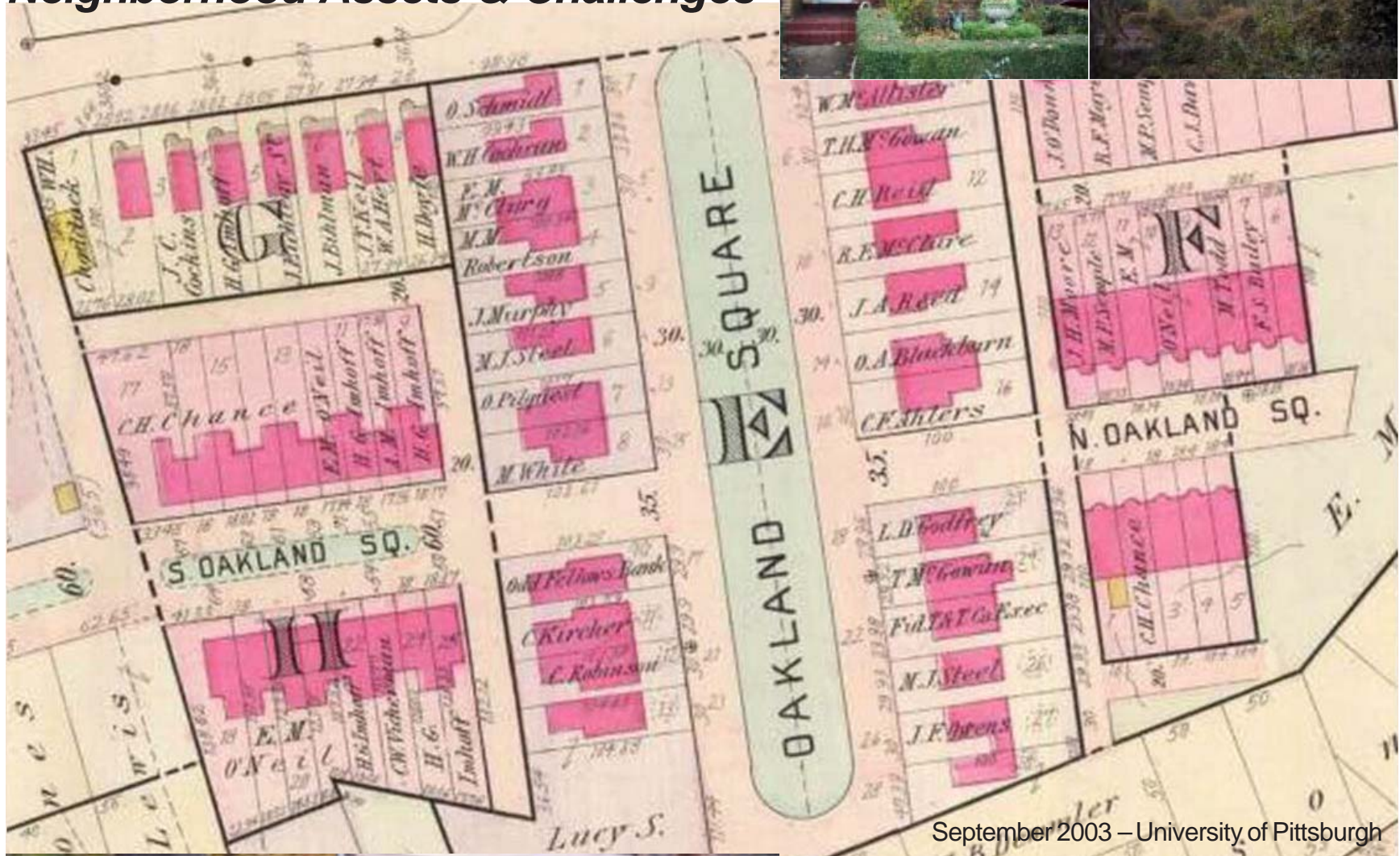


Oakland Square

Neighborhood Assets & Challenges



September 2003 – University of Pittsburgh
Graduate School of Public and International Affairs
Neighborhood & Community Development

Executive Summary

The Oakland neighborhood, because of its proximity to the University of Pittsburgh, continues to transform in character. While student rental housing becomes even more dominant in the area, Oakland Square represents a hope to stimulate a return to family housing, home ownership, and neighborhood quality. However, despite its isolation on the edge of South Oakland, our study found that this quaint block was not immune to the changes in the general Oakland area.

Using observation, census data, interviews, surveys, and property value analysis, we conclude that the majority of families that once inhabited Oakland Square have already moved out, and they are being replaced with student renters. In the immediate area around Oakland Square, the estimated median age is 26 years old, and the majority of young people 19-44 are renters and are studying or working in Oakland. Of the 99 housing units, 7 are vacant, 17 owner-occupied, and 75 renter-occupied.

The failure of the city to watch more closely the uses of property in Oakland is resulting in violations of housing ordinances, and possibly the loss of potential tax revenue since income-generating properties appear to be assessed below their true values. While ownership is not yet as dominated by slumlords and housing not as dilapidated as other parts of Oakland, reversing the trend and encouraging families to resettle will require strong efforts and interventions by concerned neighbors.

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A quiet, small, and charming residential South Oakland neighborhood overlooking Panther Hollow, Oakland Square is arguably one of the most well-hidden gems in Oakland.

The neighborhood is defined by Oakland Square in the center, a grassy park-like median sprinkled with mature trees. The street wraps around the square in a one-way, U-shaped road bounded by Dawson Street on the west and a hillside overlooking Panther Hollow on the east.

The 26 houses on the Oakland Square block face inward to the Square, creating an enclosed feeling of community. Two kinds of houses occupy the Square, singles and duplexes, with each unit 20 feet wide. Houses have a front porch 7 feet deep and a front yard 13 feet long, totaling 20 feet of offset from the public sidewalk. The sidewalk is 8 feet wide, and the one-way road is 20 feet wide, with parking on one side.

Most houses and yards are well maintained, although many show signs of age. We found Madonnas in front of houses, decorations for holidays on some houses, and a leafy green vegetable garden by the side of another. A cat and three dogs were also spotted. But one house, half of a duplex, was clearly neglected.

Low car traffic on the street due to the discontinuous nature of the road help contribute to a calm environment. However, parking, like much of Oakland, is crowded. Since the houses were not originally designed to accommodate cars, additions such as garages in back allies and weather covers in spaces between buildings have been built to shelter cars. Parking on the street is by permit only, but residents say that more permits than parking spots have been issued.

Parkview Street intersects the square, with 13 row houses of similar but narrower architecture on the dead-end side in the north, and another 17 houses to the south before Parkview continues on. Residents call these two sections North and South Oakland Square since the houses share a similar heritage.

Across Dawson Street at the intersection with Atwood Street is a small convenience store. Oakland Square is in a prime location, within a short walk from Pitt and UPMC, near restaurants and cultural amenities, and around the corner from the Post Office. Despite the onslaught of the student population, the location still feels like a traditional neighborhood and has the potential to reclaim its heritage.

This is a report about Oakland Square. Seventeen students toured the neighborhood, spoke to residents, and conducted research to seek out some of the characteristics and history, benefits and challenges of Oakland Square.

Oakland Square





U.S. Census Data from Summary File 1 (SF1) and Summary File 3 (SF3) were used in the table. SF1 is known as the “100-percent data,” reflecting the theoretical full return of short-form surveys. It contains more general information but extends down to the Block level. SF3 is the “1-in-6 sample data,” based on the return of long-form surveys extrapolated to the total population. It contains more specific data but is good only down to Block Groups.

It should be noted that some information are reported in both formats, but their numbers do not usually match because of statistical error. To learn more about the limitations of statistical data, please visit the Census website at: www.census.gov.

Introduction

In the Fall of 2002, students in Professor Sabina Deitrick’s Neighborhood and Community Development class carried out a project exploring Oakland Square. These students in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh conducted a variety of qualitative and quantitative research, then compiled this report.

During the semester, the Executive Director of Oakland Planning and Development Corporation (OPDC), David Blenk, discussed Oakland Square with the class. He explained that there seem to be two types of residents: Older homeowners who may be looking to sell their homes within the next five to 10 years and younger homeowners who moved to Oakland Square because of its close proximity to cultural and social amenities, as well as their place of employment. Blenk explained the problem currently facing Oakland Square: Without a concerted effort to market Oakland Square to prospective homeowners, many of the older homeowners will have no choice but to sell their homes to absentee landlords, who already own a substantial portion of homes in Central Oakland, and are generally perceived to be problematic for the neighborhood. (See previous reports on Pier Street and Meyran Avenue.)

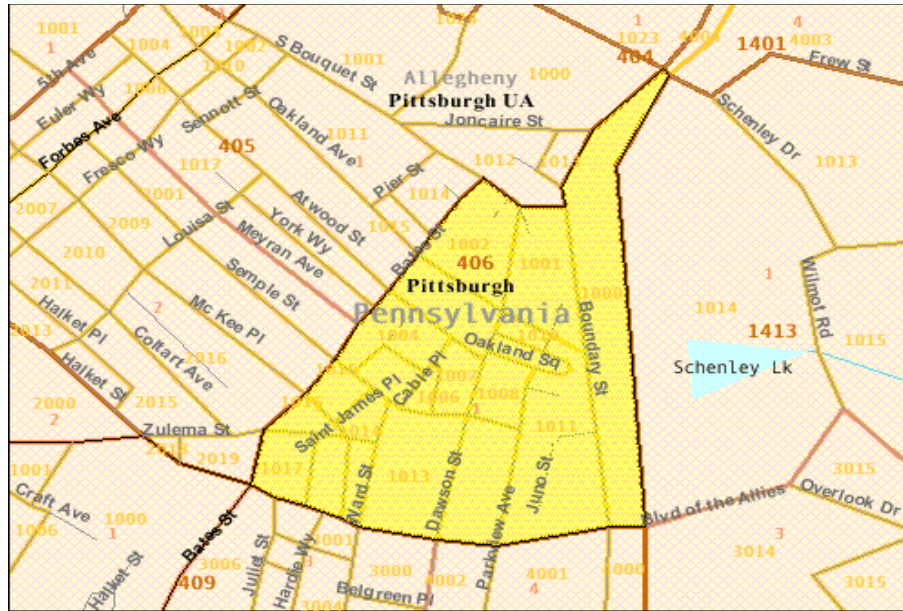
In the effort to promote home ownership, OPDC has identified two potential groups of buyers, what they call knowledge workers and the professional class, such as institutional faculty and staff, who would potentially be interested in residing in Oakland Square. OPDC wanted more information before organizing efforts to reach their targets. The class responded and completed a profile of the neighborhood that includes research on the U.S. Census, the history of Oakland Square, resident interviews, mailed resident survey, property values assessment, local zoning regulations, and crime perceptions and statistics.

Census Data (Track 406)

We began our study by analyzing data from the United States Census to look for introductory information on changes in Oakland Square’s demographics over the past decade.

Census data are organized into hierarchical subsets from national to state, county, tract, block group, and block data. Oakland Square seems to fit the criteria for its own Block nicely since it has well defined boundaries and is about the size of a city block. However, it is not considered a Block by the Census; in fact it is broken into several other blocks.

We proceeded to first look into the next level of data available, the Census Tract. Oakland Square is located within Tract 406, which covers much of Central Oakland. Tract 406 has an eastern edge at Boundary Street, a western boundary at Bates Street, a northern boundary at South Bouquet and Joncaire Streets, and a southern boundary at the Boulevard of the Allies. The following map highlights the researched area.



Census Tract 406 Oakland Square in Middle www.census.gov

With Track 406 as a reference area, we then narrowed Oakland Square to three Blocks: 1008, 1009, 1010, to get more targeted but less detailed information. This set of Blocks covers all of Oakland Square, but also includes some other residences. However, this aggregate data is the closest Census approximation of the neighborhood, and the subsequent information is useful, especially when compared with the larger Track 406. Data areas collected include population, housing, race, education, and income, and reveal some basic trends:

Population

The population living in the wider area around Oakland Square (Track 406) is 57% majority male (vs. 54% in more detailed Oakland Square blocks), and largely student-based with a median age of 22.4 years (about 26 years old in Oakland Square). The proximity of the University of Pittsburgh and other centers of higher learning ensure this situation. Because of this, it was intriguing to find out that the population of the area has decreased by 5% over the last ten years. However, at the same time, the population over 25 has decreased by a dramatic 36%. One may infer from these numbers that there are more undergraduate students and fewer other residents in 2000 than in 1990.

**Oakland Square Area
Population, Households, and Families**

| Track 406 | 1990 | 2000 | % |
|---------------------|------|------|-----|
| Population | 2392 | 2271 | -5% |
| Male | 57% | 57% | |
| Female | 43% | 43% | |
| Median Age | n/a | 22.4 | n/a |
| Households | 1038 | 1059 | 2% |
| Average HH Size | | 2.13 | |
| Families | | 196 | |
| Average Family Size | | 2.81 | |
| Children Under 18 | | 123 | |

| Blocks 1008/1009/1010 | 2000 |
|-----------------------|------|
| Population | 160 |
| Male | 54% |
| Female | 46% |
| Median Age | 26* |
| Households | 92 |
| Average HH Size | 1.74 |
| Families | 23 |
| Average Family Size | 2.61 |
| Children Under 18 | 7 |

* estimated from ranges

Of the 99 housing units in the immediate Oakland Square area, 17 are owner-occupied and 75 are renter-occupied.

| Oakland Square Area | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| Race | | | |
| Track 406 | 1990 | 2000 | % |
| Population | 2392 | 2271 | -5% |
| White | 79% | 80% | |
| Black | 8% | 6% | |
| Asian | 12% | 10% | |
| Two or more races | n/a* | 3% | |
| Blocks 1008/1009/1010 | | 2000 | |
| Population | | 160 | |
| White | | 70% | |
| Black | | 1% | |
| Asian | | 26% | |
| Two or more races | | 2% | |

* New 2000 Category

Housing

Oakland Square is located in a largely rental community. The large student population and lack of on-campus housing provided by the institutions maintain the need for local rental housing. Likely due to these factors, there has been a dramatic change in the already low owner-occupied housing over the last ten years in Census Tract 406, decreasing by 34% from 205 units in 1990 to 135 units in 2000. Consistent with this decrease is the rise of renter-occupied units, which increased by 11% from 833 units to 924 units. It may be inferred that a large number of owner-occupied units have been converted into rental units. In the blocks encompassing Oakland Square, there is slightly higher percentage of owner-occupied housing, but still only at 17%. There is also a lower percentage of vacant housing, 7%, compared to 9% in the Census Tract, in 2000.

| Oakland Square Area | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Housing, Occupancy, and Tenure | | | | |
| Track 406 | 1990 | 2000 | % | % 2000 Total Housing Units |
| Total Housing Units | 1190 | 1169 | -2% | 100% |
| Units Vacant | 152 | 110 | -28% | 9% |
| Units Occupied | 1038 | 1059 | 2% | 91% |
| Owner-Occupied | 205 | 135 | -34% | 12% |
| Renter-Occupied | 833 | 924 | 11% | 79% |
| Blocks 1008/1009/1010 | | 2000 | % 2000 Total Housing Units | |
| Total Housing Units | | 99 | 100% | |
| Units Vacant | | 7 | 7% | |
| Units Occupied | | 92 | 93% | |
| Owner-Occupied | | 17 | 17% | |
| Renter-Occupied | | 75 | 76% | |

Race

The population demographics in the blocks around Oakland Square is 70% white and 26% Asian. Meanwhile, the larger area of Track 406 is 80% white, 10% Asian, and 6% black. The higher representation of Asians around Oakland Square is consistent with our visual tour of the neighborhood. One caution with Census data in this category, however, is the introduction of multiple-race categories in the most recent Census, which may make comparisons with prior decades more difficult.

Education

The 36% drop of the over-25 population from 1990 to 2000 may be indicative of the population shift. Every category declined dramatically except for those with some college or graduate degrees. They are likely continuing students or post-docs at the university. The departure

of people in other categories likely means that residents not studying at the university are leaving the neighborhood covered by the Census Tract.

Income

After adjusting for inflation and converting all monetary values to 2000 U.S. dollars, we find the median household income in the Census Tract rose 13% from 1990 to 2000 to \$16,018, an increase of \$1,794, while the per capita income stayed stagnant. These figures are difficult to interpret because they are skewed by the large student population. Meanwhile in the neighborhood, the median gross rent for renter-occupied housing in adjusted dollars decreased by 10%. And the median value of owner-occupied housing decreased by 4%.

While this particular Census research is not as Oakland Square specific as intended, these trends still provide valuable insight into the community and its surrounding areas. What goes on around Oakland Square has great effects on the neighborhood itself, and vice versa. To look for more insights into Oakland Square, we first reflect upon its history, then examine what current residents themselves say about their community.

History

During our research, we happened upon a document titled “Oakland Square - One Hundred Years,” written by the late Clifford Ham, a longtime resident of Parkview Avenue. His wife, who still lives on Parkview, supplied us the document. It was written in 1989, the one-hundred-year anniversary of Oakland Square, and included a history of Oakland Square’s development and a brief account of the developer, Eugene O’Neill. Also utilized was the Pittsburgh Digital Library (Historic Pittsburgh), especially the Platt Maps. When researching Oakland Square, it is important to note that the name changed to Argentina Place on April 5, 1910, and was later returned to Oakland Square on June 30, 1915.

Oakland Square was the first “big batch” of homes built in the Linden Grove area, which consists of middle and lower Oakland. Appearing comparable to modern day developments, there was only one builder, Charles H. Chance, and two partnering developers, Eugene O’Neill and Harriet L. Rook, for all of the homes. O’Neill purchased land from Simon Beymer on October 28, 1885, and Rook bought land from Sarah A. Morgan on January 29, 1887.

The main part of the square (the horseshoe), which had 26 homes, was developed between 1889 and 1890. Of the 26 homes, 14 were single family and 12 were halves of duplexes. All homes sold within two years, most above the listed price of \$6,500. This is most likely due to upgrades and additional construction. Of the first purchasers of the homes, eight women purchased nine properties.

Oakland Square

Oakland Square Area Educational Attainment, Highest Level

| Track 406 | 1990 | 2000 | % |
|--------------------|------|------|------|
| Population Age 25+ | 1111 | 708 | -36% |
| No Diploma (<12) | 305 | 93 | -70% |
| High School Grad | 205 | 147 | -28% |
| Some College | 158 | 160 | 1% |
| Associates Degree | 59 | 36 | -39% |
| Bachelor's Degree | 214 | 106 | -50% |
| Graduate Degree | 170 | 166 | -2% |

Oakland Square Area Income, Housing Value, and Gross Rent

| Track 406 | 1990 | 2000 | % |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|------|
| <i>(in 2000 US\$)</i> | | | |
| Median HH Income | \$14,224 | \$16,018 | 13% |
| Per Capita Income | \$11,707 | \$11,666 | 0% |
| Median Value | \$66,670 | \$63,879 | -4% |
| Median Gross Rent | \$570 | \$516 | -10% |





North Oakland Square (3700 blocks of Dawson Street and Parkview Avenue) was developed between 1891 and 1893, adding another 17 homes to the area. South Oakland Square (3600 blocks of Dawson Street and Parkview Avenue) was developed between 1891 and 1896, with 24 more homes. Also developed by O’Neill was the Oakland Square Apartments located at 3732 and 3728 Dawson Street.

Also happening in the region when Oakland Square was developed:

- September 12, 1889, a 5.5 mile cable car system, built by the Pittsburgh Traction Company, linked downtown to East Liberty. This was the first rapid transit facility in the city and replaced the Fifth Avenue Horse Car System.
- October 30, 1889, Mary E. Schenley donated 300 acres to the City of Pittsburgh, which became the city’s first park, Schenley Park.



Comparison with Friendship Park

At the onset of this project, we were led to believe that there were four historic squares in Pittsburgh, all developed at approximately the same time. Upon further investigation this assertion was proved false. However, during the discovery process we came upon Friendship Park, which is strikingly similar in its layout to Oakland Square. Upon further investigation, we learned that while Oakland Square had one developer and was built during a concentrated period of time, the development of Friendship Park lasted nearly forty years. The early phase of housing construction began in the late 19th century. The park area developed over time with most of the current housing units dating to the 1920’s. For more details on our observations of Friendship Park, please see Appendix A.

Even with the differences between the two locations, our research shows that Oakland Square is still underused as a neighborhood park as compared to Friendship Park. A comparison of the two parks demonstrates that there are several features of Friendship Park that have merit. We believe that incorporating several of these aspects of Friendship Park could make Oakland Square a more welcoming and functional space for the residents of the neighborhood. Our observations include:

| Oakland Square | Friendship Park |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undefined space • 1 trash barrel • 30 trees, varying ages, scattered • Small flowerbed near path • No park visitors • College student walking home • People arriving and leaving by car • Older lady walking through • 3 cobra-type (standard) streetlights | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned space • Benches • Decorative trash bins • Main-street-style (decorative) streetlights • Mature trees, widely spaced (mostly around perimeter) • Several groups of visitors on benches • Hospital employees • Family from hospital • Children playing • People sitting • Paved sidewalks through and around park |

Based on what makes Friendship Park people-friendly, we proposed a few recommendations for Oakland Square:

- Consider putting in benches, so users may relax and enjoy the green space.
- Remove some trees to create a cleared, open grassy area for children to play passively.
- Add more lights.
- Add some aesthetic, decorative touches, such as flowerbeds. This also refers to the trash receptacles and streetlights, which are currently quite utilitarian.

With the addition of these mostly superficial alterations, it is our opinion that Oakland Square can become a more inviting and enjoyed amenity for the local residents.





Resident Interviews and Observations

From history on paper to history by stories, we were interested in the thoughts and perceptions of residents. We spoke informally but at length with some long-time residents of Oakland Square, and combine their opinions with our own observations to paint a contemporary picture of life in Oakland Square.

What was once a neighborhood of owner-occupied single-family dwellings is now mainly composed of owner-occupied and absentee landlords and their renters. Some buildings are equipped with fire escape ladders. Multiple mailboxes, electric meters, and doorbells are noticeably present on the majority (all but five) of the buildings, which means a vast majority of the living units available are inhabited by renters.

People going in and coming out of the houses represent a diverse population, from an elderly lady of long-time residence walking her dog, to a middle-aged couple renovating their house, to a young Chinese woman, likely a graduate student at Pitt. One young child was observed, but in general children were absent from our observations, but perhaps we did not go at the right times or the weather was too chilly for the kids to be playing outside.

Our casual conversations with a few long-time and involved residents help point out some of the treasures and struggles of living in Oakland Square. On the plus side, they noted the prime location in Oakland combined with relatively low cost of housing, the benefits of city living but retaining a neighborhood feel, and the pleasant environment of the Square's greenspace along with a view overlooking Panther Hollow and Phipps Conservatory in Schenley Park.

But Oakland Square also faces many challenges maintaining its positive characteristics, foremost of which is the gradual conversion of this quiet residential neighborhood into an extension of slum student housing that defines much of Central and South Oakland. We will return to this key issue shortly.

Residents guided us toward other problems facing the Square, including neglect by the city over public property space. The curb of the Square at the turn of the U has been chipped by big trucks unable to make the tight semi-circle, but the city has not fixed the problem despite repeated appeals. The hillside is also overgrown with brush and littered with trash; residents have to trim trees and pick out garbage themselves.

There are also problems with the houses along the hillside. One house at the end of the block is bowing out as the ground sinks, prompting its owners to plan for major repairs. A row of South Oakland Square houses on Parkview was extended, but is facing problems as the hillside continues to collapse. A few houses are also under renovations; we observed some building materials stocked up.

Safety, according to long-time residents, was a non-issue, except for cars being broken into or the random broken windshield. All in all, Oakland Square is a rather ideal neighborhood struggling to define its neighborhood character. We return now to the key development issue facing much of Oakland.

Neighborhood Deterioration

Residents said that as the elderly neighbors pass away, their children tend to move out to places like Greenfield rather than stay in Oakland Square. Newer residents, notably older international students and their families, stay in the neighborhood for a few years, but move out when their children reach 6th grade so the kids can go to middle schools in other districts.

Meanwhile, city assessors put property values of the aging housing stock much higher than the sale prices of between \$50,000 to \$65,000 on the market. The outward flight, high assessments, and perpetually high demand for student housing conspire in the favor of absentee landlords, who can both afford to purchase the houses and turn a hefty profit while simply waiting for property values to go up.

Competition for student housing remains high, and residents agonize that undergraduate students, with parents paying their bills and the willingness to cram into a house, can afford high rents per unit at the expense of the neighborhood. Whereas houses used to be divided into multiple units, now landlords simply rent out the whole house, counting on the non-enforcement of Pittsburgh's archaic "no three unrelated persons" law.

Such a house rental brings in \$2,000 and about 8 or 9 students, along with their cars. A pair of residents recall past incidents when beer parties attracted hundreds of students to the block, with loud drunk kids urinating on the trees in Oakland Square early in the morning. Calls to the police would disperse the parties before the police arrive, and these residents were convinced the party house had a police scanner.

For obvious reasons, residents would rather not have absentee landlords renting to people who do not respect the neighborhood, as one or two such houses can dramatically change the feel of the neighborhood. They prefer new buyers who desire to live in Oakland Square, thereby improving the neighborhood simply through their motivation. We believe this is the central development issue for Oakland Square and much of Oakland in general.

Pitt and UPMC, along with neglect by the city, continue to frustrate residents. One resident professes the need for people on top to pull for the neighborhood. Another resident specifically wished for a owner-occupied, scattered-site, demonstration project, so as to generate a list of potential home-owners genuinely interested in living at Oakland Square. She claims that such a project, along with a core group of residents, would be enough to move the neighborhood toward revitalization and make it attractive to families and homeowners again.

Oakland Square



Resident Survey

Complementing the personal interviews is a general resident survey, the purpose of which was to identify the characteristics of Oakland Square residents and the homes in which they live. The compiled results will assist in identifying what makes Oakland Square and its residents distinct from the rest of Central Oakland.

The survey format was designed to gather quantitative data, as well as elicit opinions and information related to living in the Oakland community. Residents were asked to respond to a series of questions regarding their age, race, family, education, income, employment, and housing. 97 packets— each containing a cover letter and a survey (Appendix B), and a self-addressed stamped envelope— were distributed to every household unit on Oakland Square and the Northern extension of Parkview Avenue. Twenty-two surveys were returned. While the 23% return rate is good for a mail survey, the respondents do not constitute a random sample and should not be considered to be truly representative. However, it is still useful to study the findings and comments.

Findings

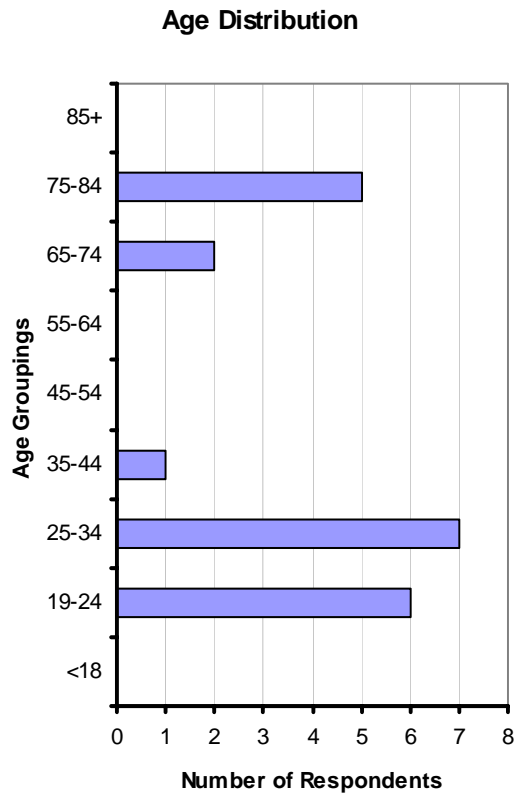
The returned surveys were compiled and evaluated, and their data summarized and presented below in statistical and narrative form. Specific and pertinent responses from certain respondents are quoted in italics without identifying the source.

Profile of Oakland Square Residents

Most of the respondents in Oakland Square are renters and many of the houses have been subdivided. More than half of the 22 respondents were between 19 and 34 years old; five were between 75 and 84. One respondent did not specify his/her age.

Of the twenty-two respondents, six are between the ages of 19 and 24. Within this age group, three are Asian and three are white. All are renters. Five of the six are single and one indicated that they are co-habiting. The number of persons living in the households varies from one to six people. In households with more than one occupant, all are unrelated. In terms of their education and employment, four have some college education and two have their Masters degree. Five work part-time, one works full-time and all earn less than \$10,000 annually with the exception of one part-time worker who earns between \$15,000 and \$24,999. Five work for a university; one works for a small corporation. Three of the respondents work in Oakland, two in Shadyside, and one works at CMU. Two work in computer and mathematics, one in healthcare, and one in architecture and engineering.

Seven respondents are between the ages of 25 and 34. These respondents are also all renters; three are Asian, four white, and three are married and four are single. More than



one person live in three of the households. Of these, everyone is related in two of the households. The third household has six people residing in it, and none of the residents are related. There is one college graduate and the remaining six respondents are working towards their Masters degree. Most (six) work part-time and one work full-time. Four work at a university, one at a hospital, one at a small corporation, and one at a large corporation. The income levels vary and consist of the following ranges: \$10,000-\$14,999 (the part-time worker), \$15,000-\$24,999 (one), \$35,000-\$49,999 (two), and \$50,000-\$74,999 (three). Two respondents found their residence through a friend; the remaining five found their place through the newspaper, internet, a for-rent sign, or word of mouth. Most (five) have lived in Oakland Square for eight months or less. One respondent has lived there for nine years, and the last had lived in Oakland Square for one and a half years.

Only one respondent is between 35 and 44 years old. S/he is Asian, married, and has four unrelated people living in the household. This respondent earns less than \$10,000 but has a post-graduate degree. The respondent had lived in Oakland Square for two and a half years, and found the residence through a family member.

The final seven respondents are between 65 and 84. Two are between 65 and 74. Both are white, single or widowed, and homeowners. Both are long time residents of Oakland Square; one has been there for eighteen years and one for twenty-two years. The two respondents have post-graduate degrees. One earns between \$50,000 and \$74,999, and the other person said her/his income is "adequate." One respondent found their residence through OPDC and the other found it through a friend.

The remaining five respondents are between 75 and 84. All are white. Three are renters, one is a homeowner, and one explained that s/he lives on one floor of a family member's home. Four of the respondents has lived in Oakland Square for over twenty years, including one for more than 50 years. The one respondent who has lived in Oakland Square for less than twenty years has been there for four years. Likely a function of age, one respondent has some high school education while the other four were high school graduates. Two of the respondents live alone, one lives with one other person, and one lives with four other people. All of the respondents are retired. Two earn between \$10,000 and \$14,999. One respondent has an annual income between \$15,000 and \$24,999. Two people did not answer the question. Three of the respondents found their home through a family member, one through a friend.

Our results indicate an age gap among the residents. Those who are 65 or older are white and long-time residents. Those who are under 45 are Asian or white, primarily renters, and mostly study or work in the Oakland area. The surveys reinforce our analysis of the Census data, and confirm the trend that Oakland Square is becoming more renter-occupied, even if most are graduate students or hold graduate degrees.

Our research found one other interesting fact, that in Oakland Square, as in the city of Pittsburgh, homeowners stay in their homes much longer than the national or county average. 17.5% of city residents have lived in the same home for over 30 years (since 1970!). Because so many have been in the same home for so long, there are fewer residents who have lived in the same house for less than 2, 5 or 10 years. In 2000, the Census found that 50% of Americans had lived in the same house less than 5 years.

| University | Total Student Population | # of Student Housing Units | % Students Housed On-Campus |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Carnegie Mellon University | 7,500 | 3,300 | 44% |
| Carlow College | 1,200 | 468 | 39% |
| Duquesne | 8,000 | 3,000 | 38% |
| University of Pittsburgh | 23,000 | 6,000 | 26% |
| Art Institute of Pittsburgh | 2,500 | 550 | 22% |
| Point Park | 3,000 | 560 | 19% |

**All information provided by individual institutions' housing offices.*

Number of Building Units

The survey results showed that many of the houses had been divided into rental units. Of the twenty-two respondents only four said their building had not been divided. Two responded that there were two units in the building; eleven houses had been divided into three units, two had been divided into four, and one house had been divided into five units. There was one missing response.

More survey results (satisfaction level, prior residence, reasons for living in Oakland, additional comments) are detailed in Appendix C.

While interviews and surveys help provide a contemporary glimpse of the area, long-term participant observation would greatly help substantiate the reality of this community and its relationship with itself and the surrounding areas. Future interviews and surveys should be planned to keep track of neighborhood changes and resident preferences.

Property Values

The effect of university life on Oakland Square has been strenuous throughout recent years. Difficulties have been reflected in citizen complaints, deteriorating infrastructure and dwellings, and more recently, in adverse property values. Much of the problem has revolved around the lack of housing available to university students. Most colleges in Pittsburgh only supply housing for about one third of their students, as shown in the side table.

It is clear from the representation chart that there is a great demand for affordable housing within close proximity to universities and colleges by the large student population. This abundant demand has caused even more strain on the current lack of affordable housing to the general citizen population within the city limits.

Oakland has become a destination of choice for many college students. Oakland has a close proximity to most of the major colleges and is accessible through various forms of public transit. Perhaps the largest draw is the vast number of houses in Central and South Oakland that can be divided amongst several individuals. Lack of enforcement involving city ordinances and zoning has led to increasing amounts of overcrowded housing and exploitive absentee landlords.

The Oakland Square neighborhood is trying to avoid this trend in their section of Oakland, but with the lack of city officials enforcing laws, the battle could be exhausting to preserve the heritage of the square. Preserving this particular neighborhood can only be accomplished with cooperation at various levels of participation. Regular interaction among residents, community organizations, university officials, city government, and perhaps even students can possibly provide resources that the neighborhood residents cannot achieve alone.

In our review of the student population of the university campuses close to Oakland and the amount of on-campus student housing, we wanted to see if the high demand for off-campus student housing in Oakland had driven up the values of homes in the Oakland Square and Parkview Avenue area. Basic economic principles of supply and demand indicated that home values should be rising, but our review of the property assessment data revealed a decrease in property values.

Our “target area” of homes was along Oakland Square and from 3602 to 3729 Parkview Avenue. These homes include some detached homes with small yards, but most homes were duplexes or row houses. For the target area of homes, we found that the median home value was less than the median value for homes in the United States and Allegheny County. The median value was close to that of homes in the City of Pittsburgh and the 4th Ward that includes Oakland. As the table shows, the greatest difference in home values was the comparison with the entire county and the rest of the country.

As mentioned above, **the biggest surprise was the fact that home values for the target area are falling.** Even if the homes are used as rental properties, their value should not be falling because they are producing income. Even though the survey of residents found that the target area was not an isolated island of single-family dwellings in an ocean of cheap student rentals, the area is still different from the surrounding neighborhoods. This difference is primarily in the appearance of the homes, which from the street appear to be better maintained than neighboring homes. The homes may contain rental units, but many also are used as the owners’ residences.

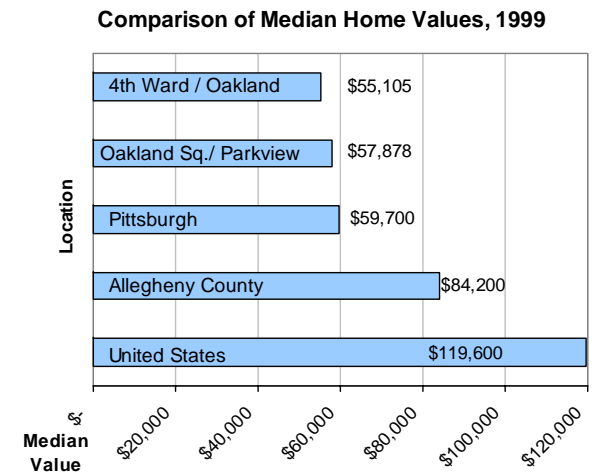
Turning to the change in property values, the two tables show the difference in the price of home sales and their respective assessed property values.

We cannot predict what will happen with future property assessments, but the current owners are probably benefiting from lower values of surrounding neighborhoods. We also feel that property owners are benefiting from the failure of the city and county to take rental income into consideration when setting the fair market value of property.

The Oakland area has a history of absentee slum-landlords who violate city housing ordinances by leasing homes to more than 3 unrelated occupants. Student/tenants do not want to lose cheap housing close to campus and thus they do not complain, and the landlords usually have a written lease with one person rather than with all occupants.

The failure of the city to watch more closely the uses of property in Oakland is resulting in violations of housing ordinances, and possibly the loss of potential tax revenue since income-generating properties appear to be assessed below their true values.

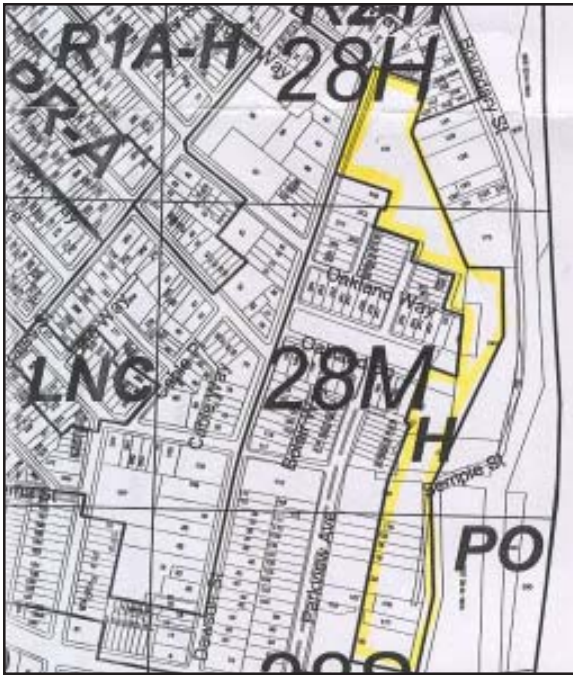
Oakland Square



Recent Home Sales, Oakland Square, 2000-2002

| House | Street | Year | Price | Assessment |
|-------|--------------|------|----------|------------|
| 5 | Oakland Sq | 2002 | \$61,500 | \$85,500 |
| 3720 | Parkview Ave | 2002 | \$54,000 | \$51,000 |
| 28 | Oakland Sq | 2001 | \$62,500 | \$62,500 |
| 3608 | Parkview Ave | 2001 | \$38,000 | \$53,700 |
| 3607 | Parkview Ave | 2001 | \$65,000 | \$65,000 |
| 3613 | Parkview Ave | 2000 | \$94,000 | \$55,200 |
| 3602 | Parkview Ave | 2000 | \$70,000 | \$71,500 |

| House | Street | Year | Price | Assessment |
|-------|--------------|------|---------|------------|
| 3725 | Parkview Ave | 2002 | \$6,159 | \$64,800 |
| 22 | Oaland Sq | 2000 | \$1 | \$70,000 |
| 24 | Oaland Sq | 2000 | \$1 | \$65,000 |
| 23 | Oaland Sq | 2000 | \$1 | \$77,200 |
| 3612 | Parkview Ave | 2000 | \$0 | \$66,300 |



According to the City of Pittsburgh Department of City Planning, all parcels of land within the city limits must have a zoning classification as well as a land use classification. The Department of City Planning defines Land Use as the actual use of a structure occupying each parcel of land. Examples of such uses would be residential; apartment buildings or single unit homes, commercial; grocery or department stores, and industrial; warehouses or factories. Zoning is defined as land use and it determines how the property can be used, defines the height of apartment buildings, and the number of parking spaces at a store. Zoning has shaped the way Pittsburgh has grown as well as influenced every decision made about the built environment, from homes to industry, to street lights and billboards. Within the zoning classifications there are density classifications such as: HD—High Density, VHD—Very High Density, LD—Low Density, MD—Medium Density. Density is determined by the lot size the property is situated on.

A common theme that we heard was that the city ignores Oakland, resulting in neglect of problems and lost opportunities to increase tax revenue. For the owners of the homes in the targeted area, they should consider themselves fortunate to be benefiting from this oversight. However, this situation will also make it easier for properties to be purchased by speculators who will turn the homes into student rentals.

Zoning and Land Use

The city also controls zoning and land use, both of which greatly affects neighborhoods. This section will outline the Map Pittsburgh project and the Hillside District that borders Oakland Square.

The *Map Pittsburgh* project was an initiative of the Department of City Planning to analyze, neighborhood by neighborhood, the conversion map adopted in February 1999. Map Pittsburgh is in no way related to the property assessments recently conducted by Allegheny County. The conversion map translates the existing zoning districts into the districts regulated by the new code. The Department of City Planning wants to make sure that current zoning of each neighborhood has the appropriate classification.

The Hillside district in Oakland borders Oakland Square, Parkview Avenue, Schenley Park Pond, and Dawson Street. Currently there is no development underway but there would be potential for development if the proposed zoning classification of R1A-H (Residential Single Unit Attached High Density) is approved by City Council. This classification would limit the homes built to be no taller than 2 stories and on a lot no larger than 1800 sq. ft. The guidelines for any hillside development, be it residential or commercial are:

- The preservation of existing land, no sliding of hillside or soil erosion.
- Structures must fit into hillside and not adjust the hillside to fit the structures.
- Must not disturb sensitive areas.
- Preserve the neighborhood architectural character.

This potential for future development must consider possible effects on Oakland Square. With the development of the Hillside district, there would be obstruction of the view from Oakland Square overlooking Schenley Pond that would potentially cause the housing prices as well as the assessed price of the Oakland Square homes to decrease. There is the potential for an increase in traffic, and due to the landscape access would be limited to few roads. Privacy is also a concern for residents in Oakland Square. With the increase in residents and or visitors to the Hillside District the private environment that Oakland Square provides would be disrupted and there would no longer be a quiet cul-de-sac area but a through street with numerous people (non-residents) traveling through the area.

Crime and Perception

Besides property values and neighboring development, crime is also a factor that affects community well-being. Since most people agree that being the victim of a crime is an unpleasant experience, the issue of crime and the *perceived* fear of becoming a victim of crime are very important to the person, community, and neighborhood.

We created a survey to be conducted randomly to individuals with ties to Oakland through work, school, or residency. The survey was designed to establish a general idea of what people who are familiar with Oakland think about crime in the area, and what perceptions they have about their own personal safety when they are in Oakland.

The first two questions of the survey establish what the individual's perception of crime in Oakland is compared to the rest of the City of Pittsburgh, and another urban area, in this case New York City. To compare the responses with actual crime rates in these areas, we calculated the actual crime rates per 1000 based on statistics for Oakland (more specifically Census Tracts 402-406), the City of Pittsburgh, and New York City.

Interestingly, based on our calculations of crime rates per population using available statistics, Oakland does in fact have a higher total crime rate per thousand than both the city of Pittsburgh and New York City. The charts summarizing these rates and our calculations are detailed in Appendix D.

However, the survey responses indicate that the 48% of people interviewed did not perceive that Oakland as more dangerous than the rest of the city of Pittsburgh (vs.8% who did), while 84% did not perceive Oakland more dangerous than other urban areas such as New York City, and they are not fearful of crime or being a victim of crime while in Oakland. These and the rest of the survey results are listed in Appendix E.

Community Newspaper

One suggestion to help with neighborhood cohesion is the creation of a community newspaper, and we also surveyed residents about it. The benefits of a community newspaper are many. Residents are able to:

- discuss neighborhood issues they believe to be important by sending letters to the editor and by submitting articles for print;
- learn about important neighborhood topics by reading articles from guest columnists and freelance journalists;
- learn about community meetings and events and cultural programs;



- learn about the cultures and beliefs of their neighbors through interviews with residents;
- learn about the numerous local, state and federal programs focused on the issues of human service, residential property revitalization, and personal finance just to list a few;
- participate in community surveys contained within the newspaper. Local government and residents are able to communicate through the newspaper;
- learn the beliefs of and policies supported by the individuals campaigning to be their elected local, state and federal representatives;
- learn about the products and services provided by local businesses;
- buy / sell items such as property, furniture, vehicles, etc.

We realize that the community did have a paper a few years ago, but it failed. However, a majority of our survey respondents supported the need for a community newspaper (p.23). Such a paper can serve property owners, landlords, business owners, residents, college students, and employees of Oakland based businesses and organizations. These people encompass a collective group of different educational levels, life histories, cultural heritage, religious beliefs, financial resources, as well as sexes, races, age, and sexual orientations.

It is unrealistic and foolish to believe that a community newspaper will solve every problem and turn Oakland into a model neighborhood for replication throughout the United States. However, it is realistic to expect the following to occur from the establishment of a community newspaper. Residents will:

- develop an effective and efficient form of communication within their community;
- increase their level of participation in their community;
- develop an understanding of their neighborhood and the people living within its borders;
- have a forum to openly discuss disputes to develop a suitable solution;
- have a collective voice.

For the residents of Oakland, the function of the proposed community newspaper is to focus on the issues and topics relating to the neighborhood of Oakland. The newspaper will serve as the watchdog of the community, questioning the decisions made by the businesses, organizations, governments and individuals that are not in the best interest of the Oakland Community. We are basing the success of our recommendation to create a community newspaper for the Oakland neighborhood on the community revitalization concepts and theories advocated by several experts on community and neighborhood development and the success of other community newspapers.

Gerald D. Suttles believes city neighborhoods take their identity less from previously shared values of the residents and more from forces outside the boundaries of the neighborhood. He bases this belief on the changing composition of a neighborhood and the declining interaction between the residents.

Suttles noted that neighborhoods consisted of related family members and individuals with commonalities. Different generations of a family such as grandparents, sons/ daughters, and grandchildren would occupy a single residential property or occupy different units in the same complex. Often, related families by marriage or birth would own or rent property in the same neighborhood. This close interaction with relatives permitted the development of shared values and commonly held beliefs among the residents of a neighborhood. Suttles also noted that neighborhoods often consisted of residents who shared common religious beliefs and heritages. These commonalities and social interaction facilitated the development of shared values and beliefs among non-related residents of a neighborhood.

We view Oakland, as a neighborhood where shared common space has become the primary characteristic of the residents, because the other commonalities of the residents upon which to build a strong neighborhood are too few and too diverse. For this reason, **the creation of a community newspaper may help serve as the tool to strengthen the residents' connection to their neighbors and the neighborhood in which they share space.**

Conclusion

Ultimately, residents and OPDC would like to preserve the character of Oakland Square by strengthening owner-occupancy, infilling new construction, providing façade improvement and home purchasing programs, improving rental housing, extending the neighborhood, and marketing the quality of the neighborhood. These are challenging tasks, however, given the findings of our research, as listed on the side.

We believe OPDC does not fully realize the extent to which Oakland Square has already declined. While it is marginally better in owner occupancy and vacancy rates than surrounding areas, the historic neighborhood is much further along the same student slum housing process, much like the rest of Oakland, than OPDC assumed. Those few long-time residents who still remain have witnessed the transformation and are very concerned about the future of their homes and neighborhood.

We hope that the information contained in this report will be useful for concerned residents and OPDC in future strategic plans. Oakland Square is indeed a gem, and it will need a broad coalition of innovative and action-oriented people to survive its current challenges.

Report Summary

- *From our Census data, we ascertained that of the 99 housing units in the Oakland Square area, 17 are owner-occupied, 75 are renter-occupied, and 7 are vacant.*
- *From our historical review, we recommended a few changes (benches, open space, more lights, decorative touches) to make Oakland Square a more welcoming and functional space.*
- *From our resident interviews, we learned of some of the causes of neighborhood deterioration, including out-migration, neglect of public property, and student slums.*
- *From our resident surveys, we gathered that there is an age gap in the Oakland Square population, with young folks 19-44 being primarily renters and students or works in Oakland.*
- *From our property value assessment, we raised concerns that student slums and absentee landlords are driving down housing values below their true market values.*
- *From our land use analysis, we warned that potential future development in the Hillside district should take into account the traffic, noise, privacy, and views of Oakland Square.*
- *From our crime perception study, we determined that although Oakland Square suffers more crime than Pittsburgh or New York City, people perceive it to be safer and are not fearful.*
- *From our community newspaper research, we suggested the potential for creating an Oakland newspaper that would help tie the community together and keep residents informed.*

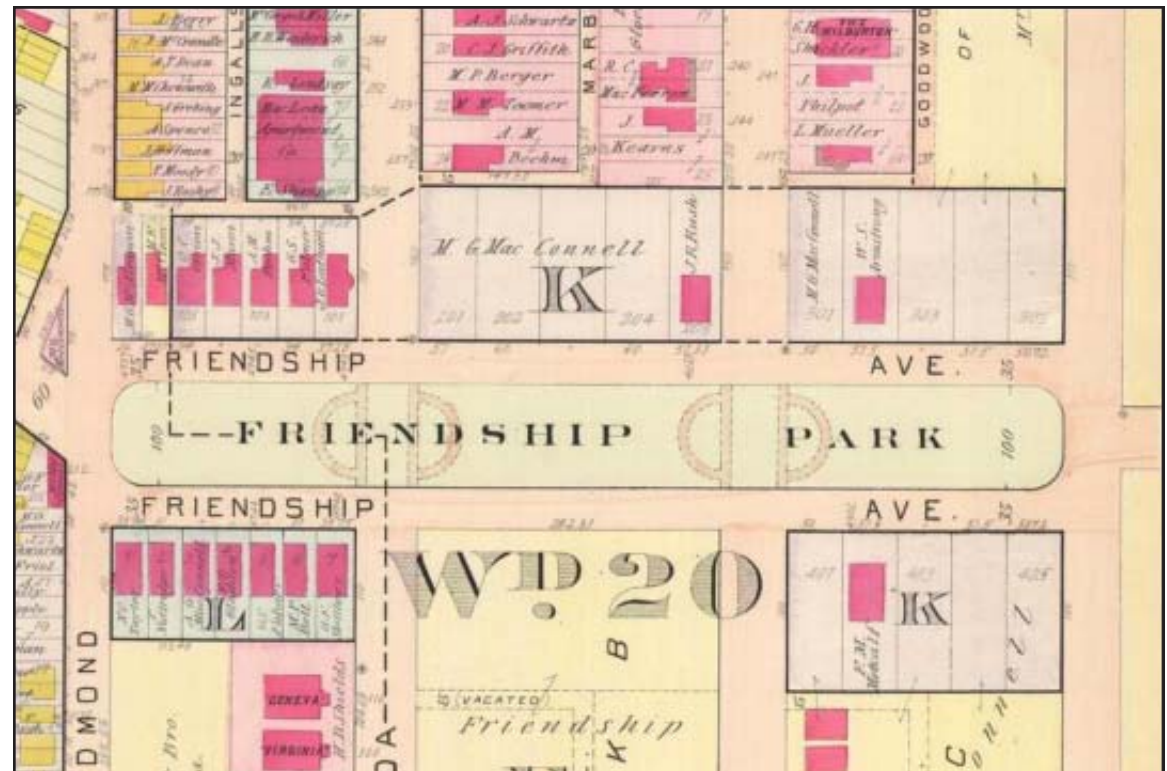


Appendix A Friendship Park Comparison

Tucked at the western edge of what is now recognized as Friendship, Friendship Park is actually more correctly a part of Bloomfield. According to a 1904 map of the park, 29 parcels plus one full block dominated by West Penn Hospital ring the “square.” Given its similarity in some respects to Oakland Square and its close proximity to a major institution (West Penn Hospital) and the potential influence of a nearby commercial district, we were curious about how the uses of Oakland Square and Friendship Park might compare and about what similarities there might be in the residents of the two neighborhoods. Both Oakland and Bloomfield have a significant population of persons with Italian ancestry and we were curious about the impact that might have on stability of home ownership.



Unlike Oakland Square, Friendship Park was never strictly residential. Our observations of the square indicate that several of the larger commercial properties were constructed as apartment buildings, although they may have originally contained fewer units. (This based on an inconsistency between the number of original call buzzers and the existing number of



light meters and mailboxes) West Penn Hospital has occupied its current location since 1848 and now consumes an entire city block as does its affiliated Nursing School. Together the two medical facilities dominate the south side of Friendship Avenue. Another institution, Immaculate Conception Catholic Church owns a house used as a convent and two larger residential structures, formerly the convent, now used as rental apartments. Interestingly, the church owned apartment units are among the worst maintained on the street.

Comparison of Squares

After reviewing the census and other quantified data for Friendship Park and Oakland Square, we focused on a comparison of several features of the two parks that we observed while touring the areas.

First, Oakland Square is surrounded solely by residential buildings, while Friendship Park is not. In addition to apartment buildings and homes, the perimeter of Friendship Park includes a hospital, nursing school, daycare center, and also a convent associated with the nearby Immaculate Conception Catholic Church.

Also, Friendship Park is closer to a commercial district than Oakland Square; it is one block away from Liberty Avenue as it passes through Bloomfield. The final difference I would like to mention is the fact that Friendship Avenue is a thoroughfare, while Oakland Square is essentially a cul-de-sac.

All these features I have just mentioned would lead one to assume that Friendship Park would be a busier recreational area than Oakland Square, an assumption that was corroborated by our observations.

However, after considering these inherent differences, our research shows that Oakland Square is still underused as a neighborhood park as compared to Friendship Park.

We offer these four recommendations. The first is to put in benches, so users may relax and enjoy the green space. The second recommendation is for the removal of some trees to create a cleared grassy area for children to play passively. Next, we believe Oakland Square needs additional lighting. And the fourth and final suggestion is the addition of aesthetic, decorative touches. This refers mainly to the trash receptacles and streetlights, which are currently quite utilitarian.

With the addition of these mostly superficial alterations, it is our opinion that Oakland Square can become a more inviting and enjoyed amenity for the local residents.

Oakland Square



Appendix B
Resident Survey Letter and Questionnaire

November 1, 2002

Dear Oakland Square Resident,

As you know, Oakland Square is a unique community within Central Oakland. The Oakland Planning and Development Corporation (OPDC) would like to preserve the character of Oakland Square by strengthening owner-occupancy, infilling new construction, providing façade and home purchasing programs, improving rental housing, extending the neighborhood and marketing the quality of the neighborhood.

In an effort to implement these strategies, OPDC has partnered with graduate students from the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA) to explore what makes Oakland Square and its residents distinct.

Enclosed is a brief survey intended to better identify neighborhood characteristics. All information reported will be held in the strictest of confidence and will only be used for statistical purposes.

Your assistance in **completing and returning** the survey **by Friday, November 15, 2002** would be greatly appreciated. A self-addressed, stamped envelope is enclosed for your convenience. The graduate students will present the results of the research on Tuesday, December 3, 2002 in Posvar Hall (formerly Forbes Quad), room to be announced, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Please consider joining us for this event.

Thank you in advance for you time and attention to this matter. We look forward to receiving your completed survey within the next two weeks.

Sincerely,

Kelly Hoffman
Graduate Student

Stephanie Schoenberg
Graduate Student

Enclosures

10a. Workplace:

- University Hospital Small Corporation (Under 25 employees)
- Institution Large Corporation

10b. If employed, what type of work do you do?

- Architecture, Engineering Installation, Maintenance and Repair
- Arts, Design, Entertainment, Media Legal
- Building/Grounds, Maintenance & Cleaning Life, Physical and Social Science
- Business and Financial Operations Nursing
- Community & Social Services Office & Administrative Support
- Computer & Mathematical Personal Care/Service and Grooming
- Construction & Extraction Production
- Education, Training & Library Protective Services
- Farming, Fishing & Forestry Sales & Related
- Food & Lodging Transportation & Material Moving
- Healthcare Other _____

10c. If employed, in what city/neighborhood do you work? _____

11. How did you find your residence?

- Family Member Realtor Newspaper Other _____
- Word of Mouth Friend Institutional Resource

12. On a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being the least satisfied and 10 being the most rate your satisfaction with living in Oakland Square. _____

13. How long have you lived in Oakland Square? _____

14. Where did you live prior to moving into Oakland Square? _____

15. Why did you choose to live in Oakland? _____

16. Is there a need for an Oakland community based newsletter? Yes No

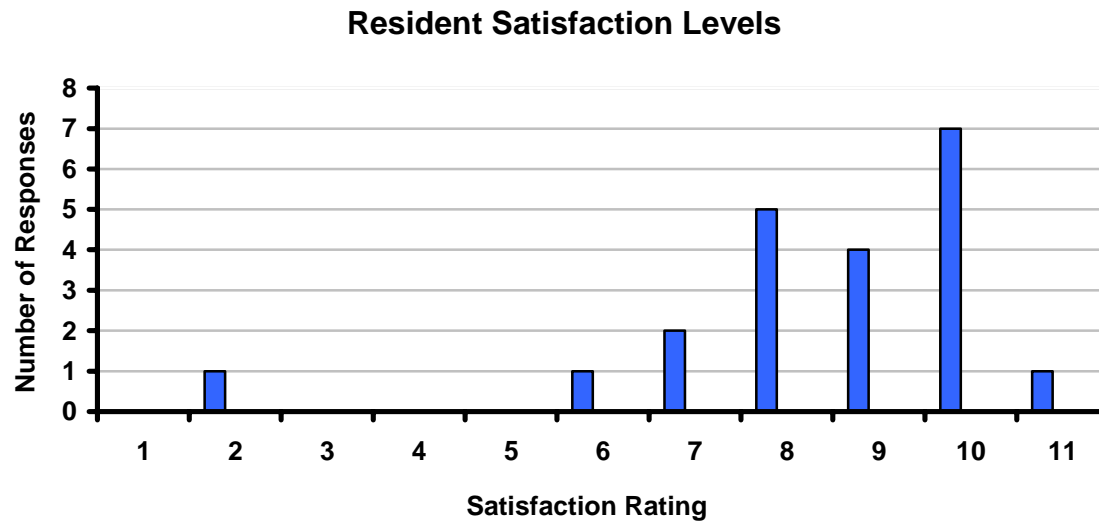
17. Would you read an Oakland community newsletter if it were on the Internet? Yes No

18. Additional comments about living in Oakland _____

Appendix C **Resident Survey Results**

Satisfaction Level

Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with living in Oakland Square on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being the least satisfied and 10 being the most.



An overwhelming majority of respondents (77%) rated their satisfaction with living in Oakland Square at 8 or higher. One respondent actually rated his/her satisfaction level beyond the one to 10 scale, at 11. The four people who had a satisfaction rating of 7 or less are all renters who have lived in Oakland Square for 6 months or less. Two of the respondents with lower satisfaction ratings are between 19 and 24 years old and single; the other two are between 25 and 34 years old and married.

Prior Place of Residence

Residents were asked where they had lived prior to moving into Oakland Square. Comments included:

Atwood Street
Bates Street, South Oakland
Canada
Carlisle, PA
Detroit, Michigan

Additional Comments

Respondents were asked to provide any additional comments that they have about living in Oakland. Comments included:

Dawson Street forms a division between the garbage-strewn undergraduate tenements & the verdant, quiet, well-maintained, largely Italian beauty of Oakland Square. As older Oakland Square residents move out, the character of the neighborhood will decline rapidly if the houses are occupied by college students. Professionals, grad students, independent businesspeople & artists/artisans would love this neighborhood & be great for it.

We really enjoy living here. It is a nice, clean, quiet place removed from the loud and run-down remainder of South Oakland. Oakland Square is nicely preserved.

Although I realize the majority of South Oakland is student housing, in the future I would like to see more young professionals and even families move into the area. I also enjoy the ethnic diversity in Oakland. Much of the student housing is in desperate need of renovation and better upkeep. I think Oakland has great potential!

I like Oakland Square (my street) because the homes are well kept up (unlike many of the student sections) - these are amazing old homes and more of an effort should be made to clean up other areas of Oakland.

Absentee landlords are a big problem - too little monitoring of tenants. Too many Area D parking permits are given out.

I find Oakland a superior place to live because of its convenience, its diverse population, historic buildings, and cutting edge endeavors in the educational, medical, and social fields.

*North Oakland
Oakland Avenue (Pitt's Dormitory)
Squirrel Hill
Southside*

A majority of the current residents of Oakland Square (13) made a cross-town move to Oakland Square; they lived in another section of Pittsburgh prior to moving into the neighborhood. Two people moved into Oakland from other parts of Pennsylvania; three people came from other States, Massachusetts, Michigan, and Texas; and one person moved to Oakland Square from Canada.

Reason for Living in Oakland

The survey asked respondents why they chose to live in Oakland. Comments included:

- *Proximity to Pitt, restaurants, shops & groceries, no need to bus or drive, close to Schenley Park.*
- *Good living condition.*
- *Close proximity to campus, cleanest & quietest area of South Oakland.*
- *More space.*
- *Initially, convenience to university. Now convenience to places of employment and all areas of Pittsburgh.*
- *Quiet. Safe. Clean.*
- *Came here to be near my son and daughter-in-law who live [in Oakland Square].*
- *Close to work, decent rent.*
- *Wanted smaller house in a convenient location.*

The overwhelming majority of respondents (14) noted that Oakland's convenient location and close proximity to several amenities were important factors in moving to the area. Other reasons cited for locating in Oakland include low rental rates, cleanliness and quietness. Despite numerous positive replies, one respondent expressed concern regarding the decline of Oakland:

[Oakland] was convenient to everything. Now, Pitt raised the office spaces so high that the [doctors] moved. Crime is high the supermarkets moved. It's just not the same.

Community-based Newsletter

A community-based newsletter is an effective communication tool that provides an instant connection to its readers and the neighborhood. Currently, Oakland does not have a community-based newsletter. Therefore, residents were asked if there was a need for an Oakland community-based newsletter.

| Community-based Newsletter | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Total |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Yes | 13 | 59% |
| No | 6 | 27% |
| Other | 1 | 5% |
| No Answer | 2 | 9% |

A review of the survey results clearly shows that residents are interested in having a community-based newsletter: a majority of the respondents (13 of 22) identified a need for an Oakland newsletter. One survey respondent asserted that, “there used to be a newsletter years ago and I got the paper & enjoyed it. I would like to know what is going on in Oakland once again”. With nearly 60% of the respondents interested in community news, it would be prudent for OPDC, or some other appropriate entity, to publish a local newsletter.

Internet Newsletter

A community newsletter is only effective if community residents and stakeholders read it. The Internet provides an inexpensive way to reach innumerable people, but it also presents a barrier to people who do not have access to the Internet or are not computer savvy. To that end, respondents were asked if they would read an Oakland community newsletter if it were on the Internet.

| Read Internet Newsletter | Number of Respondents | Percentage of Total |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Yes | 8 | 36% |
| No | 11 | 50% |
| Other | 1 | 5% |
| No Answer | 2 | 9% |

It is important to note that of the 13 respondents who replied, “yes” to a need for a community-based newsletter, only five believed that they would read the newsletter online. Therefore, three people, who initially did not think there was a need for a community-based newsletter, said that they would read the newsletter if it were posted on the Internet. Accordingly, OPDC or another appropriate organization, may want to consider publishing a community newsletter on paper as well as on the Internet.

Appendix D **Crime Rates Comparison**

The following charts summarize our calculations of the crime rates per thousand in Oakland (census tracts 402-406), the City of Pittsburgh, and New York City:

| Crimes | Oakland | Pittsburgh | New York City |
|---------------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Murder | | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Rape | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.2 |
| Robbery | 2.4 | 4.1 | 3.6 |
| Aggravated Assault | 1.8 | 4.1 | 2.9 |
| Burglary | 9.8 | 9.5 | 4.2 |
| Larceny | 39.6 | 31.5 | 5.9 |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 8.9 | 8.0 | 3.8 |
| Total | 63.1 | 57.7 | 20.7 |

To calculate the crime rate per thousand for Oakland we used crime statistics for census tracts 402-406 given to us by Officer Deborah Walker of the University of Pittsburgh Police. This was the best estimate we could provide because the Pittsburgh Police keep track of crime stats at the census tract level and the information is not readily available to the public, nor is it easily broken down to the neighborhood level. Given this, based on population data from the 2000 U.S. Census, we calculated the population of census tracts 402-406 to be 14,554. The table on the opposite page lists the crime states used to calculate the crime rate per thousand.

The total number of crimes per group is as follows:

| Crimes | Number | Rate per 1000 |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Murder | n/a | |
| Rape | 7 | 0.5 |
| Robbery | 35 | 2.4 |
| Aggravated Assault | 26 | 1.8 |
| Burglary | 143 | 9.8 |
| Larceny | 577 | 39.6 |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 130 | 8.9 |
| Total | 918 | 63.1 |

| Census Tract | | 402 | 403 | 404 | 405 | 406 |
|----------------------|---------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| agg assault | AA | 2 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 3 |
| agg assault | AADV | | 1 | | | |
| agg assault | AAPO | | 2 | | 2 | |
| arson | ARSON | 1 | | | 1 | |
| auto theft | SV | 5 | 42 | 6 | 50 | 22 |
| auto theft | SVRV | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| burglaries business | BB | | 8 | 11 | 9 | 1 |
| burglaries business | CTRESB | 1 | 2 | | 1 | |
| burglaries church | BC | | 1 | | | |
| burglaries residence | BR | 7 | 29 | 3 | 41 | 22 |
| burglaries residence | CTRESR | | 2 | | 3 | 1 |
| burglaries school | BS | | | | 1 | |
| rape | RAPE | | | | 5 | 2 |
| robberies bank | RB | | 2 | | 1 | |
| robberies business | ARMED | 1 | | | 1 | |
| robberies business | ARMEDB | | | | 3 | |
| robberies business | RSAB | | | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| robberies person | ARMEDP | 2 | 2 | 1 | 8 | |
| robberies person | CARJACK | | | | 1 | |
| robberies person | RPS | | | | 2 | |
| robberies person | RSAP | 6 | 5 | 1 | 27 | 2 |
| theft by deception | TBD | 1 | 6 | 2 | 2 | |
| theft from auto | TFA | 32 | 62 | 19 | 94 | 31 |
| theft from business | TFB | 11 | 31 | 10 | 59 | 4 |
| theft from person | TFP | 31 | 35 | 5 | 72 | 7 |
| theft from residence | TFR | 1 | 12 | 4 | 16 | 9 |
| total (937) | | 101 | 250 | 66 | 413 | 107 |

To calculate the crime rate per thousand for the City of Pittsburgh, we used crime statistics available from the 2001 FBI Uniform Crime Report, Table 6-data for the Metropolitan Statistical Area for Pittsburgh. The report calculates the crime rate per 100,000 for the entire Metropolitan Statistical area; however, it does present crime data for the City of Pittsburgh separately. From this information, we attempted to extrapolate and calculate the crime rates per thousand for Pittsburgh. Like the crime data for Oakland, these numbers are the best available because the Pittsburgh Police do not provide statistics that are easily accessible to the public. According to the report, the population of Pittsburgh was 341,414 in 2001. The incidents of crime are given as the following:

| Crimes | Number | Rate per 1000 |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Murder | 55 | 0.2 |
| Rape | 134 | 0.4 |
| Robbery | 1384 | 4.1 |
| Aggravated Assault | 1391 | 4.1 |
| Burglary | 3246 | 9.5 |
| Larceny | 10766 | 31.5 |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 2732 | 8.0 |
| Total | 19708 | 57.7 |

Calculating the crime rates per thousand for New York City was much easier than for Oakland or Pittsburgh. Population and crime data is much more readily available. The NYPD publishes crime data online and a link is provided through the Vera Institute of Justice website at www.vera.org. To calculate these rates, we used the 2001 estimate of the population of New York City of 7,836,676 from the U.S. Census Bureau supplemental survey. The crime incidents in New York City for 2001 are the following:

| Crimes | Number | Rate per 1000 |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Murder | 643 | 0.1 |
| Rape | 1919 | 0.2 |
| Robbery | 27872 | 3.6 |
| Aggravated Assault | 23015 | 2.9 |
| Burglary | 32691 | 4.2 |
| Larceny | 46240 | 5.9 |
| Motor Vehicle Theft | 29609 | 3.8 |
| Total | 161989 | 20.7 |

These tables yield the first location comparison table at the appendix beginning.

Appendix E Crime Survey Results

(Q. 1) Do you think that Oakland has a higher crime rate than the rest of the City of Pittsburgh?

| | | | |
|--------|------|------------|------------|
| higher | same | not higher | don't know |
| 8% | 26% | 48% | 18% |

(Q. 2) Do you think that Oakland has a higher crime rate than other urban areas such as New York City?

| | | | |
|--------|------|------------|------------|
| higher | same | not higher | don't know |
| 0% | 1% | 84% | 15% |

(Q. 3) Are you ever concerned or fearful about crime when you are in Oakland?

| | | | |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| very fearful | somewhat fearful | not very fearful | not at all fearful |
| 1% | 39% | 50% | 10% |

(Q. 4) Are you ever concerned or fearful of becoming a victim of street crime when you are in Oakland?

| | | | |
|--------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| very fearful | somewhat fearful | not very fearful | not at all fearful |
| 1% | 41% | 52% | 6% |

(Q. 5) If the answer to 4 is (a) very fearful, or (b) somewhat fearful, what type of street crime are you most afraid of?

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| robbery/ stealing | physical assault, no gun | assault with gun/ hurt with deadly weapon | sexual assault/ rape | don't know | other type |
| 80% | 23% | 21% | 21% | 2% | 2% |

(Q. 6) Do you ever engage in any of the following in order to protect yourself when in Oakland?

| | | | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| avoid going out at night | avoid going out alone | carry self-defense warning device | avoid certain walk routes or areas | none/ not concerned | other response |
| 17% | 18% | 4% | 30% | 25% | 7% |

(Q. 7) Do you live, work or go to school in Oakland?

If the respondent lives in Oakland, then they move on to questions 8-11 which are more neighborhood specific.

34 people (34%) in this survey live in Oakland.

(Q. 9) If you answered yes to any of the parts in question 8, do any of these conditions make you feel less safe?

Of the 34 people who live in Oakland Pa. 26 responses of yes that the characteristics such as: Abandoned cars and / or buildings, rundown/ neglected buildings, poor lighting, Overgrown trees/ shrubs, trash, illegal public drinking/ drug use, public drug sales, vandalism or graffiti, prostitution, panhandling/ begging, homeless sleeping on benches/ streets, makes them feel less safe was collected.

(Q. 10) In the past year, have you done any of the following things to protect yourself from crime in your neighborhood?

- 4% (a) you went to a neighborhood watch meeting
- 20% (b) you and your neighbors have agreed to watch out for one another
- 5% (c) you've installed a security system for your home
- 13% (d) you have guard dogs at home
- 13% (e) you've installed extra locks on windows and/or doors
- 8% (f) you have purchased a weapon
- 33%** (g) other _____

(Q. 11) Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of life and safety of your neighborhood?

| | | | |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| satisfied | somewhat satisfied | dissatisfied | very dissatisfied |
| 27% | 51% | 5% | 17% |



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