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# Part Two: An Overview of West Philadelphia As a District

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## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

West Philadelphia is located between the Schuylkill River and Cobbs Creek. Its northwestern boundary is City Avenue. On the south, West Philadelphia is separated from Southwest Philadelphia by the route of the Media-West Chester railroad, near Baltimore Avenue. The district encompasses 14.2 square miles and has a population of 219,713 according to the 1990 census.

The district's overall land use pattern shows residential to be the predominant land use, with two large areas that contain very little housing: University City's institutional and commercial core, and Fairmount Park. University City is situated across the Schuylkill River from Center City. Its one-square-mile core area is intensely developed with universities, hospitals, research and transportation uses. Fairmount Park covers three square miles of land in West Philadelphia, and most of that land is in "West Park" on the west side of the Schuylkill River north of Girard Avenue.

A closer look at West Philadelphia's land use reveals more non-residential areas: City Avenue's commercial strips, St. Joseph's University at 5600 City Avenue, the Parkside industrial area just west of Belmont Avenue, and the predominantly institutional zone bounded by Market, Haverford, 42nd and 49th Streets. Land use is mapped on page 16.

The vast majority of the housing was built between 1890 and 1930. Today, 52% of West Philadelphia's housing units are owner-occupied. Owner-occupancy rates are extremely high in the two-story rowhouse neighborhoods west of 52nd Street, and in some of the City Avenue neighborhoods. Conversely, rental occupancy of residential structures is the norm in and around University City (the location of much student housing) and in the Wynnefield Heights neigh-

borhood (containing a large concentration of housing for senior citizens). West Philadelphia is known for its many large historic apartment buildings; a significant concentration of these buildings is located in the area south of Market Street between 38th and 52nd Streets.

West Philadelphia is also known for its architecture. Many areas contain historic houses, apartment buildings, churches and schools which stand as stellar examples of the various architectural styles of the 1800's and the early 1900's. Preservation of this magnificent architecture is the goal of several of West Philadelphia's community groups, who have researched and sponsored "historic district" designation for their respective areas. Garden Court, Powelton Village, Overbrook Farms, East Parkside and a portion of Haddington are National Register Historic Districts; and large portions of the area south of Chestnut Street (from 40th to 50th Streets) comprise the proposed National Register historic district called "Victorian University City." The campus of the University of Pennsylvania, established in West Philadelphia in 1875, is also a National Register Historic District.

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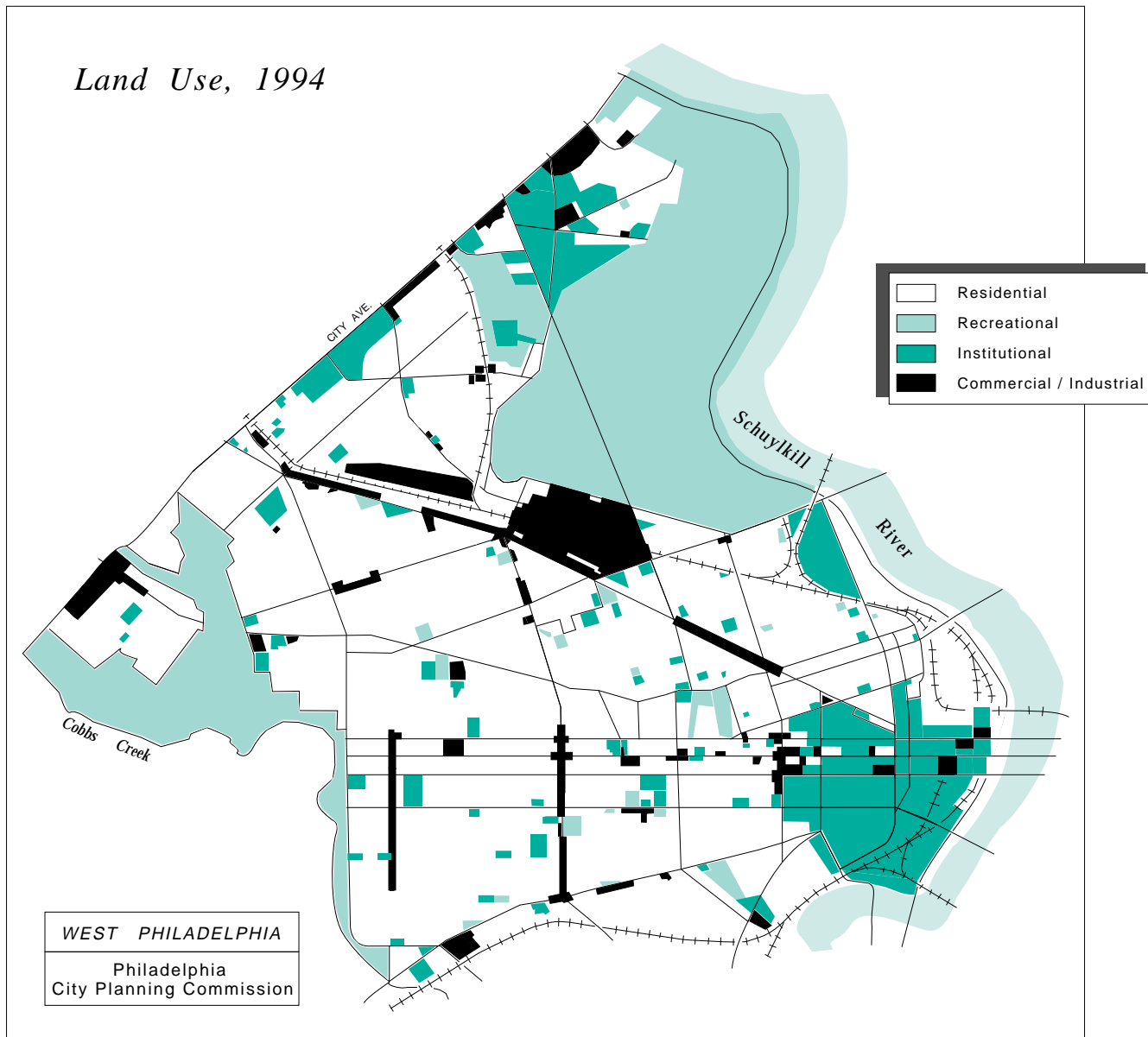
## THE PEOPLE OF WEST PHILADELPHIA

West Philadelphia has a diverse population: 72% of the people are Black, 24% White, and 3.3% Asian. About 1.4% of the West Philadelphia population is of Hispanic origin. In 1990 West Philadelphia's population was 219,713, or 13.9% of the city's total. The percentage of youth in West Philadelphia (25.2% under age 20), the percentage of elderly in the district (15.3% over age 64) and the average number of persons per household (2.48 for West Philadelphia) closely parallel citywide figures. Another characteristic of West Philadelphia's

Table 1

West Philadelphia  
1990 Census data

Population:  
219,713  
Median Family  
Income:  
\$26,020  
Homeownership:  
51.8% of occupied  
housing  
units  
Homeownership by  
Blacks:



population which is consistent with that of the city as a whole is the continuing decline in total population in recent decades.

The first half of this century was a period of unprecedented population growth in the city. West Philadelphia's total population reached its peak in 1950, as did the city's. Since that time,

the district's population has decreased by 33%, while the city's population has decreased by 23%. Population loss has been a factor that is related to many of West Philadelphia's current problems: housing abandonment, vacant lots, decreased overall buying power of the residents, and very high retail vacancy. The 1950 to 1990

Table 2

West Philadelphia: Population Change by Decade

1950 - 60: - 8.6%

population trend also has a bright side. The 5.7% reduction since 1980 is the smallest ten-year reduction for the district during this 40 year period, and the 1980s was the first decade since the 1950s in which West Philadelphia's rate of decline was less than that of the city as a whole (5.7% as compared to 6.1%). Therefore, based on population numbers, greater stability has been the recent pattern for West Philadelphia.

The 1990 median family income for West Philadelphia was \$26,020 according to the 1990 Census. During the 1980s, median family income for the district generally kept pace with inflation, and this represents an improvement over the 1970's. However, income for West Philadelphians is losing ground over the long term, in comparison with city-wide incomes. The census shows that between 1960 and 1990, the median family income for West Philadelphia decreased from 92% of the citywide median family income to 86%.

Census data regarding poverty in West Philadelphia shows that the proportion of families living in poverty decreased between 1980 and 1990, from 20.2% to 18.2%. Despite this modest improvement, almost one in five West Philadelphia residents still lives below the federal poverty level. This fact continues to make poverty a major concern for West Philadelphia. The 1990 poverty rate for West Philadelphia

exceeds the citywide rate by two percentage points, and a greater proportion of West Philadelphians receive welfare payments and food stamps than Philadelphians in general. There are three basic types of state assistance in Pennsylvania---Cash Assistance, Medical Assistance, and food stamps---and West Philadelphia is slightly above the citywide rate for each of these types of assistance (Table 3). It is important to note that the West Philadelphia and city rates have increased substantially in just four years.

According to the 1990 census, 27.9% of West Philadelphia households were headed by females compared to 22.8% for the city. Since female-headed households nationally have median incomes that are significantly below the median, it is not surprising that the majority of female-headed households in West Philadelphia are concentrated in the poverty-stricken sections of the district.

The 1990 census indicates that the level of education has increased in both West Philadelphia and the city between 1980 and 1990. The West Philadelphia increase was significant and very encouraging: the percentage of persons graduating from high school increased from 57% to 70% over the decade, and the percentage of persons with a bachelor's degree or higher increased from 13% to 18%. In both of

Table 3

Percent of Population Receiving State Assistance:

	West Philadelphia March 1989 / June 1993		City March 1989 / June 1993	
Cash Assistance*	16.0%	20.3%	14.1%	19.1%
Medical Assistance	22.7%	30.2%	20.0%	29.6%
Food Stamps	20.1%	27.2%	17.3%	25.0%

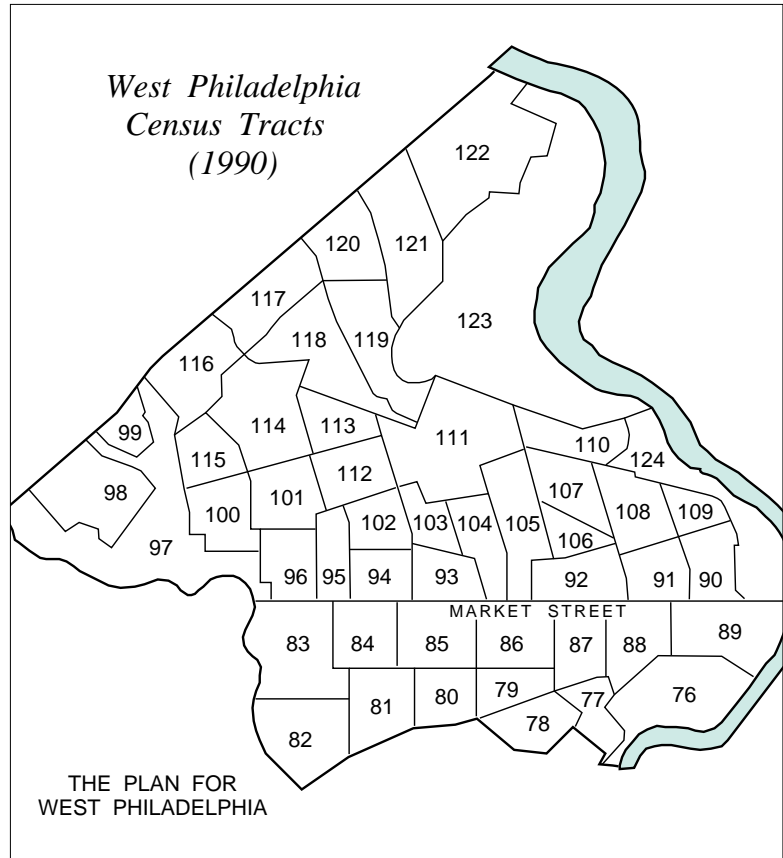
\*Cash Assistance includes: (1) Aid to Dependent Children, and (2) Cash Assistance

these categories, West Philadelphia had slightly higher percentages in 1990 than the city as a whole.

Census data on “category of employment” shows that the number of West Philadelphians employed in “white-collar” jobs -- managerial, professional, technical, sales and clerical occupations -- continued to increase during the 1980’s (56% in 1980 to 61% in 1990). This trend for West Philadelphia is consistent with the city-wide data during the same time span.

While the Black population has begun to decline slightly in numbers in recent years, homeownership is important in describing the strength and stability of West Philadelphia’s Black population. The rate of 57.4% among Black households is the second highest homeownership rate for the city’s twelve Planning Analysis Sections. Among Black residents, it is also common to find individuals who are the third generation of their family to have grown up in West Philadelphia. West Philadelphia has the second largest concentration of Asians in the city. According to the 1990 Census, only the Olney-Oak Lane area had a greater number of Asians. The 7,144 Asians residing in West Philadelphia represent 16.4% of the city total for this population group. Census data also indicate that since 1980 West Philadelphia’s Asian population has grown at a slower rate than for the city as a whole.

Most of the gain in Asian population in West Philadelphia occurred prior to 1985, and most new Asian arrivals are now finding housing in other parts of the Philadelphia area. Prior to 1985, many refugees, usually lacking resources and jobs, settled in inexpensive rental housing located in West Philadelphia, but quickly resettled in permanent housing throughout the region—especially in Southwest Philadelphia, Upper Darby and Lansdowne. Most of the other Asians living in West Philadelphia are neither



refugees or immigrants; they are temporary residents enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania, which had 2,270 Asian students in the 1993-94 academic year, and at other local universities and colleges.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

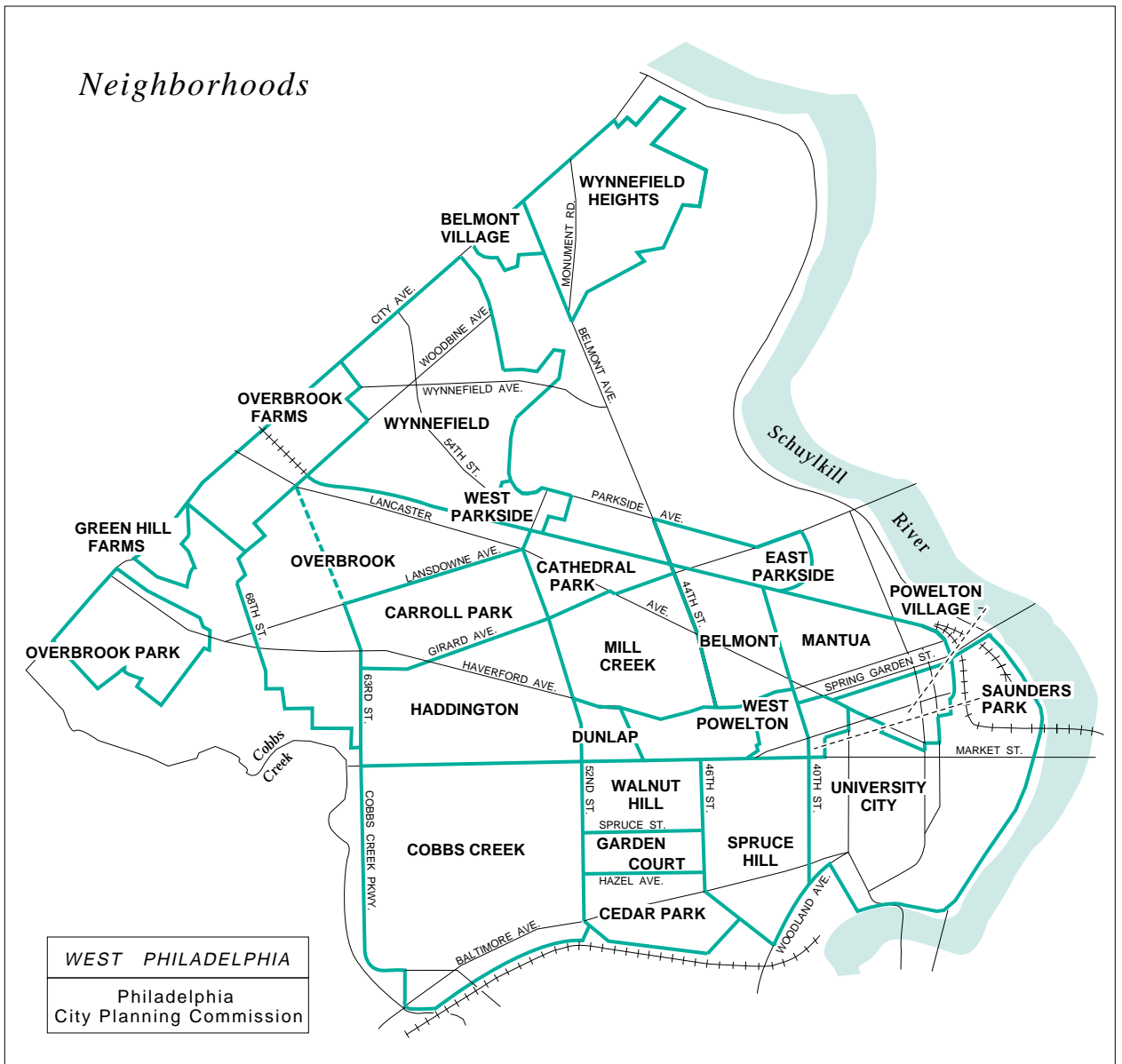
Community facilities and services—police and fire stations, health centers, libraries, recreation facilities, YMCA’s and neighborhood community centers—undergird the fabric of life in West Philadelphia.

The City built most of its community facilities during the 50’s and 60’s. Many of these facilities are now in need of substantial repair at

a time when city government is facing the reality of a decreasing population and a weakened tax base. As a result, there are fewer resources available for staffing and maintaining community facilities.

In West Philadelphia, there are 32 playgrounds, 9 public libraries, 2 City health centers,

3 police district stations, 4 police mini-stations, and 7 fire stations. Additionally, 35 public schools and 13 parochial schools are located in West Philadelphia. Along with major non-profit social service centers, these community facilities are listed on the two pages that follow.



Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Community Facilities

*Playgrounds and Recreation Centers*

Baker	Lansdowne & Conestoga
Clark Park	43rd & Woodland
Clayborn-Lewis	38th & Poplar
Cobbs Creek	59th & Whitby
Cobbs Creek	63rd & Catherine
Cobbs Creek	63rd & Spruce
Cobbs Creek	70th & Lansdowne
Cobbs Creek Park	61st & Wharton
Cobbs Creek Park (Skate House)	63rd & Walnut
Conestoga	53rd & Media
Conshohocken & Windermere	Conshohocken & Windermere
Granahan	65th & Callowhill
Lee	44th & Haverford
Mantua	34th & Haverford
McAlpin	36th & Aspen
McCreesh	66th & Regent
Mill Creek	48th & Brown
Papa, Charles A. (Morris Park)	68th & Lansdowne
Rose	75th & Lansdowne
Shepard	57th & Haverford
Sherwood (Christy)	56th & Christian
Tustin	60th & Columbia
West Mill Creek	51st & Reno
West Park	53rd & Parkside
West Park	Belmont & Edgely Dr
West Park	Belmont & Montgomery Dr.
West Park	Belmont & States Dr.
West Park	Chamounix Dr.
34th & Wallace	34th & Wallace
37th & Mt. Vernon	37th & Mt. Vernon
39th & Olive	39th & Olive
48th & Woodland	48th & Woodland

*Police District Stations*

16th District	39th & Lancaster
19th District	61st & Haverford
18th District	55th & Pine

*Fire Stations*

Engine 5	43rd & Market
Engine 16	Belmont & Viola
Engine 41	61st & Thompson
Engine 44	34th & Haverford
Engine 54	63rd & Lancaster
Engine 68	52nd & Willows
Squirt 57	56th & Chestnut

*Branches of the Free Library*

B. A. Nixon-- Cobbs Creek	59th & Baltimore
George Institute	52nd & Media
Haddington	65th & Girard
Haverford Avenue	56th & Haverford
Mantua	34th & Haverford
Overbrook Park	7422 Haverford Ave.
Walnut Street West	3950 Walnut St.
West Philadelphia Regional	52nd & Sansom
Wynnefield	54th & Overbrook

*City Health Centers*

Health Center Three	43rd & Chester
Health Center Four	44th & Haverford

*Major Private Non-Profit Centers*

Haverford Community Center	631 N. 39th St.
West Phila Community Center	3512 Haverford Ave.

The Plan for West Philadelphia

Community Facilities (continued)

*Public Schools*

Anderson	E	61st & Cobbs Creek Parkway
Barry	E	59th & Race
Beeber	J	59th & Malvern
Belmont	E	41st & Brown
Blankenburg	E	46th & Girard
Bryant	E	60th Street & Cedar
Cassidy	E	66th & Lansdowne
Catto	S	3833 Walnut Street
Daroff	E	57th & Vine
Drew	E	37th & Warren
Gompers	E	57th & Wynnefield
Hamilton	E	57th & Spruce
Hanna	E	58th & Media
Harrington	E	53rd & Baltimore
Harrity	E	56th & Christian
Heston	E	54th & Lansdowne
Huey	E	52nd & Pine
Lamberton	E	75th & Woodbine
Lea	E	47th & Locust
Leidy	E	Belmont & Thompson
Locke	E	46th & Haverford
Mann	E	54th & Berks
McMichael	E	36th & Fairmount
Miller	S	43rd & Westminster
Overbrook	H	59th & Lancaster
Overbrook Ed. Center	E	54th & Malvern Parkway
Gamma	S	49th & Chestnut
Phila. Reg.	H	62nd & Lebanon
Powel	E	36th St. & Powelton
Rhoads	E	50th & Parrish Streets
Shoemaker	J	53rd & Media Streets
Univ. City	H	36th & Filbert St
Washington	E	44th & Aspen Streets
West Phila.	H	47th & Walnut Streets
Wilson	E	46th & Woodland

*Parochial Schools*

Our Lady of Lourdes	E	63rd & Lancaster
Our Lady of the Rosary	E	Callowhill & Felton
Our Lady of Victory	E	54th & Summer
Our Mother of Sorrows	E	1020 N. 48th Street
St. Barbara	E	Georges Lane & Lebanon
St. Callistus	E	68th & Lansdowne
St. Carthage	E	6225 Cedar Avenue
St. Donato	E	405 N. 65th Street
St. Francis DeSales	E	917 S. 47th Street
St. Ignatius	E	644 N. 43rd Street
St. Rose of Lima	E	1516 N. Wanamaker
Transfiguration	E	5501 Cedar Avenue
West Catholic High Sch.	H	45th & Chestnut

School E = Elementary H = High

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THE INSTITUTIONS OF WEST PHILADELPHIA

West Philadelphia contains a truly remarkable collection of institutions. In addition to the University of Pennsylvania, which is the largest university in eastern Pennsylvania, Drexel University and St. Joseph's University are also

located in West Philadelphia, as is the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science and eleven hospitals. Institutional properties account for a major portion of West Philadelphia's land area, as shown on the Land Use map (page 16).

University City's Institutions

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia	Philadelphia Child Guidance Center
Children's Seashore House	Presbyterian Medical Center of Philadelphia
Dept. of Veterans Affairs Medical Center	Ralston House
Drexel University	Rudolph Home for the Blind
Elwyn Institute	Scheie Eye Institute
Horizon House	University City Science Center
International House of Philadelphia	University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia Center for Health Care Sciences	University of Pennsylvania Medical Center
Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science	Wistar Institute

Major Institutions in Other Areas of West Philadelphia:

Belmont Center for Comprehensive Treatment	Methodist Home for Children
City Avenue Hospital	Misericordia Hospital
Institute of Pennsylvania Hospital	Overbrook School for the Blind
Jefferson Park Hospital	Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine
Kearsley Home	Presbyterian Home
Methodist Home for the Aged	St. Joseph's University
	Simpson House
	Urban Education Foundation

Other Important West Philadelphia Institutions:

Archdiocesan Schools	Mill Creek Jazz and Cultural Center
Bushfire Theatre for the Performing Arts	Movement Theater International
The Caring Center	People's Emergency Center
Carousel House	Philadelphia Boys Choir
Catchment Area #4 (MH/MR)	School District of Philadelphia
The Center for Literacy	Stephen Smith Nursing Home and Apartments
Clara Muhammad School	University City Arts League
Community Education Center	University City New School
The Consortium (MH/MR)	West Philadelphia Cultural Alliance
Hayes Manor	Wynnefield Academy
Inglis House	YMCA and YMCA Academy
Mercy Douglas Human Services Center	Yeshiva of Philadelphia

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*Educational and health care institutions are defining features of West Philadelphia. Institutions account for most of the area's jobs and much of the non-residential land.*

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CULTURE AND THE ARTS

West Philadelphia has an especially rich collection of the facilities that are devoted to culture and the arts—places of worship, museums, libraries, community centers, universities, colleges, schools, performance and entertainment venues, social clubs and gathering places. The gathering places can be informal, formal, public, private, indoors and outdoors.

West Philadelphia is home to many specific organizations and places that offer experiences related to culture and the arts, including the University of Pennsylvania, the Annenberg Center, the University Museum, the Institute for Contemporary Art, Drexel University, West Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, University City Arts League, University City Historical Society, Community Education Center, International House of Philadelphia, Movement Theater International, Philadanco, Mill Creek Jazz & Cultural Center, and Bushfire Theatre for the Performing Arts.

West Philadelphia makes a major contribution to culture and the arts in this region. This valuable role should be recognized and fostered through public policy and through the decisions of those who provide financial support to cultural and arts-related organizations.

THE ECONOMY OF WEST PHILADELPHIA

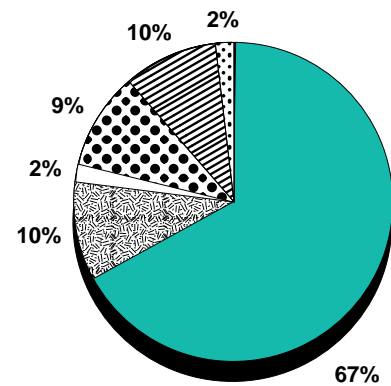
**Employment:**

West Philadelphia contains approximately 10% of the city's 696,000 jobs, according to Planning Commission estimates. Approximately 82% of the total jobs identified in West Philadelphia are in the private sector. Public sector jobs make up the other 18% of the work force. In West Philadelphia, the major public sector employers are federal government agencies, the Postal

Service, AMTRAK, and the school district; the 18% figure does not include city government workers based in West Philadelphia.

"Health and Education" is the dominant category of employment in West Philadelphia, with 67% of the total jobs identified. This category includes universities, hospitals, all schools and many additional West Philadelphia institutions. Most of the jobs in the "Manufacturing and Business Services" category are at the University City Science Center, which employs over 6,000 persons.

Table 4  
Distribution of West Philadelphia's Total Estimated Jobs by Type of Employer, 1991



-  Health and Education
-  Transportation and Utilities
-  Hotels
-  Manufacturing and Business Services
-  Retail
-  Government

West Philadelphia has relatively few jobs in manufacturing and light industry compared to other sections of the city, but the West Parkside

Enterprise Zone program holds promise for strengthening employment in this sector. The “Health and Education” and “Manufacturing and Business Services” categories include thousands of West Philadelphia jobs that are associated with research activities. Research in the fields of health care, business and technology is a major element of West Philadelphia’s economy.

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**Unemployment:**

The 1992 unemployment rate for West Philadelphia is estimated by the Planning Commission to be 10.1%. The City's unemployment rate for the same period was 8.8%, up from a 1990 rate of 6%. Although unemployment rates in West Philadelphia tend to be higher than those of the City as a whole, their trend mirrors that of the City. During the decade of the 1980's, the City's unemployment rate fell from a high of 10.8% in 1983 to a low of 6% in 1989, the result of rising employment in a tight labor market.

***Meeting the employment needs of West Philadelphia residents:***

There are a number of education and job training programs already offered in West Philadelphia. West Philadelphia-based organizations offer an array of educational and job training services that can serve as a strong base for improving the economic status of the area and its residents. The University of Pennsylvania, in partnership with community groups, the schools, and other West Philadelphia institutions, has created several important programs.

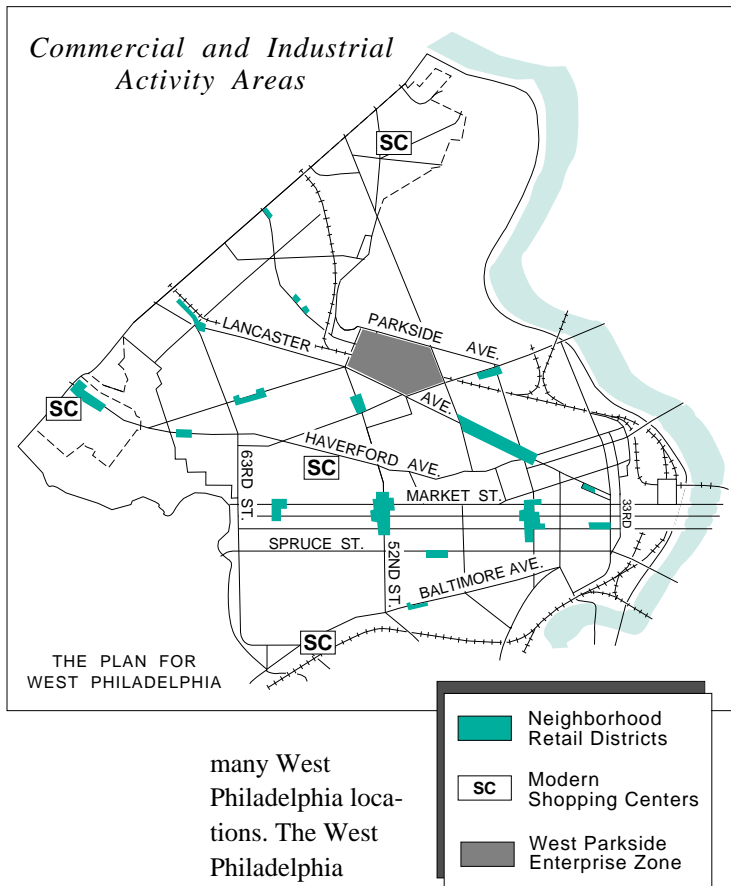
The West Philadelphia Partnership originated at the University of Pennsylvania in 1959 to improve the quality of life for West Philadelphia residents. In 1981 its board was reorganized to allow equal representation from West Philadelphia institutions, businesses and neighborhood organizations. The partnership works to promote economic development, youth employ-

ment and education through initiatives such as Hire West Philadelphia, Buying in West Philadelphia and the West Philadelphia Improvement Corps. The West Philadelphia Partnership Community Development Corporation (C.D.C.) was recently established to undertake housing and community development projects.

The West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC), along with the School Board and the community, sponsors “Community Schools” in nine schools in West Philadelphia. Established in 1985, its concept is to expand the schools into places where all residents can acquire education and skills and work on projects that benefit the community. The most extensive “Community School” programs are at the Turner Middle School, Sulzberger Middle School and West Philadelphia High School.

The Wharton West Philadelphia Project utilizes students and faculty from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School in four separate community outreach programs. Young Entrepreneurs at Wharton brings motivated high school students to the Penn campus for a special enrichment program each August. Wharton students then work individually with these students during the school year. Skills Training Employment Preparation enables residents who are looking for clerical/secretarial jobs at Penn to update their skills through summer classes of three weeks' duration. The Technical Assistance Program uses Wharton MBA students to provide technical assistance to West Philadelphia businesses and non-profit organizations. Bridges is a mentoring program, matching Wharton students with West Philadelphia Middle School students.

Other West Philadelphia-based organizations are involved in education and job training. The Center for Literacy, established in West Philadelphia in 1968, with headquarters at 48th Street & Baltimore Avenue, has learning sites at



many West Philadelphia locations. The West Philadelphia Economic

Development Corporation sponsors employment training services, and job training is also provided locally by the Parkside Association of Philadelphia.

City-wide programs, with specific sites in West Philadelphia for either training or referral, are sponsored by the public schools, Private Industry Council (PIC), and the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition. The Center for Literacy's programs are also available city-wide.

**Focus on the Retail Sector:**

Citywide retail activity was analyzed in the Planning Commission's 1989 publication entitled, Philadelphia Shops: A Citywide Study of

Retail Center Conditions, Issues and Opportunities. The 1989 publication identified 40 commercial centers containing at least 10,000 sq. ft. of gross leasable area (GLA) in West Philadelphia. Most of the commercial centers are older retail corridors in the older neighborhoods, but West Philadelphia also has modern shopping centers with plentiful off-street parking in Haddington, Cobbs Creek, Wynnefield Heights and Overbrook Park.

Demand for retail goods and services in West Philadelphia has been weakened by the district's 27% population loss since 1960. In addition, household income levels (which also affect consumer demand) are relatively low in West Philadelphia; according to the census, 1990 median household income for West Philadelphia is \$20,918 compared with \$24,603 for the City and \$29,069 for Pennsylvania. Population loss and low income levels are most noticeable in the central area of West Philadelphia (census tracts 78-86, 92-96, and 101-112). From 1960 to 1990, this area lost 34% of its population and more than 20% of its households. This central area also captures less of the purchases made by its residents than other sections of West Philadelphia, according to the City-wide Buying Survey published in 1985 by the Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation (PCDC); this may reflect the poor condition of local retail facilities and the ease of transit or auto access to other large shopping destinations nearby.

Retail centers in the central portion of the district are functioning under several limitations. The first is their limited role in the marketplace. Except for the 52nd & Market corridor, which attracts customers from a wider area for comparison-goods shopping, these retail centers cater primarily to the convenience-goods needs of nearby residents. Second is the surplus of stores in relation to the reduced population and the greater mobility of consumers who can readily

access the more modern and larger competitive centers outside of West Philadelphia; this results in high vacancy rates. In most of these corridors, vacancy increased between 1987 and 1990. The vacancy rate for the 52nd & Market Streets corridor increased from 21% in 1987 to 27% in 1990, and the vacancy rate for 60th & Market jumped from 27% to 44% during the same time period.

Third is the prevalence of small storefronts and small ownership parcels -- this puts older corridors at a disadvantage at a time when retail chains are seeking larger and larger store sizes. The fourth limitation is a lack of parking. Most

**Table 5**  
Neighborhood Commercial Centers,  
1990  
(75,000 or more sq. ft. Gross Leasable Area)

	Trade Area		%
	G.L.A.	Pop.*	
52 / Market	300,000	57,000	27%
Lancaster	218,000	22,000	27%
60 / Market	170,000	35,000	44%
52 / Girard	115,000	23,000	43%
Lansdowne	95,000	29,000	33%
Baltimore	75,000	32,000	44%
Haverford	75,000	20,000	3%

older centers in West Philadelphia currently have less than the two (2) parking spaces per 1000 sq. ft. of retail gross leasable area (GLA) recommended for pedestrian-oriented corridors in Philadelphia Shops (Planning Commission, 1989), but the quantity of parking is not the only problem. The off-street parking lots that serve the older corridors are generally unsafe, poorly maintained and therefore underutilized. This suggests that improvements to existing parking areas may be more important than the addition of new spaces.

The older retail corridors do, however, share significant underlying strengths. Geographically,

they are evenly distributed throughout West Philadelphia's central core, and they are located at points where multiple transit routes converge. This reflects the corridors' traditional orientation to transit riders and pedestrians, and ensures at least a small, captive market for convenience goods, services, and some comparison goods. This is supported by the 1985 Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation survey of shoppers which shows that residents of West Philadelphia's central area are more likely than residents of the other sections of West Philadelphia to make shopping trips on foot or by transit.

RECENT INVESTMENT

**Private Investment in West Philadelphia**

Private investment is taking place in every section of West Philadelphia. Investors are improving neighborhood conditions, building new housing, creating new offices and research facilities, and modernizing universities and hospitals. Private investment is flourishing in University City and along the City Avenue corridor, and the prospects are good for additional private development in the West Parkside Enterprise Zone and near 46th & Market Streets. Additionally throughout the area, individual homeowners and owners of small rental properties are investing in maintenance and home improvement projects.

This summary of recent private investment looks at expenditures made since 1980. It demonstrates that the private sector is actively investing in West Philadelphia.

**Construction Activity**

Building permit data gives a picture of construction activity and private investment. The monetary value of building permits by category, for the years 1987-91, is summarized in Table 6.

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*West Philadelphia's retail sector faces a continued erosion of neighborhood buying power, aging and often obsolete buildings, and stiff competition from popular shopping facilities located just outside the district.*

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**Table 6**  
Value of Building Permits by Category (in thousands)

Year	Land Use Category					Total
	Residential	Commercial	Institutional	Industrial	Other	
1987	\$7,966	\$7,530	\$43,009	\$3,946	\$25,566	\$88,016
1988	\$13,199	\$75,522	\$22,102	0	\$37,552	\$148,375
1989	\$10,973	\$19,250	\$13,504	0	\$30,037	\$73,764
1990	\$16,411	\$492	\$8,934	0	\$43,892	\$69,729
1991	\$3,357	\$730	\$501	0	\$38,730	\$43,318
Total	\$51,906	\$103,523	\$88,050	\$3,946	\$175,777	\$423,202

The amount of investment by category reflects West Philadelphia's inherent land use pattern; i.e. the district has an abundance of institutions, and compared to many other sections of the city, it has a small amount of industry. The information on expenditures by year shows that investment has generally been declining during the 1987-91 time span -- a trend that is consistent with the broader national economy. The majority of expenditures in the "Other" category are government dollars used for public works projects.

**Private Investment in Housing**

Residential building permit activity for the years 1980 through 1987 was analyzed in the West Philadelphia District Plan Working Paper, released in 1990. It states that 1,787 dwelling units were built or rehabilitated during the 1980-87 period. More recent building permits (see Table 7) show that an additional 750 units were added in West Philadelphia during the years 1988 through 1991; this is an average of 188 new units per year.

The 188-per-year average is less than the 1980-to-1987 average of 223 units per year, indicating that the pace of residential construction in West Philadelphia has slowed. Moreover, the 1991 data is indicative of a serious and sudden decline in residential construction and investment.

Of the 750 dwelling units that were added to

**Table 7**  
Building Permits for New Dwelling Units

	West Phila.	City
1988	373	2981
1989	132	1496
1990	226	1213
1991	19	614
Total	750	6304

West Philadelphia's housing stock between 1988 and 1991, the largest single project was the second phase of the Lincoln Greene Apartments in the Wynnefield Heights neighborhood, but the vast majority of the additional units resulted from subsidized multi-family rehabilitation projects such as the Admiral Court, Dorset, Locust, Dunlap and Von Louhr Apartments.

Since 1980, private investment has produced thousands of new and rehabilitated housing units in West Philadelphia. Much of the private investment in West Philadelphia's housing has utilized incentives provided by the public sector. Public assistance for housing rehabilitation and new construction have taken many forms during the 1980's and 1990's, including direct grants from Philadelphia's Office of Housing and Community Development and the Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs, use of the federal Section 8 and Section 202 programs,

Urban Development Action Grants, federal tax credits for low income housing and historic preservation, and FHA mortgage insurance.

As shown on the accompanying list of recent housing developments, 3,177 dwelling units have been produced since 1980 through private initiative (combined with the various public incentives). Of the 39 developments on the list, 29 are reserved for low and moderate income persons. These 29 affordable housing developments contain 1,874 dwelling units for low and moderate income occupancy.

**Public Investment in West Philadelphia**

Public investment in West Philadelphia takes many forms: rehabilitating houses; delivering social service programs; maintaining basic infrastructure; making repairs to police and fire stations, health centers, schools, libraries, playgrounds and recreation centers; maintaining

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*Private investment in housing, including new construction and rehabilitation, has had an immensely positive impact on West Philadelphia's neighborhoods. Since 1980, 3,177 dwelling units have been produced through both private initiative and public incentives programs.*

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Table 8  
Residential Development Projects Since 1980 (New Construction)

	Address	Units	Type*
Carriage Lane	411 N. 32nd	8	F
Executive House	Overbrook & City	301	F
Haddington Family Townhouses	54th & Wyalusing	90	F
Lincoln Greene Apartments	Presidential Blvd.	636	F
Mahlon Lewis Residence	56th & Race	135	E
Mercy Douglas (Sansom)	4508 Sansom	47	E
Mercy Douglas (Walnut)	45th & Walnut	86	E
Mt. Vernon Garden Apartments	33rd & Haverford	124	F
OIC Towers III	56th & Haverford	60	E/Ha
Simpson/Fletcher (Conestoga Apts.)	54th & Master	112	E/Ha
Park Tower Apartments	40/Conshohocken	112	Ha
Sarah Allen Site (townhouses)	41st & Parrish	28	F
St. Matthews	57th & Vine	58	E
University City Townhouses	40th & Market	70	F
52nd & Wynnefield		11	F

**Sub-total:** 1,888 units in 15 projects

\*see legend on page 29

Fairmount Park; and funding shelters for the homeless. Public expenditures are an important catalyst for private investment. Several major types of public investment are summarized here.

**Infrastructure and Community Facilities:**

The Capital Program is the City of Philadelphia's annual spending plan for the development and maintenance of city-owned infrastructure and facilities.

During the past several years (fiscal years

1988 through 1993), over \$42 million in capital funds has been spent in West Philadelphia. The majority of the projects were for the renovation of public facilities (as opposed to the construction of new facilities). Renovations were made at four fire stations, two branches of the Free Library of Philadelphia, two district health centers, the Medical Examiner's Office, the Civic Center, thirteen West Philadelphia playgrounds or recreation centers, nine facilities in West Fairmount Park, and two facilities at the

Table 9  
Residential Development Projects Since 1980 (Rehabilitation)

	Address	Units	Type*
Admiral Court	48th & Locust	46	F
Art Apartments	126 S. 49th	30	F
Anderson/Bey	52nd & Columbia	40	F
Brantwood Phase 1	4152 Parkside	18	H
Courts at Powelton	35th & Powelton	174	F
Dorset	4710 Locust	58	F
Dunlap	51st & Race	35	E
Glademore	236 S. 48th	81	F
Lancaster Mews	36th & Lancaster	42	F
Lansdowne	41st & Parkside	39	F
Locust	4815 Locust	40	F
Media Place	1501 N. 59th	12	F
Monte Vista	63rd & Nassau	171	F/E/Ha
Old Quaker	36th & Lancaster	75	F
Parkside Apartments	52nd & Columbia	30	F
People's Emergency Center	39th & Spr. Garden	11	H
Sarah Allen	41st & Parrish	35	H/F
Von Louhr	61st & Ludlow	25	H
Walnut Park Plaza	63rd & Walnut	123	E
Westminster Apartments	52nd & Pennsgrove	43	F
4702-22 Chestnut Street		79	F
5400 Locust Street		50	F
6013-19 Ludlow Street		15	F
5136 Sansom Street		17	F

\*Legend:

Type of Unit:

Family =

F

Elderly =

E

Handicapped = Ha

**Sub-total:** 1,289 units in 24 projects

Philadelphia Zoo. Other capital expenditures were for public transit projects: the new University City Rail Station, improvements to 30th Street Station, and improvements to the commuter rail system in West Philadelphia. Cobbs Creek Park was improved during the past five years, and capital funds were spent on highways and bridges at many West Philadelphia locations.

Part Five of The Plan for West Philadelphia provides a description of “Community Facilities and Services” in West Philadelphia.

***Housing and Community Development:***

Between 1974 and 1987, federal Community Development funds were targeted to the neighborhoods of Mantua, West Parkside, Cobbs Creek and Carroll Park for purposes of housing rehabilitation, loans and grants to homeowners, improvements to streets and sidewalks, social services and community oversight. These activities are still being funded on a case-by-case basis within West Philadelphia, and the “Homestart” rehabilitation/sales program for subsidized homeownership is currently targeted to blocks in the Mantua and East Parkside neighborhoods.

Community Development funds have been used for the construction or rehabilitation of over 1,200 housing units between 1980 and 1993, at a cost of more than \$16.9 million. An additional \$5.6 million was spent during the same time period for new curbs and sidewalks in West Philadelphia residential areas; 145 block faces were rebuilt with these funds. Other Community Development expenditures that have supported neighborhood revitalization efforts (1980 through 1993) are: \$5.1 million to assist in the construction of social service and community centers by non-profit organizations, \$784,000 for the delivery of social service programs by community-based providers, and \$1.6 million for support programs such as community-based

planning, counseling to renters and homebuyers, extra police services, community clean-ups, community gardens and free paint to homeowners.

***Redevelopment:***

Eight Urban Renewal Areas exist in West Philadelphia. Urban renewal is a program which utilizes government’s power of eminent domain to purchase blighted property for the purpose of redevelopment. In Philadelphia, the urban renewal program is managed by the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Philadelphia. The Redevelopment Authority purchases land in an urban renewal area and eventually sells the land to a developer. By law, the Redevelopment Authority must have the approval of the Planning Commission and City Council at different points in the redevelopment process.

Urban renewal has been used in West Philadelphia since 1963, and it has made dramatic changes in the area. The eastern section of Mantua, near 34th Street, has been revitalized with new sales housing, new apartments, a recreation center, a public library and two new playgrounds. In Haddington near 56th & Vine Streets, a modern town center has been created with a new shopping center, elementary school, library, three mid-rise apartment buildings and a recreation center. In the West Mill Creek Urban Renewal Area in the vicinity of 46th & Fairmount, 155 townhouses were built in 1972 on urban renewal land and the homes were sold to moderate income families; Mill Creek has also seen new rental housing, a modern nursing home and a new church built through urban renewal.

In West Philadelphia, the most visible impact of urban renewal has been in University City. The entire 22-acre campus of the University City Science Center was developed under the urban renewal program, and the Science Center now employs over 6,000 people.

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*The public sector's commitment to West Philadelphia's neighborhoods is demonstrated by ongoing investment in housing, community development, redevelopment, commercial revitalization and economic development.*

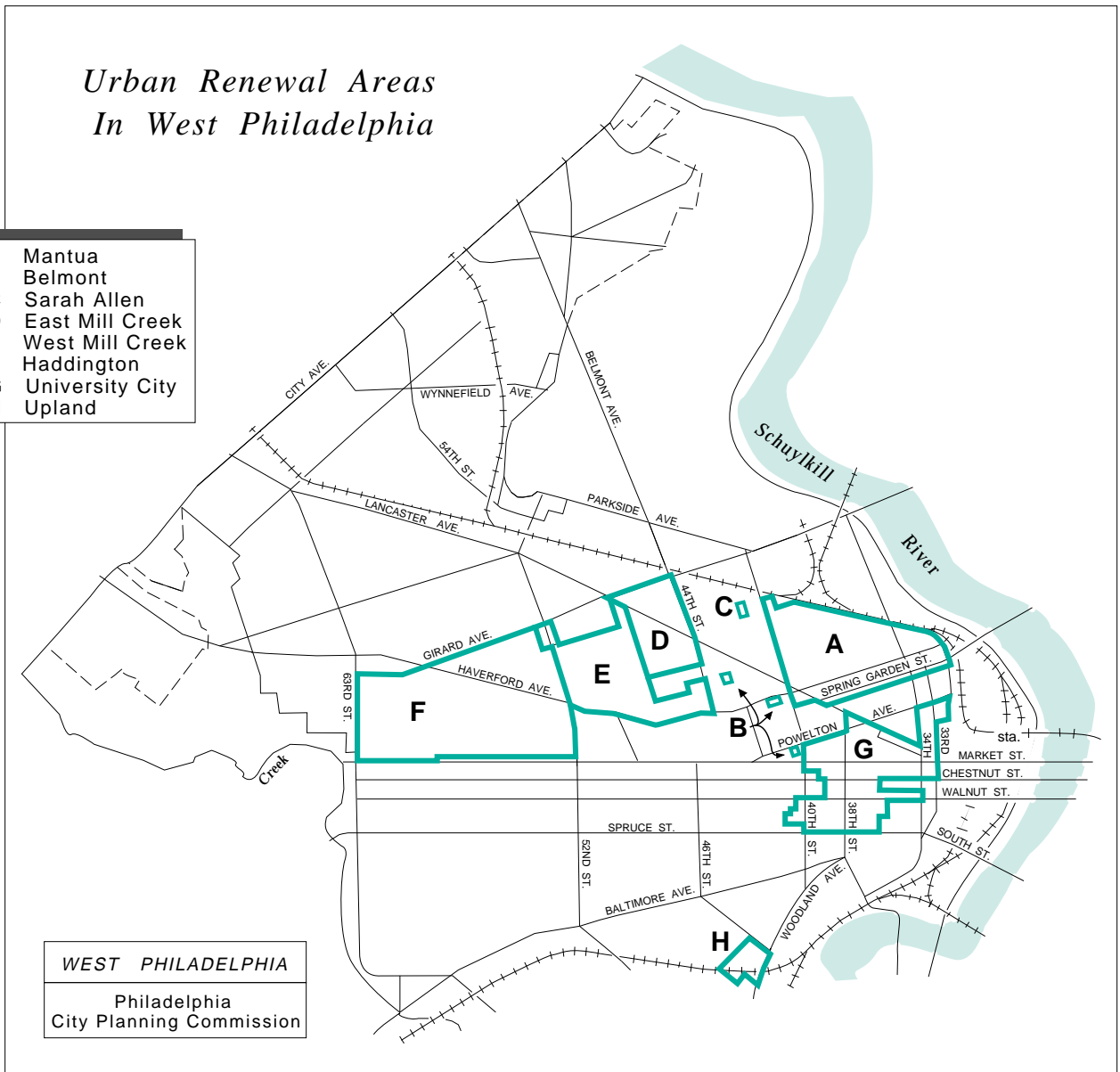
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The majority of Drexel University's campus was acquired from the Redevelopment Authority, and the University of Pennsylvania has also expanded with urban renewal assistance. University City High School and the University City Townhouses are also built on land acquired from the Authority.

**Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization:** City funds rebuilt the sidewalks and curbs along six retail corridors during the late 1970s and early 1980s. This included the shopper's sidewalk canopy on 52nd Street and the state and city-funded reconstruction of Lancaster Avenue. Managed by the Philadelphia Commercial

*Urban Renewal Areas  
In West Philadelphia*

- A Mantua
- B Belmont
- C Sarah Allen
- D East Mill Creek
- E West Mill Creek
- F Haddington
- G University City
- H Upland



Development Corporation (P.C.D.C.), the Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization program continues to provide technical assistance and loan/rebate programs to area merchants. Approximately two million dollars has been directly invested in West Philadelphia's small businesses by P.C.D.C. between 1980 and 1993.

***Economic Development:***

Additional public funds, including more than \$2.4 million in federal Community Development funds, were spent between 1980 and 1993 on other economic development activities in West Philadelphia. The CD-funded activities include several types of loans that are offered to businesses by the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation, physical development in the West Parkside Enterprise Zone, financial support for the job creation programs of the West Philadelphia Economic Development Corporation, and job training programs administered by the Parkside Association of Philadelphia.

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ZONING IN WEST PHILADELPHIA

Zoning is the exercise of the City's "Police Power" to protect the public health, safety and welfare by placing bulk, height and use controls upon buildings and land. These controls are based upon the need to prevent overcrowding of land, congestion on the streets and sidewalks, undue concentration of population and the mixing of incompatible land uses. More importantly, zoning provides a basis for guiding and ordering the pattern of future development.

Zoning delineates where and how residences, businesses and industry can be located within a community. These land use delineations are embodied in the "Zoning Code." Every zoning code has two essential elements: the zoning

code text, which contains written regulations, and the zoning maps. The zoning maps set the boundaries for the various zoning districts.

Most of West Philadelphia's land area is zoned for some type of residential use. West Philadelphia's large areas of parkland are zoned "Recreation." The campuses of the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University and St. Joseph's University are zoned "Institutional Development District." Commercial areas of University City and sections of City Line are zoned "C-3 Commercial" or "C-4 Commercial;" these classifications are generally intended for office-related uses, although they also permit residential development. Most of the neighborhood commercial areas are zoned "C-2 Commercial," which allows storefront commercial use on the ground floor of the building with apartments or commercial uses on the upper floors. The Parkside Industrial Park is zoned "G-2" Industrial" for general industrial use.

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**Zoning Remapping**

Zoning remapping is a public process, initiated by the community, that reviews and updates the zoning for an entire neighborhood. The community receives technical assistance from the Planning Commission staff in revising the zoning, and then a new zoning map reflecting these changes is adopted by the Planning Commission, and forwarded to the appropriate District Councilperson for introduction as a Bill.

Following the posting of public notices in the affected neighborhood, City Council conducts a public hearing so that citizen comments can be considered. If the Bill is passed by City Council and signed into law by the Mayor, the new zoning will take effect.

By updating zoning to reflect changes and trends in the neighborhoods, zoning remapping can assist the civic and planning efforts of communities in many ways. For example, neighbor-

hood groups that want to reinforce the single family residential character of their communities may want to choose zoning classifications that limit the use of housing to single family occupancy. This helps prevent the proliferation of commercial uses, and makes it more difficult for property owners to change single family homes into apartment buildings or offices.

When a community is concerned about the development of undeveloped land, zoning remapping can help control the usage and density of future development. Remapping can have the effect of stimulating business development, limiting the geographic extent of business expansion, or changing the pattern of commercial development by changing the requirements for building height, building size, parking, landscaping and open space.

Communities cannot arbitrarily select zoning classifications for remapping if specific property characteristics are not in conformance with

the requirements of the proposed zoning. However, the zoning remapping process can result in some added protection for community groups that are concerned about future growth and development in their area.

The accompanying map shows the areas of West Philadelphia that have been remapped since 1965. Many of the recommendations contained in this plan can be implemented through zoning remapping.

