 25 and older. Hill District residents are twice as likely to have less than a high school degree compared to all Pittsburgh residents.

Exhibit 12. Educational Attainment

Source: ACS 2019 5-year

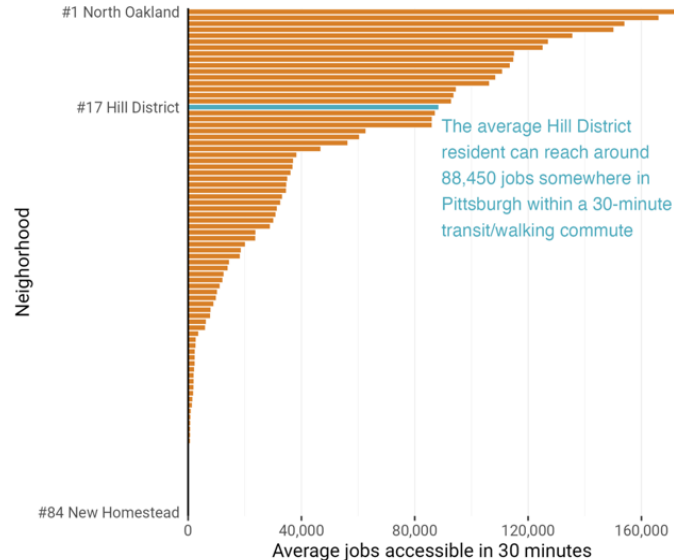


Out of all of Pittsburgh's designated neighborhoods, the Hill District ranks 17th in terms of its transit access to job opportunities across the city.

The average Hill District resident can reach 88,450 jobs in a 30-minute transit commute. By comparison, the nearby average North Oakland resident can reach 172,160 jobs – nearly twice as many – in that same amount of time

Figure 39. Transit access to employment by neighborhood

Source: LODES



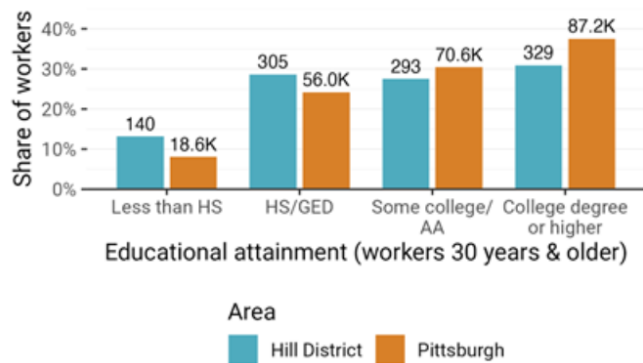
Compared to Pittsburgh, there is a relative lack of workers with a college degree or higher in the Hill District.

Workers with a high school degree or GED, or less than a high school degree, are slightly over-represented in the Hill District.

Note: These data do not necessarily reflect the educational attainment required for various jobs in the Hill District but can at least indicate where workers with differing attainment levels have found employment.

Exhibit 32. Jobs by Workers' Educational Attainment, Hill District and Pittsburgh, 2018

Source: LEHD



The Hill District has a slightly larger share of younger workers (under 29) and older workers (older than 54), compared to the Pittsburgh.

Overall, workers in the Hill District mostly resemble workers across Pittsburgh in terms of the distribution of workers' age.

Like in Pittsburgh, about half of all workers are between 30 and 54 years old, though the Hill District has a slightly smaller share of this age group (49 percent) than Pittsburgh (56 percent).

Exhibit 33. Jobs by workers' age, 2018

Source: LEHD

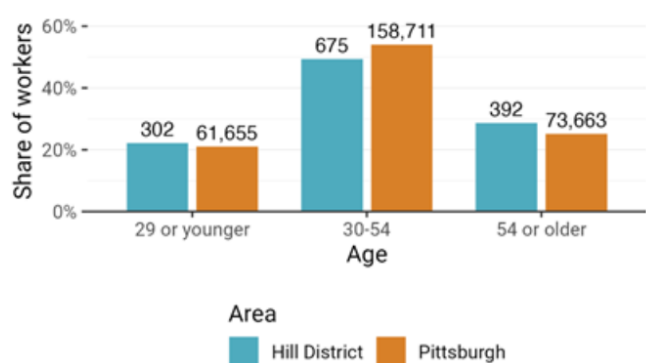


Figure 45. Tree Canopy and Vegetation

Source: City of Pittsburgh, Google Street View



The Hill District has significant natural areas, but features like parks and tree canopy are unevenly distributed within the study area.

Tree canopy is a critical resource: it forms important habitat areas, provides shade for pedestrians, can improve mental health and well-being, supports pervious cover that can absorb water and potentially improve air quality, and can improve property values. Previous plans like the Hill District Greenprint (2009) identified that the study area has substantial wooded areas along the steep slopes and hillsides. These wooded areas, as well as trees on parcels throughout the district, constitute the majority of the tree canopy for the area. The Hill District's street tree canopy is focused at places that have seen major redevelopment over recent decades such as Crawford Square and Bedford Terrace. This deficit of tree canopy, particularly in the Middle Hill and commercial areas like Centre Avenue, could become a significant constraint as climate change increases summer temperatures and shade becomes increasingly important for pedestrians. Similarly, mature trees on parcels will be important to protect as new development takes place.

Vacant parcels exist in different conditions, with varying impacts to the neighborhood.

It is important to note that within the general category of vacant parcels are a variety of property conditions and concomitant impacts to the surrounding neighborhood. While many parcels are poorly maintained, often impacting adjacent sidewalk access, other vacant parcels are in use as various types of open space. In other cases, vacant buildings are attached to occupied homes and businesses. These attached vacant properties have negative effects on both the public realm as well as the potential safety of these adjacent structures.

Figure 46. Vacant Parcels Character

Source: Google Street View

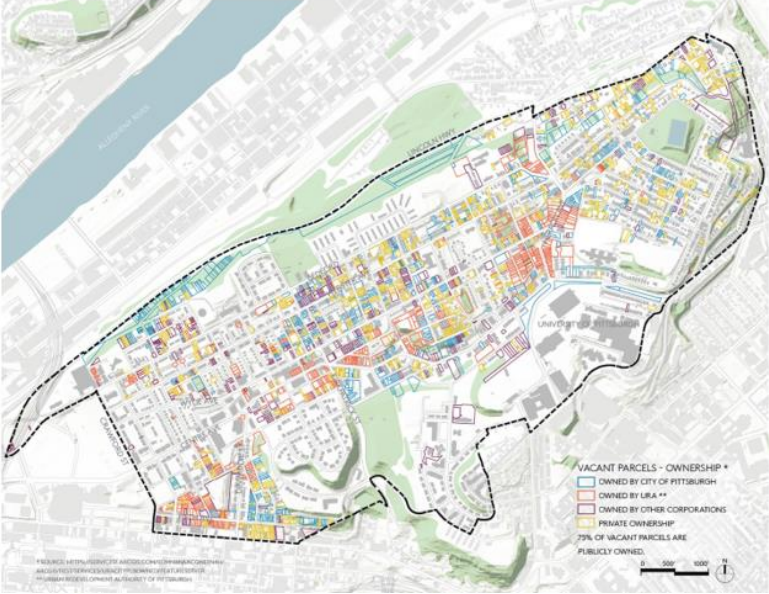


Vacant parcels continue to be an important issue for the Hill District as a whole.

There are over 600 acres of vacant land in the Hill District, which reflects the decades of disinvestment following mid-century urban renewal. Much of this vacancy is concentrated in the Middle Hill and along Herron Avenue. Over 75% of these vacant parcels are publicly owned by the URA or City of Pittsburgh.

Figure 47. Vacant Parcels by Ownership

Source: City of Pittsburgh, Mithun





Community Programs Exercise

Neighborhood Stressors

What is a community stressor?

A community stressor is an event that negatively impacts a community physically, emotionally, or economically. Stressors differ by communities, but examples include:

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(e.g., hurricanes or severe snowstorms)

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Levels:

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Foundations of your Resilient Community

- People
- Systems Thinking (Strategic?)
- Adaptable
- Transformable
- Livable
- Co-powerment



Resilient Hill District

- Greater Hill District Master Plan -> Update and Adopt
- Programs and Liveability – October (Housing) & November
- Cultural Legacy & Historic Preservation – December
- Public Health, Facilities & Services (Safety) -January



Future Meetings/Next Steps

- December- Cultural Legacy/Historic Preservation/Public Art
- January- Public Health, Facilities & Services (Safety)

Where can you find us?



Pittsburgh City Planning



@PLANPGH
@resilientPGH



@planpgh

Online at engage.pittsburghpa.gov/ghdmp



Leadership Circle

Name	Organization	Topical Area
Reverend Paul Abernathy	Neighborhood Resilience Project	Community
President & CEO Marimba Milliones	Hill District Community Development Corporation	Community
Claudy Pierre	Eat Initiative	Community
Derek Tillman	Bridging the Gap Development	Development
Felicity Williams	Hill District Community Development Corporation	Development
Carol Hardeman	Hill Consensus Group	Mobility
Arbie Blackston	Hill District Resident/Consensus Group	Infrastructure
Holly Douglass	Cosmos Technologies	Infrastructure

Project Team

Name	Organization	Role on Project
President & CEO Marimba Milliones	Hill District Community Development Corporation	Co-Chair
Councilman Daniel Lavelle	Council District 6, City of Pittsburgh	Co-Chair
Ose Akinlotan	Department of City Planning, Strategic Planning	Project Manager, Community Action Team
Derek Dauphin	Department of City Planning, Strategic Planning	Supervising Planner, Development Action Team
Josiah Gilliam	Mayor's Office of Equity & CitiParks	Community Action Team
Nick Fedorek	Urban Redevelopment Authority	Development Action Team

Project Team

Name	Organization	Role on Project
Steve Auterman	Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI)	Mobility
Moira Egler	Port Authority of Allegheny County (PAAC)	Mobility
Martina "Marti" Battistone	Department of City Planning, Environmental Planning	Infrastructure Action Team
Megan Zeigler	Green Building Alliance	Infrastructure Action Team
Flore Marion	Department of City Planning, Sustainability & Resilience	Infrastructure Action Team
Sarah Yeager	Department of City Planning, Sustainability & Resilience	Infrastructure Action Team

Project Team

Economic Development and Urban Design Consultants

- Firms: ECONorthwest, Mithun, Inc; Ideas and Actions and Studio Sewde
- Urban Design Study, Economic Development Study, Centre-Heldman Site Activation Plan, Implementation Plan

Transportation Consultants

- Firms: Kittelson & Associates, NspireGreen, and Langan
- Curbside and Parking Management Strategy, Transportation Study, Transportation Demand Management
- **Parks Master Plan Consultants**
- Firms: Groundswell and Deep Dive Detroit



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- Information about the plan and process
- Upcoming meetings
- Future Action team information
- Receive updates/Follow the project
- Engagement opportunities

Scales of Planning

Types of Plans

