



## BOROUGH OF MT. OLIVER

### THE MT. OLIVER PLAN FOCUS ON OUR FUTURE

**Livable Communities:  
Focus on Sustainable  
Housing and  
Neighborhoods**

**Open for Business:  
Creating Economic  
Activity and Social  
Gathering Places**

**A Sense of Place:  
Honoring our  
History and  
Unique Character**

*Prepared by:  
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August 25, 2016*

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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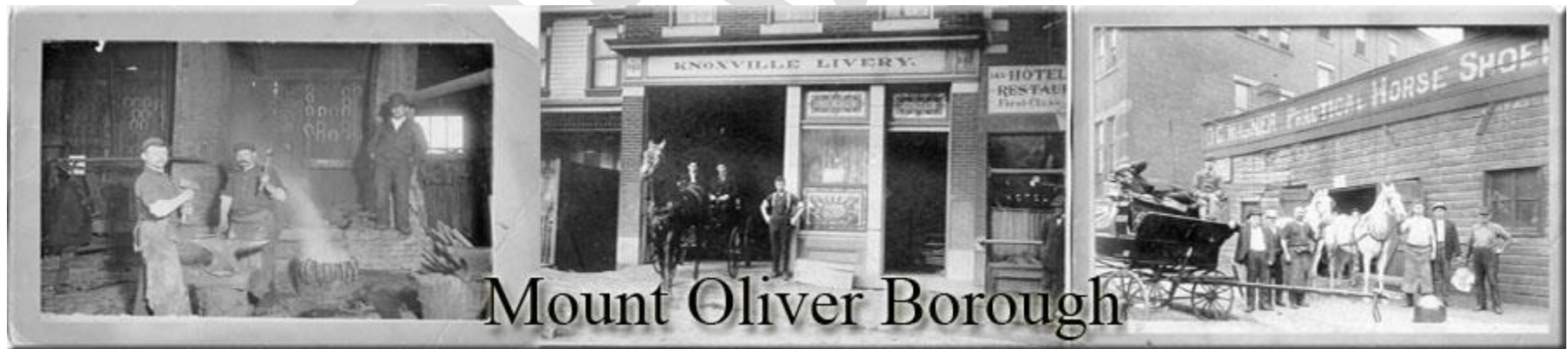
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## INTRODUCTION

### History of Mt. Oliver Review of Previous Plans Planning Process

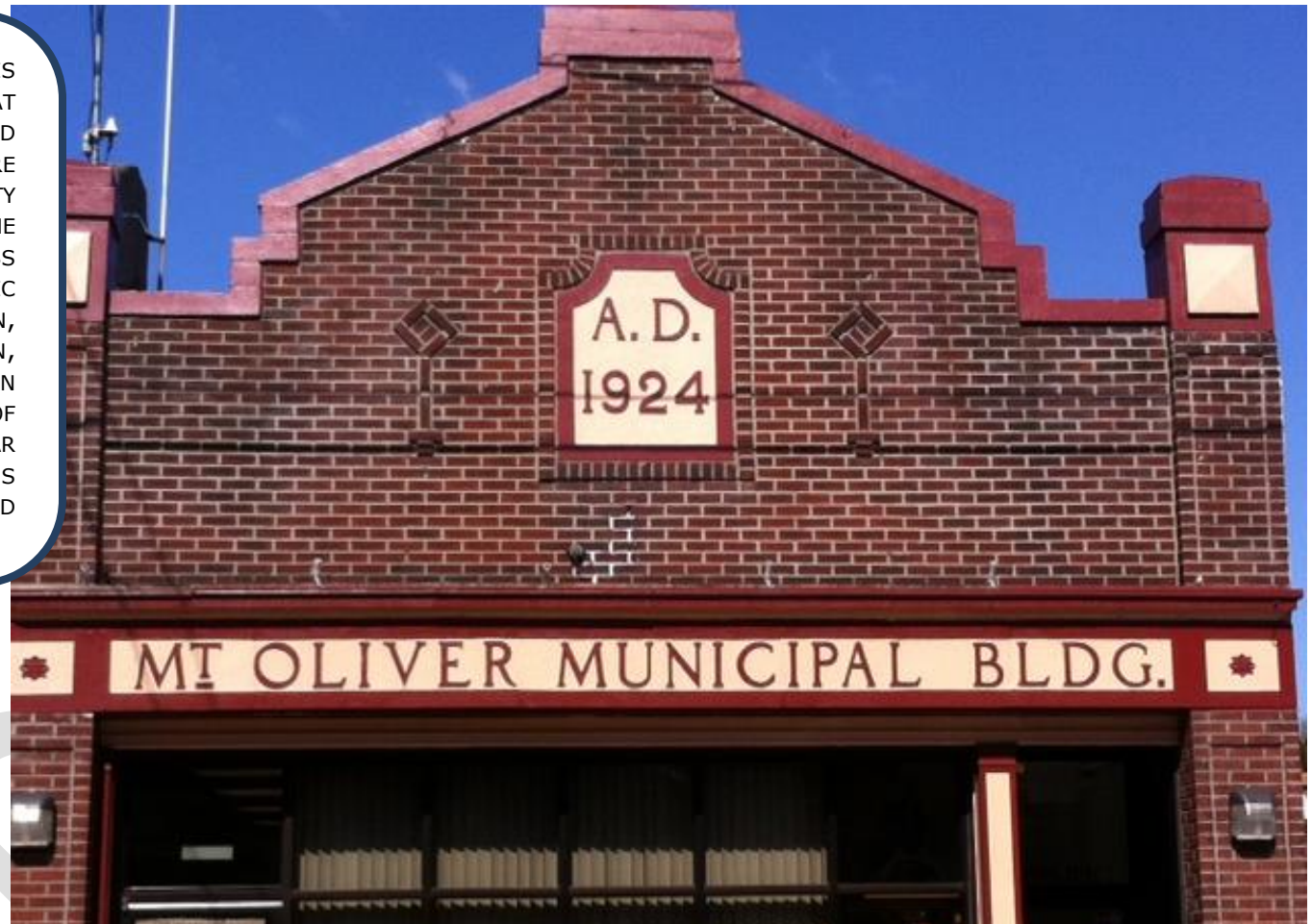
*"Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now."*

*Alan Laekin*





**COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING** IS USED TO DESCRIBE A PROCESS THAT IDENTIFIES COMMUNITY GOALS AND ASPIRATIONS IN TERMS OF FUTURE LAND USE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT. THE OUTCOME OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS IS A PLAN THAT GUIDES PUBLIC POLICY FOR TRANSPORTATION, COMMERCE, LAND USE, RECREATION, AND HOUSING. THE MT. OLIVER PLAN FOCUSES ON A BROAD RANGE OF TOPICS AND COVERS A TEN YEAR HORIZON. IT IS A RESULT OF MONTHS OF PUBLIC DISCOURSE AND COMMUNITY CONSENSUS.



IN 2014, THE MT. OLIVER BOROUGH COUNCIL MADE APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (DCED) REQUESTING GRANT FUNDS TO SUPPORT THE UPDATE OF THEIR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND TO ALSO ENGAGE IN THE DCED EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM PROCESS. IN FALL OF 2014, GRASS ROOT SOLUTIONS WAS SELECTED AS THE CONSULTANT TO LEAD THIS PROCESS AND IN JANUARY 2015, A STEERING COMMITTEE WAS FORMED. IN APRIL OF 2015 THE COUNCIL APPOINTED THE FIRST EVER BOROUGH MANAGER AND ALLOCATED FUNDING TO ENGAGE IN THE PLANNING PROCESS. THIS DOCUMENT – THE MT. OLIVER PLAN - IS THE FIRST STEP IN THE OVERALL PROCESS TO PROVIDE DIRECTION AND A VISION FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE IN THE BOROUGH OF MT. OLIVER.

### WHY PLAN

In the simplest terms, a comprehensive plan answers the question: "What do we want to be?" In Mt. Oliver, this is a complex and highly complicated exercise and the answer is very different for different folks in the community. But great communities are born of a shared vision and the Mt. Oliver Plan is a result of residents (of all age groups), businesses, elected officials, and other interested persons providing their opinions and advice. Ultimately, the Mt. Oliver Plan reflects the best thinking and creative outcomes from dozens of interviews, meetings with large and small groups, and the best practices of community planning models. It will provide a guiding vision and a sustained set of strategies for future years.

*"First comes thought; then organization of that thought into ideas and plans; then transformation of those plans into reality. The beginning, as you will observe, is in your imagination."*

*Napoleon Hill*



### HISTORY AND STRUCTURE

#### HISTORY

The Borough of Mt. Oliver (Borough), located in Allegheny County, has a population of approximately 3,394 and a total land area of .3 square miles. Mount Oliver is completely surrounded by the City of Pittsburgh and immediately adjacent to the Southside Slopes and Pittsburgh neighborhoods of Carrick and Knoxville. The borough's business district, Brownsville Road, runs across Mt. Oliver the length of the municipality along the crest of the hill from the South Side Slopes to Carrick. It connects South Eighteenth Street in Pittsburgh with the neighborhood of Carrick and communities further south. It has one of the highest elevations in Allegheny County.

Mount Oliver was incorporated in 1892. With over 100 years of history as a municipality, Mount Oliver has maintained many of the values that were key to its founding in 1892. These values of family and community actually began as far back as 1769 when John Ormsby, an officer under the command of General Forbes, was granted 249 acres in an area located in the South Hills along the banks of the Monongahela River. The Ormsby family became known as the most famous of all pioneering families, and is documented as the oldest family of distinguished lineage in all of Pittsburgh.

Most of the population growth in Mt. Oliver was in the years following the turn of the century as it became a mostly residential area for families using public transportation for work in the City of Pittsburgh. It was completely built out by 1930 and most of the housing stock dates back prior to those years. The population in Mt. Oliver peaked in 1930 at over 7,000 residents but has declined steadily in every census since then to a low of 3,403 in 2010. It is estimated that the current population in Mt. Oliver is 3,394. Because of the loss of population, there are dozens of properties that are vacant and abandoned and these have become a problem for local officials.

**STRUCTURE**

Operating under the Borough Code, the Borough Council acts as the governing body and is comprised of seven Councilpersons elected at large for four year terms. To ensure continuity of Borough management, a maximum of four Council members are up for election in any given election year. The Council approves the ordinances, policies, and directives for the Borough. Until 2015, the Borough operated with a Borough Secretary who was primarily responsible for the recording of ordinances, resolutions, minutes and other official documents of the Borough. Council subcommittees were delegated the day to day responsibility of directing the departments. However, in 2015 the Council adopted a manager ordinance and appointed a professional manager for the first time in the Borough's history. The Council has clearly confirmed the formal, professional management structure and delegated the day to day operational oversight to the appointed Manager.

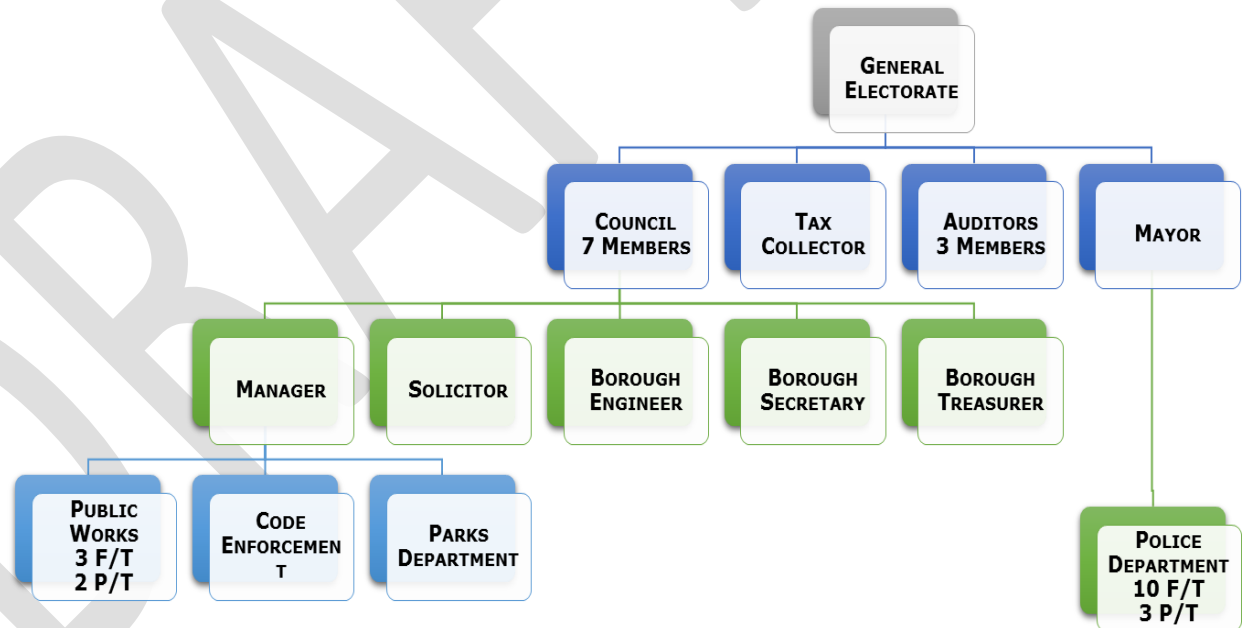
Borough departments include:

- Management and Finance
- Tax Collection
- Police Department
- Public Works
- Parks and Recreation
- Code Enforcement

The Borough Code permits and the Council has established the following boards and commissions:

- Civil Service Commission
- Planning Commission
- Zoning Hearing Board

Fire services in the Borough are provided by the Mt. Oliver Volunteer Fire Department. Ambulance services in the Borough are provided by the City of Pittsburgh EMS. Residents in Mt. Oliver pay a 2% tax on earned income to the Pittsburgh School District for the privilege of Mt. Oliver children to attend Pittsburgh public schools.





## REVIEW OF PREVIOUS PLANS

The Borough of Mt. Oliver has undertaken a number of planning processes over the past few years. Many of the recommendations and initiatives have been implemented.

### 1994 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The previous comprehensive plan was undertaken from 1993 through 1994 by *Community Planning Services, Roberta Saraff, AICP* and included an extensive review of the Boroughs socio-demographic profile, municipal services, and financial position. The Plan included a community survey and a business district survey. The results of the survey indicated that residents liked their neighborhoods, parks, and services but were concerned about code enforcement, blighted properties, and rising crime rates, especially in the business districts. Businesses worried about safety, sufficient parking, and lacked the resources to make improvements to facades and storefronts. Residents expressed a strong desire for a grocery store and diverse shopping and dining opportunities. The Plan recommended:

- Stabilization of revenue and cost containment to continue to maintain a healthy economic base
- Improvements to parking signage, lighting, and convenient locations to support the business district
- Continued improvements to the parks
- Zoning updates that included: modification and/or elimination of the historic district; additional regulations to prevent conversion of single family homes to multi-family; a more

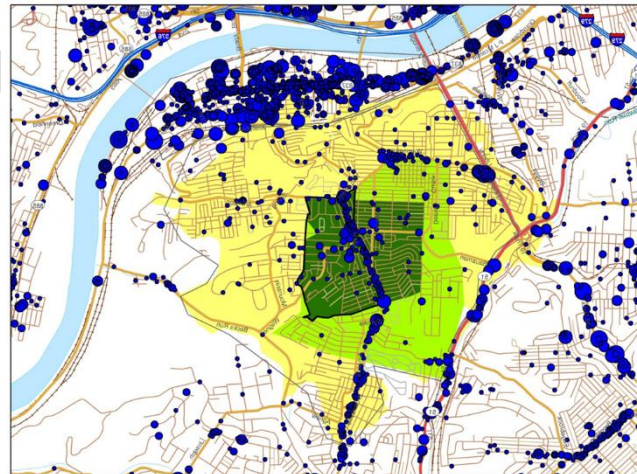


reasonable approach to parking regulations in the residential and commercial districts.

- An upgrade to municipal facilities to provide better working conditions and support for resident services.

### 2009 MT. OLIVER COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION PLAN

The Borough of Mount Oliver, in May of 2008, solicited proposals to prepare a marketing strategy and assessment plan for the Mount Oliver business district. The Mount Oliver Commercial Revitalization Plan was funded by a grant through the Allegheny County Economic Development through an allocation of Community Development Block Grant Funds. *Delta Development Group, Inc.* was selected to complete the Plan. The purpose of the project was to undertake the development of a comprehensive marketing strategy, market assessment, land use updates, branding, and image enhancement plan. There was extensive public involvement in the visioning process and in formulating the final strategies that were included in the Plan. Sales volume was examined and several sites were

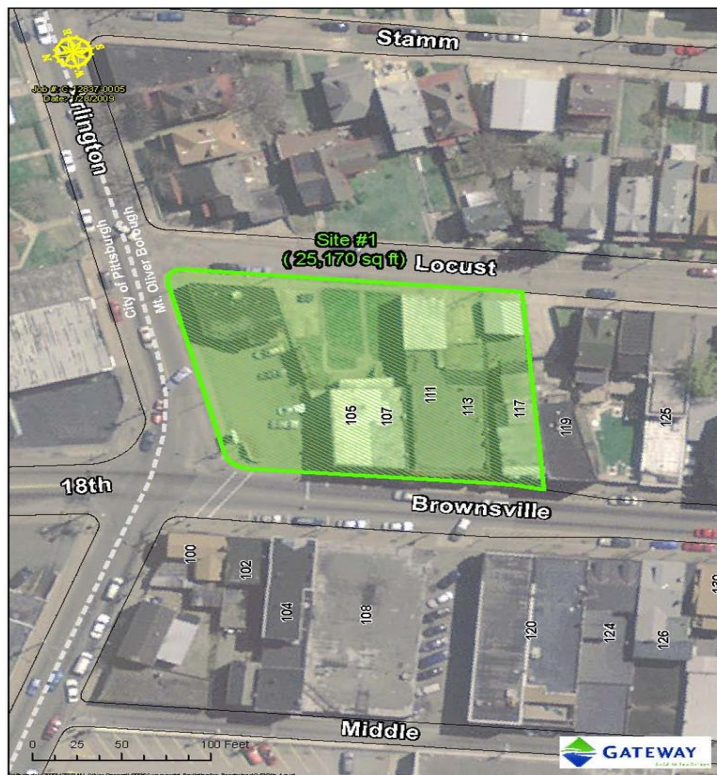


reviewed in terms of viability for future development by applying specific criteria to each of the identified sites. The most promising site for future development was determined to be the First National Bank site which sits at the gateway to

the Borough. Other strategies that were recommended were:

- “Right Sizing” the business district by reducing its size and focus and targeting key sites.
- Focusing on “safe, clean, and green” activities as a way to invigorate and promote the neighborhoods and businesses

- Considering a streetscape that includes crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) features
- Expanding, retaining, and recruiting viable businesses and dining that support community life, and
- Updating land use regulations to include more mixed use opportunities, transition areas along Brownsville Road that include high density housing, and a “traditional neighborhood district” (TND) overlay.



## THE MT. OLIVER PLAN PROCESS

The Mt. Oliver Plan relies heavily on a process that was guided by the local Steering Committee and was based on national, regional, and local information and market trends along with an extensive public outreach process. Hundreds of residents weighed in at group meetings, on surveys, in small groups, and in interviews. Case studies and best practices were discussed. Information was gathered, analyzed, and reported to the Steering Committee where goals and strategies were developed. There was a final goal setting and strategy session in January of 2016 that guided the consultant analysis in developing action plans. Below is a graphic depiction of the Mt. Oliver Plan Process.

*"You can always amend a big plan, but you can never expand a little one. I don't believe in little plans. I believe in plans big enough to meet a situation which we can't possibly foresee now."*

Harry S. Truman



BY THE  
NUMBERS



PUBLIC  
OUTREACH



ANALYSIS  
AND  
SYNTHESIS



VISION AND  
GOAL  
SETTING





BY THE NUMBERS

**People**  
**Population**  
**Mobility**  
**Density**  
**Age**  
**Race**  
**Households**  
**Education**  
**Income**  
**Housing**

*"You can have data without information,  
but you cannot have information without  
data."*

*Daniel Keys Moran*



## SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS



### BY THE NUMBERS

This section explores population and housing trends in Mt. Oliver and compares these trends to trends in the County, State, United States, neighboring municipalities, and comparable surrounding Pittsburgh neighborhoods.

Some sections also feature comparisons to Allegheny County municipalities with similar populations, services, budgets and demographics and, for purposes of this study, are designated as “comparable communities.”

**TABLE 1 – POPULATION 1900-2040**

YEAR	TOTAL POPULATION	TIME FRAME	COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE	DECENNIAL CHANGE
1900 (ACTUAL)	2,295			
1910 (ACTUAL) <sup>1</sup>	4,241	1900s	6.3%	84.8%
1920 (ACTUAL)	5,575	1910s	2.8%	31.5%
1930 (ACTUAL)	7,071	1920s	2.4%	26.8%
1940 (ACTUAL)	6,981	1930s	-0.1%	-1.3%
1950 (ACTUAL)	6,646	1940s	-0.5%	-4.8%
1960 (ACTUAL)	5,980	1950s	-1.1%	-10.0%
1970 (ACTUAL)	5,509	1960s	-0.8%	-7.9%
1980 (ACTUAL)	4,576	1970s	-1.8%	-16.9%
1990 (ACTUAL)	4,160	1980s	-0.9%	-9.1%
2000 (ACTUAL)	3,970	1990s	-0.5%	-4.6%
2010 (ACTUAL)	3,467	2000s	-1.3%	-12.7%
2020 (PROJECTED)	3,316	2010s	-0.4%	-4.4%
2030 (PROJECTED)	3,447	2020s	0.4%	4.0%
2040 (PROJECTED)	3,610	2030s	0.5%	4.7%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION (SPC)

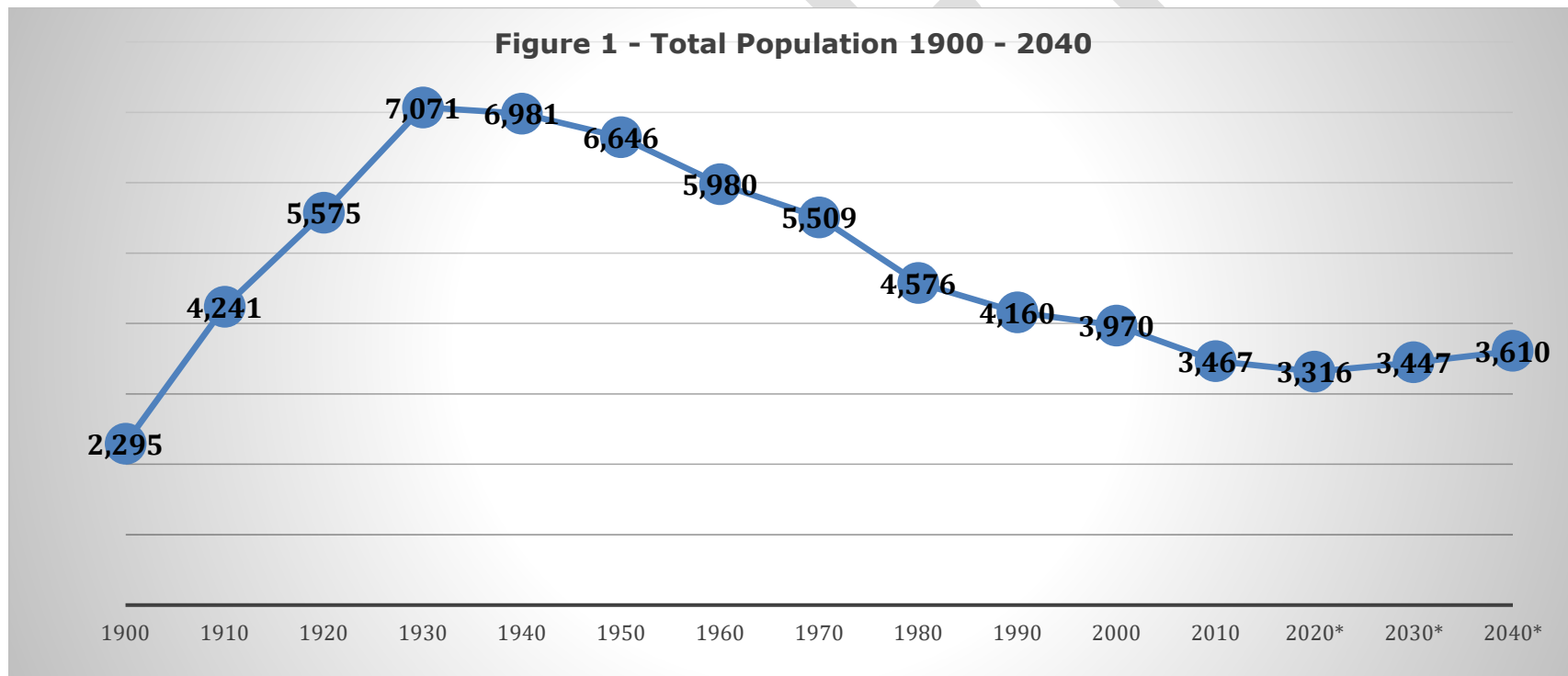
<sup>1</sup> Part of Lower St. Clair Borough annexed in 1904 (U.S. Census 1910).

**POPULATION**

As a densely populated, urban municipality, Mt. Oliver was a victim to the mid-twentieth century trend of middle-class Americans moving out of cities and into less crowded, more homogenous suburbs. Mt. Oliver's population peaked in 1930 at just over 7,000 residents, as shown in **Table 1** and **Figure 1**. Since 1930, the Borough experienced significant population decline, especially between 1950 and 1980 as the

region lost both jobs and residents. Again, between 2000 and 2010, population decline was particularly steep.

However, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) projects that the Borough's population will increase by around 200 individuals, or just over 6%, between 2010 and 2040. **Table 1** and **Figure 1** show the actual population changes between 1900 and 2010, and the SPC's projections through 2040.



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION (SPC)

Between 2000 and 2010, Mt. Oliver's population declined by almost 13%, which is a greater decline than neighboring communities in the Brownsville, Route 51 corridor. By comparison, Allegheny County's population shrunk by less than 5%. **Table 2** shows the actual

population in 2000 and 2010 and the projected changes in population through 2020 for Mt. Oliver, Brownsville Road – Route 51 communities, and Allegheny County, as estimated and projected by the SPC.

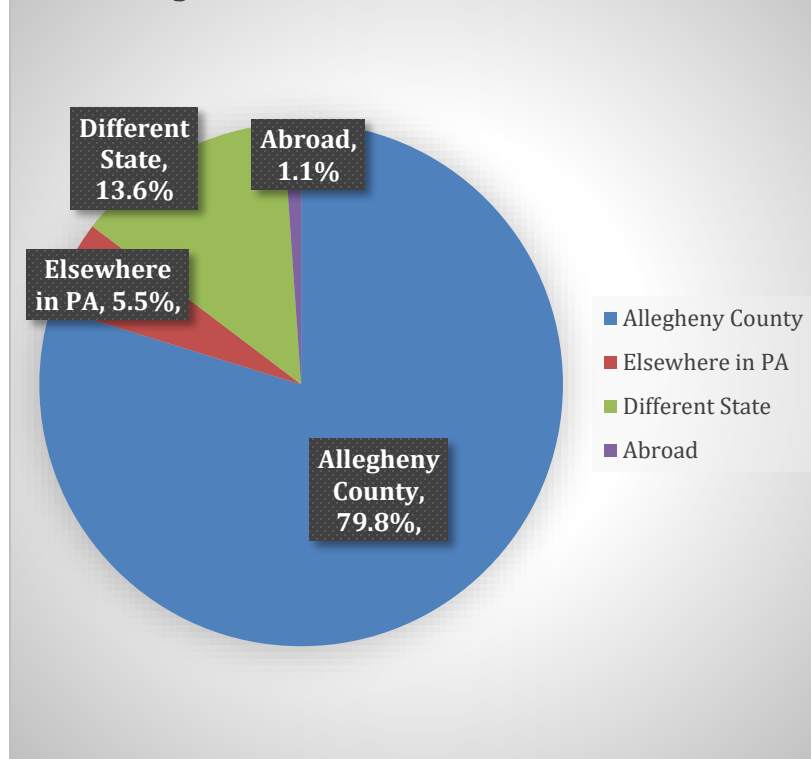
TABLE 2 – POPULATION COMPARISONS FOR NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES						
MUNICIPALITY	2000 (ACTUAL)	2010 (ACTUAL)	2020 (PROJECTED)	% CHANGE 2000 TO 2010	% CHANGE 2010 TO 2020	COMPOUND ANNUAL CHANGE 2000 TO 2020
MT. OLIVER	<b>3,970</b>	<b>3,467</b>	<b>3,316</b>	<b>-12.7%</b>	<b>-4.4%</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>
BALDWIN BOROUGH	19,999	19,622	20,738	-1.9%	5.7%	0.2%
BRENTWOOD	10,466	9,711	9,675	-7.2%	-0.4%	-0.4%
WHITEHALL	14,444	13,912	14,097	-3.7%	1.3%	-0.1%
PITTSBURGH	334,563	308,003	305,356	-7.9%	-0.9%	-0.5%
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	1,281,666	1,223,348	1,261,531	-4.6%	3.1%	-0.1%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU AND SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION (SPC)						

## MOBILITY

Over one-third,<sup>2</sup> or 36%, of Mt. Oliver's population in 2013 reported that they had moved into their current residence within the last year. The majority of people moving into residences in Mt. Oliver between 2012 and 2013 moved from elsewhere in Allegheny County. By

comparison, 21% of the City of Pittsburgh's population moved between 2012 and 2013. Mt. Oliver's mobility rate shows a significant amount of movement within the community and is reflective of the transient nature of the population.

<sup>2</sup> Because of Mt. Oliver's comparatively low population, U.S. Census estimates rely on a small sample to determine the percent of movers, which produces higher margins of error for this figure than in more populous geographies.

**Figure 2 - Percent of Total Movers 2013**

Nearly 80% of Mt. Oliver residents have moved from some other place in Allegheny County.

Mt. Oliver has substantially fewer owner-occupied dwellings, only 41% in 2013, compared to 49% in the City of Pittsburgh and 66% in Allegheny County. The high level of mobility, combined with the low numbers of owner-occupied dwellings, presents important challenges when dealing with a declining population and housing stock. **Table 3** and **Figure 2** show the rate of mobility and the origin of those who moved to Mt. Oliver.

**TABLE 3 - MOBILITY IN MT. OLIVER BOROUGH (2013)**

MOBILITY FACTORS		
POPULATION 1 YEAR & LONGER	3,372	
LIVED IN SAME HOUSE IN 2012	2,155	
LIVED IN DIFFERENT HOUSE IN 2012	1,217	
MOBILITY RATE (% MOVERS)	36.1%	
MOVED FROM	NUMBER	% OF TOTAL MOVERS
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	971	79.8%
ELSEWHERE IN PA	67	5.5%
DIFFERENT STATE	165	13.6%
ABROAD	13	1.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,217	100.0%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU		

**INCOME**

The median household income in Mt. Oliver in 2013 was \$25,536, which is less than half of median household incomes for the County, the State, the United States, and four of the nearby municipalities. In contrast, the 2013 median household income in the City of Pittsburgh was almost \$40,000. As shown in **Table 4**, Mt. Oliver's median income is also lower than the median for all neighboring municipalities.

**TABLE 4 – TRENDS IN MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

MUNICIPALITY	2000	2010	2013	% CHANGE 2000 TO 2013	COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE	
					2000 TO 2010	2010 TO 2013
<b>MT. OLIVER</b>	<b>37,866</b>	<b>33,827</b>	<b>25,536</b>	<b>-32.6%</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>	<b>-8.9%</b>
BALDWIN BOROUGH	55,130	51,829	51,625	-6.4%	-0.6%	-0.1%
BRENTWOOD	50,072	48,380	47,170	-5.8%	-0.3%	-0.8%
WHITEHALL	61,027	53,738	52,535	-13.9%	-1.3%	-0.8%
PITTSBURGH	38,675	38,480	39,195	1.3%	-0.1%	0.6%
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	51,836	51,238	51,366	-0.9%	-0.1%	0.1%
PENNSYLVANIA	54,259	53,842	52,548	-3.2%	-0.1%	-0.8%
U.S	57,041	55,462	53,046	-7.0%	-0.3%	-1.5%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU						





SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU AND ACS

A comparison was also done for comparable communities of similar population and demographics in other areas of Allegheny County. **Table 5** shows that Mt. Oliver households also have a

lower median income than other comparable communities in Allegheny County and that the change in income adjusted to 2013 dollars is -32% which is significant.

**TABLE 5 – TRENDS IN MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES  
(ADJUSTED FOR 2013 DOLLARS)**

MUNICIPALITY	2000	2010	2013	% CHANGE 2000 TO 2013	COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE	
					2000 TO 2010	2010 TO 2013
<b>MT. OLIVER</b>	<b>37,866</b>	<b>33,827</b>	<b>25,536</b>	<b>-32.6%</b>	<b>-1.1%</b>	<b>-8.9%</b>
BRACKENRIDGE	41,283	42,679	41,975	1.7%	0.3%	-0.6%
ETNA	42,529	36,787	38,728	-8.9%	-1.4%	1.7%
INGRAM	47,936	47,609	51,979	8.4%	-0.1%	3.0%
MILLVALE	35,866	38,197	35,776	-0.3%	0.6%	-2.2%
PITCAIRN	35,268	39,062	35,724	1.3%	1.0%	-2.9%
PORT VUE	43,055	39,228	41,282	-4.1%	-0.9%	1.7%
SHARPSBURG	30,069	32,145	31,585	5.0%	0.7%	-0.6%
SPRINGDALE	48,054	45,979	50,417	4.9%	-0.4%	3.1%
PITTSBURGH	38,675	38,480	39,195	1.3%	-0.1%	0.6%
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	51,836	51,238	51,366	-0.9%	-0.1%	0.1%
PENNSYLVANIA	54,259	53,842	52,548	-3.2%	-0.1%	-0.8%
U.S.	57,041	55,462	53,046	-7.0%	-0.3%	-1.5%

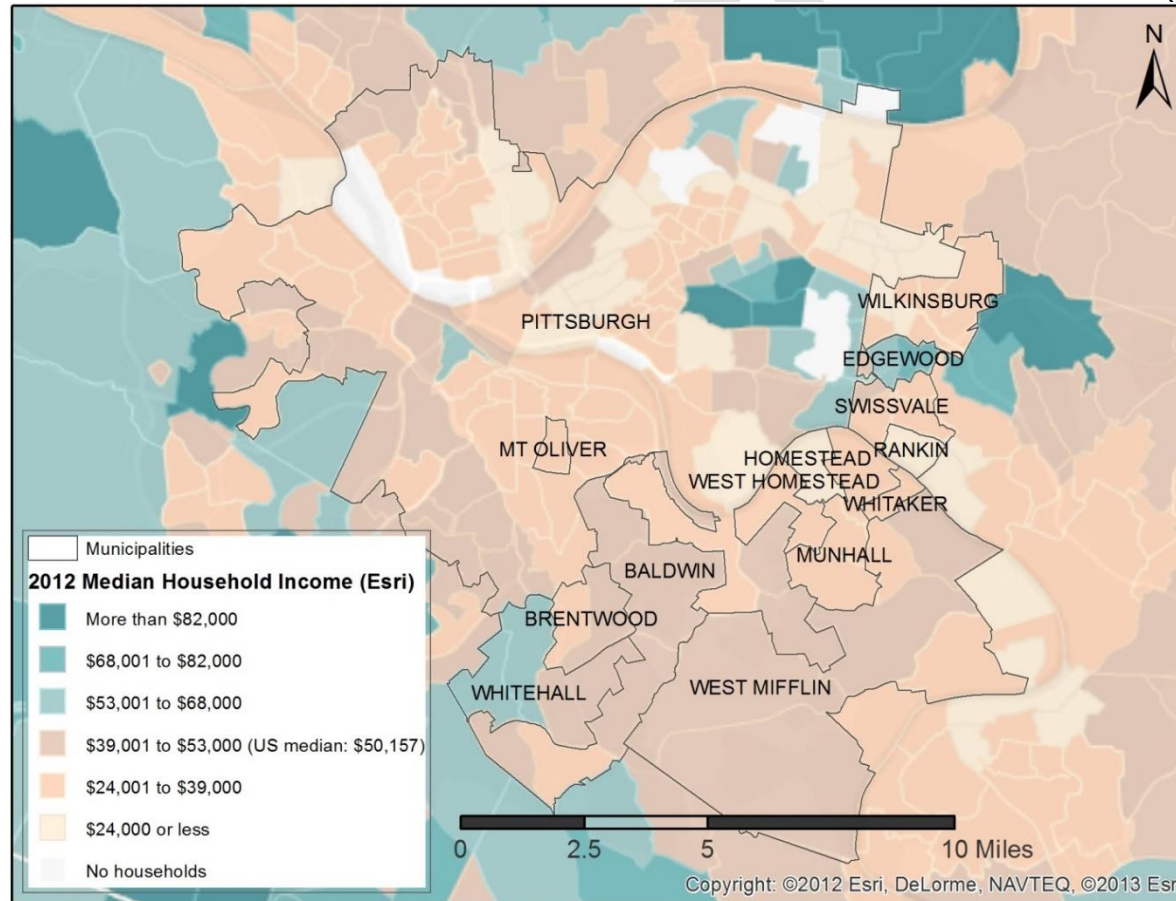
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU



**Map 1** depicts the geographic distribution of median household income in Mt. Oliver and in several Allegheny County municipalities. Mt. Oliver's median income falls within the same range as the Pittsburgh neighborhoods

immediately adjacent to the Borough, while municipalities along the Monongahela River tend to have lower median incomes and some municipalities along the City's eastern border have higher median incomes.

MAP 1 – MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN SEVERAL ALLEGHENY COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES (2012)

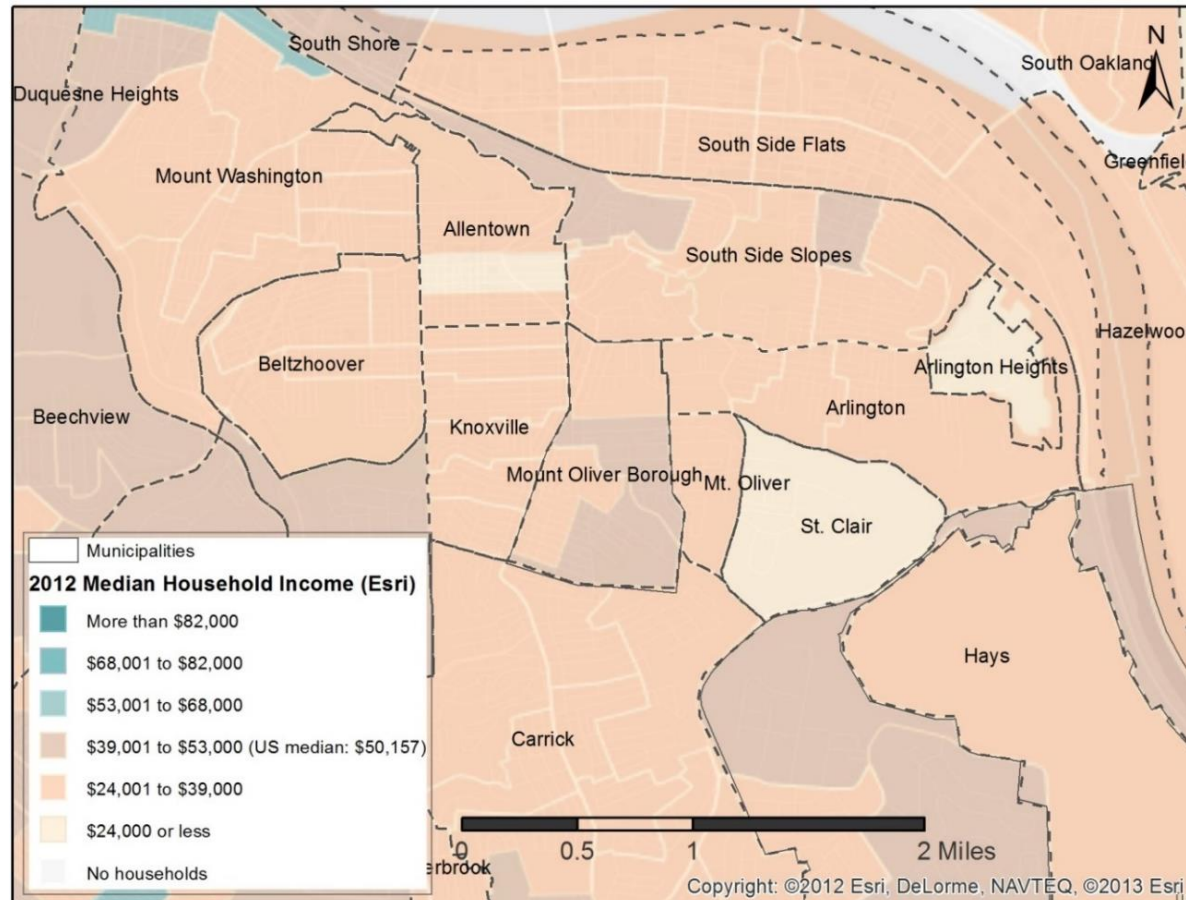


SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI), CITY OF PITTSBURGH, MAP PREPARED BY BREAN ASSOCIATES

**Map 2** illustrates median household income within the Borough and the City neighborhoods immediately adjacent to Mt. Oliver. Although **Table 5** shows that the Borough's median household income has decreased as the City's median household income has increased, the

map shows that median incomes in the Borough are comparable to those in the surrounding City neighborhoods. In the block groups south of Ormsby Avenue, median household incomes are even a bit higher than nearby City areas.

MAP 2 – MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOODS (2012)

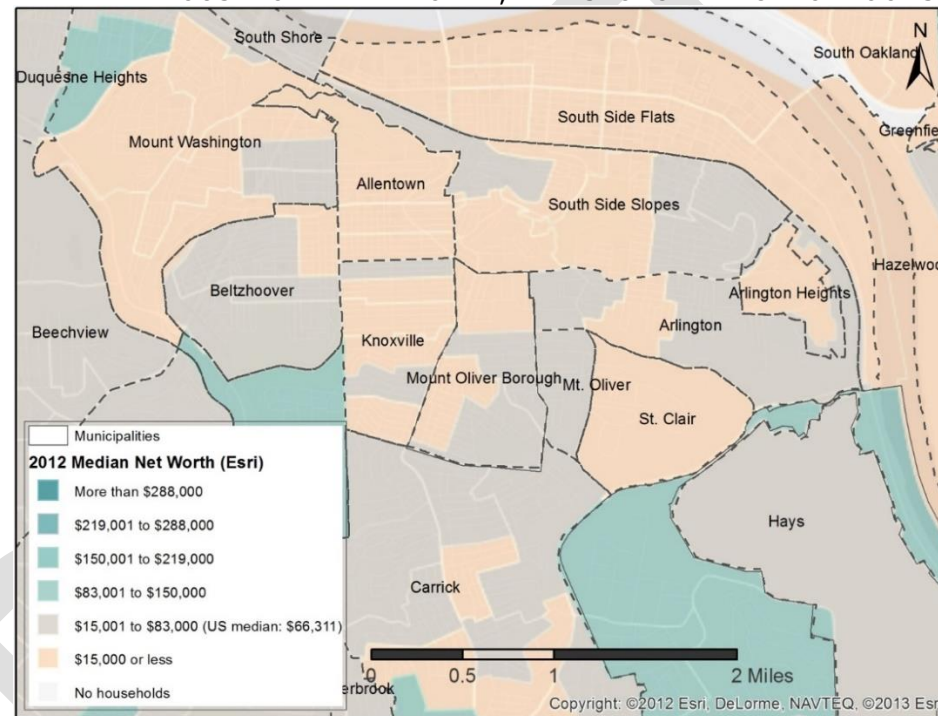


SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI), CITY OF PITTSBURGH, MAP PREPARED BY BREAN ASSOCIATES

**Map 3** provides the measure of “net worth” as opposed to income. This takes into account wealth that may be retained in investments in addition to earned income. In the block groups south of Ormsby Avenue, median

household net worth is higher than in nearby City areas.<sup>3</sup> This is influenced by a variety of factors, not the least of which may be that homeownership levels in Mt. Oliver tend to be lower than the City average.

MAP 3 – MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD NET WORTH, PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOODS (2012)



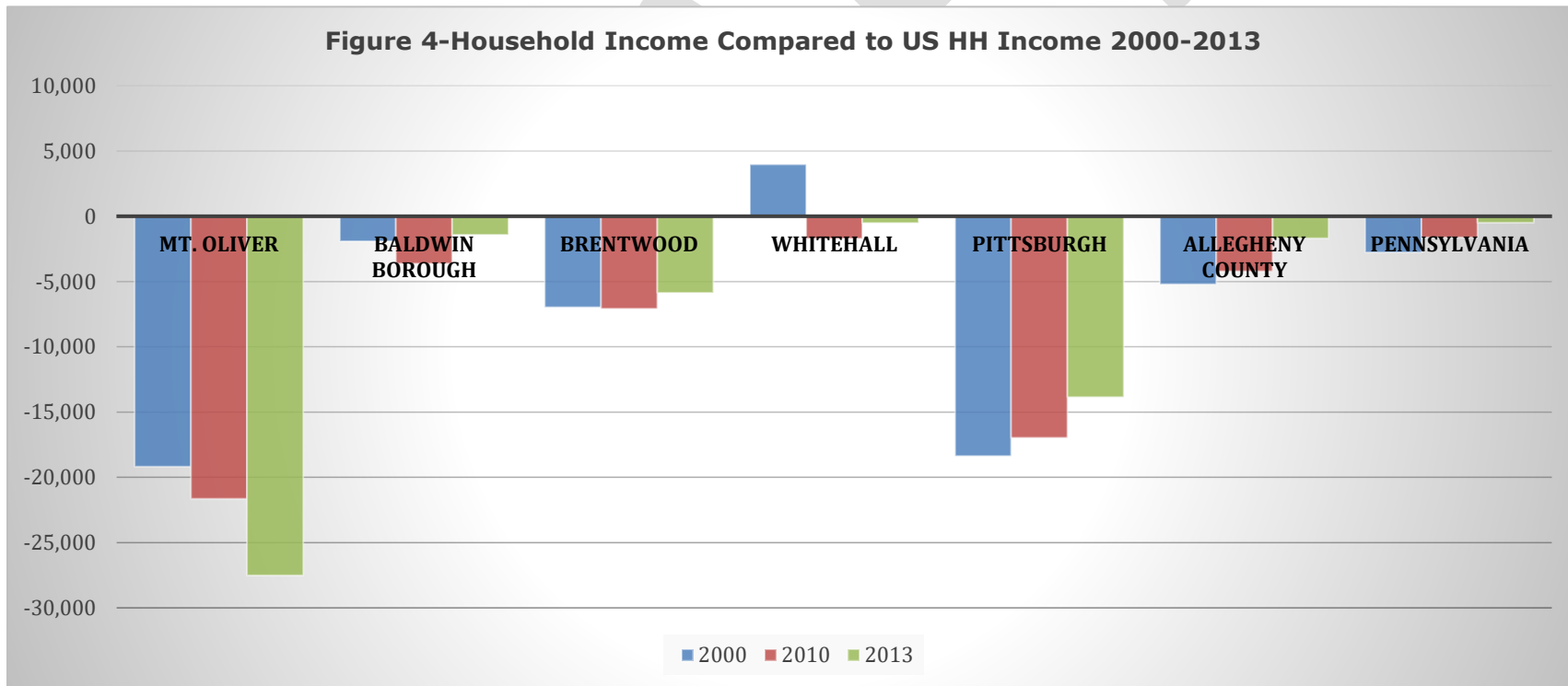
SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI), CITY OF PITTSBURGH, MAP PREPARED BY BREAN ASSOCIATES

<sup>3</sup> On household net worth, the U.S. Census Bureau writes, “Household net worth or wealth is an important defining factor of economic well-being in the United States. In times of economic hardship, such as unemployment, illness, or divorce, a person’s or household’s financial assets (e.g., savings accounts)

are an additional source of income to help pay expenses and bills. For individuals and households with a householder 65 years and older, wealth is also an important source of post-retirement income.”

Another key indicator of economic health is the relationship between median incomes locally and in the rest of the nation. While in the neighboring communities, the gap between median incomes and the U.S. median narrowed between 2000 and 2013, the gap widened significantly in Mt. Oliver. Among neighboring communities in 2000, the gap was widest in Mt. Oliver and the City of Pittsburgh compared to the U.S. median. This is especially significant when considering the fact that the U.S. median income fell (in 2013 Dollars) over

that same time period and Mt. Oliver income still lost ground. **Figure 4** shows the median household incomes in neighboring communities compared to the U.S. median. In the neighboring communities, the gap between the median household income and the U.S. median income narrowed. However, in Mt. Oliver the gap widened significantly.





**MEDIAN AGE**

Mt. Oliver has the youngest median age of all the neighboring communities.

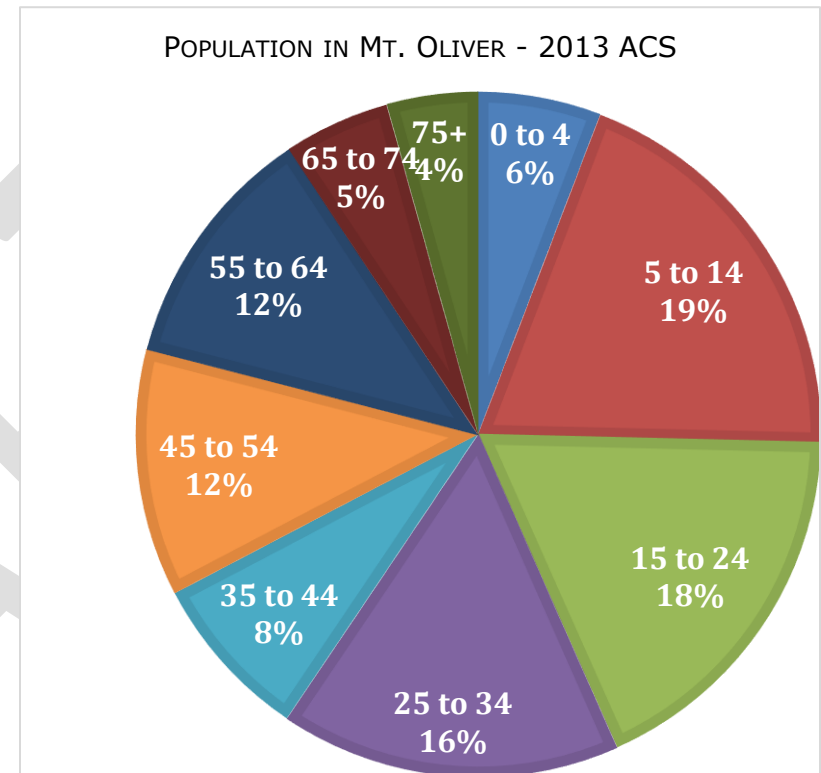
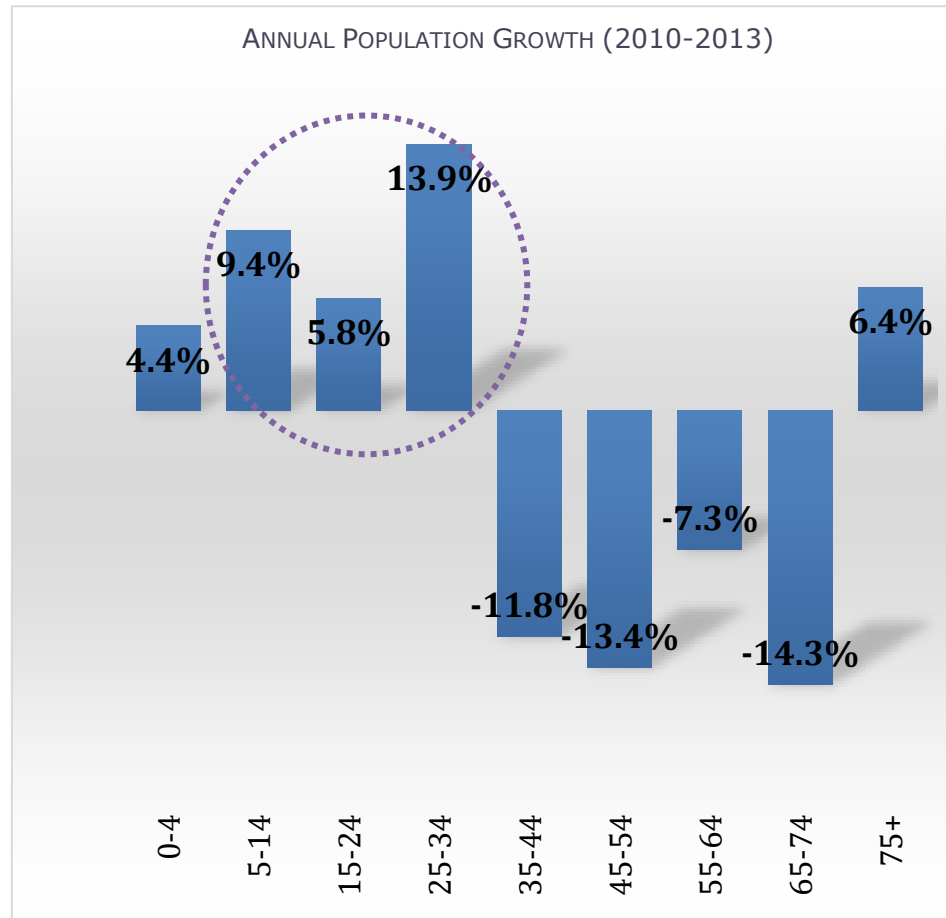
**Table 7** shows that as median ages in neighboring municipalities rose, the median age in Mt. Oliver fell between 2000 and 2013. As of 2013, the median age of Mt. Oliver residents at 29.8 is over seven years younger than the U.S. median and almost four years younger than the City of Pittsburgh's median.<sup>4</sup> Some of this change is due to the increasing number of children under the age of 18 which is pushing the median age lower and lower.

**TABLE 7 - MEDIAN AGE OF NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES**

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>% CHANGE 2000 TO 2010</b>	<b>% CHANGE 2010 TO 2013</b>	<b>COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE 2000 TO 2013</b>
MT. OLIVER	36.1	39.8	29.8	10.2%	-25.1%	-1.5%
BALDWIN BOROUGH	42.6	44.6	44.0	4.7%	-1.3%	0.2%
BRENTWOOD	38.8	38.5	40.4	-0.8%	4.9%	0.3%
WHITEHALL	43.8	44.6	44.6	1.8%	0.0%	0.1%
PITTSBURGH	35.5	34.7	33.4	-2.3%	-3.7%	-0.5%
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	39.6	41.3	41.1	4.3%	-0.5%	0.3%
PENNSYLVANIA	38.0	40.1	40.3	5.5%	0.5%	0.5%
U.S.	35.3	37.9	37.3	7.4%	-1.6%	0.4%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU						

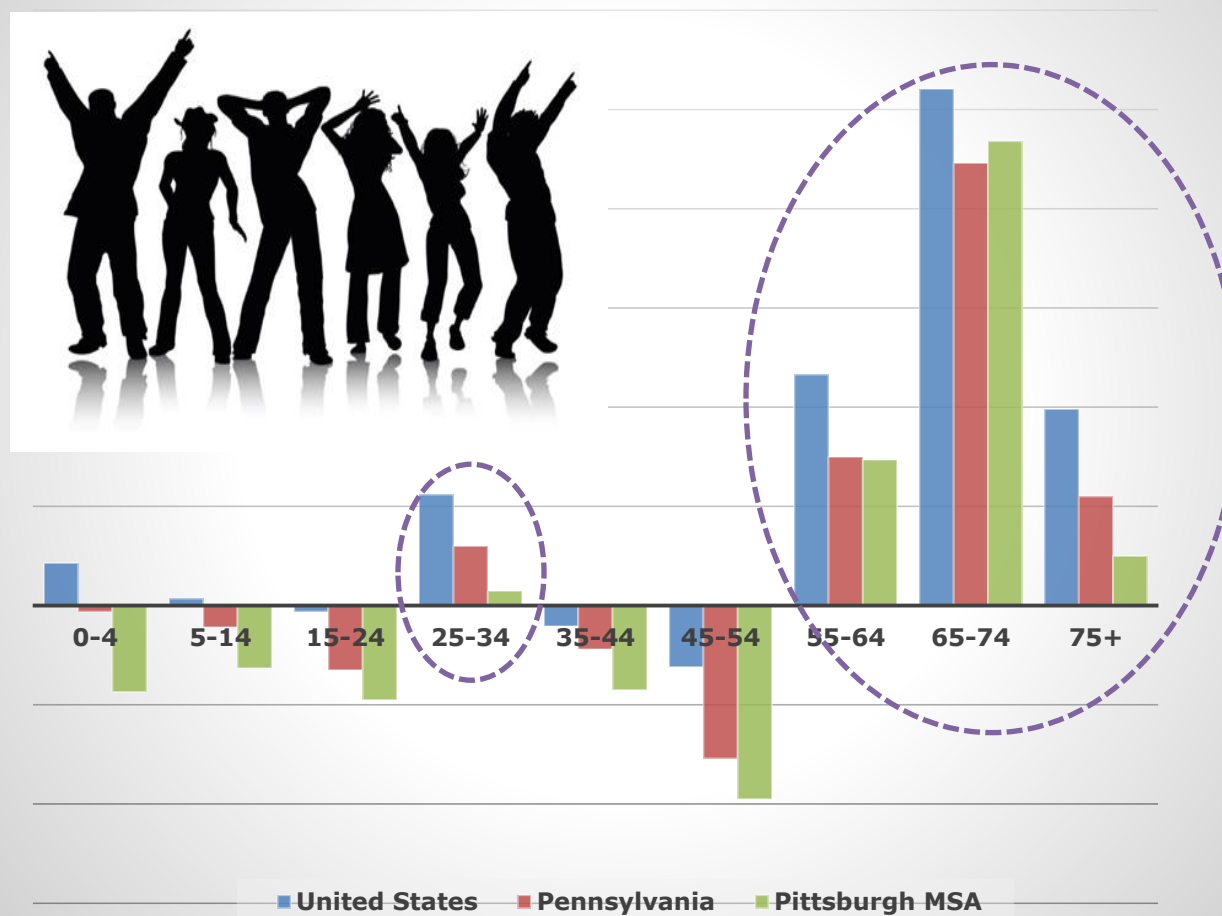
<sup>4</sup> A small sample-size can create a large margin of error for Mt. Oliver.

The fastest growing population in Mt. Oliver is the 25-34 age group, which is commonly identified as “the Young Workforce” group. Most other age groups in Mt. Oliver are actually decreasing but this group has demonstrated consistent growth. About half of the population in Mt. Oliver is 25 years of age or younger.



In order to identify opportunities in the residential and commercial markets, it is also necessary to understand the regional and national trends in population growth. **Figure 5** provides information related to population growth in the region. The fastest growing population in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Service Area (MSA) is the Young Empty Nesters (55-64) and the Older Empty Nesters (65-74). The Young Workforce (25-34) age group is also expected to increase slightly.

FIGURE 5 - PROJECTED ANNUALIZED PERCENTAGE CHANGE BY AGE GROUP 2013-2018



SOURCE: "SOCIO-ECONOMIC TRENDS AND FUTURE LAND USE IMPLICATIONS"- PRESENTED BY 4WARD PLANNING AT THE 2013 PA PLANNING ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE, ANALYSIS BY GRS

## HOUSEHOLDS

According to the census, a household is defined as all individuals who occupy a single housing unit. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated people who share living quarters. A family household is defined as "a householder and one or more other people living in the same household who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption." Households are further classified as "married-couple family;" "male householder, no wife present;" "female householder, no husband present;" and "nonfamily household." One person in each household is designated as the householder, usually the person in whose name the home is owned or rented.

The definition for each of these household types is as follows:

**Married-couple family** – This category includes a family in which the householder and his or her spouse are enumerated as members of the same household.

**Male householder, no wife present.** This category includes a family with a male maintaining a household with no wife of the householder present.

**Female householder, no husband present** – This category includes a family with a female maintaining a household with no husband of the householder present.

**Nonfamily household** – This category includes a householder living alone or with nonrelatives only.

As shown in **Table 8**, social characteristics related to households in Mt. Oliver have changed in the past thirteen years, with the percentage of family households declining almost four percentage points between 2000 and 2013. Interestingly, family households with children under 18 have stayed constant in the same time period. Whereas more families used to be married, there

## Non-Household Family Formation Rising

AN ANNUAL CENSUS BUREAU REPORT SHOWED THAT U.S. HOUSEHOLD FORMATION HAS BEEN TERRIBLY SLOW WITH JUST 476,000 HOUSEHOLDS ADDED LAST YEAR. A NEW SURVEY NOW REVEALS THAT NON-FAMILY HOUSEHOLD FORMATIONS ARE ON THE RISE WITH MORE RELATIVES ADDED TO THE FAMILY HOMES. HOUSEHOLD FORMATION IS A MAJOR INDICATOR OF ECONOMIC HEALTH. USUALLY, WHEN THE ECONOMY IS SLOW, MORE PEOPLE START LIVING TOGETHER WITH ADULT CHILDREN MOVING INTO THEIR PARENTS' HOMES OR GETTING A ROOMMATE TO SPLIT THE COST OF RENTING A PLACE.

THE NEW REPORT BY HOUSING ECONOMIST THOMAS LAWLER REVEALED THAT IT'S NOT JUST THE ADULT CHILDREN MOVING INTO THEIR PARENTS' HOUSE; RELATIVES AND IN-LAWS HAVE ALSO STARTED LIVING TOGETHER. LAWLER'S SURVEY, WHICH SOURCED DATA FROM THE CENSUS BUREAU HOUSEHOLD FORMATION REPORT, FOUND THAT THE NUMBER OF RELATIVES AND IN-LAWS ADDED TO FAMILY HOMES IN 2013 WENT UP TWO-FOLD. THE NUMBER OF NON-RELATIVES ADDED TO A HOUSEHOLD WENT UP AS WELL. THE YEAR 2013 SAW THE FORMATION OF 164,000 NEW NON-FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS (FRIENDS, ROOMMATES) WHEN COMPARED TO THE 65,000 RECORDED BETWEEN 2010 AND 2012.

*SOURCE: REALTY TODAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2014*

has been a steady rise in single-male-headed households and single female-headed households. This finding is in line with current research which suggests that low-income couples with children have become less likely to get married than they were in previous decades.<sup>5</sup> While as recently as 2000 the typical Mt. Oliver family was raising children as a married couple, by 2013 that picture had changed. Research suggests that low-income families are more likely to be unmarried, co-habiting adults with more transient relationships than in previous years.

**TABLE 8 - TRENDS IN MT. OLIVER FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS**

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	2000	2010	2013
FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS	988	763	738
FAMILY HOUSEHOLDS (% OF ALL HOUSEHOLDS)	58.7%	50.3%	54.8%
WITH OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 (% OF FAMILIES)	47.6%	38.7%	47.1%
MARRIED COUPLES (% OF FAMILIES)	60.5%	60.7%	41.9%
MALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS (% OF FAMILIES)	7.4%	21.4%	18.2%
FEMALE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS (% OF FAMILIES)	32.1%	18.0%	40.0%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU			

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Families in Mt. Oliver are significantly larger, on average, than in any of the neighboring municipalities, the County, or Pennsylvania. However, they are similar to the national family size of 3.22 persons. As of 2013, Mt. Oliver families are an average of 3.51 people compared to 2.92 in the City of Pittsburgh. Mt. Oliver also has the largest household size of any of the neighboring municipalities. These comparisons are illustrated in **Table**



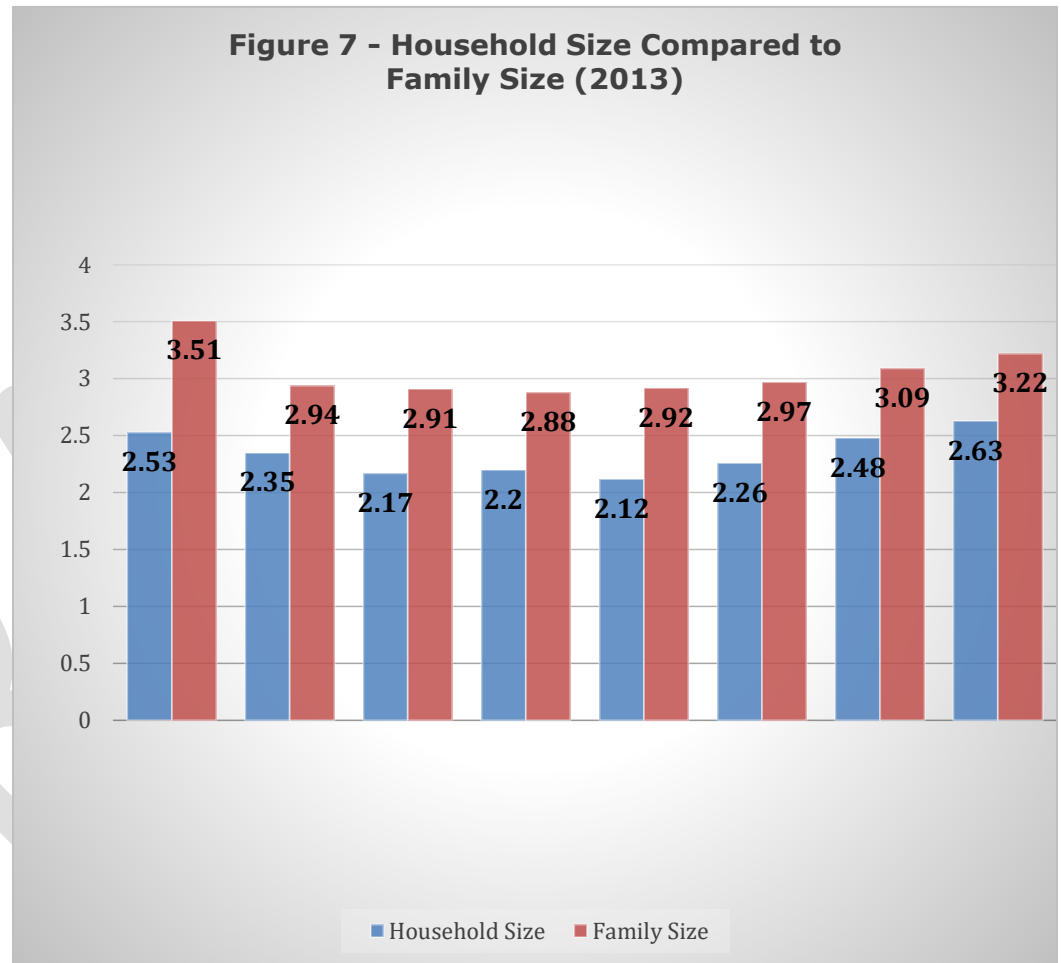
**9 and Figure 7.** Compared to neighboring municipalities, Mt. Oliver has a similar share of family households. The percentage of married-couple families is lower than the County, State, United States, and the neighboring municipalities. Mt. Oliver has a greater proportion of single mothers and single fathers than nearby communities. **Table 10** provides a comprehensive comparison of many of the demographic trends

<sup>5</sup> Carbone, June and Naomi Cahn. *Marriage Markets: How Inequality is Remaking the American Family*. New York: Oxford English Press, 2014.

**TABLE 9 - COMPARISON OF HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY SIZE (2013)**

MUNICIPALITY	AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE	AVERAGE FAMILY SIZE
MT. OLIVER	2.53	3.51
BALDWIN BOROUGH	2.35	2.94
BRENTWOOD	2.17	2.91
WHITEHALL	2.20	2.88
PITTSBURGH	2.12	2.92
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	2.26	2.97
PENNSYLVANIA	2.48	3.09
UNITED STATES	2.63	3.22

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

**Figure 7 - Household Size Compared to Family Size (2013)**

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU



TABLE 10 – DETAILED COMPARISONS OF HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS (2013)

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	MT. OLIVER	BALDWIN BOROUGH	BRENTWOOD	WHITEHALL	PITTSBURGH	ALLEGHENY COUNTY	PENNSYLVANIA	UNITED STATES
<b>Total households</b>	1,346	8,396	4,441	6,188	133,005	526,004	4,958,427	115,610,216
<b>Family households (HHs)</b>	54.8	65.6	54.6	61.6	46.5	57.9	64.8	66.4
<b>Families with children (HHs)</b>	25.9	24.6	20.9	23.5	18.5	23.3	26.6	29.6
<b>Married-couple families (HHs)</b>	23	48.9	38.4	46.9	28.4	42.5	48.6	48.7
<b>Married couples with children (HHs)</b>	8.4	17.3	11.6	17.6	9	15.7	18.2	20
<b>Married couples with children (Married couples)</b>	36.5	35.4	30.2	37.5	31.7	36.9	37.4	41.1
<b>Single male householder (HHs)</b>	10	3.8	3.3	4.1	3.8	3.6	4.3	4.7
<b>Single fathers (Families)</b>	3	1	1.3	2.1	1.7	1.5	2	2.3
<b>Single fathers (Male Householders)</b>	30	26.3	39.4	51.2	44.7	41.7	46.5	48.9
<b>Single female householder (HHs)</b>	21.9	12.9	13	10.5	14.3	11.8	11.9	13
<b>Single mothers (Families)</b>	14.4	6.2	8	3.8	7.7	6	6.4	7.3

TABLE 10 – DETAILED COMPARISONS OF HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS (2013)

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	MT. OLIVER	BALDWIN BOROUGH	BRENTWOOD	WHITEHALL	PITTSBURGH	ALLEGHENY COUNTY	PENNSYLVANIA	UNITED STATES
<b>Single mothers (Female Householders)</b>	65.8	48.1	61.5	36.2	53.8	50.8	53.8	56.2
<b>Nonfamily households (HHs)</b>	45.2	34.4	45.4	38.4	53.5	42.1	35.2	33.6
<b>Householder living alone (HHs)</b>	40.1	30.2	38	35.7	41.7	35.4	29.5	27.5
<b>Households with one or more people under 18 years (HHs)</b>	31.6	25.3	23.1	24	21	25.3	29.4	32.9
<b>Households with one or more people 65 years and over (HHs)</b>	18	33	24.1	33	24.3	28.4	28.4	25.5
<b>Seniors Living Alone (HHs)</b>	7.9	13.8	12.6	15.2	12.7	13.3	11.8	9.8
<b>SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU</b>								

## DEPENDENT POPULATIONS

Communities depend on working-age residents to support other residents who are not currently participating in the labor force. An age dependency ratio is one way to measure the pressure on the working-age population in a community. The dependency ratios shown in **Table 11** show the proportion of dependents – either seniors or youth under 18 – per 100 working-age residents.

Dependency ratios can be broken into two groups: senior dependency ratios and child dependency ratios. Mt. Oliver is home to many more children per working

adult than in neighboring communities, but many fewer seniors than neighboring municipalities.

Mt. Oliver's age dependency ratio is higher than the County, Pennsylvania, the United States, and all but one of the neighboring communities. However, the senior dependency is lower than the County, Pennsylvania, the United States and all of its neighboring communities. This may suggest that Mt. Oliver residents have less disposable income than their neighbors because of their obligations to the youth under 18.

TABLE 11 - AGE DEPENDENCY RATIOS (2013)			
	AGE DEPENDENCY RATIO	SENIOR DEPENDENCY RATIO	CHILD DEPENDENCY RATIO
MOUNT OLIVER	68.4	15.6	52.8
BALDWIN BOROUGH	64.8	32.5	32.3
BRENTWOOD	47.7	21.5	26.2
WHITEHALL	71.8	38.6	33.2
PITTSBURGH	43.8	20.2	23.6
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	57.1	26.5	30.6
PENNSYLVANIA	59.8	25.2	34.7
UNITED STATES	59.1	21.4	37.7
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU			

## SENIORS

Pennsylvania has a greater proportion of seniors than the United States as a whole, and the senior population is growing. In Mt. Oliver, however, the senior population is smaller in proportion than the senior population in the County, Pennsylvania, United States, and neighboring communities. The senior population actually shrunk about 3.2% between 2000 and 2013. **Table 12** shows that there are fewer households with senior members in Mt. Oliver than any of the nearby communities, while **Table 13** indicates that the Borough has a greater percentage of children households than other communities.



TABLE 12 – DEPENDENT POPULATIONS – SENIORS 65+

MUNICIPALITY	2000	2010	2013	% CHANGE 2000 TO 2010	% CHANGE 2010 TO 2013	COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE 2000 TO 2013
MT. OLIVER	14.1%	11.4%	9.3%	-19.1%	-18.4%	-3.2%
BALDWIN BOROUGH	21.0%	19.6%	19.7%	-6.7%	0.5%	-0.5%
BRENTWOOD	17.8%	14.8%	14.6%	-16.9%	-1.4%	-1.5%
WHITEHALL	24.2%	22.9%	22.4%	-5.4%	-2.2%	-0.6%
PITTSBURGH	16.4%	14.6%	14.1%	-11.0%	-3.4%	-1.2%
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	17.8%	16.8%	16.9%	-5.6%	0.6%	-0.4%
PENNSYLVANIA	15.6%	15.4%	15.7%	-1.3%	1.9%	0.0%
U.S.	12.4%	13.8%	13.4%	11.3%	-2.9%	0.6%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU						

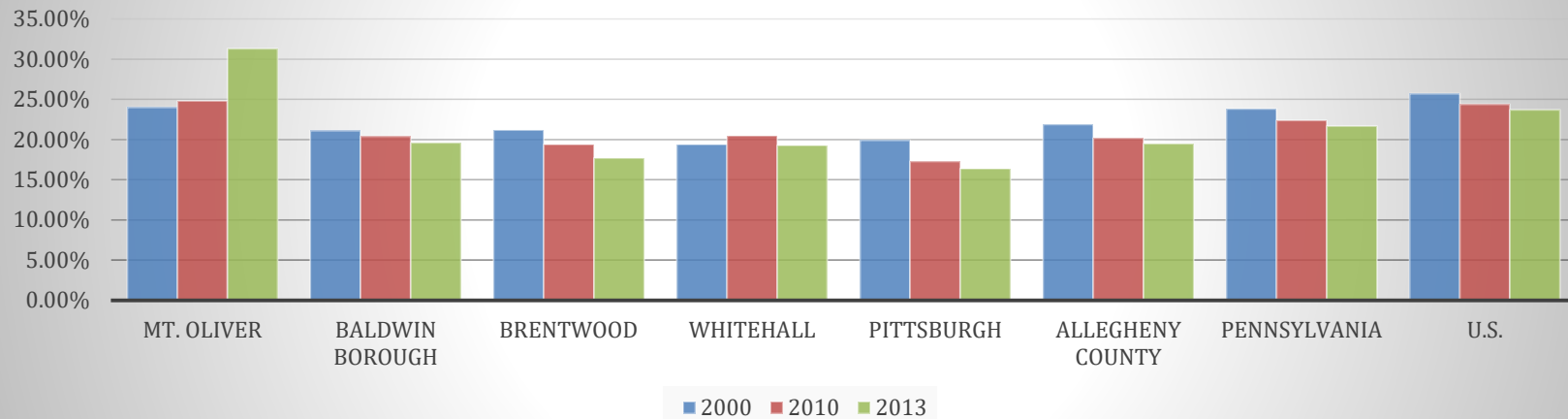
**CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

As of 2013, Mt. Oliver has a greater proportion of children in its population than the County, Pennsylvania, the United States, and nearby municipalities. In addition, the percentage of children in Mt. Oliver grew significantly from 2000 to 2013, as shown in **Table 13** and **Figure 8**. It should be noted that the proportion of children in the population is roughly double in Mt. Oliver to the City of Pittsburgh. Finally, **Table 14** illustrates that children in Mt. Oliver are more likely to grow up in single-parent households than children in neighboring communities.

**TABLE 13 – DEPENDENT POPULATIONS - YOUTH UNDER 18**

MUNICIPALITY	2000	2010	2013	% CHANGE 2000 TO 2010	% CHANGE 2010 TO 2013	COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE 2000 TO 2013
MT. OLIVER	24.0%	24.8%	31.3%	3.3%	26.2%	2.1%
BALDWIN BOROUGH	21.1%	20.4%	19.6%	-3.3%	-3.9%	-0.6%
BRENTWOOD	21.2%	19.4%	17.7%	-8.5%	-8.8%	-1.4%
WHITEHALL	19.4%	20.5%	19.3%	5.7%	-5.9%	0.0%
PITTSBURGH	19.9%	17.3%	16.4%	-13.1%	-5.2%	-1.5%
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	21.9%	20.2%	19.5%	-7.8%	-3.5%	-0.9%
PENNSYLVANIA	23.8%	22.4%	21.7%	-5.9%	-3.1%	-0.7%
U.S.	25.7%	24.4%	23.7%	-5.1%	-2.9%	-0.6%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU						



**Figure 8 - Population Under Age 18**

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

**TABLE 14 - FAMILIES RAISING CHILDREN (2013)**

MUNICIPALITY	FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN	MARRIED COUPLES	SINGLE MEN	SINGLE WOMEN
MT. OLIVER	349	32.4%	11.6%	55.6%
BALDWIN BOROUGH	2,065	70.3%	4.1%	25.2%
BRENTWOOD	928	55.5%	6.2%	38.3%
WHITEHALL	1,454	74.9%	8.9%	16.2%
PITTSBURGH	24,606	48.6%	9.2%	41.6%
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	122,559	67.4%	6.4%	25.8%
PENNSYLVANIA	1,318,942	68.4%	7.5%	24.1%
UNITED STATES	34,220,624	67.6%	7.8%	24.7%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

**RACIAL/ETHNIC DIVERSITY**

Racial and ethnic diversity in Mt. Oliver is considerably greater than the City of Pittsburgh and neighboring municipalities, as shown in **Table 15**. The non-white proportion of the population in Mt. Oliver almost tripled between 2000 and 2013 from 16% to 45.8%. This rate

of growth is much greater than the County, Pennsylvania, the United States, or the City of Pittsburgh.

TABLE 15 - TRENDS IN RACIAL DIVERSITY						
MUNICIPALITY	2000	2009	2013	% CHANGE 2000 TO 2013	COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE 2000 TO 2009	COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE 2009 TO 2013
MT. OLIVER	16.3%	24.9%	45.8%	181.0%	4.8%	16.5%
BALDWIN BOROUGH	3.8%	7.8%	10.2%	168.4%	8.3%	6.9%
BRENTWOOD	2.1%	2.6%	8.2%	290.5%	2.4%	33.3%
PITTSBURGH	32.4%	32.1%	33.7%	4.0%	-0.1%	1.2%
WHITEHALL	3.4%	3.4%	11.1%	226.5%	0.0%	34.4%
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	15.6%	17.0%	18.6%	19.2%	1.0%	2.3%
PENNSYLVANIA	14.6%	16.2%	17.8%	21.9%	1.2%	2.4%
UNITED STATES	24.8%	25.5%	30.0%	21.0%	0.3%	4.1%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU						
*NON-WHITE POPULATION OR TWO OR MORE RACES						

**Table 16 and Figure 9** show the distribution of race in Mt. Oliver and the neighboring communities including details about the makeup of the non-white population. Though the non-white population grew significantly between 2000 and 2013, the community is still comprised of a majority of white residents. As in most of the United States, Pennsylvania, and especially Allegheny County, the majority of the non-white population in Mt. Oliver identifies as “black” for purposes of the census. Black residents represent

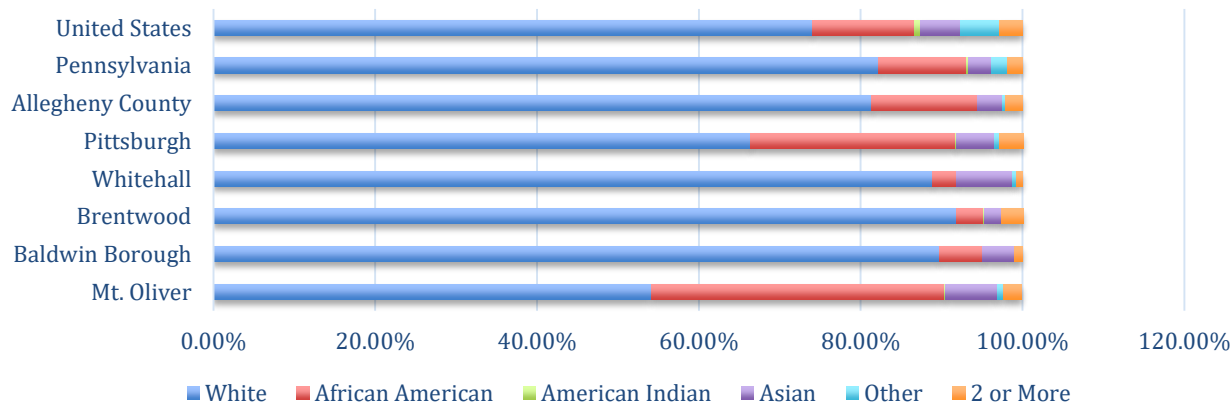
36% of Mt. Oliver’s population and approximately 80% of the non-white population. Mt. Oliver is also home to a significant Asian population, which represents 6.4% of the total population and 14% of the non-white population. Diversity and immigration trends make Mt. Oliver much more like the rest of the United States than its neighboring communities.

Mt. Oliver's non-white proportion of the population is slightly higher than the City of Pittsburgh. More suburban, later-developed communities like Baldwin, Brentwood, and Whitehall have much smaller non-white populations as shown in **Table 16**.

<b>MUNICIPALITY</b>	<b>WHITE</b>	<b>BLACK</b>	<b>AMERICAN INDIAN</b>	<b>ASIAN</b>	<b>OTHER</b>	<b>TWO OR MORE RACES</b>
MT. OLIVER	54.1%	36.3%	0.1%	6.4%	0.7%	2.3%
BALDWIN BOROUGH	89.8%	5.3%	0.0%	3.9%	0.0%	1.0%
BRENTWOOD	91.9%	3.3%	0.1%	2.1%	0.0%	2.7%
WHITEHALL	88.9%	3.0%	0.0%	6.9%	0.5%	0.7%
PITTSBURGH	66.4%	25.3%	0.2%	4.7%	0.6%	2.9%
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	81.4%	13.0%	0.1%	3.0%	0.4%	2.1%
PENNSYLVANIA	82.2%	10.9%	0.2%	2.9%	1.9%	1.9%
UNITED STATES	74.0%	12.6%	0.8%	4.9%	4.9%	2.8%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

**Figure 9 - Distribution of Race 2013**



## **DIVERSITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**

VIBRANT PITTSBURGH, A BUSINESS LEADERS GROUP ESTABLISHED TO PROMOTE DIVERSITY IN THE REGION REPORTED THAT ONLY 11.6% OF THE CURRENT WORKFORCE IN THE PITTSBURGH MSA OF 2.3 MILLION WORKERS ARE MINORITIES WHICH IS WELL BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 26.1%.

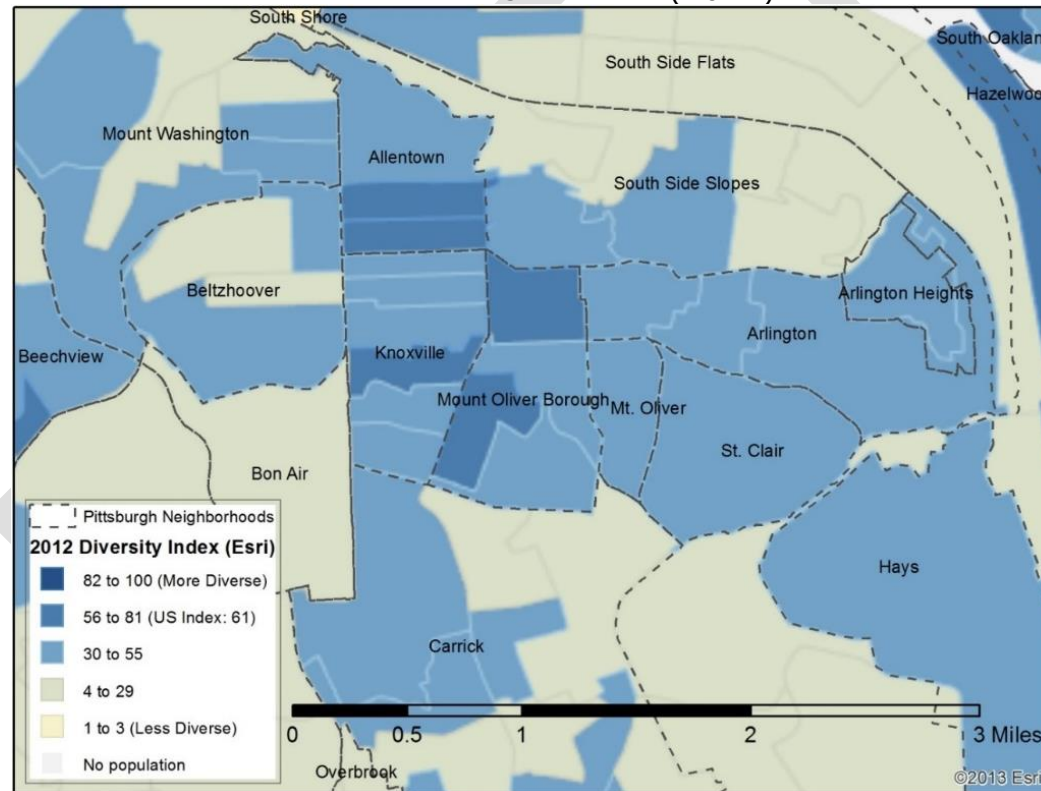
"DIVERSITY IS ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL TO ECONOMIC GROWTH . . . TO BRINGING NEW IDEAS, NEW APPROACHES," SAID SUNIL WADHWANI, CO-CHAIR OF VIBRANT PITTSBURGH AND CHAIRMAN OF IGATE CORP., A COMPUTER SERVICES AND OUTSOURCING PROVIDER. VIBRANT PITTSBURGH LEADERS HAVE A VISION FOR THE REGION OF TRUE INCLUSIVENESS.

JOE NAPSHA, TRIB LIVE

**Map 4** shows the diversity index in Mt. Oliver compared to Pittsburgh neighborhoods. The diversity index measures the probability that two people from the same geographic area will belong to different racial or ethnic groups. The higher the index, the greater the likelihood that two people will belong to different racial or ethnic groups. Although there are a multitude of measures of diversity, this particular

measure refers only to racial and ethnic diversity. According to ESRI's 2012 data, the diversity index for Mt. Oliver as a whole is 54, which means that there is a 54% chance that two persons, chosen at random around Mt. Oliver, belong to different race or ethnic groups. Mt. Oliver's block groups have comparable diversity index scores to those in Pittsburgh's Hilltop neighborhoods.

MAP 4 – DIVERSITY INDEX (2012)



SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI), CITY OF PITTSBURGH,  
MAP PREPARED BY BREAN ASSOCIATES

**EDUCATION**

Allegheny County's population has higher educational attainment rates than Pennsylvania as a whole. This is not true for the Mt. Oliver residents. According to 2013 estimates, only 78.1% of Mt. Oliver residents have at least a high school diploma, 48% have some college education, and 13% have received a bachelor's degree or higher. These percentages are much lower than those in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, the United States, and nearby

municipalities. Of the neighboring communities, Mt. Oliver has the highest percentage of residents without a high school diploma. This factor contributes to Mt. Oliver residents having a harder time finding employment in the region and having lower incomes.

**Table 17** shows the Borough's educational attainment compared to neighboring municipalities, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, and the United States.

TABLE 17 - EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT – POPULATION AGE 25+ (2013)									
MUNICIPALITY	POPULATION 25 YEARS AND OVER	NO HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE (OR EQUIVALENT)	SOME COLLEGE	ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	BACHELOR'S DEGREE	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR	BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR
MT. OLIVER	1,927	21.9	34.8	23.0	7.8	5.0	7.5	78.1	12.5
BALDWIN BOROUGH	14,412	8.7	39.0	18.2	11.1	15.2	7.8	91.3	23.0
BRENTWOOD	7,049	6.8	36.0	19.6	12.7	18.8	6.1	93.2	24.9
WHITEHALL	10,362	8.2	34.5	14.5	9.1	20.8	12.9	91.8	33.7
PITTSBURGH	201,614	9.6	29.9	17.1	7.9	18.1	17.4	90.4	35.5
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	866,479	7.1	31.0	17.0	8.9	21.2	14.7	92.9	35.9
PENNSYLVANIA	8,712,762	11.4	37.0	16.5	7.6	16.9	10.7	88.7	27.5
UNITED STATES	206,587,852	13.9	28.1	21.2	7.8	18.0	10.8	86.0	28.8
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU									



School-age children in Mt. Oliver attend Pittsburgh Public Schools following either the Pittsburgh Public Schools geographic feeder patterns, applying for magnet school enrollment, or attending private schools. Elementary and junior high school students attend Arlington Pre-K-2 and Arlington 3-8. Older students attend Carrick High School 9-12. Students of all ages can also attend Pittsburgh Online Academy or apply for magnet school enrollment.

According to 2013-2014 PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment) tests, average scores for the elementary students ranked in the bottom four in each subject (Math, Reading, Science, and Writing), as shown in **Figure 10. Table 18** shows how Arlington students' scores compare to those at other K-8 schools in the district. Three other K-8 schools – King, Langley, and Morrow – also reported low scores across all subjects.

<b>TABLE 18 – PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS K-8 PSSA SCORES ADVANCED OR PROFICIENT (2013-2014)</b>				
<b>SCHOOL*</b>	<b>READING</b>	<b>MATH</b>	<b>SCIENCE</b>	<b>WRITING</b>
<b>ARLINGTON PRE-K-8</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>42%</b>
BROOKLINE PRE-K-8	61%	74%	55%	70%
CARMALT PRE-K-8	61%	66%	54%	69%
COLFAX K-8	73%	80%	62%	75%
GREENFIELD K-8	66%	67%	61%	64%
KING PRE-K-8	36%	49%	45%	27%
LANGLEY K-8	39%	43%	36%	28%
MANCHESTER PRE-K-8	46%	57%	42%	31%
MIFFLIN PRE-K-8	57%	66%	47%	57%
MORROW PRE-K-8	38%	50%	50%	44%
SUNNYSIDE PRE-K-8	58%	68%	45%	74%
<b>SOURCE: PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>				

Carrick High School is one of nine high schools in the Pittsburgh Public School District and one of two in the south area of Pittsburgh. Students at Brashear High School, the other high school in the South, score similarly in Literature and Biology, and higher in Algebra 1. Compared to students at other schools in the District, Carrick High School students score near the middle of the range, as seen in **Table 19**.

The Pittsburgh Promise offers college scholarships up to \$40,000 to Pittsburgh Public School students who meet academic requirements. Unfortunately, according to Pittsburgh Promise staff in January 2015, despite the fact that they attend Pittsburgh Public Schools, Mt. Oliver students are not eligible for the Promise scholarship because they do not meet the residency requirement.

<b>TABLE 19 – PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS HIGH SCHOOL KEYSTONE SCORES ADVANCED OR PROFICIENT (2013-14)</b>			
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>ALGEBRA 1</b>	<b>LITERATURE</b>	<b>BIOLOGY</b>
ALLDERDICE HIGH SCHOOL	70%	80%	37%
BRASHEAR HIGH SCHOOL	49%	60%	11%
CAPA 6-12	80%	96%	49%
<b>CARRICK HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>13%</b>
MILLIONES 6-12	28%	46%	0%
OBAMA 6-12	73%	92%	32%
PERRY HIGH SCHOOL	28%	44%	8%
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ACADEMY	80%	92%	49%
WESTINGHOUSE 6-12	3%	8%	0%
SOURCE: PITTSBURGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS			

## THE PUBLIC PROCESS

**Steering Committee  
Stakeholder Interviews  
Community Events  
Electronic Surveys  
Public Outreach Meetings**



*"Government, in the last analysis, is organized opinion. Where there is little or no public opinion, there is likely to be bad government."*

*Mackenzie King*



## PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public participation is a crucial element in developing a community's comprehensive plan because it provides key information about a community's culture and preferences. However, it can be the greatest challenge in the planning process. Effective citizen participation can bring out concerns and issues that are not always

apparent to the consultant team or even the public officials. An effective public involvement process gives representation to diverse interests in the community and helps the community begin to take ownership of the plan.

An additional benefit of the public input process is that good citizen participation, properly documented, gives significant support to the plan when it is officially adopted. Plans that reflect the vision of the community through citizen participation will generally be upheld if a challenge is brought against any element of the comprehensive plan. But most importantly, public input is the basis of sound public policy.

### THE STEERING COMMITTEE

At the outset of the planning process, members of the Comprehensive Plan team met with Mt. Oliver Borough officials and staff to identify a diverse Steering Committee to shepherd the process and ensure broad involvement of Borough residents, business owners, public officials and other key stakeholders. Throughout the process, Mt. Oliver staff and public officials were briefed on the progress of the Plan. The Steering Committee met from March through June in 2015 and then broke for the Public Participation activities over the summer months. They began



to meet monthly again in September through January of 2016. Steering Committee meeting topics included:

- Review of project scope and schedule
- Review of existing land uses
- Public outreach plan
- Review of demographics
- Review of prior planning efforts
- Introduction of planning tools
- Preliminary market research data
- Case studies from other communities, and
- Plan review, including recommendations for future land use, community facilities, housing and redevelopment, and economic development.

### **STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS**

A number of interviews were conducted with various groups and persons who have been working on projects and programs throughout the Borough. The team conducted eight sessions with individuals or groups (see list below) who were either identified by the Steering Committee or were not represented at the first public meeting. These interviews added critical perspectives on a variety of topics.

- Hilltop Economic Development Corporation (HEDC)
- Mt. Oliver Community Group / Block Watch
- Hilltop YMCA / Brashear Association, Youth Development Programs
- Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh (BCAP)
- Mt. Oliver Community Garden

### **HILLTOP ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**JUNE 9, 2015**

What would you say are the top two opportunities or strengths you associate with doing business in Mount Oliver Borough?

What would you say are the top two challenges or barriers to future growth for your business?

What types of businesses do you think should be brought to Mount Oliver to improve its attractiveness as a shopping and business district?

What are the top two reasons you believe people shop in Mount Oliver?

What are the top two reasons you believe people do not shop in Mount Oliver?

What do you think is the one most important action that should be taken to make Mount Oliver a more attractive place to shop and visit?



- Hilltop Family Care Connection, Parent Council
- Lifespan, Seniors
- A local pastor

Some of the information derived from those meetings is summarized below. Additional summaries are provided in Appendix B.

#### **HILLTOP ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION MEETING JUNE 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2015 KNOXVILLE LIBRARY**

##### **General Notes:**

The HEDC is a community development corporation that represents Mt. Oliver Borough and the City community of Knoxville. It is governed by an appointed Board of Directors and is the beneficiary of funding through the PA DCED Neighborhood Partnership Program (NPP).

##### **Parking:**

There is the perception that there's not enough parking on Brownsville Road, even though parking studies have shown only about a 60% occupancy. Parking is needed in front of heavily-trafficked businesses (post office in the morning and the bakery at lunch time). Only parallel parking is available on the street. This disrupts traffic and discourages some visitors who are uncomfortable with parallel parking. The current parking lot behind the Borough Building isn't well-known; nor is it well marked. New parking areas should not require parallel parking, should be visible from Brownsville Road, and should be convenient to popular businesses.

##### **Brownsville Road Appearance:**

The appearance of the buildings, sidewalks, and plantings is "tired" and needs to be improved. Landscaping should be revamped. The Borough has received a \$125,000 multi-



modal grant through the Commonwealth Financing Authority program to reconstruct the sidewalks. Participants suggested Brownsville Road could take some cues from Carnegie's business district with regard to cohesiveness. The cohesive appearance makes Carnegie feel more walkable.

##### **Existing Businesses:**

Brownsville Road could be a destination for thrift and antique stores. This would require the stores to have more obvious signage, regular hours, and better layouts. Participants stated that bars and check-cashing stores discourage outsiders from stopping. People loitering in front of businesses discourage customers. It should be the responsibility of the business owners to keep their storefronts clear of loiterers. People don't know what Brownsville Road currently has to offer. There is a lot of business turnover.

##### **New/Potential Businesses:**

The area needs fresh food, whether it comes from a full grocery store or from a bodega. In general, Brownsville needs more neighborhood-serving businesses (shoe store,

coffee shop, fresh food store). Attracting young people may generate more activity on Brownsville. There is a possibility that a new candy store will be opening and the bakery incubator concept is moving forward.

### Key Actions:

Turn the clock tower plaza into a successful, welcoming gathering space in the business district.

**Vision:** The clock tower plaza could be a place for people to bring food, meet neighbors, and rest between visits to multiple Brownsville Road businesses. The plaza could support both public and private events. The Borough should work to create/encourage storefront renovations to provide more move-in ready space. NPP funding should be focused on this area for the next few years.

**Proposal:** Cheap rents and low property values create a disincentive for business owners to have regular/long business hours. More businesses on the street would drive rents up a little, creating the incentive for business owners to be open for more hours.

### Other Comments:

The group urged the officials to generate positive press and impressions of the neighborhood. Many community members still don't 'sell' the neighborhood. It is important to get youth involved in the process of building a better reputation for the area. There *are* good businesses in the area, but unattractive exteriors discourage people from outside the area from visiting them. Encourage façade renovations that build a visually-coherent district. Currently, storefronts that aren't maintained detract from the improvements that have been made to other buildings. Attract an institution (Art Institute, Bidwell, or another major employer, for example) that would generate all-day activity

and bring jobs to the neighborhoods. Land could be found along Hays Avenue.

### MT. OLIVER COMMUNITY GROUP AND BLOCK WATCH JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2015

The Community Group focuses on vacant lot projects (getting them mowed, cleaning up trash, putting in plantings). The Block Watch has primarily reviewed crime reports, but is working on a new format that proactively engages community members.

### Hays Ave Lot Clean-Up:

The Community Group has a \$1200 budget for mulch and plantings.



**Brownsville Road Appearance:**

The trees need attention. As the business district gets more trees, community group members think they should not be berry trees that will make a mess on the sidewalk.<sup>6</sup>

**Passive vs. Active Parks:**

Community group members suggested converting parks to have more passive space because active space needs are fulfilled by parks in the South Side and Carrick.

**Litter:**

Litter is a problem in Mt. Oliver. A Council person indicated that he picked up trash regularly in his neighborhood when he lived in DC. After about 2 years, he saw a significant change in the amount of litter on the street. He felt that residents who saw him picking up trash may have been motivated to clean up more in front of their homes. He now picks up trash on his street and around the Borough. Group members suggested placing more trash cans at key intersections. In the future, the group is going to work on having more guest speakers. The group may also identify ongoing projects to work on. It would be helpful to find out what other successful block watch groups do. Block Watch members will identify nearby block watch groups and make arrangements to either visit their meetings or meet with a few members.

**PR Issues:**

Elected officials don't show up to Borough events and don't try to understand the issues Mt. Oliver is facing. This needs to be addressed. The group would like the South Side Reporter to feature more news about the Borough. The clock

tower plaza is not currently a space that feels welcoming because the steel and concrete structures and surface. More planning needs to be done about how to use that space, which is privately owned by Beckman Motors.

**COMMUNITY EVENTS**

The Comprehensive Plan team participated in the Community Day celebration in the Borough on May 30, 2015. The Team handed out flyers, provided information, and participated in a raffle with proceeds to the HEDC. The Borough was widely represented by community groups, social service groups, and businesses in the area. It was a great success and the Plan was widely advertised to residents.



<sup>6</sup> The proposed Streetscape funding project would provide for the removal of existing trees and the planting of new more appropriate trees.



## Community Day Event – May 30, 2015



## PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETINGS

To ensure that the Mt. Oliver Comprehensive plan was truly shaped by Borough residents, the Steering Committee and the consultant team organized two public meetings

### PUBLIC MEETING #1 – JUNE 22, 2015

The first public outreach meeting was held on Monday, June 22 at 6:00pm at the Mt. Oliver Fire Hall. Approximately 45 people participated in the public meeting which was staffed by Borough officials, the Steering Committee members, and the Comprehensive Plan team. As participants arrived at the meeting, they were asked to participate by identifying items on five boards as “Important” to future Mt. Oliver plans. The Boards were *Safe, Clean, and Green*; *Welcome to our Neighborhoods*; *Moving and Shaking*; *Come Out and Play*; and *Open for Business*. They were also asked to place a dot



on a map of the Borough to show where they lived. Attendees identified the following five issues as most important in each of the five categories:

- *Safe, Clean and Green*: Address Blighted Properties
- *Welcome to our Neighborhoods*: Demolish Blighted Properties
- *Moving and Shaking*: Condition of Neighborhood Roads
- *Come out and Play*: Safety – Lighting, Security, and Design
- *Open for Business*: Cafes, Dining, Restaurants

Attendees were then shown a brief presentation about the comprehensive planning process and led through four discussions at their tables: (1) Understanding Community Culture and Context; (2) Reinforcing Sense of Place; (3) Using our Natural and Human Resources Wisely; and (4) Leadership and Community Capacity for the Future. Representatives from each table shared summaries of their tables’ conversations with the rest of the group.

Throughout the meeting, one message repeatedly rose to the surface: Safety is the number one issue in the Borough (both in residential and commercial areas), and improvements to perceptions of safety are critical to almost all areas of the comprehensive planning process.

Attendees stressed that blight – in the forms of trash, vacant homes and storefronts, and homes in disrepair – contributes to a variety of ills in the community: lack of pride in the community; unsafe physical and social conditions; and continued disinvestment. Addressing blight and safety will

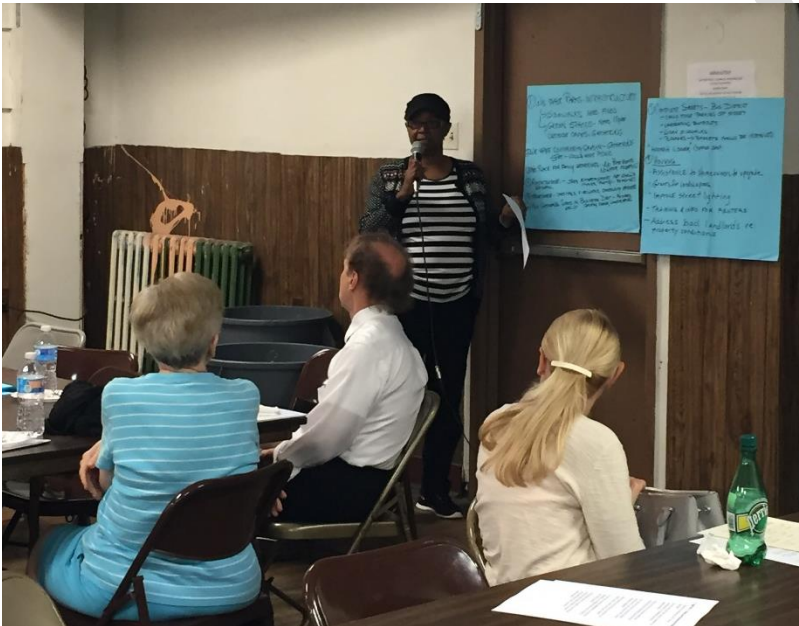


encourage residents and business owners to invest in their homes and properties.

With an eye towards addressing blight and safety, attendees made suggestions for improvements to the business district and the community's parks. Suggested improvements to the business district included:

- Attracting more and better-quality retail businesses, including an anchor store that would stimulate further investment;
- Addressing parking, possibly by moving business district parking off-street; and
- Beautifying the business district with plantings.

Attendees noted that community parks are a great asset to the Borough, but they need some attention. Specifically,



residents feel unsafe in the parklet after hours and would like focal points within the parks. Focal points might include an expanded picnic area in the community garden or an improved amphitheater in Transverse Park.

### **PUBLIC MEETING #2 – OCTOBER 22, 2016**

The second public meeting was held on Monday, October 22, 2016 at the Mt. Oliver Fire Hall at which time approximately 36 persons attended. In the first part of the meeting, consultants presented key findings from public outreach meetings over the summer. This included results from the community electronic survey and issues raised in interviews and focus groups. During the second part of the meeting, attendees were invited to participate in two activities: (1) Prioritizing Key Strategies and (2) Spending Your Tax Money. In Prioritizing Key Strategies, participants expressed their preferences for strategies that corresponded to the key themes raised during summer outreach: safety, diverse needs, youth programs, business district, housing and neighborhood appearance, shared challenges, and Borough leadership. In the second activity, *Spending Your Tax Money*,

## Spending Your Tax Dollars

attendees allocated their tax money to eight categories of public services. This activity was designed to encourage attendees to allocate their tax money to seven (7) categories of public services. Each attendee was give \$50 to spend any way that they saw fit on services provided by the Borough. The categories identified and the final tally of tax dollars spent from highest to lowest is shown below:

### Public Safety



**\$1,240**

### Business District Streetscape



**\$1,010**

### Code Enforcement



**\$747**

### Maintenance of Roads and Facilities



**\$500**

### Sidewalks, Bike paths, Trails



**\$393**

### Parks and Recreation



**\$347**

### Planning, Economic, Community Development



**\$322**

The consensus, by far, with 27.3% of the tax dollars, was for additional expenditures for public safety. Business district streetscape was a close second with 22.0% of the dollars spent. Code enforcement came in at 16.4% of the vote. Sidewalks, bike paths, trails, parks, recreation, planning, and community development were at the bottom of the spending priority list. Interestingly, items related to safety, blight, and code violations continued to be the prominent theme from residents. Results by percentage are shown below:

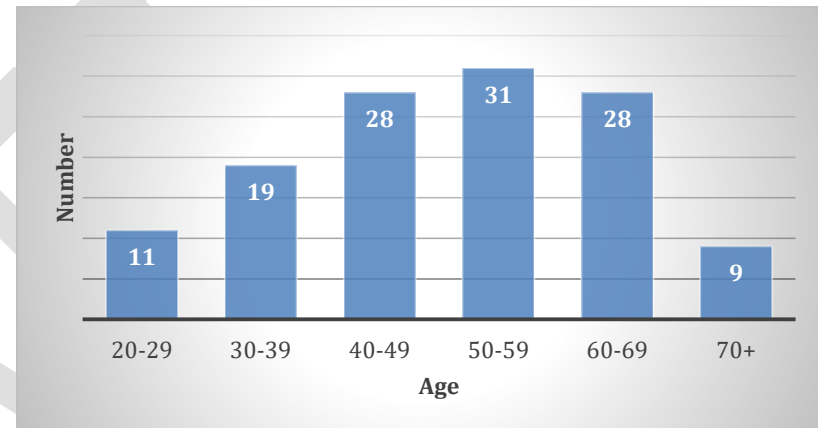
CATEGORY	BUDGET SUPPORT
<b>Public Safety</b>	27.3%
<b>Business District Streetscape</b>	22.0%
<b>Code Enforcement</b>	16.4%
<b>Maintenance of Roads/Facilities</b>	11.0%
<b>Sidewalks, Bike Paths, Trails</b>	8.6%
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>	7.6%
<b>Planning &amp; Community Development</b>	7.1%

It should be noted that this was a very small sample size from only about 36 residents. However, it is representative of a broader sentiment that is supported by other opinions that were expressed during the public process.

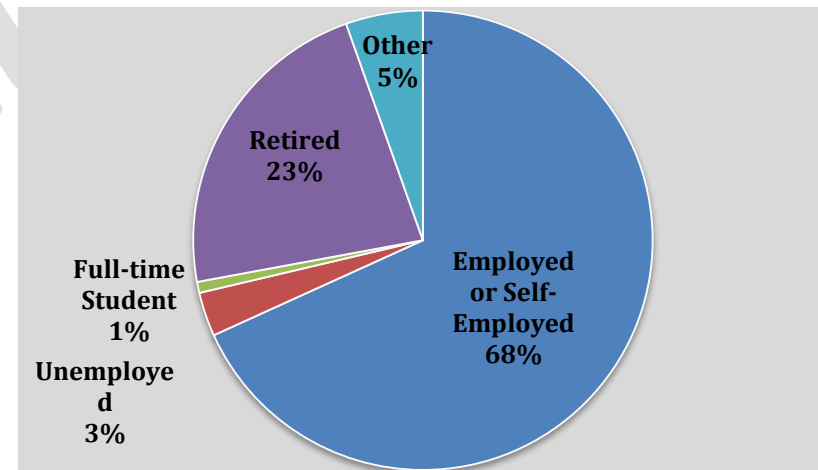
### ON-LINE COMMUNITY SURVEY

Community members were invited to participate in the planning process through an online community survey. The surveys were also distributed in print. The planning team publicized the survey with postcards mailed to residences, posted to the Borough's website, through email, and with flyers at community events throughout the summer. Survey respondents were asked about ways they believe the Borough has improved or declined during their time in

residence; land use issues; the need for various types of housing, businesses, and employment; and the quality of public services. Approximately 131 persons took the survey. Figure \_\_\_ below provides a breakdown by age.



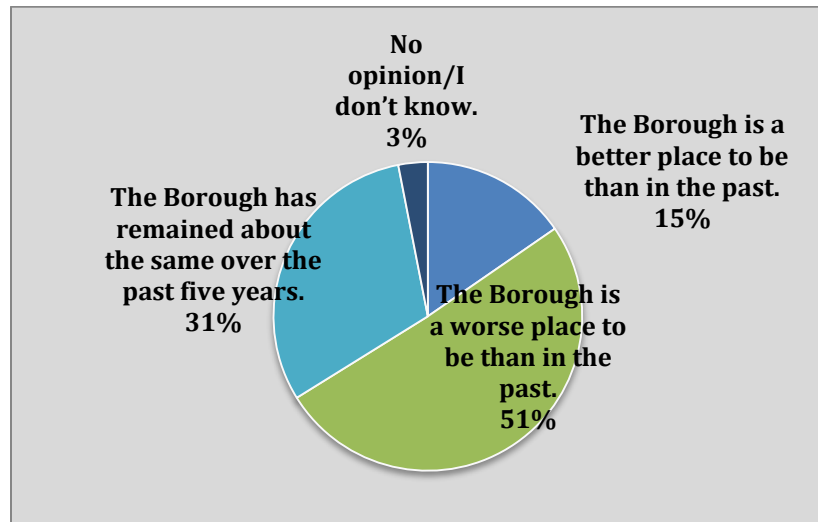
Most respondents were employed or self-employed. About 23% were retired.



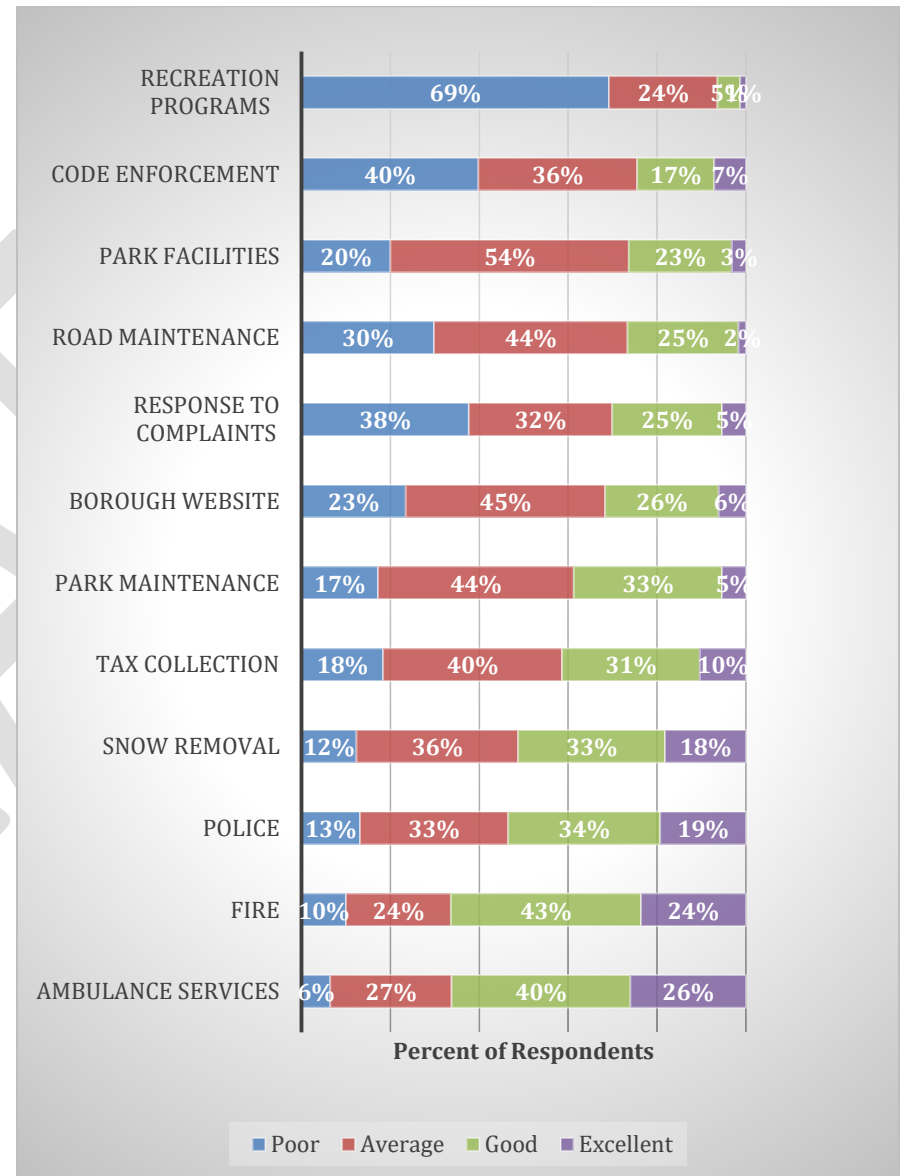


Mt. Oliver residents were asked to rate the public services provided by the Borough as part of the on-line survey. Public safety (ambulance, fire, police) and snow removal were rated the highest of all of the services provided. Park facilities, recreation programming and code enforcement were rated the lowest.

Most people in the Borough, about 51%, believe that the Borough is getting worse. Only about 15% of those who responded felt that the Borough is getting better.



"Absentee landlords and bad tenants. Poor code enforcement. Mount Oliver use[d] to be a special place to live."



Residents who felt that the Borough is better now than it has been in the past pointed to the number of volunteers who are interested and working in the Borough to achieve common goals and the improved local government leadership that has provided for a higher quality of government services. These positive elements provide the basis for building trust and encouraging additional improvements.

"More residents are becoming involved in Block Watch and community groups to clean up vacant properties. Our police force now has a good working relationship with Council and community businesses and residents. Community members have also formed relationships with other Hilltop organizations and are making progress. . . . We are not alone in fighting blight and crime, but I really believe that we have turned a corner and are heading into better days."

Many residents described more blight than in the past and concern about crime and drug related violence in the Borough. This concern is partially supported by the crime data which indicates that about 52% of the crimes in Mt. Oliver are drug violations. However, violent crime has actually been decreasing over the past 5 years although it

The 'Hilltop' .. has seen a drastic increase in violence/ gun related incidences in the past 5 to 10 years,"

remains higher than in the comparable communities that were reviewed. The police department makes about 375 drug arrests each year.

Residents also talked about the amount of business activity that used to exist that was inviting to families for dining, shopping, and entertainment. They lamented the loss of family dining establishments, the bakery, and clothing stores.



Residents talked about fear because there were too many "unruly" youths loitering in the streets preventing free movement on sidewalks and at the clock tower triangle. Many suggested that they would like to spend more time and money in the Borough but that there is a lack of shopping and dining options. Many wished for a grocery and small retail centers where they could purchase items of convenience. Complete survey results can be found in Appendix A.

## THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

**Roads**  
**Sewers**  
**Watersheds**  
**Wetlands**  
**Slopes**  
**Minerals**  
**Public Facilities**

*"Design should start with a thorough understanding of the way people use spaces and the way they would like to use spaces."*

*Peter Calthorpe*



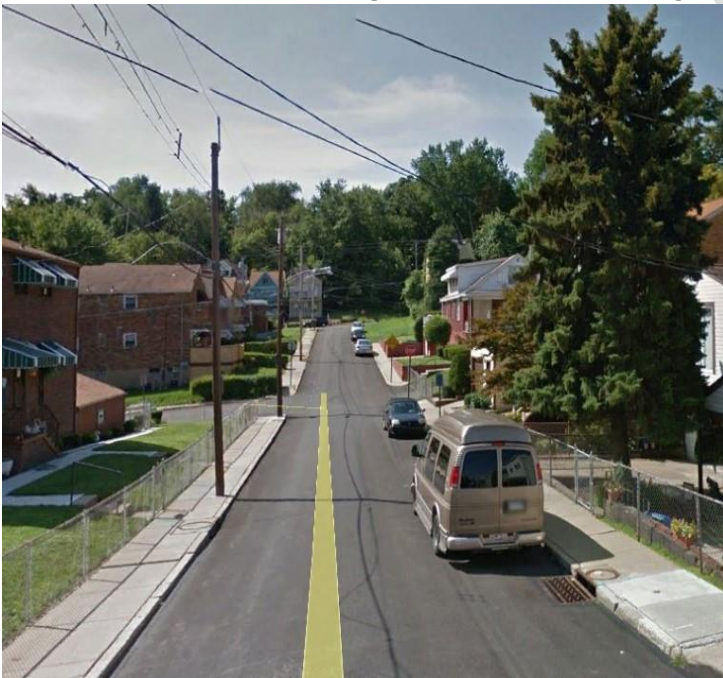


In a comprehensive planning process it is important to examine the built environment – the roads, bridges, sewers, parks, sidewalks, and other infrastructure that support the neighborhoods and commercial districts and contribute to the basic needs of a community. These fundamental elements provide the necessary framework around which all lifestyle activities take place. Planning for the continuous upgrade, maintenance, and repair of the infrastructure is similar to ensuring that the “hardware” of a computer system is capable and in good operating condition in order to support the “software” which is the community culture, preferences, vision, and goals of its residents.

## ROADS

Mt Oliver roadways consist of all Borough owned and maintained streets with the exception of Walter Avenue which is maintained by Allegheny County via an agreement. There are approximately 10.8 miles of streets within the Borough. The major thoroughfares through the Borough are Brownsville Road, Hays Avenue, Ormsby Avenue, Walnut Street and Anthony Street. All other streets are generally local residential streets. Most streets within Mt Oliver are typical asphalt streets with a select few streets that remain the original brick. The Borough realizes the need to maintain the streets and curbs and have prepared a

Pavement Conditions Survey to rate the condition of each street in the Borough so that the streets that are in the worst condition are prioritized for repairs. Based on repair needs and costs, the Borough allocates funds for the highest priority repairs when preparing the annual budget. This survey is included in [Appendix D](#).



### WHAT IS A PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM?

- SOFTWARE THAT INPUTS ROAD MEASUREMENTS AND CONDITION ASSESSMENTS AND OUTPUTS A 5-YEAR PAVING PROGRAM.
- IT'S NOT JUST A LIST OF ROADS IN THE WORST CONDITION – IT DETERMINES THE ROADS THAT IF GIVEN MAINTENANCE WILL PROVIDE THE HIGHEST IMPROVEMENT TO THE ROADWAY SYSTEM CONDITION FOR THE LEAST COST
- IT CAN PROVIDE AN ANNUAL ROAD PROGRAM BUDGET THAT WILL INCREASE, DECREASE, OR MAINTAIN THE OVERALL RATING/CONDITION OF THE ROADWAYS
- IT CAN PREDICT THE OVERALL CHANGE IN RATING/CONDITION OF THE ROADWAYS WITH A GIVEN SPECIFIC ANNUAL ROAD PROGRAM BUDGET

## SANITARY SEWERS

The Borough sewage collection system services approximately 1,500 residences and businesses in the Borough. The sewage system is entirely separate and is comprised of 255 manholes and approximately 63,000 feet of sewer lines ranging from eight (8) inches to fifteen (15) inches in diameter. A majority of the collection system consists of vitrified clay pipe (VCP) that was constructed more than 80 years ago. The Borough is divided into two main sewersheds. A majority of the area drains to the Upper Monongahela drainage basin and a small portion drains to the Saw Mill Run drainage basin. All sanitary sewer lines within the Borough are owned and maintained by the Borough.

On February 27, 2004, Mt. Oliver Borough (Borough) entered into an Administrative Consent Order (ACO) with the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) in order to eliminate sanitary sewer overflows and comply with the Clean Streams Law. As part of this Consent Order, the Borough



was required to inventory its system, complete necessary repairs, perform flow monitoring, dye testing, adopt a point-of-sale dye testing ordinance, adopt an ordinance to eliminate storm water connections, perform a hydraulic analysis of the collection system, develop an operation and maintenance (O&M) plan, and prepare a feasibility study to address any collection system deficiencies to eliminate sanitary sewer overflows by July 31, 2013. This work was all completed on time and submitted to ACHD. The feasibility study recommended approximately \$200,000 in additional capacity augmentation work to allow the entire system to be capable of conveying a 10 year – 24 hour design storm.

As a follow up action, the ACHD issued interim consent orders to all of the ALCOSAN communities extending the consent order time frame an additional 18 months to allow the communities enough time to evaluate flow reduction strategies and conduct a demonstration project for a flow reduction project. A report on the results is due at the end of the 18 month period. The Borough conducted a flow reduction project on the interceptor below Transverse Park in 2015. Post project metering was conducted in 2016 to verify the removal rate from the project.

While the Mt Oliver collection system is in reasonably good condition, the Borough's private lateral sewers have considerable deficiencies and the Borough should consider strategies to ensure the proper maintenance and repairs are complete on private sewer lines. The Borough will be considering a private lateral maintenance and inspection program as part of the interim consent order. While these repairs are the property owner's responsibility, the Borough may consider a grant program to assist owners with these repairs.

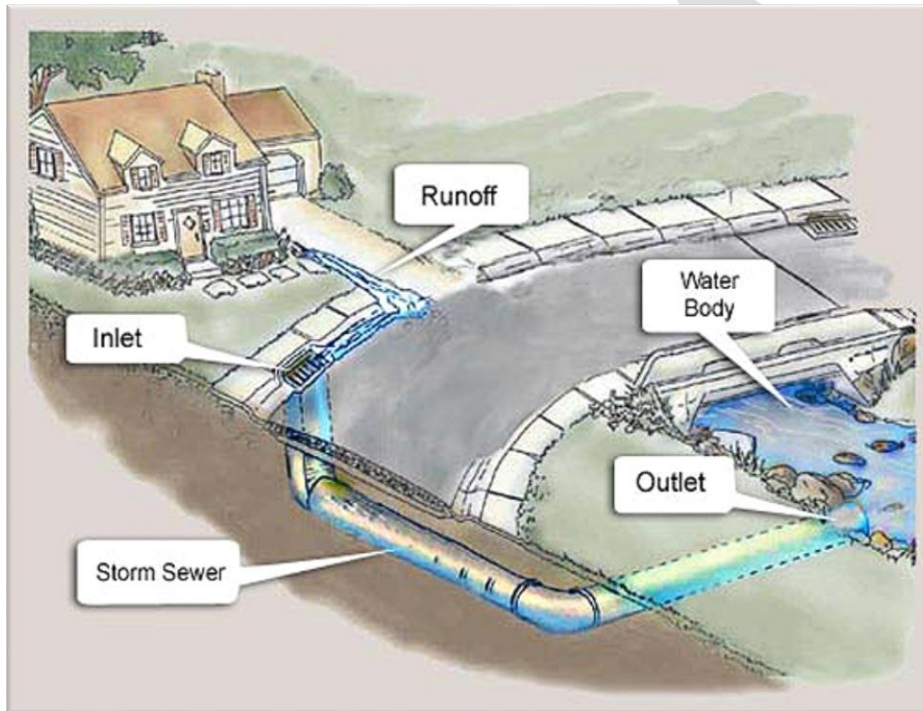
## STORM SEWERS

The Borough storm sewer system services the entire Borough. The storm sewage system is entirely separate and is comprised of approximately 31,000 feet of sewer lines ranging from ten (10) inches to forty-eight (48) inches in diameter. A majority of the storm sewer system consists of vitrified clay pipe (VCP), corrugated metal pipe and some plastic pipes with a majority of the lines being constructed more than 80 years ago. The Borough is divided into two main sewersheds. A majority of the area drains to the Upper Monongahela drainage basin and a small portion drains to the Saw Mill Run drainage basin. The Upper Monongahela basin

drains to a tributary to Becks Run via 4 separate outfalls. The Saw Mill Run Sewershed connects directly to the PWSA combined sewers approximately 1 block outside the Borough off of Amanda Street. All storm sewer lines within the Borough are owned and maintained by the Borough.

The Borough has an MS-4 permit through the PADEP that requires operators of regulated small MS-4 systems to design their programs to reduce the discharge of pollutants to the "Maximum Extent Practicable", protect water quality, and satisfy the appropriate water quality requirements of the Clean Water Act. The programs must contain the 6 minimum control measures, use best management practices and establish goals. The 6 minimum control measures include public education and outreach, public involvement and participation, illicit discharge detection and elimination, construction site stormwater runoff, post construction stormwater runoff, and pollution prevention and good housekeeping for municipal operations. The Borough is maintaining compliance with the MS-4 program requirements.

While the Mt. Oliver storm sewer system is in reasonably good condition, the Borough is continuing the efforts to maintain the system by cleaning and televising approximately 10% of the storm sewers each year and performing the appropriate repairs as needed. In addition, regular cleaning of inlets is performed to manage the amount of debris entering the system. The Borough utilizes the SHACOG vactor truck program as well as private contractors through the SHACOG bidding process to perform these operations. The Borough has no known issues of flooding associated with the storm sewer system.





## FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

### WETLANDS

There are no significant concerns for wetlands in Mt Oliver. As Mt Oliver is primarily built out, the only area that may contain wetlands appears to be along the stream below Transverse Park. As this area is not considered a buildable area, wetlands should not be of concern.

### FLOODPLAINS

There are no floodplains identified by FEMA within the Boundaries of Mt Oliver. There are no reported issues with flooding in the Borough.

### STEEP SLOPES

As Mt. Oliver is on a hilltop, steep slopes are a common concern. Most slope issues in Mt. Oliver were addressed during original development to include building construction methods and retaining walls. The only major steep slope concern is the area below Margaret Street and Transverse Park where known slides have occurred in the past.

### MINERALS

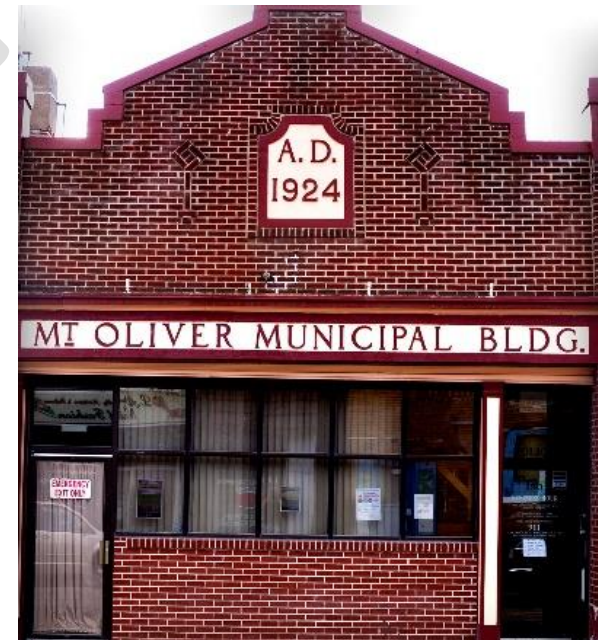
The subsurface conditions in Mt. Oliver are similar to all communities in the Pittsburgh region and is made up of sandstone, red and grey shale, conglomerate, clay, coal and limestone. The Borough has had issues in the past with mine subsidence due to the extensive network of underground deep tunnel coal mines that crisscross under Mt. Oliver. Areas from Transverse Park, Anthony Street and Frederick Street have all experienced significant issues with mine subsidence damaging homes, businesses and public facilities. Mine

subsidence issues are a concern throughout the Borough and should be noted.

## PUBLIC FACILITIES

### MUNICIPAL BUILDING

The Borough's most significant asset is the Municipal Building located at 150 Brownsville Road. This building serves as the Borough administrative office, Council Chambers, police station and public works facility. Built in 1924, the first floor houses the Council Chambers, police station and administrative offices. Lower level consists of holding cells, garages, storage, lockers, and break rooms. In 2006, an addition was added to provide for garage space and for storage of public works equipment and vehicles. Overall the building is in relatively good condition but would benefit from a space utilization study and upgrades to maintain the staffing levels and space needed to conduct efficient and quality Borough business and provide services to residents.





### ORMSBY PARK

Ormsby Park is located between Church Avenue and Ormsby Avenue. The Park consists of a basketball court, playground equipment, gazebo, parking and green space. The park was completely renovated in 2015 and is in excellent condition.

The recent renovations to Ormsby Park will provide a burden for public works employees due to the additional landscaping and care and upkeep of amenities. The amount of mulch and plantings will require attention for weeds and watering. Some additional maintenance responsibilities include:

- Smaller scale mowing, trimming, mulching, weed control, plant watering and maintenance, concrete sealing, cleaning, repairs and maintenance, fence repairs and upkeep, basketball court painting, net and

post upkeep, trash, fountain upkeep, playground upkeep and maintenance.

- There is currently no signage entering or around this park.

### TRANSVERSE PARK

Transverse Park is located off of Transverse Avenue. This park consists of a playground area, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, deck hockey, horse shoe pits, basketball court, a community garden, and various open green spaces. The Park also contains a field house and garage on the property.

The tree damaged metal backstop at what appears to be a younger age use field should also be removed. This structure is badly damaged and serves as a public safety threat.



The tennis court in Transverse Park is in very bad condition. The fencing is dangerous, the surface is littered with trash and glass and the surroundings of the facility are overgrown and unsightly.



Transverse Park is mowing and trimming intensive and requires a lot of manpower to remove trash and for general upkeep of the grounds. There is no inspection of park equipment, no schedule of repairs,



and no routine maintenance completed on the parks equipment. Some additional maintenance responsibilities include:

- Extensive large scale mowing /trimming, seeding, curb, parking bollards and playground equipment painting, trash and restroom upkeep, storm water basin and line maintenance, street and perimeter safety lighting, playground equipment repairs and maintenance, asphalt deck hockey, batting cage, trails and basketball court maintenance and repairs, concrete walk and steps maintenance, ball field and court bench repairs, ballfield backstop and dugout maintenance and repairs, extensive fence maintenance and repairs, guiderail maintenance,



maintain signage, park road and trail surfaces, tree and brush maintenance and leaf collection.

- A contracted service with TruGreen is budgeted at \$1,000 for grub control and lawn service. Spraying is budgeted for the ballfields.
- Signage is outdated both entering and throughout the park.



## ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

### Key Themes Future Land Use Implications



*"Consensus isn't just about agreement. It's about changing things around: You get a proposal, you work something out, people foresee problems, you do creative synthesis. At the end of it, you come up with something that everyone thinks is okay. Most people like it, and nobody hates it."*

*David Graeber*



## ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

### EMERGENCE OF KEY THEMES

Drawing from the background research and the public outreach efforts, certain key themes emerged for consideration. In addition to interviews, public meetings, focus groups, and Steering Committee involvement, about 133 residents logged onto the electronic survey at the Borough's website to express their opinions. The following is a summary of the Key Themes that emerged from the entire process. The complete results from the electronic survey are provided in [Appendix A](#).

### PROVIDING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS

Crime and perceptions of safety were by far the most common issues raised by stakeholders. Concerns were not limited to any particular group of stakeholders; seniors, employees on Brownsville Road, and Bhutanese refugees all reported feeling unsafe at times in the Borough. Long-time residents expressed concern over crimes committed in and around the Borough's many vacant houses. Conversations often centered on pride in the community. Crime and a lack of safety contribute to residents and outsiders having a low opinion of the area, which in turn may open the door for more crime.

Although the Borough has many assets, a lack of safety is driving some good residents away. In stakeholder interviews, the team heard from Bhutanese residents who plan to move to other communities because they or their children have been victims of crime or they fear they will become victims in the future. BCAP reported that many families have already left Mt. Oliver for the communities of Brookline, Brentwood, Castle Shannon, and others because the perception is that they are "safer" communities. In general, Bhutanese interviewees enjoy Mt. Oliver's good access to transit and the community garden, but they cite a lack of safety as their primary (if not only) reason for relocation.

Other stakeholders pointed out that loitering, harassment, and robberies



are linked to the issue of youth engagement. The Borough lacks significant programs and positive gathering places for pre-teens, teens, and young adults. Without places to go, bored youth are more likely to get into trouble. Youth service providers, business owners, and community survey respondents advocated for more educational and recreational youth programs that would steer the next generation of Borough youth away from future criminal behavior. In addition to education and recreation, stakeholders stressed that providing entry-level employment opportunities for youth would make them less likely to resort to other ways of making money.

### ADDRESSING DIVERSE NEEDS

Mt. Oliver is more diverse than many nearby communities and this should be viewed as a valuable asset. Unfortunately, growing racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity in the Borough has led to tension between resident groups. Throughout the stakeholder engagement process, the team heard a large number of negative comments directed at renters, especially lower-income renters who receive housing choice vouchers.

#### COMMENTS FROM THE RESIDENTIAL ELECTRONIC SURVEY

"WE NEED MORE POLICE, BUT POLICE WHO HAVE BEEN TRAINED ON HOW TO BE PARTNERS WITH PEOPLE AND NOT ADVERSARIES. RESPONSE TIME TO CALLS USED TO BE BETTER. CONCERN FOR VANDALISM OF CARS AND BUILDINGS USED TO BE HIGHER."

"I FEEL THE POLICE ARE DOING A GOOD JOB TRYING TO KEEP CRIME DOWN BUT I THINK IT WOULD BE BETTER IF SOMETHING WERE DONE ABOUT THE GROUPS THAT HANG ON THE CORNER AND BY THE BARBER SHOP NEAR THE OLD TRIANGLE BAR."

"IT'S NOT SAFE! THERE ARE DRUG DEALS AND ABANDONED PROPERTY AND IT IS A SAFETY ISSUE FOR THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY."

"MOST OF THE TIME, THERE ARE PEOPLE LINGERING AROUND MAKING ME FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE NOT TO MENTION THE PITT BULLS THAT MAKE PEOPLE CROSS THE STREET."



Other stakeholders identified another point of tension between the Bhutanese population and existing residents. Bhutanese residents expressed concern that if tensions are not addressed now, they could escalate in the coming years. They suggested





using community activities to build bridges between Bhutanese and non-Bhutanese youth through activities in Transverse park such as community gardening, soccer, and volleyball.

The area also has a large population of individuals with mental and physical disabilities, in part, because of transit accessibility and affordable rents, Stakeholders reported that the Borough lacks sufficient services for these individuals. Interviewees told the team that some residents with disabilities are living in homes that are not suited to their needs or are traveling long distances for doctor visits.

#### PROVIDING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES AND YOUTH PROGRAMS

Youth make up a large portion of the population in Mt. Oliver and the surrounding neighborhoods. A variety of stakeholders (religious leaders, parents, business owners, and service providers) discussed the need for enhanced educational, employment, and recreational programs that would:

- Improve educational and employment outcomes for young residents;
- Provide alternatives to inappropriate activities; and
- Bridge divisions within the community.

One stakeholder made another important point about existing youth-serving organizations: Many rely on volunteers from the Americorps program, which has a month-long gap in August before school starts. As a result of decreased staff, organizations stop programs for a few weeks in August, leaving youth at home or – more often – on the streets all day. In this environment, youth struggle to pass the time in a positive way.

#### COMMENT FROM THE RESIDENTIAL ELECTRONIC SURVEY

"RACE RELATIONS AND VIOLENCE NEED TO BE ADDRESSED HEAD ON IN THE COMMUNITY. THE DYNAMIC OF THE NEIGHBORHOODS HAS CHANGED A LOT IN THE PAST FEW DECADES AND THERE SEEMS TO BE A LOT OF FEAR, RESENTMENT, AND PREJUDICE TOWARD BLACK PEOPLE AND BHUTANESE IMMIGRANTS. THE BOROUGH NEEDS TO BE PROACTIVE, WORKING WITH ALL BUSINESSES, SERVICE PROVIDERS AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS TO BRING THIS ISSUE TO THE FOREGROUND AND CREATE MEANINGFUL SOLUTIONS FOR INTEGRATION AND PROBLEM SOLVING. "

#### COMMENTS FROM THE RESIDENTIAL ELECTRONIC SURVEY

"THE NUMBER ONE THING THAT IS MISSING IN MOST NEIGHBORHOODS TODAY IS SOMETHING FOR KIDS TO DO INSTEAD OF HANGING AROUND CORNERS."

"THERE ARE TOO FEW ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN."

"I LIVE BY THE PARK AND IT IS A QUIET PART OF MT. OLIVER WHICH I LOVE BUT WE NEED TO UTILIZE THE PARK BETTER . . HAVE VARIOUS EVENTS FOR THE KIDS."

**CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE**

The Borough and surrounding Pittsburgh neighborhoods have faced many of the same challenges in recent years: declining family incomes, declining homeownership rates, high crime rates, and the loss of businesses and services. Some groups are working to package the area as one Hilltop 'brand,' which has prompted push-back from residents who see their neighborhoods as distinct. Stakeholders have expressed that the Borough has its own proud identity separate from City neighborhoods and is separate from the City providing its own services through an independent government.

Mt. Oliver has a lot to be proud of. When the team asked stakeholders why they chose to live or spend time in the Borough, stakeholders cited proximity to the City, good transit access, a wealth of social services, and a core group of residents committed to positive change. Because of its amenities, the Borough does present a positive draw for many residents and visitors.



A large number of stakeholders discussed a "PR" problem. They stressed the need for community members to "sell" the neighborhoods to inspire pride and investment. They told the team that this work needs to be targeted towards both residents *and* visitors, as many residents do not speak highly of their Borough. In regard to the issue of Mt. Oliver's image, two issues are of particular note:

- Several stakeholders suggested that getting the next generation of residents involved in telling a more positive story about the Borough is critical.
- Others suggested that creating more opportunities for residents to get involved in improving the area may be a way to foster more pride in the community.

### REVITALIZING THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

Stakeholders agreed that Brownsville Road should continue to be a major focus going forward. In the short-term, interviewees identified the need to reduce vacancy and make the street safer, especially after dark. Some told the team that they could not tell which businesses were actually open.

In the longer term, stakeholders called for

- Fresh food, whether it would come from a full grocery store or from year-round pop-up markets;
- Transforming the clock tower into a successful, welcoming central gathering space;
- Introducing local dining and café opportunities
- Attracting neighborhood-serving businesses (e.g. a shoe store, a coffee shop, etc); and



### COMMENTS FROM THE RESIDENTIAL ELECTRONIC SURVEY

"MANY OF THE BUSINESSES HERE ARE OF NO INTEREST TO ME AND MY FAMILY."

"THERE USED TO BE PLACES TO SHOP FOR JUST ABOUT ANYTHING YOU WANTED OR NEEDED."

"MT. OLIVER NEEDS A FACELIFT TO RETROFIT ALL OF THE ABANDONED SHOPS. IT LOOKS LIKE A DEPRESSED COMMUNITY."

"WE NEED TO HAVE FEWER 'PAY AS YOU GO' CELL PHONE STORES, FEWER 'WE BUY GOLD' AND SUCH STORES, MORE PARKING FOR PEOPLE . . . AND BETTER QUALITY STORES."

"I LIKE THE SMALL COMMUNITY AND THE STORES WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE."

- An anchor store that would serve neighborhood shopping needs, attract shoppers from nearby communities, and provide entry-level jobs, especially for local youth.

Interviewees and survey respondents also expressed a desire for a cleaner business district. The streetscape is perceived as tired and outdated and in need of a complete facelift.<sup>7</sup> They would like to see better coordination between Mt. Oliver and the City regarding cleaning up the streets and vacant lots along the entire length of Brownsville Road.

<sup>7</sup> The Borough began a large scale Streetscape project in the summer of 2016.



### ADDRESSING NEIGHBORHOODS AND BLIGHTED PROPERTIES

In public meetings, stakeholder interviews, and the community survey, residents expressed concern over a decline in housing quality, the condition of rental property, and the safety and cleanliness of residential streets.

In addition to the large number of vacant homes, much of the problem is seen to come from poorly-maintained and managed rental properties. Many rental properties are in poor condition and are owned by people who do not respond to requests for maintenance. In spite of the rental registration program, many landlords do not enforce tenant expectations (e.g. keeping trash in trash cans) and may not even know the names of the current occupants of their units.

Another part of the issue is that seniors with fixed incomes or other low-income homeowners often do not have money to make necessary repairs. Stakeholders expressed that the



problems of trash on the streets and vacant, dilapidated buildings stem from, and contribute to, a lack of pride in the community.

Finally, seniors expressed a desire to 'age in place.' Some seniors have lived in the Borough or the surrounding City neighborhoods for their whole lives. Many own homes that no longer accommodate their accessibility needs. However, senior apartment facilities have long waiting lists and many apartments in the neighborhood are in worse condition than their long-time homes. Based on stakeholder feedback, the Borough is lacking in senior housing options.

### COMMENTS FROM THE RESIDENTIAL ELECTRONIC SURVEY

"WITH THE AMOUNT OF RENTAL PROPERTY, THE OWNERS ARE NOT MAINTAINING THE YARDS."

"TOO MANY RENTAL PROPERTIES WITH RENTERS WHO DESTROY AND CONTINUALLY MAKE PROBLEMS."

"THE VACANT AND BLIGHTED PROPERTIES SHOULD BE TORN DOWN."

"TEAR DOWN ABANDONED HOUSES, OFFER EMPTY PROPERTIES TO NEIGHBORING HOME OWNERS THAT WILL TAKE CARE OF THEM OR PUBLIC GARDENS FOR PROPERTIES THAT NO HOME OWNERS WANT."

"IT'S HOME. I GREW UP HERE. I RAISED MY FAMILY HERE. I WOULD LIKE TO RETIRE HERE. IT'S AN AFFORDABLE COMMUNITY. AND VERY ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYTHING BECAUSE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IS AVAILABLE READILY!"

## VISION AND GOAL SETTING

**Welcome to Our Neighborhoods  
Open for Business  
Moving and Shaking  
Sense of Place**

*"The Plan's basic philosophy should be 'Be Better than Venice.' If any decision does not compare to Venice, do not do it. Shape the Borough in the traditional city pattern. In fact, we should just outright adopt a beautiful city's Plan or Code."*

*Anonymous Resident*





## VISION AND GOAL SETTING

### WELCOME TO OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

Mt. Oliver residents like the urban feel and community atmosphere of their neighborhoods. They feel that their neighborhoods provide a welcoming, quiet, suburban environment that forms a buffer to the hectic and fast paced living that is just minutes from their doors. They like the convenience of being able to get to jobs, shopping, and dining easily and quickly – but they are concerned about the vacant properties, blight, and safety of their neighborhoods. This section will provide some additional insight and strategies for maintaining and enhancing the quality of neighborhoods and housing in the Borough.

### HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Housing characteristics are one of the clearest indicators of a community's economic health. Trends in characteristics such as home ownership and housing tenure can alert a community to the fact that its current housing stock may not be adequate to support the needs of a particular age or income group. Housing is also typically the

single largest source of tax revenue for a community.

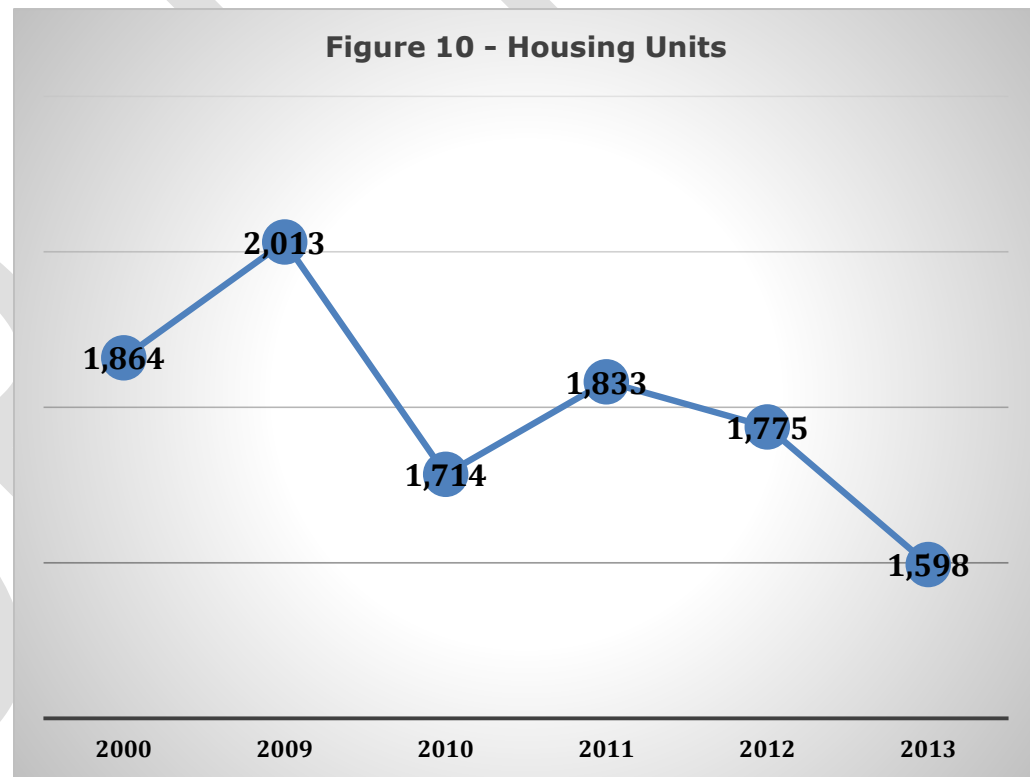
Between 2000 and 2009, Mt. Oliver gained 149 housing units, but since 2009, Mt. Oliver has experienced considerable decline in the number of housing units in three out of four years. According to 2013 Census estimates, Mt. Oliver has 1,598 housing units. **Table 20** and **Figure 12** show the decline in the number of Mt. Oliver housing units between 2000 and 2013.



TABLE 20 - HOUSING UNITS		
YEAR	HOUSING UNITS	COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE
2000	1,864	
2009	2,013	0.9%
2010	1,714	-14.9%
2011	1,833	6.9%
2012	1,775	-3.2%
2013	1,598	-10.0%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU		



Figure 10 - Housing Units



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

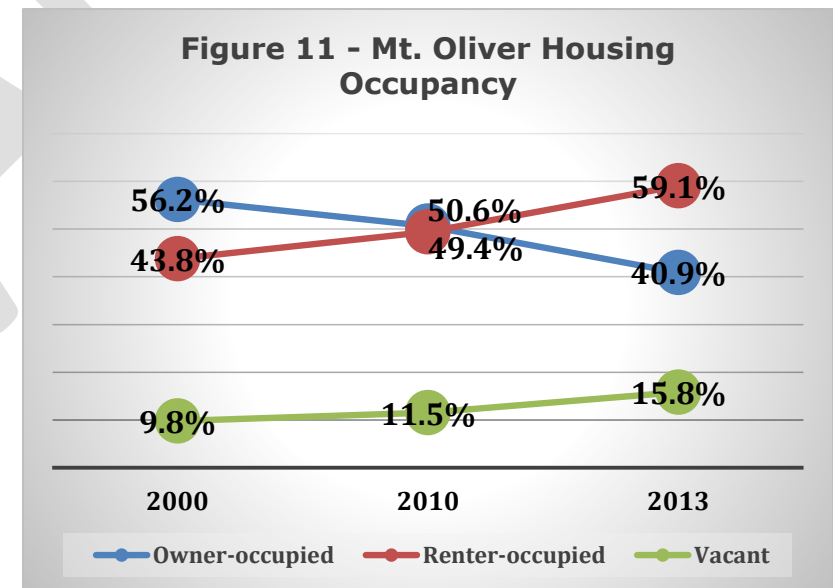
**HOUSING OCCUPANCY**

As seen in **Table 21** and **Figure 13**, between 2000 and 2013, the percentage of owner-occupied housing units fell dramatically as the percentage of both renter-occupied and vacant units rose. This suggests that as homeowners sell their homes or pass away, new owners are not likely to become owner-occupants. This is evidenced in the fact that the homeowner vacancy rate is higher than the vacancy rate for rental housing (3.7% compared to 0%).<sup>8</sup> In the City of

Pittsburgh, rental housing is twice as likely to be vacant than owner-occupied housing (5.2% compared to 2.4%).

In 2013, the U.S. Census estimated that only 40% of Mt. Oliver's housing units were owner-occupied. Rental housing represented nearly 60% of Mt. Oliver's housing stock. Vacancy increased significantly between 2000 and 2013 from almost 10% to over 15% of all housing units. This is higher than the national housing vacancy average of 10.9%.

TABLE 21 - MT. OLIVER HOUSING OCCUPANCY				
UNIT STATUS	2000	2010	2013	COMPOUND ANNUAL CHANGE 2000 TO 2013
OWNER-OCCUPIED	56.2%	50.6%	40.9%	-2.4%
RENTER-OCCUPIED	43.8%	49.4%	59.1%	2.3%
VACANT	9.8%	11.5%	15.8%	3.7%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU				



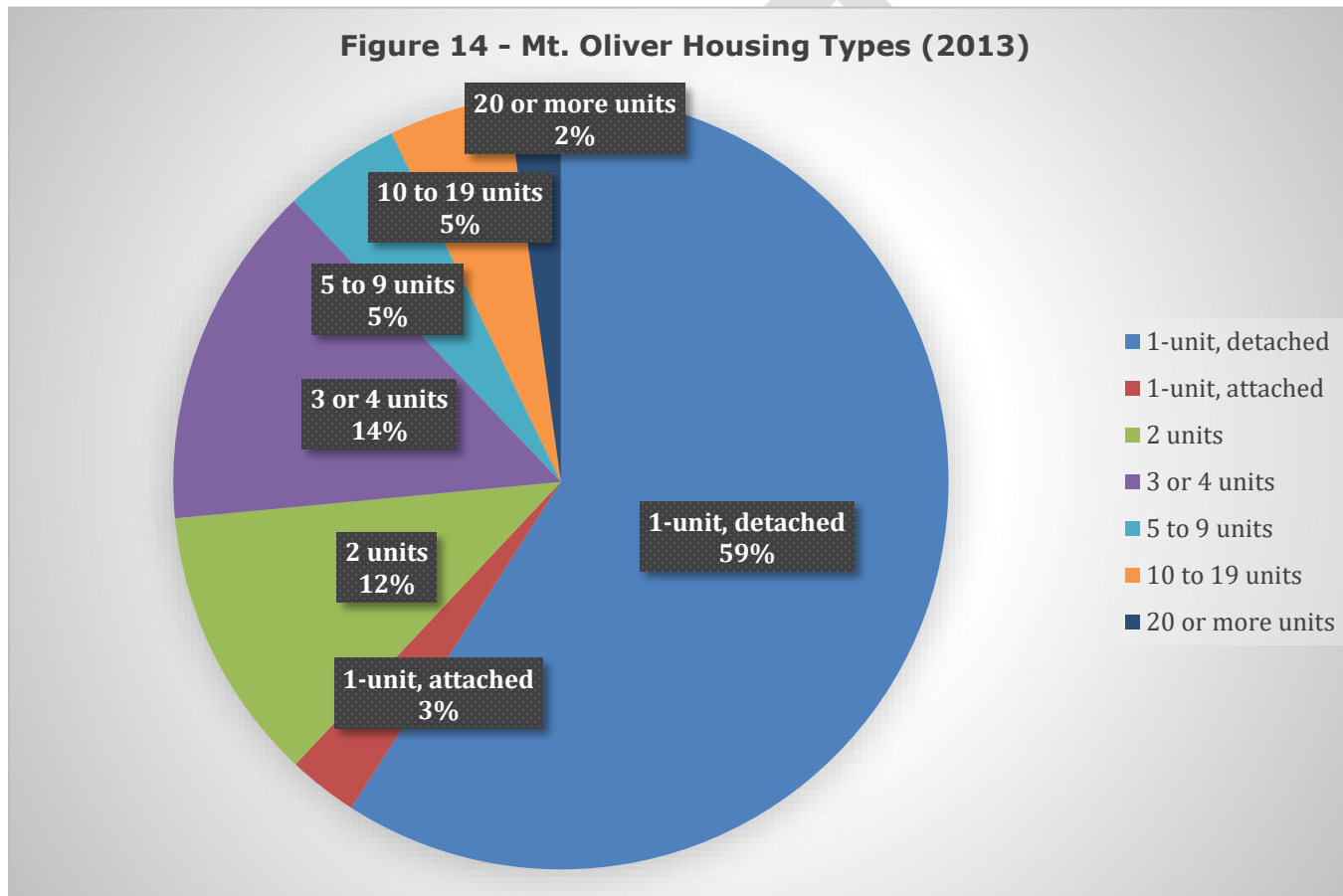
<sup>8</sup> 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Mt. Oliver Borough and City of Pittsburgh)



**HOUSING TYPES**

**Figure 14** provides an overview of the types of housing that is available in Mt. Oliver. About 59% of residential buildings in Mt. Oliver Borough are single-family detached dwellings.

The next two most common housing types are buildings of three to four units (14%) and two-unit dwellings (12%).



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

## HOME VALUE

Home values in Mt. Oliver are low compared to neighboring communities and they actually decreased significantly between 2000 and 2013. The median value of a home in Mt. Oliver Borough in 2013 was \$49,400 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Between 2000 and 2013, median home values in Mt. Oliver decreased by over 20% in 2013 dollars, or 1.8% annually.

TABLE 22 - MEDIAN HOME VALUES (ADJUSTED TO 2013 DOLLARS)				
MUNICIPALITY	2000 (ADJUSTED)	2013	% CHANGE	COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE
MT. OLIVER	62,230	49,400	-20.6%	-1.8%
BALDWIN BOROUGH	115,396	110,900	-3.9%	-0.3%
BRENTWOOD	99,027	97,500	-1.5%	-0.1%
WHITEHALL	139,206	134,000	-3.7%	-0.3%
PITTSBURGH	80,764	89,400	10.7%	0.8%
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU				

**Table 23** shows median home values in Mt. Oliver compared to the adjacent Pittsburgh neighborhoods. Median home values in Mt. Oliver were higher than Allentown,

**Table 22** shows how these values compare to median home values in neighboring municipalities. The median housing value in Mt. Oliver is the lowest and decreased the most of the neighboring municipalities.



Arlington, and Knoxville and lower than Carrick, Mt. Oliver City, and South Side Slopes.



**TABLE 23 - MEDIAN HOME VALUE PITTSBURGH NEIGHBORHOODS  
(IN 2010 DOLLARS)**

MUNICIPALITY	2000 (ADJUSTED)	2010	% CHANGE
MT. OLIVER BOROUGH	52,250	52,300	0.1%
ALLENTOWN	43,434	42,200	-2.8%
ARLINGTON	49,132	44,200	-10.0%
CARRICK	67,409	66,900	-0.8%
KNOXVILLE	45,587	39,900	-12.5%
MT. OLIVER CITY	49,639	56,700	14.2%
SOUTH SIDE SLOPES	55,337	73,050	32.0%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, CITY OF PITTSBURGH

**TABLE 24 - MEDIAN HOME VALUES FOR COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES  
(ADJUSTED FOR 2013 DOLLARS)**

MUNICIPALITY	2000 (ADJUSTED)	2013	% CHANGE	COMPOUNDED ANNUAL CHANGE
MT. OLIVER	62,230	49,400	-20.6%	-1.8%
BRACKENRIDGE	72,782	72,000	-1.1%	-0.1%
ETNA	86,175	81,800	-5.1%	-0.4%
INGRAM	100,786	92,600	-8.1%	-0.6%
MILLVALE	60,607	64,600	6.6%	0.5%
PITCAIRN	69,806	65,600	-6.0%	-0.5%
PORT VUE	69,400	63,900	-7.9%	-0.6%
SHARPSBURG	75,758	68,200	-10.0%	-0.8%
SPRINGDALE	94,292	90,300	-4.2%	-0.3%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

As shown in **Table 24**, the median home value in Mt. Oliver, at \$49,400, is the lowest of all home values among comparable communities in Allegheny County. Furthermore, when adjusted for 2010 dollars, Mt. Oliver's median home values decreased significantly between 2000 and 2013, down by 20.6%. Although the median home values in the comparable communities also decreased, the decreases were much less dramatic. Only Sharpsburg experienced a double digit decrease in median home value of more than 10% when measured in 2013 dollars.

**HOME SALES**

Although median home values in Mt. Oliver fell by over 20% between 2000 and 2013, sales prices have been rising steadily since 2009, as seen in **Table 25** and **Figure 15**. The number of sales has remained relatively constant, but median sales prices have risen from just over \$17,000 in 2009 to just under \$26,000 by 2015. This signals a slight increase in private investment in the Borough.

It should be noted that median sales prices are well below median home values. The median home value in 2013 was

\$49,400 but the median sales price is almost \$25,000 less at \$24,500. As a result, homeowners likely have little incentive to do much-needed repairs because sales prices will not support the improvements. It also makes it difficult to introduce market rate new in-fill housing to Mt. Oliver because the cost of construction is higher than the market price points. **Figure 16** provides an analysis of the price points in 2015, the most recent year for which data was available.

**TABLE 25 - RESIDENTIAL, SINGLE-FAMILY SALES CHARACTERISTICS (2009-2014)**

	2009		2010		2011		2012		2013		2014		2015	
TOTAL SALES	77		76		74		94		75		89		63	
\$0 TO \$499	18	23%	15	20%	22	30%	18	19%	16	21%	19	21%	11	18%
\$500 TO \$9,999	21	27%	16	21%	11	15%	25	27%	18	24%	16	18%	11	18%
\$10,000 TO \$24,999	24	31%	27	36%	23	31%	21	22%	12	16%	16	18%	15	23.8%
\$25,000 TO \$49,999	6	8%	12	16%	11	15%	22	23%	18	24%	25	28%	18	28.6%
\$50,000 TO \$99,999	8	10%	5	7%	6	8%	8	9%	10	13%	13	15%	8	12.7%
\$100,000 OR MORE	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0.0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
MEDIAN*	\$15,500		\$19,000		\$17,500		\$17,000		\$24,500		\$26,750		\$23,500	
*EXCLUDES SALES <\$500 TO AVOID COUNTING TRANSFERS BETWEEN FAMILIES														
SOURCE: MT. OLIVER BOROUGH														





Figure 15 - Median Housing Sale Price

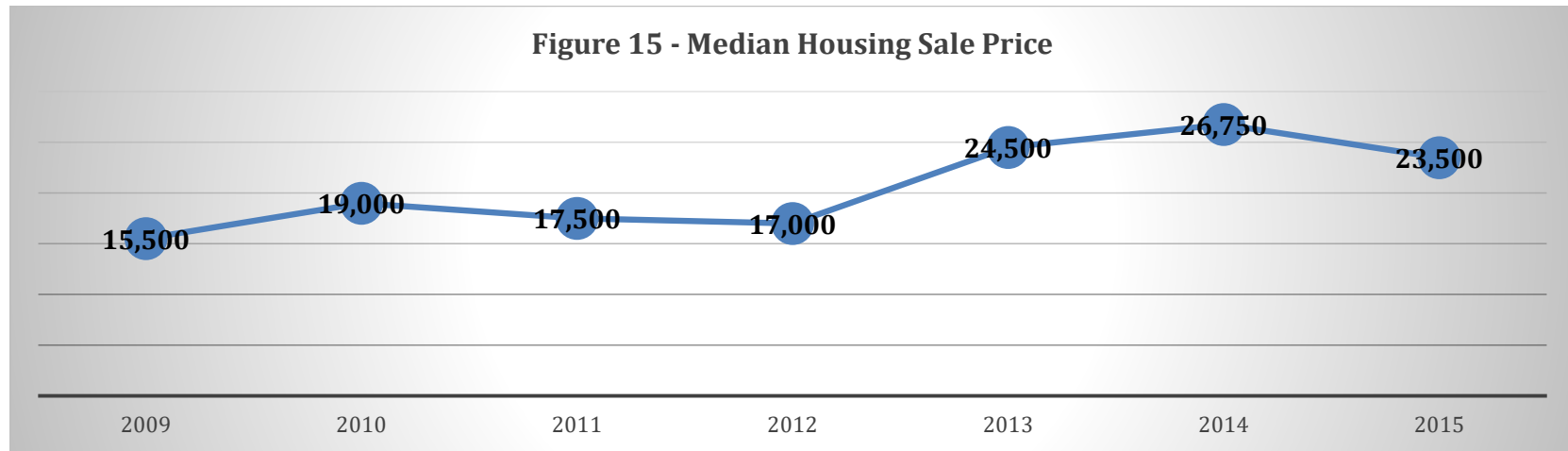
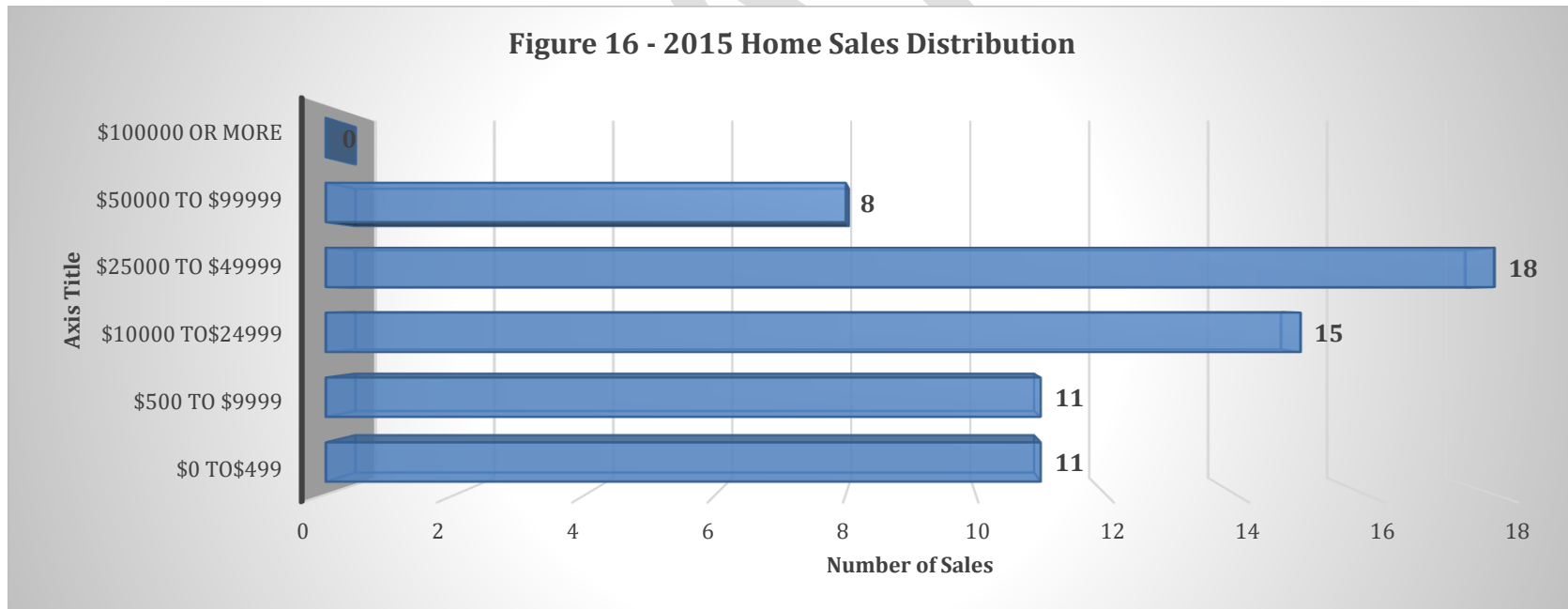


Figure 16 - 2015 Home Sales Distribution



**AGE OF HOUSING STOCK**

According to the 2013 ACS 5-Year Estimate, the median year a home was built in Mt. Oliver Borough was before 1939. Over half of all homes, 67.1% were built before 1940, making them over 76 years old as of 2015. **Table 26** compares the age of housing in Mt. Oliver to the median age of housing in the neighboring municipalities, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, and the United States. For the neighboring communities examined, median age does not appear to have a strong relationship to median home value.

<b>TABLE 26 - MEDIAN YEAR HOME BUILT FOR NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES</b>		
<b>MUNICIPALITY</b>	<b>MEDIAN YEAR</b>	<b>MEDIAN AGE IN 2015</b>
<b>MT. OLIVER</b>	<b>1939*</b>	<b>76+</b>
BALDWIN BOROUGH	1956	59
BRENTWOOD	1947	68
WHITEHALL	1957	58
PITTSBURGH	1939*	76+
ALLEGHENY COUNTY	1955	60
PENNSYLVANIA	1961	54
U.S.	1976	39
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU *MEDIAN AGE IS OLDER THAN 1939		

**Table 27** shows the median age of Mt. Oliver's housing stock compared to other comparable communities in Allegheny County.

<b>TABLE 27 - MEDIAN YEAR HOME BUILT FOR COMPARABLE COMMUNITIES</b>		
<b>MUNICIPALITY</b>	<b>MEDIAN YEAR</b>	<b>MEDIAN AGE IN 2015</b>
<b>MT. OLIVER</b>	<b>1939*</b>	<b>76+</b>
BRACKENRIDGE	1947	68
ETNA	1941	74
INGRAM	1940	75
MILLVALE	1939*	76+
PITCAIRN	1939*	76+
PORT VUE	1952	63
SHARPSBURG	1941	74
SPRINGDALE	1949	66
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU *MEDIAN AGE IS OLDER THAN 1939		

**NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING VISION STATEMENT:** Mt. Olive Borough will continue to provide a wide variety of housing opportunities in stable and attractive neighborhoods in order to meet the needs of their residents and attract new residents at all stages of their lives.

### *OUR GOALS:*

#### **ENHANCE EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS BY ADDRESSING INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS AND CREATING PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS.**

**ISSUE:** With 10.9 miles of roadways in the Borough, Mt. Oliver is hard pressed to adequately address all of the paving needs in the neighborhoods. Many residents cited the lack of upkeep and maintenance of streets in the neighborhoods as having a direct impact on the quality of their community life and the values of the housing stock. Residents also cited the lack of sidewalk maintenance to commercial areas as a barrier to a more cohesive community life. Pedestrian access (sidewalks and trails) to Transverse Park and to Brownsville Road would provide more support for the local business district and allow more use of Borough recreation areas.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- Develop a comprehensive “pedestrian overlay district” (POD) ordinance and map for the specific residential and commercial areas. An advisory committee of residents who have an interest in this issue should be appointed. The POD development should take into account the neighborhood topography, right of way areas, and existing roadway and parking patterns.
- Require any new development or redevelopment to install improvements that are consistent with the POD standards.

“. . . sitting on my mom’s porch relaxing and the neighborhood being alive with kids playing, people barbequing, people walking and saying ‘hi’ and feeling safe while we sit out there.”

#### **MAKING COMMUNITIES WORK FOR ALL**

“IT DOESN’T MATTER WHERE THEY LIVE- IN A BIG CITY, A SUBURB, OR A RURAL TOWN, THE VAST MAJORITY OF OLDER ADULTS WANT TO REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE,” SAID NANCY LEAMOND, AN AARP EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT.

THAT’S MORE LIKELY TO HAPPEN, IF THE COMMUNITY AND HOME HAVE FEATURES THAT ARE SUITABLE FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES. “LIVABLE” COMMUNITIES GENERALLY HAVE SOME OF THESE:  
WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOODS; PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS; AFFORDABLE HOUSING; SAFE STREETS; EASY ACCESS TO SHOPPING AND GREEN SPACES; AND INDOOR AND OUTDOOR PLACES FOR ALL AGES TO GATHER AND STAY CONNECTED.

HOMES WITH FEATURES SUCH AS A STEP-FREE ENTRANCE TO THE HOUSE, LEVER HANDLES ON DOORKNOBS AND FAUCETS, AND THE POTENTIAL FOR ONE-FLOOR LIVING ARE SAFER FOR OLDER PEOPLE. IT’S IMPORTANT WE ALL STEP UP OUR GAME,” LEAMOND SAID, “BECAUSE BY 2030, 1 OF EVERY 5 AMERICANS WILL BE 65 OR OLDER.”

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WWW.AARP.ORG/AGEFRIENDLY

- Begin to budget annually for sidewalk and trails as funding permits in the neighborhoods based on the adopted POD map. Priority should be given to linkages that create connections to the parks and the business district.
- Supplement local funding with applications for PENNDOT transportation multi-modal funds, DCNR recreation funds, and Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) greenways and trails funding. Additional money may be available through the county's Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund (CITF) and Gaming Economic Development (GEDF) grant funds.

### MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE CURRENT HOUSING STOCK

**ISSUE:** Most of the Borough housing stock is older – the median age of a home in Mt. Oliver is 76 years. Many of the structures and accessory structures are in need of update and repair. A strong well maintained housing stock is the best way to increase property values and to attract new residents to the community. Aggressive code enforcement is the number one strategy that can be implemented to protect a community from a decline in its property values.



### ACTION ITEMS:

- Improve and strengthen code enforcement. The Borough currently utilizes one (1) full time code enforcement officer to address over 1,500 units in the Borough. The code enforcement operation is primarily "complaint" driven. In order to be more proactive, this department should be supplemented with a part-time code officer.
- The Borough has adopted the latest 2015 International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC). The Borough should site all property violations under this Code because it will withstand any challenges that are brought in Common Pleas Court.

"Mt. Oliver is home. I raised my family here. I would like to retire here. It's an affordable community. And very accessible to everything because of public transportation."

"There are absentee landlords and bad tenants coupled with poor code enforcement. Mt. Oliver used to be a special place to live."



- The Borough has a good database of vacant properties but does not require an annual registration. Like the rental registration program, a *Vacant Land Registration Program* will provide the Borough with the ability to maintain an active database of property owners' names and contact information. The Borough can establish an annual fee to cover the costs of regular inspections and complaint response. This program will promote annual contact between the Borough and property owners. The Borough could use this opportunity to promote and educate the property owners about the required maintenance of these properties.
- In order to begin to gain compliance without the need for public funds to be expended, the Borough should consider adopting a presale inspection program that would entail a checklist of property maintenance items that must pass inspection prior to the transfer of the property from buyer to seller. The seller would either be required to have the conditions abated before the sale is complete, or the buyer would have to abate the condition within a set amount of time.
- Traditional homebuyers have taken advantage of low mortgage rates and refinancing opportunities. Those entering the housing market now are either first time buyers or not able to qualify for traditional mortgages. The Borough should consider this opportunity and explore the feasibility of a "first time" homeowners program targeting houses in need of repairs. Develop a database of houses meeting criteria that the Borough sees as eligible. This is a program that could be a part of the EDS scope of services under the NPP program.

### SUPPORT DIVERSITY IN TYPES OF HOUSING AVAILABILITY

**ISSUE:** Senior housing, over-55 "patio type" housing, mixed use housing, affordable housing for young couples and families, and market rental units were cited as lacking in Mt. Oliver. Regional and national trends support these needs – specifically, the "baby boomers" and the "millennials" are seeking more rental units at market price in areas that are convenient to shopping, dining, and employment opportunities. Mt. Oliver has an opportunity to capture some of this market by implementing tools that will encourage this type of housing diversity, especially around transit stops.

#### ACTION ITEMS:

- Include zoning for mixed use and higher density especially along Brownsville Road. Currently, Mt. Oliver Borough residential areas are zoned primarily for single family home residential use and the business district is zoned primarily for commercial uses. It is important to carve out areas for mixed use and higher density residential alternatives especially where the character of the neighborhood is compatible to mixed use.
- Consider transit oriented development (TOD) overlays at the transit stops along Brownsville Road. The TOD should include



compatible uses for apartment units, transit use, and support services such as dining, personal services, and small retail establishments.

- Incentivize development for the types of housing development that is desired by the Borough through the use of LERTA-RAP, TIF, or TRID which captures the incremental value of the development in order to assist the developer with the public improvements such as parking and infrastructure.

"Mt. Oliver has a lack of quality housing for active seniors. We need a greater variety of senior housing options."

### ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL AND ENHANCE EXISTING SENIOR HOUSING

**ISSUE:** Seniors who participated in the community survey and focus groups cited a lack of senior housing opportunities that would allow them to stay in the Mt. Oliver community and continue to have access to the shopping, dining, medical facilities, and entertainment that they desire and with which they are familiar. Although the Borough has Ormsby Manor, a senior hi-rise option, the services for seniors are limited and the challenges have increased with the elimination of the Elder Avo and some of the Port Authority bus routes that previously met senior access needs. Lack of sidewalk maintenance and fear of loitering youth were also cited as hindering the ability of seniors to walk to parks, shopping, services, and dining areas.

#### ACTION ITEMS:

- Consider providing zoning that would allow for market apartment rental, or "quad" unit development for "early baby boomers" who may not desire the traditional senior living but may choose to live in "over-55" facilities with urban amenities. Seek developers who specialize in the "over 55" market in order to identify opportunities in the Borough.
- Contact and work with supportive housing development firms (like Action Housing) to access the county



programs and HUD for assisted housing for seniors with lower incomes who may be interested in continuing to live in Mt. Oliver Borough as they age.

- Work with senior agencies like Lifespan and ACCESS to incorporate more programming and transit opportunities for seniors especially in the Borough's recreation and leisure activities.
- Include senior representation in developing a pedestrian oriented district (POD) ordinance in order to provide pedestrian connections to existing senior housing and needed amenities.

"Owners are not maintaining their yards. 80% of the homes don't clean weeds growing up between sidewalks and curbs. Small things can make a big difference."



### WORK ON ISSUES OF BLIGHT AND VACANT PROPERTIES

**ISSUE:** Residents are frustrated and angry about the properties in their neighborhoods that continue to be in disrepair and deterioration. They also expressed concern about vacant properties owned by absentee landlords that present a particular safety concern. Besides the obvious problems that vacant and blighted properties present, a recent study in Allegheny County found that a blighted property in the neighborhood can cause the property values of adjacent properties to decrease as much as 17%.

### ACTION ITEMS:

- Continue to map blighted and vacant properties and cross check those properties with those that are tax delinquent. These properties can be scheduled for tax sales – many times adjacent property owners will purchase properties at discounted rates at such sales.
- Consider participating in the Pittsburgh land bank program. This program is designed to accept blighted and tax delinquent properties in order to sell and repurpose them for return to the tax rolls.
- In addition to enforcing the 2015 Property Maintenance Code, the Borough should enforce "quality of life" ticketing that includes trash and litter, abandoned vehicles or appliances, or high grass and weed.
- Expand the rental registration program to include vacant property registration that requires registration of property owner and payment of an annual fee to cover the costs of regular inspections and complaint response. This would provide the ability to map these parcels and to either take them through the county vacant property program or to tax sale. It also provides an opportunity to send information to the owner about their responsibilities under the code and regulations.



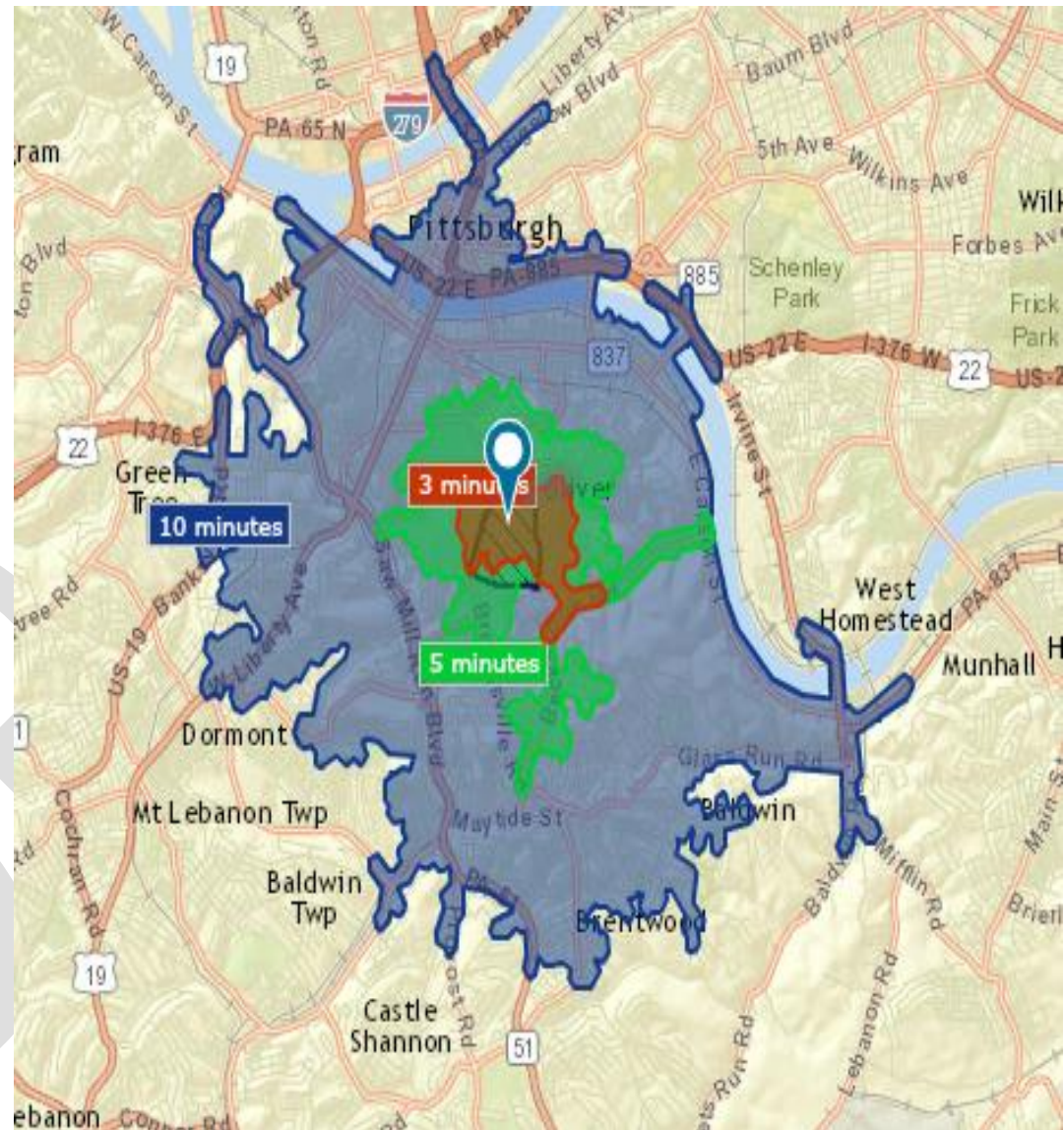
## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

In the past, Mt. Oliver enjoyed an active and thriving business district that offered a diverse mix of retail, dining and employment for Borough residents and neighboring communities. It still provides the highest amount of commercial activity and “critical mass” of any of the Hilltop communities. The most direct competition for attracting businesses and residents is the Southside shopping district and the Southside Works.

## MARKET PROFILE

As part of this Plan, the team conducted a market assessment to determine the highest and best market potential for commercial revitalization for market areas for the Borough of Mt. Oliver. A market analysis is in essence a series of tools used to analyze current building uses, business mix, market area size, and economic and consumer data. A market profile will help to identify potential opportunities in different business and retail sectors.

In order to establish a geographic parameter for the Market Area Analysis, a Primary Market Area (PMA) is defined as the entirety of the Borough of Mt. Oliver, and a three-, five-, and ten-minute drive time from the geographic center point of the Borough. The areas have been determined by availability of public transportation and the access to goods and service from Mt. Oliver. Drive times are an acceptable definition of market area and are considered an industry standard for market analysis.





**RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS**

Understanding the spending patterns and the spending potential of the targeted customer base and market is important when promoting a marketing campaign. Table \_\_\_ analyzes the Spending Potential Index that represents the amount that consumers spend in specific retail markets in the

All NAICS code descriptions can be found on the NAICS Association's Web site at [www.naics.com](http://www.naics.com).

3-minute, 5-minute, and 10-minute drive time areas relative to a national average of 100. For example, if the Spending Potential Index for computers in the local area is 50%, it means that local households spend 50% less on computers than the average U.S. household.

What is revealed in Table \_\_\_ indicates that for Mt. Oliver, as well as the 3-, 5- and 10-minute drive times, there are *no* industry sectors where consumers in the respective market areas are spending more than the national average. Overall, it appears that in Mt. Oliver and in the 3- and 5- minute drive time market areas, consumers are spending approximately half of the national average in all of the industry sectors. Those areas that have the highest spending for Mt. Oliver, which include Food at Home, Healthcare, and TV/Video/Sound Equipment, also have the highest spending among the industry sectors for the 3-, 5-, and 10-minute drive times.

Although none of the spending potential indexes in Mt. Oliver are greater than the spending potential indexes of that in the

5- and 10-minute drive times, Mt. Oliver has a greater spending potential index in every industry sector than the 3-minute drive time market area. The largest difference is the spending in Education where Mt. Oliver has a spending potential index of 53 and the 3-minute drive time has a spending potential index of 50. This means that consumers in Mt. Oliver are spending 53% of what the national consumers are spending in the Education sector.

With the exception of the 10-minute drive time, all of the market areas, including Mt. Oliver have significantly lower than average spending potential index numbers. A number of factors could be attributed to this which include a lower median household income population that cannot afford to spend what the national average is spending; as well as the presence of a saturated market located outside of the market areas, in which consumers are going outside of the market areas to spend their retail dollars.



**PRELIMINARY ESTIMATED MARKET POTENTIAL (RESIDENTIAL CONSUMER SPENDING)**

	MT. OLIVER BOROUGH		3-MINUTE DRIVE TIME*		5-MINUTE DRIVE TIME*		10-MINUTE DRIVE TIME*	
<b>SECTOR</b>	SPENDING POTENTIAL INDEX	HOUSEHOLD SPENDING	SPENDING POTENTIAL INDEX	HOUSEHOLD SPENDING	SPENDING POTENTIAL INDEX	HOUSEHOLD SPENDING	SPENDING POTENTIAL INDEX	HOUSEHOLD SPENDING
Apparel & Services	37	\$1,186,160	35	\$1,468,561	40	\$6,021,159	49	\$38,798,430
Computer & Accessories	52	\$191,200	50	\$236,158	58	\$979,272	72	\$6,479,372
Education	53	\$1,123,432	50	\$1,374,348	57	\$5,634,435	73	\$38,229,804
Entertainment/Rec.	54	\$2,501,333	52	\$3,110,390	60	\$12,904,460	73	\$82,672,631
Food at Home	56	\$4,099,303	54	\$5,086,990	62	\$21,019,374	74	\$133,082,785
Food Away from Home	53	\$2,432,833	51	\$3,013,243	58	\$12,482,506	72	\$81,460,382
Health Care	54	\$3,586,593	53	\$4,493,949	60	\$18,706,409	72	\$117,387,269
HH Furnishings & Equip.	47	\$1,222,598	46	\$1,519,976	52	\$6,279,697	64	\$40,418,295
Investments	26	\$986,276	24	\$1,198,880	33	\$5,916,011	51	\$48,775,371
Retail Goods	52	\$18,583,738	51	\$23,121,316	58	\$95,938,854	70	\$609,810,012
Shelter	53	\$12,220,737	51	\$15,173,108	58	\$62,553,497	72	\$406,590,604
TV/Video/Sound Equip.	58	\$1,053,731	56	\$1,316,749	64	\$5,421,816	75	\$33,896,103
Travel	48	\$1,300,128	46	\$1,613,788	53	\$6,728,849	66	\$44,698,823
Vehicle Maintenance & Repairs	54	\$837,602	52	\$1,039,425	59	\$4,302,755	72	\$27,651,036

Source: Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) Business Analyst

\*5- and 10- minute drive times are based on donuts and are not cumulative smaller drive times

**TOP INDUSTRY SECTORS**

The Team also reviewed top industry sectors in the top industries for Mt. Oliver's targeted market areas (3-, 5-, 10-minute drive times) as well as those within the Borough. Examining the business mix of a market area or of a business district provides a useful snapshot of the types and number of establishments that are located within a designated area.

Typically, businesses are categorized using a grouping system known as the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The NAICS groups businesses into categories based on the types of products the businesses sell or services they provide. The team used data from the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI), which classified all businesses and industry sectors using the

NAICS. This data is compiled and updated annually by ESRI. The largest industry sectors by number of business establishments are listed separately for each respective drive time.

Looking at data within Mt. Oliver's market area (Retail Trade) the largest industry sectors in the Borough are Other Services (except Public Admin.), Construction, and Food Services & Drinking Places with 26, 21, and 19 business establishments respectively. According to NAICS, Other Services (except

Public Admin.) include those establishments which are, "primarily engaged in activities, such as equipment and machinery repairing, promoting or administering religious activities, grantmaking, advocacy, and providing drycleaning and laundry services, personal care services, death care services, pet care services, photofinishing services, temporary parking services, and dating services." (www.Bls.gov).

The service industry cannot be overestimated in the Mt. Oliver Market Area. The economic base in Mt. Oliver has shifted from a retail market to a services, food, and dining market. This is a strength that can be built upon. Construction also shows up as a strong industry sector.

MT. OLIVER MARKET AREA - 2014		
Industry Sector	# of Business Establishments	% of Total Establishments
Construction	21	13.3%
Manufacturing	7	4.4%
Wholesale Trade	8	5.1%
Food & Beverage Stores	9	5.7%
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	7	4.4%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	9	5.7%
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	11	7.0%
Admin. & Support, Waste Mgmt. & Remediation	17	10.8%
Health Care & Social Assistance	11	7.0%
Food Services & Drinking Places	19	12.0%
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	26	16.5%
Automotive Repair & Maintenance	7	4.4%
Public Administration	6	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI) BUSINESS ANALYST

3-Minute Drive Time Market Area - 2014		
Industry Sector	# of Business Establishments	% of Total Establishments
Construction	25	14.0%
Manufacturing	9	5.0%
Wholesale Trade	7	3.9%
Food & Beverage Stores	9	5.0%
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	7	3.9%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	10	5.6%
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	14	7.8%
Admin. & Support, Waste Mgmt. & Remediation	24	13.4%
Health Care & Social Assistance	12	6.7%
Food Services & Drinking Places	17	9.5%
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	31	17.3%
Automotive Repair & Maintenance	9	5.0%
Public Administration	5	2.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The 3-Minute Drive Time Market Area includes Brownsville Road and some of the Becks Run neighborhoods with approximately 179 businesses. It is clear that Mt. Oliver is the hub of commercial activity in this drive time market. In this market area, it is again obvious that the market has shifted from retail to services, administration and support, and dining. Construction in this market continues to be a strong industry sector.

SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI) BUSINESS ANALYST



5-Minute Drive Time Market Area - 2014		
Industry Sector	# of Business Establishments	% of Total Establishments
Construction	87	16.8%
Manufacturing	18	3.5%
Wholesale Trade	20	3.9%
Food & Beverage Stores	18	3.5%
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	11	2.1%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	22	4.2%
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	46	8.9%
Admin. & Support, Waste Mgmt. & Remediation	91	17.6%
Health Care & Social Assistance	38	7.3%
Food Services & Drinking Places	43	8.3%
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	91	17.6%
Automotive Repair & Maintenance	17	3.3%
Public Administration	16	3.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

The 5-Minute Drive Time Market Area includes Mt. Oliver, the Hilltop, and some Carrick neighborhoods with approximately 518 businesses. In this market area, it is again obvious that the market has shifted from retail to services, administration and support, and dining. Construction in this market continues to be a strong industry sector and health care emerges as a strengthening sector.

SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI) BUSINESS ANALYST

The 10-Minute Drive Time Market is probably not a realistic market for Mt. Oliver businesses. It includes all of the "slopes," Saw Mill Run Boulevard, W. Liberty Avenue, and parts of E. Carson Street. With 5,490 businesses, the consumers in this area will have multiple services, retail and dining to choose from and will probably not be drawn to the Mt. Oliver market area. Professional, scientific and technical services emerges as a strong industry sector in this market area.

10-Minute Drive Time Market Area - 2014		
Industry Sector	# of Business Establishments	% of Total Establishments
Construction	467	8.5%
Manufacturing	212	3.9%
Wholesale Trade	185	3.4%
Food & Beverage Stores	106	1.9%
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	87	1.6%
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	296	5.4%
Professional, Scientific & Tech Services	1,505	27.4%
Admin. & Support, Waste Mgmt. & Remediation	787	14.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	435	7.9%
Food Services & Drinking Places	422	7.7%
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	693	12.6%
Automotive Repair & Maintenance	93	1.7%
Public Administration	202	3.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,490</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI) BUSINESS ANALYST

## RETAIL AND DINING GAP ANALYSIS

Another method to help determine potential retail opportunities for the Mt. Oliver area is to perform a retail leakage/surplus or what is frequently referred to as a "gap analysis" or a "supply and demand analysis." The retail gap analysis is an effective tool for identifying retail and service needs in a community by examining the quantitative aspect of the community's retail opportunities. It is a guide to understanding retail opportunities but it is not an analysis that indicates unconditional opportunities.

The leakage/surplus index is generated by dividing the community's actual sales by the community's sales potential for a specific industry sector that is classified using the NAICS classification system. Among the industry sectors, 27 sub-industry groups make up a larger group called the Retail Trade sector and four other sub-industry groups make up the larger Food and Drink sector.

The retail leakage/surplus analysis can aid Mt. Oliver in the following ways:

- It indicates how well the retail needs of local residents in each geographic market area are being met
- It uncovers unmet demand and possible opportunities
- It helps planners to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the local retail sector
- It measures the difference between actual and potential retail sales

A **retail leakage** (an index more than 1.0) means that residents are spending more for products than what the local businesses are capturing. Retail leakage suggests that there is an unmet demand for a particular good or service in that particular industry sector. A leakage also suggests that the community can support additional store space for that type of business or industry sector. Finding significant leakages can be an excellent tool to use in presenting a case for retailers to come to the community. A **retail surplus** (an index less than 1.0) means that the community's businesses in a particular industry sector are capturing the local market spending as well as attracting non-local shoppers and consumers.

The leakage/surplus factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity for Mt. Oliver. While the analysis serves as a guide to opportunity, or the lack thereof, there will be instances when leakages do not translate into opportunity and when surpluses do not mean that a community cannot support additional businesses.

The Mt. Oliver Market Area includes 1,346 estimated households where the median income is only \$25,536. Mt. Oliver has a total of 43 Retail Trade and Food & Drink businesses in the market area; 32 of which are Retail Trade businesses and the remaining 11 are Food & Drink businesses. The total retail potential is \$23,472,038 (demand) and the total retail sales are \$23,997,369 (supply), resulting in a total leakage factor of -1.1 meaning that the Primary Market Area has a small surplus of overall retail establishments.

Industry Summary	Retail Potential (Demand)	Retail Sales (Supply)	Retail Gap	Leakage (+) / Surplus (-) Factor	# of Businesses
Total Retail Trade	\$21,239,521	\$22,162,032	(\$922,511)	-2.1	32
Total Food & Drink	\$2,232,517	\$1,835,337	\$397,180	9.8	11
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	\$23,472,038	\$23,997,369	(\$525,331)	-1.1	43
SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI) BUSINESS ANALYST					

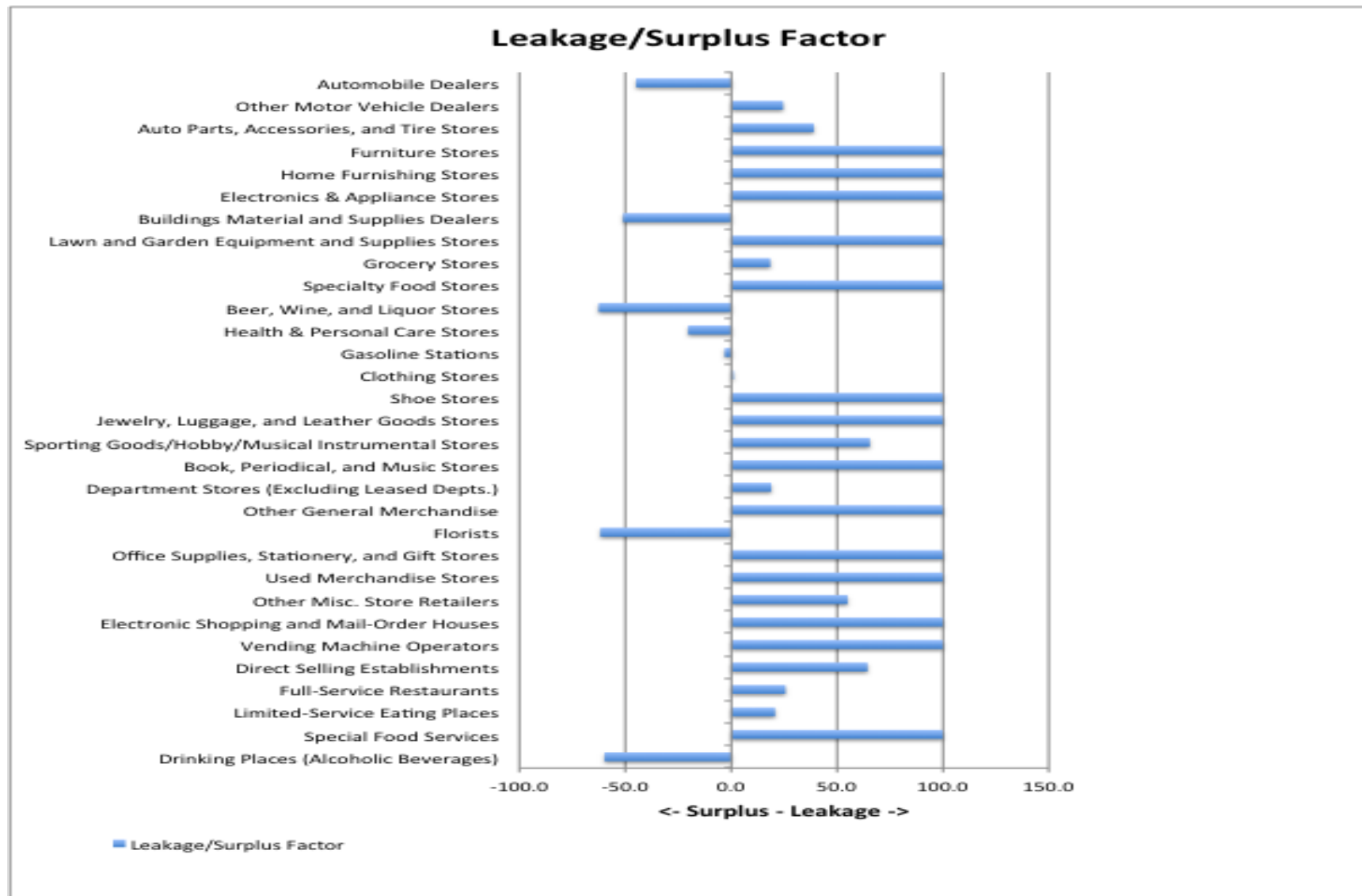
For Mt. Oliver, the overall Retail Trade & Food & Drink Market sectors largely have leakages. This reveals that residents in the Borough are spending more in the respective industries than what the market is actually capturing. This could mean there is an unmet need in the Borough. There is potential opportunity for Mt. Oliver to attract businesses in sectors such as Specialty Food Stores and Book, Periodic, and Music Stores.

There are only a few sectors where the Borough is experiencing a surplus in spending. Most notably Automobile Dealers; Buildings Materials and Supplies; Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores; Florists; and Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages) are sectors where the Borough appears to be attracting outside consumers to its establishments.



**DID YOU  
KNOW?**

- RETAIL VACANCY RATES HAVE RISEN NATIONALLY AND SLUGGISH RENTS ARE AN INDICATOR THAT SUPPLY EXCEEDS DEMAND.
- NEIGHBORHOOD, LIFESTYLE, AND COMMUNITY CENTERS HAVE SHOWN SLIGHT INCREASES IN RENTS AND LOWER VACANCY RATES.
- THERE IS A NEW FOCUS ON FAMILY-ORIENTED EVENTS, TECHNOLOGY, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND ENTERTAINMENT WITHIN SHOPPING AREAS.
- SPECIALTY AND NICHE SHOPPING IS TRENDING.



SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI) BUSINESS ANALYST



LEAKAGE/SURPLUS FACTOR BY INDUSTRY GROUP - MT. OLIVER					
Industry Group	Demand	Supply	Retail	Leakage/Surplus	# of Businesses
	(Retail Potential)	(Retail Sales)	Leakage/Surplus	Factor	
Automobile Dealers	\$3,790,210	\$10,003,640	(\$6,213,430)	-45.0	1
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	\$194,683	\$118,075	\$76,608	24.5	1
Auto Parts, Accessories, and Tire Stores	\$261,595	\$114,684	\$146,911	39.0	1
Furniture Stores	\$261,819	\$0	\$261,819	100.0	0
Home Furnishing Stores	\$181,011	\$0	\$181,011	100.0	0
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$538,972	\$0	\$538,972	100.0	0
Buildings Material and Supplies Dealers	\$498,125	\$1,537,623	(\$1,039,498)	-51.1	4
Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Stores	\$107,371	\$0	\$107,371	100.0	0
Grocery Stores	\$3,446,484	\$2,377,215	\$1,069,269	18.4	8
Specialty Food Stores	\$110,333	\$0	\$110,333	100.0	0
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores	\$378,709	\$1,652,473	(\$1,273,764)	-62.7	1
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$1,203,189	\$1,818,031	(\$614,842)	-20.4	1
Gasoline Stations	\$2,144,949	\$2,280,830	(\$135,881)	-3.1	2
Clothing Stores	\$960,332	\$955,621	\$4,711	0.2	7
Shoe Stores	\$206,475	\$0	\$206,475	100.0	0
Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods Stores	\$108,189	\$0	\$108,189	100.0	0
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrumental Stores	\$451,537	\$94,103	\$357,434	65.5	1
Book, Periodical, and Music Stores	\$140,159	\$0	\$140,159	100.0	0
Department Stores (Excluding Leased Depts.)	\$1,319,031	\$898,773	\$420,258	18.9	1

Other General Merchandise	\$1,758,355	\$0	\$1,758,355	100.0	0
Florists	\$30,594	\$129,847	(\$99,253)	-61.9	1
Office Supplies, Stationery, and Gift Stores	\$168,733	\$0	\$168,733	100.0	0
Used Merchandise Stores	\$64,405	\$0	\$64,405	100.0	0
Other Misc. Store Retailers	\$390,735	\$113,528	\$277,207	55.0	2
Electronic Shopping and Mail-Order Houses	\$2,150,856	\$0	\$2,150,856	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	\$60,268	\$0	\$60,268	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	\$312,402	\$67,589	\$244,813	64.4	1
Full-Service Restaurants	\$970,896	\$574,957	\$395,939	25.6	4
Limited-Service Eating Places	\$1,016,762	\$668,709	\$348,053	20.7	1
Special Food Services	\$96,400	\$0	\$96,400	100.0	0
Drinking Places (Alcoholic Beverages)	\$148,459	\$591,671	(\$443,212)	-59.9	6
<b>SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI) BUSINESS ANALYST</b>					

### TAPESTRY SEGMENTATION

Community Tapestry Segmentation, provided by ESRI, is a market segmentation system that classifies U.S. neighborhoods into 65 segments based on their socioeconomic and demographic variables such as age, income, home value, occupation, household type, education, and other consumer behavior characteristics. It is another method for deciphering consumer behavior.

Segmentation systems operate on the theory that people with similar tastes, lifestyles, and behaviors seek others with the same tastes – hence the adage “like seeks like.” These behaviors can be measured, predicted, and targeted.

Community Tapestry combines the “who” of lifestyle demography with the “where” of local neighborhood geography to create a model of various lifestyle classifications, or segments, of actual neighborhoods with addresses – district behavioral market segments.<sup>9</sup>

Understanding the lifestyle and behavior of households in the trade area is just as important as understanding their basic demographic profile and buying power. In Mt. Oliver there are only two different tapestry segments that are identified, the largest of which is the *Hardscrabble Road* with approximately 80.3% households falling into this category.

<sup>9</sup> The source for the segmentation system description is taken from the ESRI website at [www.esri.com](http://www.esri.com)

This tapestry segment consists of households of persons with a median age of 31.7. This group is typically ethnically diverse with a median household income of about \$26,000 is found in urbanized neighborhoods with older housing. It consists of mostly families including married couples and single parents. Most people in this group work in the service, manufacturing, and retail trades. They enjoy reading parenting and health magazines and typically favor listening to gospel, R&B, rap, and hip-hop music during their free time.

The second tapestry segment found in the Mt. Oliver Market Area, is "Traditional Living." This category consists of a younger demographic group, mostly of married couples who

are new householders. There are typically at least two generations of family members who live in the community and their children are likely do the same. This group has a median age of 34.8 and a median household income of \$37,000. Most people in this category work in the manufacturing, retail, and healthcare trades. They frequent convenience stores for lottery tickets and incidentals and they favor discount stores such as Wal-Mart and Kmart. In their spare time they enjoy outdoor activities such as visiting a local park or zoo. More complete descriptions of the identified tapestry segments are included in **Appendix C** of the Plan.

MT. OLIVER BOROUGH		3-MINUTE DRIVE TIME		5-MINUTE DRIVE TIME		10-MINUTE DRIVE TIME		PENNSYLVANIA	
Top Tapestry Segments	Percent	Top Tapestry Segments	Percent	Top Tapestry Segments	Percent	Top Tapestry Segments	Percent	Top Tapestry Segments	Percent
Hardscrabble Road	80.3%	Hardscrabble Road	36.5%	Traditional Living	23.4%	Rustbelt Traditions	14.7%	Salt of the Earth	8.4%
Traditional Living	19.7%	Traditional Living	18.1%	Hardscrabble Road	18.8%	Traditional Living	13.6%	Green Acres	6.2%
		Modest Income Homes	15.9%	College Towns	17.0%	College Towns	11.2%	Rustbelt Retirees	6.1%
		Set to Impress	8.7%	Modest Income Homes	12.9%	Old and Newcomers	9.6%	Urban Rows	6.0%
		Small Town Simplicity	7.7%	Set to Impress	7.0%	Set to Impress	9.1%	Prosperous Empty Nesters	4.8%

SOURCE: ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (ESRI) BUSINESS ANALYST

**BUSINESS DISTRICT VISION STATEMENT:** Mt. Oliver Borough will be a community that actively supports commercial activity and encourages a diversity of small neighborhood businesses, services, dining, and entertainment with opportunities for pedestrian oriented activities and community connections.

### *OUR GOALS:*

#### ENCOURAGE MORE BUSINESS DIVERSITY

**ISSUE:** Mt. Oliver residents described the Brownsville Road business district as one of the most important and defining characteristics of the community. For many visitors, it is the only experience that they have with the Borough. Residents noted that they would like to see more and varied local shopping and dining experiences. There is a general concern about the lack of diversity, lack of small business, independently owned retail, grocers, diners, restaurants, and specialty stores. The use of a “central business district” zoning designation would help to encourage a diverse mix of retail, dining, entertainment and small professional and personal service establishments in order to advance this concept.

“I live in South Side, but if there were more variety of shops and businesses in Mt. Oliver I would frequent them also....”

#### ACTION ITEMS:



- Create a “central business district” zoning designation with smaller lots and a variety of uses that encourage business diversity.
- Consider using a mixed use designation (MUD) adjacent to the Brownsville Road “central business district” in order to allow higher density residential that will support the retail, services, and dining establishments in the business district.
- Adopt a traditional neighborhood development (TND) overlay zoning designation. A TND can protect the look, character, and integrity of a neighborhood commercial district and is more consistent with form based zoning than traditional zoning.
- Actively engage in recruiting a wider range of “niche” retail and dining services that are unique to the Mt. Oliver Brownsville corridor and will serve as destination establishments for Hilltop residents.

"The only nice businesses are the ones that have been here forever-like Dollar Tree, Maietta's, Mt. Oliver Florist, and Ace Hardware."



### FOCUS ON PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES FROM THE NEIGHBORHOODS TO THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

**ISSUE:** Sidewalks and the condition of sidewalks was a big issue for residents and business owners. The issue of pedestrian connectivity was mentioned over and over especially connecting with parks, neighborhoods, or the business district.

### FOCUS ON RETENTION, EXPANSION, AND RECRUITMENT OF BUSINESSES

**ISSUE:** The Borough has been unable to retain stable businesses, expand existing businesses, or recruit new businesses. As part of the Neighborhood Partnership Program through the HEDC, the Borough has retained the services of Economic Development South (EDS) to provide the technical assistance and expertise to work in the business district.

#### ACTION ITEMS:

- Continue to utilize EDS to assist with business district activities and to work with the business community.
- Continue to offer the "rent abatement" program through the HEDC to qualified tenants who are willing to relocate to the Mt. Oliver business district.
- Continue to acquire properties when appropriate to upgrade and convert to usable commercial space and market the properties to attract favorable tenants who will provide quality services to the Mt. Oliver primary market area.
- Focus on attracting those retail dollars that show the greatest "leakage" to other market areas. These are electronics and appliances, building materials, grocers, general merchandise, and dining establishments (both limited and full service restaurants). These opportunities provide the highest potential capture of dollars from other markets.

"We need businesses that will bring in residents from surrounding neighborhoods in order for the business to survive."



Other connections mentioned were running, biking, walking, and hiking trails that encouraged people to safely move from place to place.

### ACTION ITEMS:

- Continue to work on the Streetscape project in the central business district. This project will improve sidewalks, crosswalks, landscaping, and the overall appearance of the Brownsville Road corridor.
- Develop a Streetscape Enhancement Overlay (SEO) zoning district for the Brownsville Road corridor. Work with the City of Pittsburgh to develop a SEO that can provide regulations requiring new development and redevelopment to include new sidewalks, street trees, landscaping, decorative lighting, street furniture, and other pedestrian amenities. An SEO can completely transform a corridor over time.

"There are so many walkable places in Mt. Oliver but the sidewalks are not in great shape and there are not safe walking areas for seniors and parents with strollers or anyone in a wheel chair."

- Include desired sidewalks and pedestrian connections and amenities in the business district on the Pedestrian Overlay District (POD) map.

- Plan and develop pedestrian connections from the business district to parks and to surrounding residential neighborhoods in the form of sidewalks and trails.



### IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF PROPERTIES IN THE COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

**ISSUE:** Many residents believe that there should be mandatory design requirements for all businesses along the Brownsville Road corridor that create a uniform and appealing appearance for residents and customers. They noted that aesthetics are important for creating an inviting and enjoyable shopping experience. Greening of the corridor through



trees, landscaping, and green infrastructure was mentioned in several survey comments. Research supports this opinion – the social life in public spaces contributes to the quality of life in a community.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- Set up a mini-grant program for façade improvements, signs, landscaping, street furniture, and other pedestrian amenities on Brownsville Road. Set up a design committee to review applications for program projects.
- Adopt regulations and design guidelines that require urban features to be installed for redevelopment of existing structures. Establish an advisory group to work on the development of these guidelines.
- Step up code enforcement for commercial properties that exhibit high grass and weeds, debris, garbage, or improper storage of supplies,

equipment, or vehicles. Vigorously enforce the 2015 IPMC.

- Provide incentives in the stormwater management ordinance for property owners in the business district who are interested in installing green infrastructure in the form of permeable pavements, landscaping areas, and bio-swales that will temporarily detain some of the stormwater runoff from parking lots and buildings.

#### **CREATE GREEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING ISLANDS, AND URBAN PARKS IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT**

**ISSUE:** There are limited opportunities in the Brownsville business district for providing green space, gathering areas for residents, and public parklets. In fact, the one small parklet in the business district adjacent to the Borough Building contains only benches and picnic tables and no landscaping or plantings. It is also in poor repair and should be replaced with actual park features.





**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Eliminate the wooden park structure that is adjacent to the Borough Building and incorporate this lot as part of a courtyard that is aligned with and connected to the Borough Building or use the lot for an expansion of the existing Borough Building with an entrance at street level. There are many useful options for this lot once the wooden structures are removed.
- Include attractive urban signage and amenities in the green “pocket park” at the intersection of Walnut Street and Brownsville Road. It is possible to create a dramatic focal point at this location that provides a gathering spot



and attractive signage and promotes the business district theme. It is a perfect location for extreme landscaping, lighting, a gazebo, or possible water feature. It should be used for events such as: a farmers market, entertainment, family gatherings, civic gatherings, art shows and celebrations.



- Develop an achitectural design plan for the clock tower area that provides a focal point and gathering space for the entire community. Eliminate much of the concrete and provide lighting, landscaping, monuments, benches, public art, and trees that would create a welcoming entranceway to the Borough from Bausman Street.



- Use principles from Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTD) when creating and installing improvements in the business district. Several studies have demonstrated that architectural design can be used effectively to influence crime rates in neighborhoods. These studies show that by combining security hardware, psychology, and site design, a physical environment can be developed that would, by its very nature, discourage crime. CPTED is a relatively new concept. It is a blend of physical and psychological aspects and features that will discourage crime. It makes possible designs that offer protection without resorting to the “prison camp” approach for security. It employs physical design features that discourage crime. Some of the concepts are:

**DEFENSIBLE SPACE:** Space is divided into public zones, semi-private zones, and private zones each with its own set of security and boundaries.

**TERRITORIALITY:** When people identify with the architectural environment, they feel a sense of pride and ownership and want to defend the space. This includes gateways, signage, and public art that create character and a sense of place.

**SURVEILLANCE:** *Informal surveillance* occurs as a result of architectural design that minimizes visual obstacles and eliminates places of concealment; *formal surveillance* uses cameras, guard posts, etc.

**LIGHTING:** A constant level of light providing reasonably good visibility should be maintained 24 hours a day. A bright, cheerful environment is much more pleasing than one that appears dark and lifeless.

**LANDSCAPING:** Landscaping can mark the transition between zones. Features such as decorative fencing, flower beds, ground cover, and varied patterns can show separation between zones. An attractive environment generates a sense of pride and ownership.

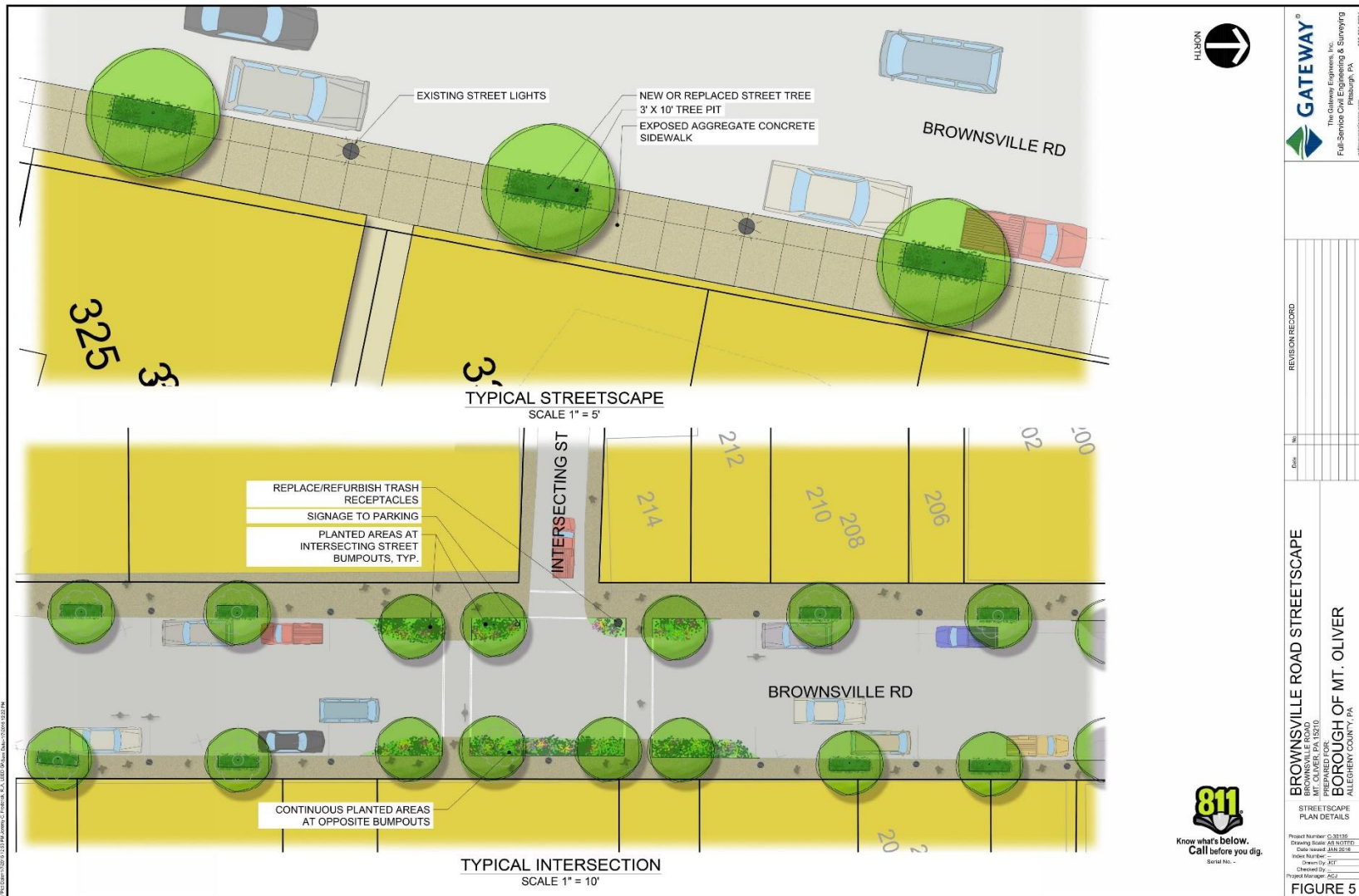
**PHYSICAL SECURITY:** The goal is to make penetration difficult and time-consuming. Degree of difficulty and length of delay are key factors in reducing crime.

**Map 4** on the following page provides the layout for the proposed streetscape design.





MAP 4 - PROPOSED STREETSCAPE DESIGN - BROWNSVILLE ROAD





## MOVING AND SHAKING – TRANSPORTATION, TRANSIT, PARKING

Traffic congestion, the elimination of popular bus routes, and lack of parking in the business district were identified as the primary issues around transportation in the Borough. The timing of the traffic signals and the lack of turning lanes was cited also. Many residents pointed out that the cuts to public

"Mt. Oliver is convenient to work (Oakland) and play (Southside) but public transportation must be improved."

transit have created serious issues for residents in terms of being able to get to jobs, shopping, and major institutions in the City.

### ROADWAYS

Mt Oliver roadways consist of all Borough owned and maintained streets with the exception of Walter Avenue which is maintained by Allegheny County via an agreement. There are approximately 10.8



miles of streets within the Borough. The major thoroughfares through the Borough are Brownsville Road, Hays Avenue, Ormsby Avenue, Walnut Street and Anthony Street. All other streets are generally local residential streets. The poor condition of the Borough streets was mentioned in several of the focus groups and in the survey. It should be noted that Brownsville Road is in the middle of an extensive road improvement and streetscape project. (See Figure \_\_)

### TRAFFIC SIGNALS

There is currently only 1 signalized intersection within the Borough that is owned, maintained and operated by the Borough. This is at the intersection of Brownsville Road with Bausman Street and Hays Avenue. This signal will be updated with new light standards and LED lighting as part of the streetscape project.





#### BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN

Sidewalk and bicycle lanes in the Borough are non-existent even along the main business district on Brownsville Road. However, there has been increased pressure on developers to include sidewalks along at least one side of the road in new developments. With the increased demand for bike lanes and pedestrian connections from the public, and with the goal of increasing the attractiveness of Mt. Oliver to the millennial and young professional class, the Borough would be well advised to consider exploring bike path options.

#### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The only source of public transportation in the Borough is through the Allegheny County Port Authority bus system, which is limited to routes intersecting Brownsville Road. There are four different routes that service the Borough residents: 48 Arlington; 44 Knoxville; 51 Limited Carrick; and

54 Oakland to Northside. Through these bus routes residents can access the Light Rail Transit and most other major bus routes.



#### PARKING

One of the primary transportation issues in the business district is the location and availability of parking for customers and visitors. Although parking studies at various times of the day and days of the week have confirmed that there is sufficient parking during peak and off-peak hours, it also revealed that the parallel parking is difficult due to the narrowness and traffic on Brownsville Road. The location of convenient, well lighted, and well signed parking is a topic that should be addressed by the Borough in order to provide support for the Borough's fragile business district.





**TRANSPORTATION VISION STATEMENT:** Mt. Oliver Borough will have a transportation system that provides safe, efficient, and environmentally supportive access for residents. The system will include public transit, roadways, biking, and pedestrian elements that move people from neighborhoods to services, employment, recreation, shopping, and entertainment.

### ***OUR GOALS:***

#### **RESTORE TRANSIT ROUTES FROM MT. OLIVER TO MAJOR SHOPPING AND EMPLOYMENT CENTERS**

**ISSUE:** The reduction in Port Authority bus line routes was mentioned as a real problem for some residents. Senior citizens, especially, felt that their transportation needs are not met since routes have been eliminated or reduced and they are no longer able to travel to shopping, employment, and medical centers easily.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- Join with other communities to schedule meetings with Allegheny County Port Authority to explore the restoration of bus routes to major population centers.
- Work with ACCESS to provide greater opportunities for seniors from senior housing to medical, shopping, and dining centers.

#### **DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE FUNDING PROGRAM FOR MAINTENANCE OF ROADS**

**ISSUE:** There are 10.8 miles of roads in the Borough. The current level of annual appropriation is about \$105,000 (about 2 mills of real estate taxes) which paves approximately .35 miles of roads per year. At this rate, it would take 30 years to pave every street in the Borough. Since the useful life of an asphalt roadway is about 10 to 15 years, the Borough will continue to fall further and further behind in the condition of the Borough owned streets. The Borough already has a tax levy directed to the maintenance and reconstruction of roads. It makes sense to gradually increase this in order to accelerate the road improvement program.





**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Continue to use the Pavement Management program to plan for the improvement of Borough roadways.
- Levy additional real estate tax millage that is dedicated to road improvements each year. One mill of tax should generate about \$53,300 of funding each year.
- Explore the option of a capital improvement General Obligation borrowing that can support improvements for facilities, roads, and recreation projects. Interest rates are at an “all time” low and borrowing for these projects could be very attractive.

**CREATE A MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

**ISSUE:** Residents noted at public meetings and on surveys that there was a need for bike paths, improved sidewalks, and connecting trails throughout the Borough. Healthy lifestyles and changes in demographics have created a demand for more pedestrian oriented activities and the need for more walkable communities. Enabling safe access for pedestrians and bikers will help improve the experience and help to make alternatives to car travel more attractive. The Steering Committee mapped out a bike path that would take the bike traffic off of Brownsville Road and run it through the Borough down Amanda Avenue to the intersection of Bausman Street and Brownsville Road. The Borough roadways should achieve a balance so that different users of the streets will be accommodated while maintaining safe, inviting, and livable streets.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Adopt the policy of “complete streets” for the design, development, or redevelopment of Borough roads. According to the National Complete Streets Coalition ([smartgrowthamerica.org](http://smartgrowthamerica.org)): “Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.” Complete streets can also be important for creating economic activity for smaller business areas such as Brownsville Road and Hays Avenue. According to the National Complete Streets Coalition: “Building more sidewalks and striping bike lanes has been shown to create more jobs than traditional car-focused transportation projects.”

“The Borough should install bike markings and ‘share the road’ signs on Brownsville Road, Amanda Avenue and Ormsby Avenue.”

- Adopt a POD ordinance and map outlining where sidewalks will be upgraded and improved. Appoint a citizens advisory group to discuss the elements of the “complete street” model that can be incorporated into design guidelines and can be the basis for a POD program.
- Recruit interested volunteers to conduct “complete street” audits of important Borough connector streets in order to assess pedestrian linkages, handicap ramps, access to transit stops, opportunity for bike paths and other amenities. Have Borough employees work with volunteers to advise what is possible and how improvements can be initiated and implemented.
- Require sidewalks and bike paths in every new development or redevelopment through the proposed Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO).
- Work with “Bike Pittsburgh” to commission a biking plan along roadways with safety and connectivity as prevailing guidelines.



- Consider applications for county and state funding to install trails, bike paths, and pedestrian walkways from parks to neighborhoods to the business district.
- Work with the City of Pittsburgh to develop and adopt a Streetscape Enhancement Overlay (SEO) as part of the zoning ordinance that requires sidewalks and streetscape amenities along the Brownsville Road corridor.
- Consider a possible bike rental program that would bring bikers and business to Brownsville Road. This program has been very successful for the City of Pittsburgh and Oakland where public transit is available for connections and bicycles can be used to access local dining, shopping, parks, and amenities.



## CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE

The Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the stakeholders agree that promoting a coherent vision for the future of the Borough is a critical piece of planning for the future – in other words, creating a “sense of place.” “Memories of personal and cultural experiences over time make a place special, favorite objects that shape to your hand or body with use, songs or dances that emerge from the people of a place, special skills you develop to enjoy your area-these things help to define a place and anchor you in it. Through time, shared experiences and stories (history) help to connect place and people and to transmit feelings of place from generation to generation.”<sup>10</sup> When asked about what things contribute to Mt. Oliver residents’ vision of an authentic place, some of the characteristics that were identified were:

- The Borough is a rich, historic, and multi-generational community with established neighborhoods.
- Residents have a strong sense of volunteerism through churches, civic groups, and the volunteer fire department.
- There is a proud tradition of strong recreation programs and opportunities which has been declining over the past several years through lack of programming and investment in facilities.
- The business district along Brownsville Road is a “shadow” of the activity, shopping, and dining establishments that were once destination places for people who live in the Hilltop area.
- There is a real sense that the Borough is “unsafe” – especially along the Brownsville Road corridor.
- Though Mt. Oliver is currently lacking in local arts and cultural activities, residents are working to bring more activities to the Borough. There is an established art gallery at the entrance to Mt. Oliver and a growing “artistic class” that is moving into the neighborhoods.



*“People feel more attached to an environment they have helped create. They will therefore manage and maintain it better, reducing the likelihood of vandalism, neglect and subsequent need for costly replacement.”*

*Community Planning.net (May 28, 2015)*

<sup>10</sup> Dr. Thomas Woods, “Making Sense of Place,” Importance of Place, [www.importanceofplace.com](http://www.importanceofplace.com)

**PLACEMAKING VISION STATEMENT:** Mt. Oliver Borough will be well known as a community with outstanding neighborhoods, a vibrant business district, excellent recreation facilities, and terrific access to City of Pittsburgh amenities. It will also be known as one of the most diverse, accepting, and inviting artistic and cultural environments in the County.

### ***OUR GOALS:***

#### **PRESERVING RESIDENTIAL LIVING IN STRONG URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS.**

**ISSUE:** Residents like their neighborhoods because they have terrific access to urban amenities but express concern about protecting the quality and character of their surroundings. Many residents expressed concern about blight, abandoned buildings, and lack of maintenance of structures and public facilities.

"I love the convenience of being close to everything. We are centrally located. I love the quality and affordability of the housing in the area."

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- Adopt the concept of "Livable" communities that address the lifestyle features that are desired by residents of all ages. These include: walkable neighborhoods, public transportation options, affordable housing, safe streets, easy access to shopping, dining, and entertainment, green spaces, and indoor and outdoor places for all ages to gather and stay connected.
- Use the proposed SALDO to implement the "livable" communities concepts and include provisions for landscaping, street trees, and stormwater management elements including retention ponds, residential rain gardens, and bio-swales. The SALDO can be the Borough's most important tool for requiring desired elements in the development and redevelopment of residential and commercial areas.
- Use stormwater management best practices. Encourage the use of permeable surfaces for parking, access drives, and driveways.
- Consider adopting an Official Map for the Borough that identifies areas in neighborhoods that will be preserved in the future for green space, parklets, or public trail development. An Official Map can provide the



Borough with the ability to acquire identified property should the property owner intend to sell it or develop it.

### GO GREEN – IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE BEST PRACTICES

**ISSUE:** The parks, open spaces, and natural environments are valued by residents who were clear about the preservation of their neighborhoods and preference for “green” spaces in their business districts. The neighborhoods are lacking in trees, landscaping, and natural elements that would make it more inviting to residents and potential buyers. Residents expressed a need for better open space and a commitment effort to cleaner, greener streets. Going green can benefit the local economy, improve the appearance of the Borough and assist in the mandates placed on local governments to reduce stormwater and sanitary overflows.

#### ACTION ITEMS:

- Continue to participate with the joint Shade Tree Commission through EDS and task them with developing a tree planting program through TreeVitalize. Hire an arborist to work with the Commission to select street and yard tree species. Promote the benefits of tree planting to residents and businesses. Organize an annual tree planting day to implement the tree planting plan.
- Implement a rain barrel program for residents so that they can disconnect roof leaders. The water can be used for gardens.
- Consider requiring some permeable areas for private and public parking areas in the proposed zoning ordinance update. Grass strips or permeable pavers can reduce the amount of stormwater that is discharged into the storm sewers.
- Encourage the use of composting, rain gardens, and “green infrastructure” streets in residential neighborhoods.
- Consider the creation of a Stormwater Authority to coordinate stormwater management practices between residents, businesses, schools, local organization, and the Borough. This can be done as a “stand alone” authority or in conjunction with surrounding communities in a joint authority. The creation of the stormwater authority provides



“I love to see pictures of the community garden. I love that the community is a mixture of cultures. This is a terrific use of unused areas in Transverse Park.”

IN JUNE OF 2013, THE PA GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTED LEGISLATION AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES TO ALLOW MUNICIPALITIES THE ABILITY TO CREATE AUTHORITIES TO OVERSEE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PRACTICES. THE ACT ADDS STORMWATER PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT TO THE PURPOSES AND POWERS OF THE MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES ACT. ACTIVITIES PERMITTED UNDER THE NEW LEGISLATION ARE "STORM WATER PLANNING, MANAGEMENT, AND IMPLEMENTATION." THE ACT IS INTENDED TO HELP MUNICIPALITIES TO RESPOND TO ESCALATING COSTS OF STORM WATER MANAGEMENT AND STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS.



the

ability to charge a stormwater management fee to residents and businesses to pay for the planning, management, construction and maintenance of stormwater facilities.

### MAXIMIZE THE USE OF BOROUGH PARKS

**ISSUE:** Mt. Oliver is .34 square miles in size and there are 2 Borough-owned parks. The parks are not fully maximized in facilities and in programming. Transverse Park, at the southeast corner of the Borough, is the largest of the parks and it is considered to be the community park. Transverse Park is walkable from most neighborhoods in the Borough.

"I live by the park and it is a quiet part of Mt. Oliver which I love. We need to utilize the park better . . . have events for the kids. Keep them off the streets at involved activities.

#### ACTION ITEMS:

- Undertake a comprehensive master planning project for Transverse Park that includes a new more "passive park" approach with emphasis on pedestrian trails and gathering areas for events and activities.
- Encourage healthy programs like running, walking biking events in the park areas and on Brownsville Road in order to encourage use of the parks and to create gathering events for residents. The Borough currently sponsors community day and a Fall Festival but much more can be done.
- Consider the creation of a Recreation Board of volunteers to begin to explore possible programming for both parks. The Borough has one of the highest





populations of under 18 residents of any of the South Hills communities and there should be programming for this age group. Some programs that should be considered are: summer camp that includes free breakfast and lunch for children; community day event; basketball leagues; holiday events (i.e. Halloween party, easter egg hunts, light up night). The Recreation Board should act as an advisory Board to Council and should provide volunteer labor to help support recreation programming.



- Hire a Recreation Director with an early childhood or recreation background to oversee summer programming, especially a summer day camp in the parks. Fees can be charged that would partially cover the salary of the Director.
- Work with LifeSpan to include additional programming and activities for senior citizens. In most studies, senior have indicated a demand for planned day trips; strength, stretching, fitness and cardio classes; healthy cooking classes; gardening, movies, yoga, and dance classes.
- Continue the support and expansion of the community garden at Transverse Park that was initiated by the Bhutanese immigrants who reside there. Currently, there are more than 50 parcels that are being gardened. This is a program that has encouraged the healthy lifestyles and ethnic diversity of the Borough and should have full fledged support from the Borough in terms of funding and public services. It is especially important in an area that has been deemed a "food desert" because of its lack of access to fresh food and grocers.

### CREATE ATTRACTIVE GATEWAYS TO THE BOROUGH

**ISSUE:** The boundaries of Mt. Oliver are not easily discernable on the major roads entering and leaving the Borough – a traveler could easily cross the border into the Borough and never realize that they are within the Borough limits. "Gateways" to a community are important because they create an identity for the community and provide an opportunity to make a positive first impression. Residents often take



pride in their community when they identify with a theme, branding, or a specific identity.

#### ACTION ITEMS:



- Develop attractive signage, “wayfinding”, and landscaping at the entrances to Mt. Oliver on Brownsville Road both north and south. Hire an architect to design a coherent and consistent theme that residents can embrace and leaders can point to for inspiration and pride.
- Include signage, landscaping, wayfinding and other elements in the streetscape design that can be partially funded by county and state funds.
- Install public art and decorative lighting at highly visible intersections or in Borough rights-of-ways that clearly define the Borough’s image and theme.
- Continue to install public murals and public art.
- Install “street walls” along property that does not conform to setbacks.



#### SUPPORTING AN INFORMED AND COHESIVE COMMUNITY

**ISSUE:** In today’s world, there are more ways than ever to obtain information and thousands of bits of information available. Yet people are more likely than ever to be uninformed about their local government operations and services. This is due to competing demands for attention from many different sources and an infinite number of distractions. Residents in Mt. Oliver don’t have many opportunities,, with the exception of Community Day, to gather for social interaction and connections through local art, culture, entertainment, or dining. It is important, therefore, to create social opportunities for residents where there is a central meeting place with a theme related to the local culture.



**ACTION ITEMS:**

- Consider identifying locations in the business district corridor for the installation of public plazas with lighting, seating, water features, landscaping, and local art. Feature entertainment, festivals, and local activities on a regular basis. By creating gathering places for residents, people are more likely to come together for social interaction and leave with a better understanding of their neighbors and the community as a social construct. "Real" places include a social experience.
- Consider scheduling Borough "news updates" at a local coffee shop or diner or at least creating the "coffeehouse" experience. Most people are more interested in buying a coffee and sitting around with friends for conversation than coming to a public meeting or event.
- Use social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, or Instagram to provide information to residents about social events, entertainment, concerts, local news, and alerts.
- Use a service like "Swiftreach," NIXEL, or "Reverse 911" to communicate with residents about possible emergencies or interruption of services that may affect specific areas of the Borough. These services can also be used to make announcements about upcoming events or specific information that may be useful to residents.
- Consider the use of an electronic newsletter that can be sent out via an email blast to residents. Continue to make improvements to the Borough's website that invite interaction and allow for conducting business on-line. Whether it's paying taxes, applying for a permit, reading the latest news, or registering a request for service, residents want to do it on their own time at their convenience.





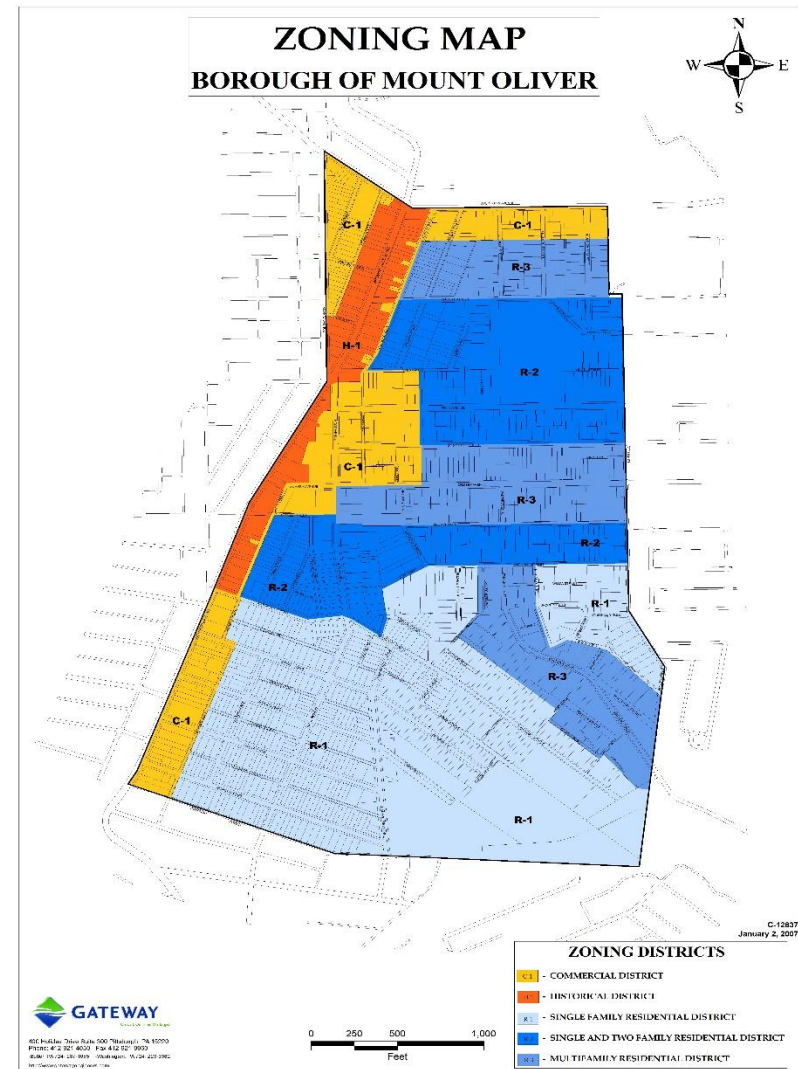
## FUTURE LAND USE

The concept of future land use in the Borough was introduced at one of the earliest Steering Committee meetings by reviewing the existing use map and the current zoning map to identify clear contradictions. Several inconsistencies and outdated designations emerged as the discussions progressed. During the course of Steering Committee meetings, a number of strategies emerged.

First, the commercial district, based on the market study, cannot possibly continue to exist as shown on the current zoning map. There is simply not enough retail activity that can be supported in this very large commercial area designation. One goal of this Plan is to condense and consolidate the most intense retail use between the Clock Tower and Arlington Avenue and to transition adjacent districts to mixed use districts (MUD). The MUD can support limited retail, services, offices, and high density residential.

Second, the historical overlay district should be eliminated. This district was never enforced and there is very little historical significance left in the buildings and uses that currently exist in this area. The historical overlay should be replaced with a "traditional neighborhood district" overlay that protects the unique character and integrity of the land use supporting this small business district.

Third, the residential districts, as currently drawn, are not consistent with existing land use. Much of the R-1, R-2, and R-3 residential uses overlap and blur. A more form based approach to zoning in the residential areas would better serve the Borough. Overall, there is a need for a simplification of the zoning designations and map. There are currently too many designations without differentiation causing unnecessary regulation and enforcement.





**CONSENSUS ITEMS**

The Steering Committee recommended as the highest priority that the Township's zoning ordinance and SALDO should be updated to include the following changes and updates which are consistent with the goals of the Plan:

- The boundaries of the existing R-1 should remain intact. In other words, the most restrictive designation -Single Family Residential - **R-1 SHOULD STAY R-1.**
- The boundaries of the proposed **R-2 ZONING DISTRICT** should be those neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the central business district bounded by Bertha Way and Giffin Street.
- The boundaries of the proposed **R-3 ZONING DISTRICT** would exist only along Arlington Avenue to the west of Brownsville Road and along Amanda Avenue and would be included in the TND designation.
- **CONVERSIONS** of residential homes should be regulated through the zoning ordinance so that the transition of single family homes to duplexes and multi-family units is strictly controlled by the Borough.
- The **CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (C-1)** zoning designation should be established for Brownsville Road between Arlington Avenue and the Clock Tower area including a small part of Hays Street.
- The area on Brownsville Road, south of the Clock Tower, should be transitioned to a **MIXED USE DISTRICT (MUD) DESIGNATION.** This designation should include higher density residential, small office and retail, and specialized dining and coffee shops.
- There should be a **TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT (TND) OVERLAY** designation characterized by pedestrian connections, decorative lighting, high density housing, and mixed uses for the entire Brownsville Road area including the proposed R-3 designation along Arlington Avenue and bordered by Amanda Street.
- A **PEDESTRIAN OVERLAY DISTRICT (POD)** ordinance and map should be developed that provides guidance for where mandatory construction of sidewalks or redevelopment of sidewalks is required in the neighborhoods, in the commercial districts, and between neighborhoods and commercial districts. The goal of the overlay district should be to connect residents to the business district, to the Borough building and services and the Ormsby and Transverse Park.

The Steering Committee also identified several areas that should be designated as high priority for redevelopment in terms of infrastructure upgrades, green infrastructure development, and public amenities. These are areas that have declined but could be assets for the community with a

commitment of public and private resources. The areas identified are:

- The entire Brownsville Road corridor
- Transverse Park
- The Clock Tower and surrounding parcels.

Other broad recommendations include:

The Zoning Ordinance should be largely developed as a “form based” code regulation. A **Form-Based Code** (FBC) is a means of regulating land development to achieve a specific urban form. Form-Based Codes foster predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle, with a lesser focus on land use, through municipal regulations.

A FBC is a regulation, not a mere guideline, adopted into city, town, or county law and offers a powerful alternative to conventional zoning regulations.<sup>11</sup>

Form Based Codes are a new response to the modern challenges of urban sprawl, deterioration of historic neighborhoods, and neglect of pedestrian safety in new development. Tradition has declined as a guide to development patterns, and the widespread adoption by cities of single-use zoning regulations has discouraged compact, walkable urbanism. Form-Based Codes are a tool to address these deficiencies, and to provide local governments the regulatory means to achieve development and redevelopment objectives with greater certainty.

Finally, the Borough should work closely with the City of Pittsburgh Planning Department to develop regulations that will control the development and redevelopment of the Brownsville Road corridor relative to signage, trees, landscaping, lighting, and pedestrian connections and amenities. This is particularly important for the southernmost Brownsville Road area where the western side of the street is located in the City of Pittsburgh. Consistency, conformity, and protection of the unique character of this area can be accomplished through a joint Streetscape Enhancement Ordinance (SEO) that would be developed and adopted by both Mt. Oliver and the City of Pittsburgh.

All of the recommendations included in this Plan should be considered during the development of the proposed Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.



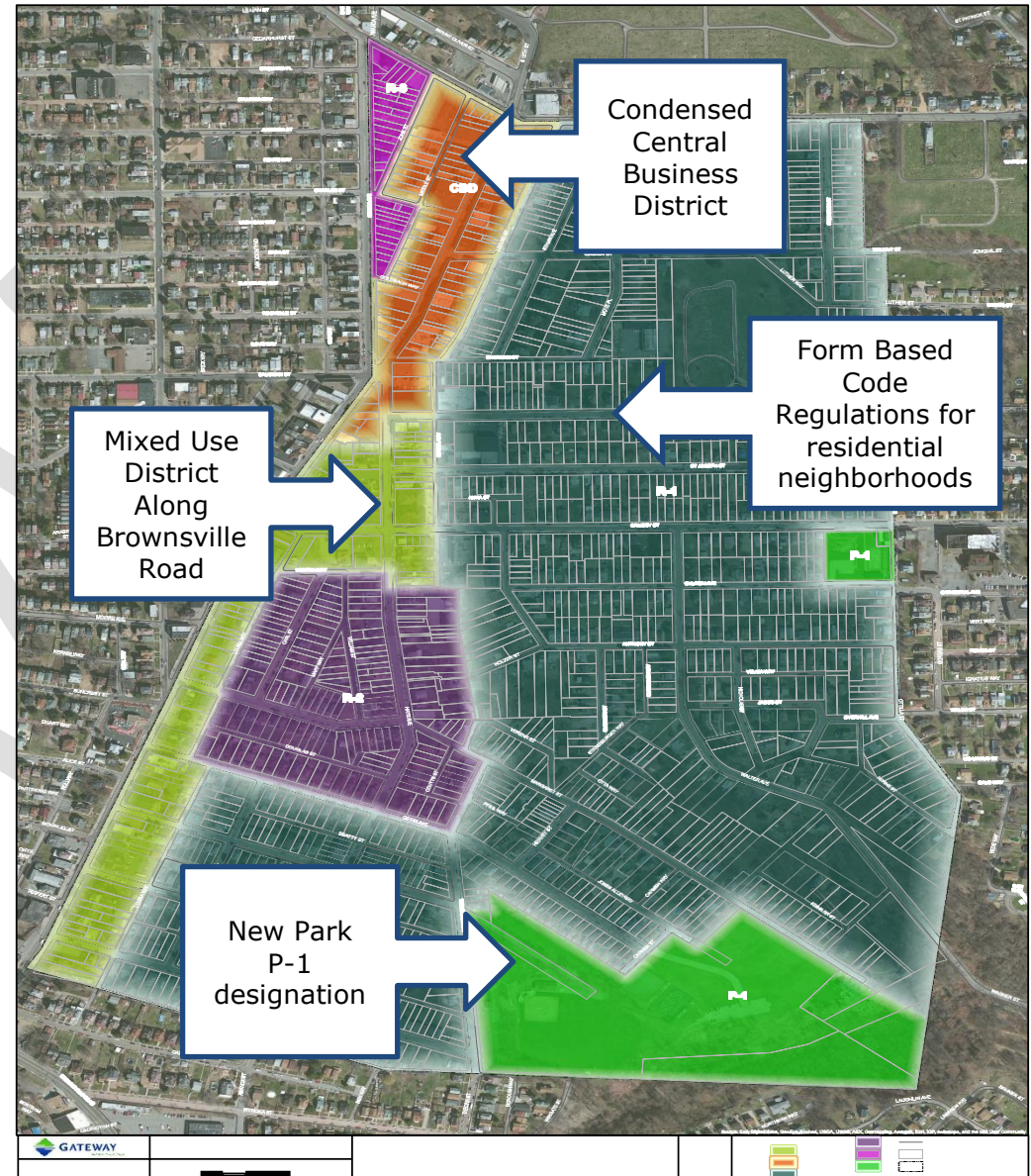
<sup>11</sup> “Form Based Code Defined,” Form Based Code Institute

### PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The proposed future land use simplifies the residential districts and suggests form based zoning as an alternative to traditional zoning districts.

- It proposes a condensed business district that can support a “critical mass” of retail that can be supported by a 3 minute and 5 minute drive time market.
- It provides a mixed use (MUD) area that provides a transition from commercial to other uses including high density residential. This could support additional housing options for 55+ living opportunities and senior housing that is adjacent to convenient services.
- It includes a new designation (P-1) for the parks in Mt. Oliver in order to preserve and protect the future development of park areas.

The future development of a Zoning Ordinance and SALDO that implement these concepts and expand on the goals of the Plan is the next critical step in future land use development.





## Leadership and Public Services

Mt. Oliver Borough's future and the implementation of this Plan will be defined by its leadership. To accomplish the goals and action items identified in this Plan, the Borough leadership will be required to identify interested and vested stakeholders, raise and commit revenue, organize the Borough staff effectively, and energize the local groups and volunteers. This section will provide a blueprint for the actions that will be necessary for the Borough leadership to drive the implementation of the Mt. Oliver Plan.

### BOROUGH LEADERSHIP

Of the 2,562 municipalities in the Commonwealth, there are 957 boroughs established under the Borough Code form of government representing about 37% of all municipalities. In Allegheny County, this is even higher where there are 82 boroughs out of 129 municipalities or 64% of all municipalities. Boroughs are a much more common form of government than cities or first class townships but much less common than second class townships.

Operating under the Borough Code, the **Borough Council** acts as the governing body and is comprised of seven (7) Council members elected at large for four year terms. The Council approves the ordinances, resolutions, and policies for the Borough.

"Taxes here are low enough. I would rather pay high taxes and have a nicer neighborhood which would attract future residents."

The **Mayor** is elected at large, serves a four (4) year term, and

is charged with oversight of the police department.

The office of **Borough Manager** is an optional position under the Borough Code and was created by ordinance in 2014 and filled in the second quarter of 2015. The Borough Manager carries out the actions of the Council and oversees the day to day operation of the Borough organization. The powers and duties of the manager are set forth in §21-5 of the Mt. Oliver Code of Ordinances.

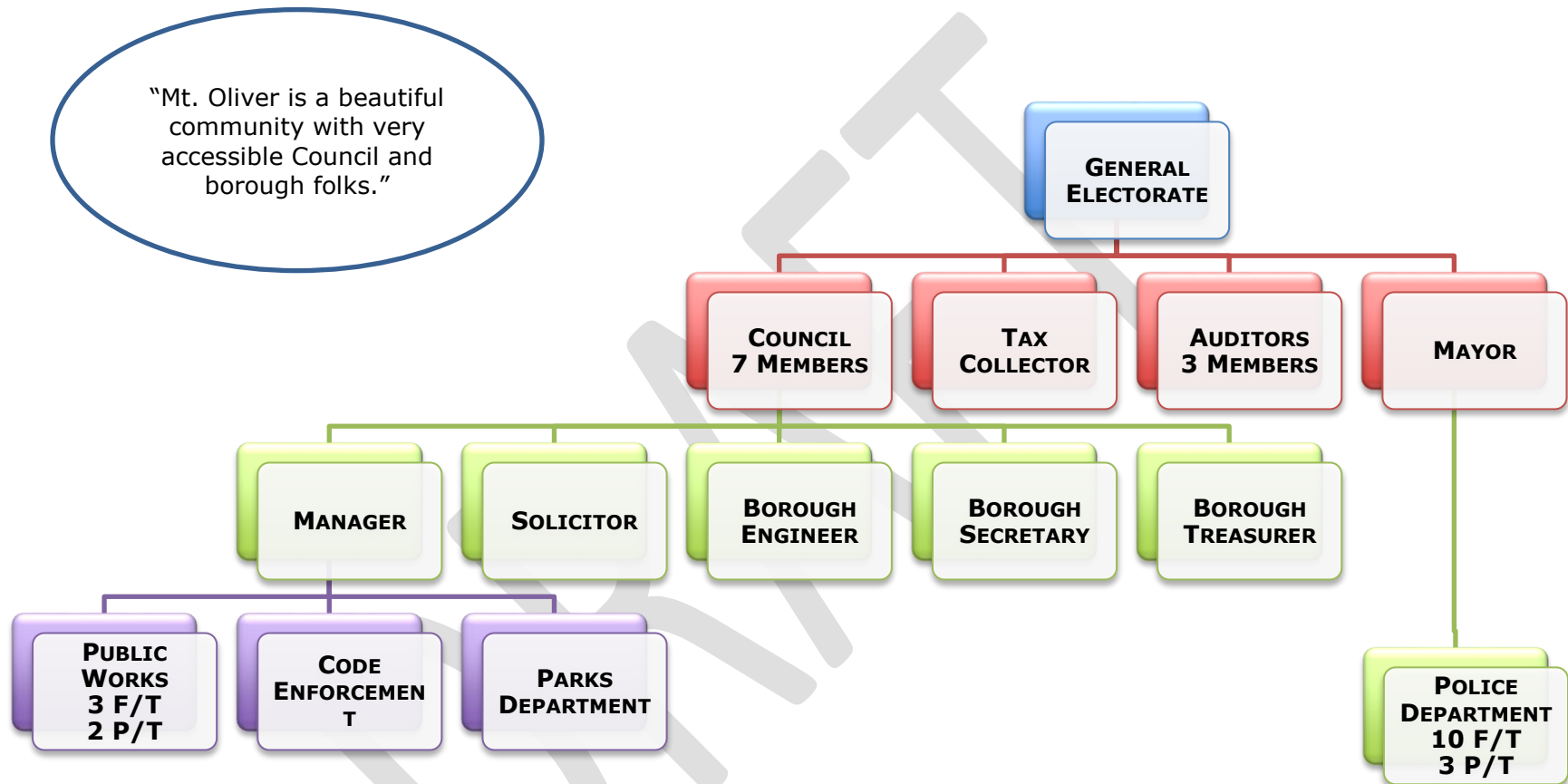
The **Borough Tax Collector** is elected independently as prescribed by the Code for a four (4) year term and collects real estate taxes for the Borough.

The **Borough Secretary** is a mandatory office in the Borough Code. In Mt. Oliver, this is a separate position from the Borough Manager position. The Secretary is charged with maintenance of the records of the municipality including minutes, ordinances, and resolutions.

The **Borough Treasurer** is not a mandatory position in the Borough Code, but the Council has appointed a Treasurer who by law must keep "a just account of all receipts and disbursements, and shall annually submit the accounts to the borough auditors."

The Borough of Mt. Oliver has opted to use **Elected Auditors** to audit the Borough finances annually at the close of the fiscal year. They are also charged with submitting the annual DCED financial report that is due by March 31 each year. Figure \_\_ provides an organizational chart of the current Borough operation.





### BOROUGH FINANCES

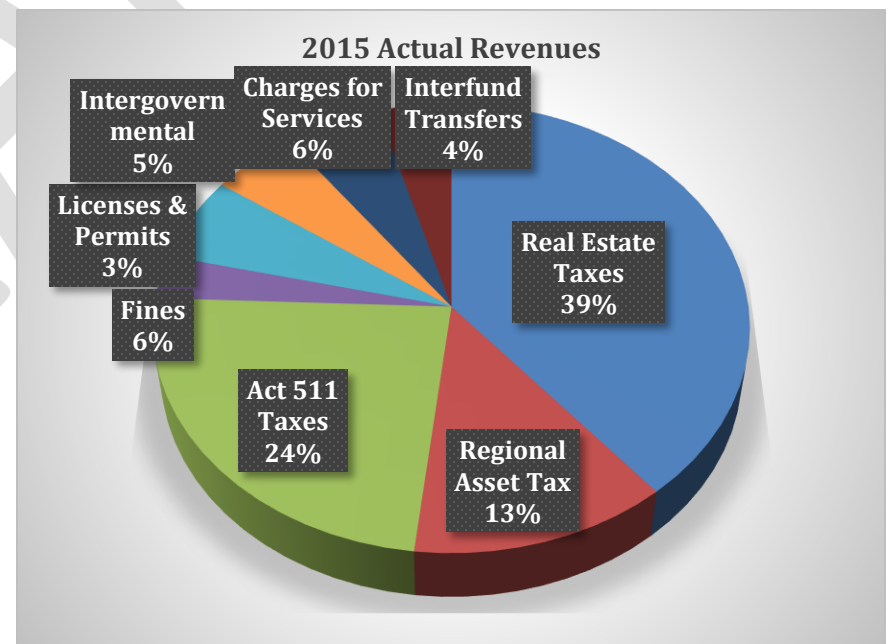
Based on the financial review in the EIP study, the Borough will be able to meet payroll requirements, debt service payments, outstanding obligations, and provide a basic level of service for its citizens during fiscal year 2016 and in future years. The Borough's budget is a reasonable projection of revenue sources and expense requirements. It meets the tests for cash solvency, budgetary solvency, and service level solvency. There is some uncertainty as to whether the Borough's financial condition will meet the test for long-term solvency beginning in fiscal year 2018 because the expenditures are expected to rise at a faster pace than revenues. Unless there is some intervention by the Borough and implementation of the strategies discussed in the EIP report, the Borough will begin to experience a gap between its ongoing operational expenses and its ability to generate sufficient revenue. It will be important for the Borough to implement the initiatives discussed in order to maintain long term solvency.

### REVENUE

In 2015, tax revenue accounted for 76% of the Borough's total General Fund revenues. The largest tax source is real estate taxes which represents 39% of all revenue. Act 511 taxes which make up the next largest category at 24% and RAD taxes at 13% have been stable and strong revenue sources in previous years. All other revenues collected make up 24% of the revenue. These include Licenses, Permits, Fines, Intergovernmental Revenue, Charges for Services, and Transfers. As a result, the Borough is heavily dependent on tax revenue which makes for a relatively unstable revenue base. Over the long term, unemployment, stagnant economy, lack of development, decreases in property values, and similar external factors can have a negative impact on the Borough's ability to generate revenue.

Category	2015 Actual	Percentage of Total
<b>Real Estate Taxes</b>	737,655	38.98%
<b>Regional Asset Tax</b>	243,075	12.84%
<b>Act 511 Taxes</b>	450,333	23.79%
<b>Licenses &amp; Permits</b>	58,983	3.12%
<b>Fines</b>	115,062	6.08%
<b>Intergovernmental</b>	97,083	5.13%
<b>Charges for Services</b>	107,693	5.69%
<b>Interfund Transfers</b>	82,700	4.37%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,892,584</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

SOURCE: MT. OLIVER FINANCIALS AND GRS ANALYSIS



**EXPENSES**

The General Fund includes police and fire services, management and finance, zoning and code enforcement, tax collection, recreation, public works, and payment of annual debt service.

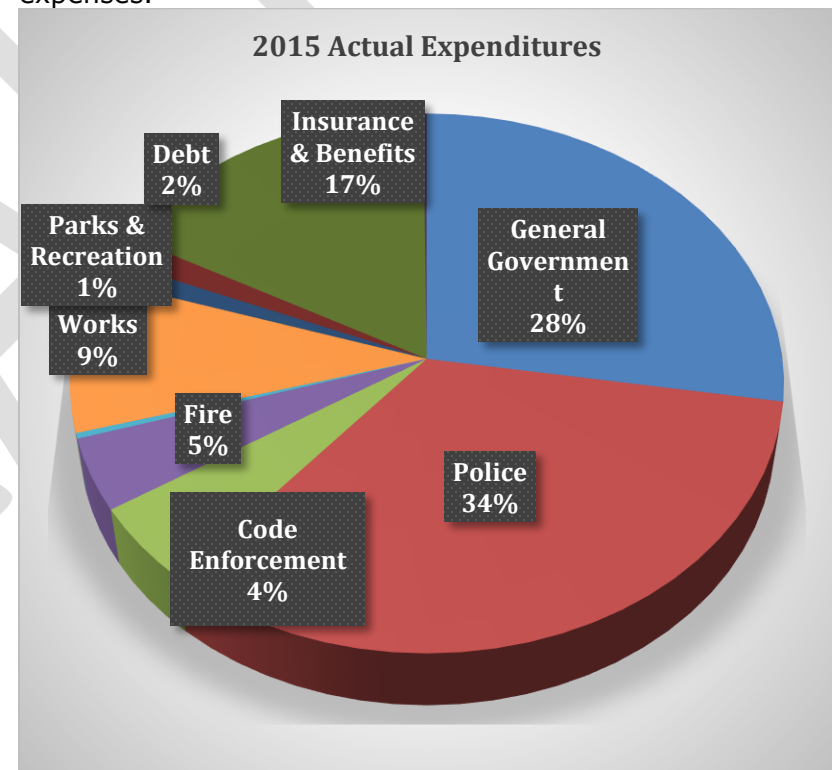
Category	In Dollars	Percent of Total
<b>General Government</b>	487,034	28.93%
<b>Police</b>	596,760	35.45%
<b>Fire</b>	84,799	5.04%
<b>Code Enforcement</b>	76,106	4.52%
<b>Solid Waste</b>	5,800	0.34%
<b>Public Works</b>	163,991	9.74%
<b>Parks &amp; Recreation</b>	23,525	1.40%
<b>Debt</b>	29,453	1.75%
<b>Insurance &amp; Benefits</b>	299,638	17.80%
<b>Interfund Transfers</b>	3,017	0.18%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,770,123</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

SOURCE: MT. OLIVER FINANCIALS AND GRS ANALYSIS

The Borough's 2015 General Fund expenditures were \$1,770,123 – which is an actual 3.5% reduction from the 2014 expenditures. General Fund expenditures support the Borough's government operations and basic services.

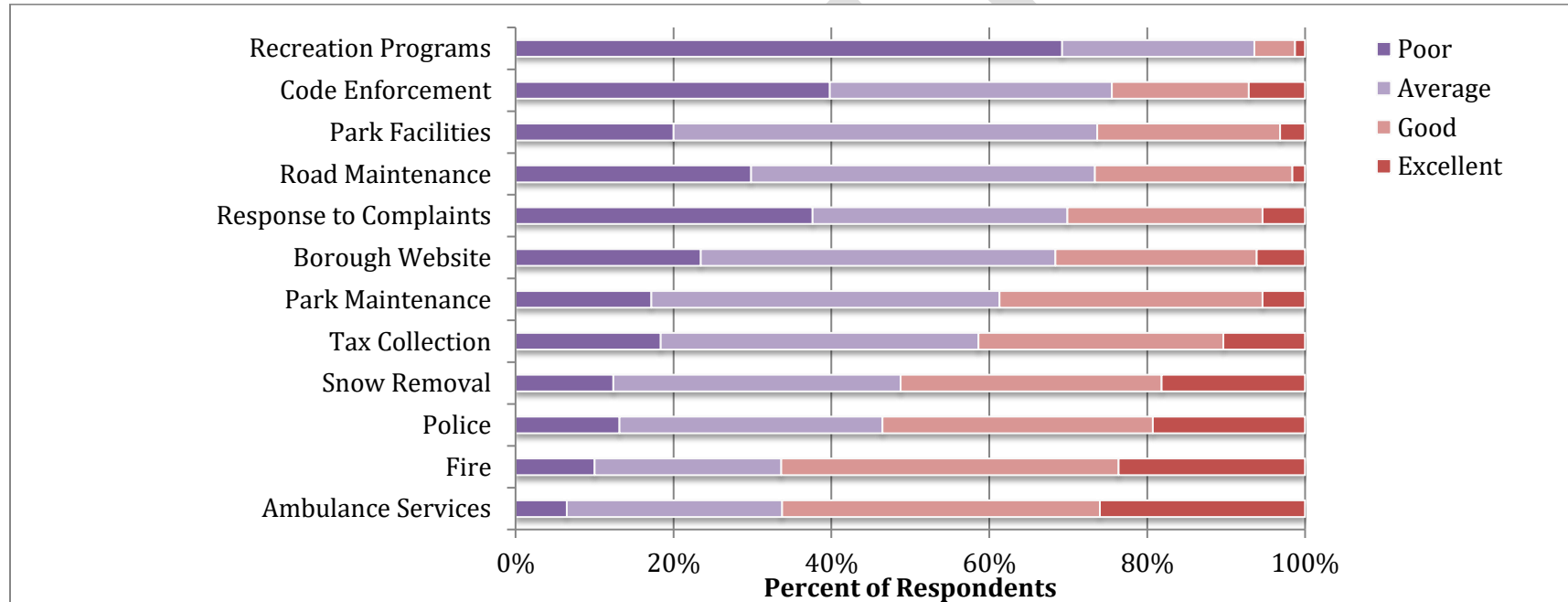
The largest expense for the Borough, by far, is the Public Safety category with about \$596,000 devoted to police services. General Government is the next highest category with \$487,034 while the public works department which includes roads, snow removal, traffic signals, street lighting, and the maintenance of all Borough facilities expends about

\$164,000. The Borough allocates only about \$23,000 to parks largely for utilities and some general maintenance. The Borough also targets another \$68,000 in its Capital Budget for streetscape improvements and demolitions. The Sewer Fund contains another \$1 million in economic activity. The level of Borough debt is extremely low and indicates that some level of borrowing for capital projects is acceptable. **Figure \_\_** illustrates the allocation and categories of General Fund expenditures for 2015 by amount and percent of total expenses.



### BOROUGH SERVICES

Overall, the Borough residents rated the public safety services from good to excellent in the on-line survey and there were many positive reviews during the focus group discussions. The fire department is particularly esteemed for its service to the community. Code enforcement and recreation programs were rated the lowest of the Borough services. Goals related to safety and cleanliness of Borough neighborhoods and the business district will rest squarely upon the police department and code enforcement.



### POLICE DEPARTMENT

The police department must be a good partner with local government management and officials in addressing the crime and perception of crime issues that have been identified in this Plan. A complete review of the police department was conducted as part of the EIP study and this

resulted in a number of recommendations for improving the department. Most of the recommendations were related to providing additional capacity and adopting a more proactive, "community oriented," crime prevention approach to police activities. Proactive policing attempts to identify and



address problems before they become arrest situations. It involves routine or random preventative patrol on the part of the officer to target a specific area or problem within the geographical patrol district.

Proactive policing involves the police, acting on their own initiative, to develop information, usually through improved technology and statistical analysis, about crime and strategies for its suppression. For example, an officer responding reactively to a dispatched call could resolve the issue proactively by mediating between the parties or using informal action. In contrast to routine patrol, directed patrol involves police officers being instructed to monitor specific areas that are identified through problem or crime analysis. Directed patrol is more proactive than random preventative patrol.

Proactive policing is closely related to the practice of community policing. Community policing's goal is "problem solving." Community policing emphasizes proactive enforcement that proposes street crime can be reduced through greater community involvement and integration between citizens and police. Community policing departments and officers must commit time to develop a "partnership" with the community to: 1) prevent and counter crime; 2) maintain order; and 3) reduce the fear of crime. Typically, the police organization is decentralized with every police officer and detective having a neighborhood to patrol with agreed upon goals and objectives to solve.

"We need more police – but police who have been trained to be partners with people and not adversaries."



Police officers must feel integrated with the majority of the citizens of the community where they patrol, and perceive themselves as sharing similar values and beliefs so they are confident in their decision making ability. Each police officer must get out of their cars (not just drive by and grin and wave) to visit with citizens and businesses to learn the residents' concerns and show they are a friend and protector – in contrast to "strict law enforcement" or "reactive policing" which doesn't view the citizens as customers.

The Mt. Oliver Chief of Police has already implemented a more proactive approach to policing that is evident in the increased number of drug arrests and indictments. There is also a change in the Mt. Oliver police culture that requires the officers to adopt a more community oriented policing approach. Officers are required to visit businesses and introduce themselves in order to better know the business owners.

Proactive policing attempts to solve the problem through a change in the perception of the police officers and residents

rather than an increase in manpower or resources. Code Enforcement

Residents' primary concerns, after crime and safety, focused on the cleanup of neighborhoods, particularly where blighted and vacant properties presented safety problems in strong neighborhoods. As part of the EIP study, a comprehensive review was completed of the code enforcement operation and a number of recommendations were made. Again, a more proactive approach to code enforcement was encouraged.

"The business district needs revamped and properties cleaned up. Homeowners need to be held responsible for their properties. I'm optimistic that with new leadership, Mt. Oliver can be brought back to its former glory!"

Communities struggle with questions such as where do we start and how do we coordinate our effort effectively while being consistent across the community. Unfortunately, it's impossible for code enforcement to reach every violator at the same time so the Borough must prioritize its enforcement with a plan. To help develop that plan, the following are a list of items to consider that will help the code enforcement personnel with direction. a) Be specific about items that require exterior property maintenance. b) Add new codes to specifically require property maintenance. c) Take steps to improve the efficiency of the Code Enforcement Office or increase personnel as needed. d) Review codes to ensure that they specifically address property maintenance (e.g.

painting, repair of missing/broken siding, shutters, abandoned vehicles, and windows). Only about 4% of the Borough budget is currently directed towards code enforcement. In order to take a more proactive approach, the Borough must commit a higher level of resources and manpower towards this effort.

### MUNICIPAL BUILDING

The current office space and work areas in the Borough Building are inadequate to support the administrative and police operations. The Secretary, Treasurer, Tax Collector, and Building Inspector are all located in the same small office area. There is no private space for the Manager or for the Secretary and Treasurer to develop, record, and reconcile financial transactions. The Manager and Building Inspector have no private space for meeting with residents or conducting business. In fact, the Manager's office is an 8' by 12' interior office with no windows that doubles for a lunch room.



The Mt. Oliver Police Department does not offer nearly enough space for police operations. The facility consists of a report area with five computer work stations and:

- An evidence/supply room
- Chief's office
- Locker room area
- Holding Room
- Camera Room

The evidence room is also utilized as a storage room. This multi-use function is not recommended and leaves the agency vulnerable to loss, misplaced, or tainted evidence upon submission.



The Borough should plan for an upgrade or expansion of this space in order to provide for adequate work space for employees so that they can provide quality services for the public. A capital program should be developed that includes improvements and/or expansion

to the Borough Building and several revenue sources should be considered for supporting this project including general obligation debt.

### **SUMMARY**

Overall, the Borough budget can support the goals and initiatives that have been identified in the Plan by directing resources to the areas that have been identified. In addition, the HEDC through the EDS can provide capacity for identifying funding sources and providing technical expertise. Public safety, business district streetscape, and code enforcement were the top 3 categories that residents identified as areas where the Borough resources should be committed and these are the categories where the majority of the Borough resources are currently committed.

In analyzing the department budgets, in terms of the priority action items identified in this Plan, the only department that appears to be underfunded is the Planning and Code Enforcement department category. With only 4.5% of the budget and \$76,000 annually committed to code enforcement category and \$23,000 budgeted for parks and recreation, it will be difficult to undertake many of the initiatives that have been identified. It will be necessary for the Borough to commit additional personnel and resources in the community development, planning and zoning, code enforcement, and recreation categories in order to implement the Plan. It will also be necessary for the Borough to identify additional outside funding through county, state, and federal funds to supplement local funds to carry out many of the projects identified in the Plan.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the EIP will require significant effort and implementation experience and will need to be the primary focus of a single individual – especially during the early stages of implementation.



For this reason, it is recommended that the Borough appoint the Borough Manager as the Implementation Manager and assign the Manager the responsibility for implementing the Plan's action items and achieving the priority goals. Working and reporting to the Borough Council, the Manager will have a thorough understanding of the implementation processes and resources and can guide the effort to ensure that key action strategies are accomplished as scheduled.

The Implementation Manager will work closely with an identified Implementation Committee to provide staff support, updates, and progress reports. The Implementation Manager would be responsible for the following items, among others:

- Implementing action items
- Establishing annual goals
- Assessing structure
- Identifying resources
- Developing an evaluation framework
- Measuring organizational performance
- Recommending corrective action

The primary responsibility of the Implementation Manager would be to make sure that the action items from the Comprehensive Plan are advanced and completed within targeted deadlines. As part of this process, the Manager will also be responsible for identifying the resources, manpower, and process for accomplishing the goals outlined in the Plan document.

*"The greatest strategy is doomed if it is implemented badly."*

*- Bernard Reimann*



**IMPLEMENTATION MANAGER AND COMMITTEE**

It is critical to the implementation of the Plan for the Implementation Manager to have a Committee with significant authority and resources with which to work to undertake the implementation of the action items. An ad hoc Committee made up of some of the Council, staff, and outside residents would be an excellent way to monitor the progress of the implementation process.

The Implementation Manager should work with the Implementation Committee to ensure that sufficient progress is made relative to implementation of the action items. The Implementation Manager would be responsible for providing quarterly updates on the progress of the implementation of the recommended items. By setting up such a structure, the Comprehensive Plan will be a living document that provides the basis for a re-energized focus and direction for the community leaders.

The Implementation Committee may consider a task force approach, whereby committee members with specific skill-sets are charged with organizing task forces as needed that may be made up of volunteer subject matter experts with the expertise and experience necessary to carry out specific actions associated with the implementation strategy.

Committee membership should encompass a broad stakeholder emphasis that is competency-based in appropriate areas of community and economic development. Specific action items are as follows:

**STEP 1** – Develop a mission statement, goals, and objectives for the Committee.

**STEP 2** – Identify additional Committee members as needed for implementation of specific items.

**STEP 3** – Conduct an organizational/launch meeting for the Committee.

**STEP 4** – Work with the Implementation Manager to identify action items from the priority goals that should be implemented in the first year.

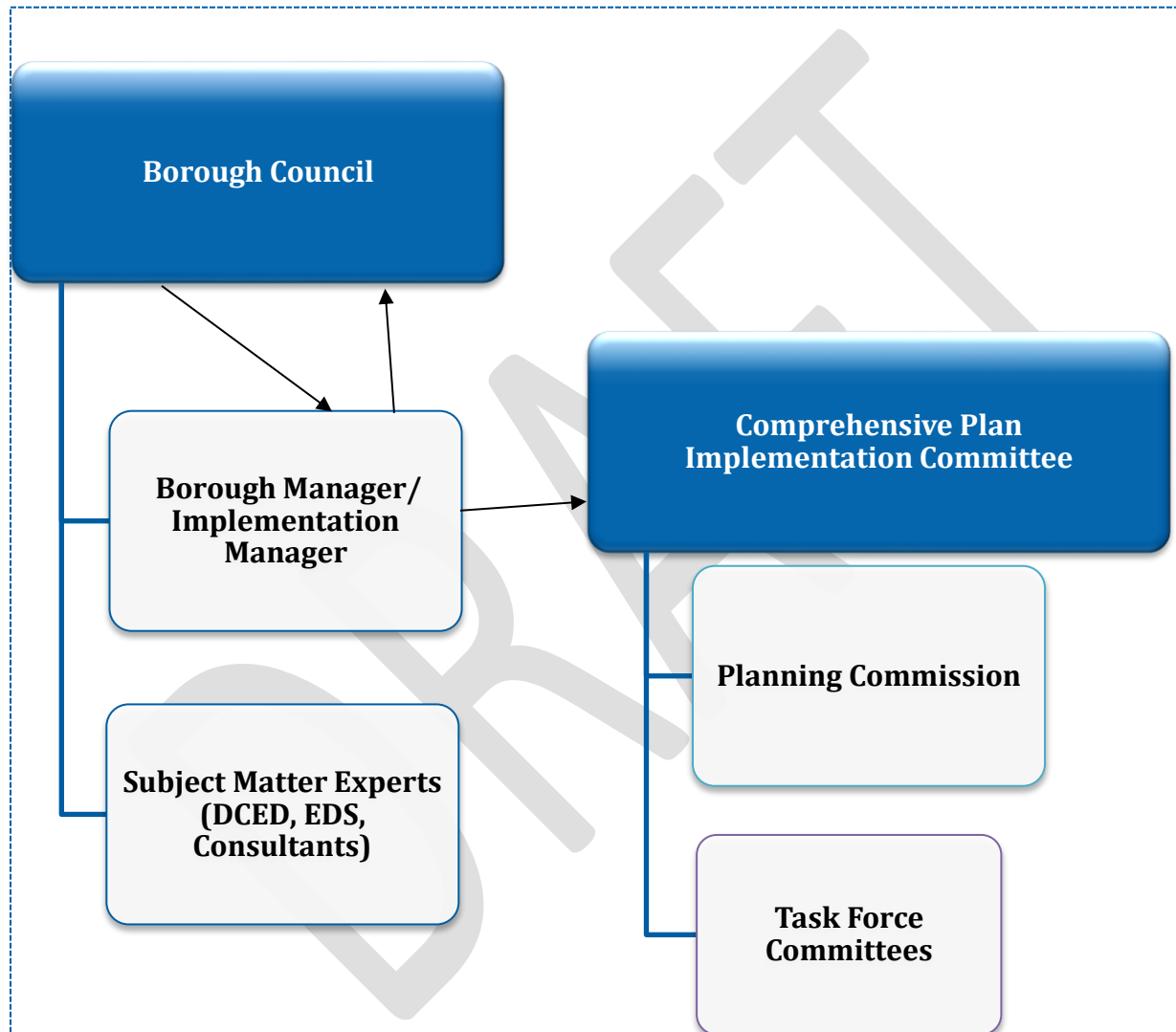
**STEP 5** – Organize subcommittees or task forces from within the Committee to assist the Implementation Manager with the identified action items.

**STEP 6** – Build capacity through additional volunteer recruitment.

**STEP 7** – Conduct a regular evaluation of progress on key action items relative to the implementation success during the first year.

**STEP 8** – Take corrective action as necessary to address deficiencies, in order to meet target goals.

FIGURE 3 – IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: PROPOSED PROCESS AND STRUCTURE



## RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Resource allocation is a central management activity that supports strategy implementation. Without a planned approach to resource allocation, decisions are often made based on political preferences or personal beliefs. In a strategically planned environment, resources will be allocated based on priority goals and established annual objectives. The success of implementation will be directly related to the consistency of the resource allocation with the priorities that are identified in the approved annual objectives. Organizations have at least four types of resources that can be used to achieve desired objectives:

Resources in organizations are often not allocated effectively because of the reasons below:

- **Leaders are overprotective of resources.** Many elected officials, in principle, are adamantly opposed to any investment of additional resources in the development of organizational capacity, especially in the areas of training and professional development. This leads to short-term savings and long-term bankruptcy.
- **The focus is on short-term liquidity instead of long-term financial health.** Often, in order to achieve long-term sustainability, it is necessary to invest in professional staff, subject matter experts, and strategic vision planning processes. In many local government organizations, these activities are not accorded the value they deserve.

- **Decisions are made based on political orientation.** When the resource allocation is based on the political support in the community, the proper attention is diverted from high-priority goals and projects to addressing the immediate “hot issue” items in the community.
- **Targets and objectives are too vague.** Planning and annual objectives should be very specific, with performance measurements identified.
- **Leaders are reluctant to make changes or take risks.** Most organizations are resistant to change. Any change in structure, technology, personnel, or practices raises anxiety levels in an organization. Change should be viewed as a continuous process and an opportunity to improve the quality of the organization and the services it provides.
- **Leaders lack sufficient knowledge about what should be done.** Because the nature of local government leadership is naturally transient, leaders are sometimes unsure or uninformed about how resources should be allocated in order to advance organizational priorities. Likewise, the priorities are often not adequately communicated to key staff in the organization who are responsible for the organization and utilization of resources.

Effective resource allocation does not guarantee success, because other factors such as personnel, commitment, and effective programming must drive the implementation.

Financial

Physical

Human

Technological

However, no implementation can be successful without prudent resource allocation.

In order to identify, organize, and capture the resources necessary for a successful implementation, the Implementation Manager should prepare a preliminary funding strategy that will position the Borough to capitalize on the best opportunities for securing public funds and for

identifying project revenue generation. The strategy should identify short-, medium-, and long-term initiatives and funding sources that can be leveraged to achieve the redevelopment vision for the project area. The Implementation Manager will identify public-private opportunities, grants, innovative fund-raising opportunities, sponsorships, and other revenue-generating strategies.

### DEVELOPING FUNDING STRATEGIES

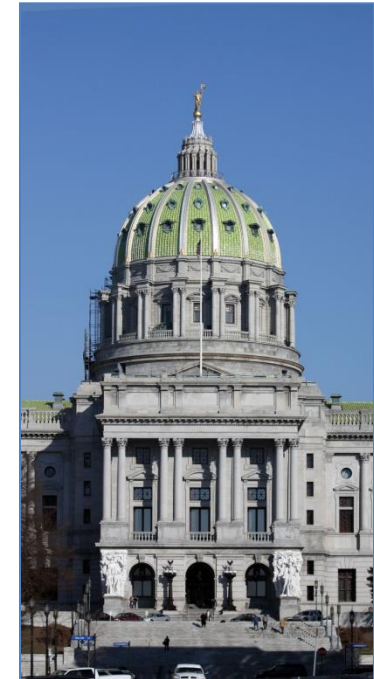
The Implementation Manager should identify and analyze potential funding sources available for eligible costs associated with the Borough's projects. A detailed matrix outlining resources available for the projects should be prepared and used to develop a comprehensive funding strategy. Utilizing the action plans the Implementation Manager should prepare detailed briefing books and message statements for each of the priority projects. As part of the process for identifying viable public funding opportunities, the projects should be discussed with key staff in county, state, and federal funding agencies. Only the most relevant funding opportunities should be targeted, based on the unique needs of the projects. Programs that should be evaluated include, but should not be limited to, the following:

#### **FY 2016 Department of Justice (DOJ) Community-Oriented Policing Services**

**(COPS) Appropriations** – The annual DOJ development appropriations legislation provides funding for costs related to public safety improvements. This opportunity involves direct contact with congressional staff and allows for the potential to address public safety for projects.

**Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP)** – Pennsylvania's RACP supports larger development projects that have a total project cost in excess of \$1 million. The governor typically announces competitive application opportunities each year. These grants are 50-50 matches.

**Business in Our Sites (BOS)** – Pennsylvania's BOS grants and loans focus on infrastructure and site preparation costs that transition undeveloped sites to "shovel-ready" sites. Although funding for this program is very limited, funds become available from time to time and there have been discussions in the General Assembly about recapitalizing the program as part of the next state budget.





**Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank (PIB)** – PIB is a program developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) that offers low-interest loans (one-half of prime) for transportation improvements. The loans can be repaid with federal funds. PIB is especially helpful in accelerating phases of transportation projects that must move at a pace that may not coincide with the timeline for delivering federal funds.

**Foundation Programs/Funding** – A review of potential foundation resources should be undertaken to determine support for components of the projects that are candidates for funding. Resources such as senior centers and other public services may increase the opportunity for foundational support.

**Pennsylvania State Energy Funding** – Energy independence programs offered through multiple agencies, including the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), DCED, and the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA), may provide potential sources of funding.

**Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2)** – This program funds both planning and development parks and recreation grants that would support several of the recommendations in the EIP. The annual application is due in April of each year.

**Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program** – Projects that could be undertaken with CDBG funds include water, sewer, and road projects; demolition of vacant and/or unsafe structures; acquisition of blighted property; handicap ramps at intersections; and handicap-accessible pedestrian walkways at parks or restrooms. The Borough has used these funds in the past for projects.

**Marcellus Shale Act 13 Funds** – The Act 13 funds can be used for projects such as the acquisition of key properties (land and buildings); rehabilitation of buildings; site preparation for public uses; parks and recreation projects; and other economic development projects. Applications are accepted by agencies at various times of the year.

**PennDOT Enhancement or Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI)** – Enhancement funds and PCTI funds are made available through PennDOT for projects that address the quality of life in a community, such as safer pedestrian-oriented linkages, traffic calming, re-signalization, and reconfiguration of intersections.

**Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund (CITF)** – Economic development funds that are available through the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County for projects up to \$250,000 for infrastructure, planning, streetscape enhancements, storm and sanitary projects, and park projects.

**Gaming Economic Development Funds (GEDF)** – Economic development funds that are available through the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County for large projects over \$500,000 that address economic and community development, parks, historical, and cultural projects. These funds require significant support from state representatives.

**Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTPR)** – These funds, up to \$250,000, are available through the Commonwealth Financing Authority for planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation, and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, parks, and beautification projects.

In addition, the PA DCED Governor's Center for Local Government Services (GCLGS) is a one-stop shop for local government officials and provides a wealth of knowledge and expertise on all matters affecting local government operations throughout Pennsylvania.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN PA

## PLANNING & PUBLICATIONS



**LOCAL INCOME TAX INFORMATION • LOCAL GOVERNMENT FACT SHEET • MUNICIPALITIES IN PA • MUNICIPAL STATISTICS • LOCAL GOVERNMENT LAWS • COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS • PUBLICATIONS**

The Implementation Manager should provide advice and recommendations related to the following: (1) eligibility requirements related to each program, (2) assumptions regarding the proposed use of funds and consistency with program eligibility and compliance requirements, (3) structuring of funding uses and match requirements to promote efficiency while meeting program requirements, and (4) potential to supplement funding sources.

The Implementation Manager should review, prepare, and utilize economic data contained in this Plan for the completion of funding applications. Once funding applications have been submitted for the project, the Implementation Manager should assist in securing disbursement of funds for specific project uses. It will be important to manage communication with appointed and elected officials at the local and state levels and with various agency personnel for the purpose of securing the disbursement of public funding for the project. A comprehensive master project funding schedule should be prepared, illustrating the timing of funding availability in relation to the projects' development schedules and phasing plans.

## PLAN CONSISTENCY

### CONSISTENCY WITH NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES



The Borough of Mt. Oliver is completely surrounded by the City of Pittsburgh and is completely compatible with the zoning designations and uses that are adjacent to the Mt. Oliver Borough parcels. A copy of this Plan was provided to the Pittsburgh City Planning Department for review.



### CONSISTENCY WITH ALLEGHENY PLACES

The Mt. Oliver Plan is generally consistent with *Allegheny Places*, the county's comprehensive plan. The Mt. Oliver Plan includes strategies around the "greening" of the Brownsville Road corridor and emphasis on redevelopment of the business district and strengthening of neighborhoods through sustainable practices such as pedestrian connections, walkability, traffic calming, and "complete streets." It includes an emphasis on creating livable places with additional park facility improvements and programming. It

includes strategies to address blighted and vacant properties and to consider repurpose and reuse of existing facilities. The Plan also includes recommendations around public transportation, the improvement of local roadways, and the inclusion of pedestrian oriented amenities like bike paths and trails where possible. Specifically the Plan is consistent with the following county goals:

- Provide a variety of mixed-income and affordable housing in mixed-use Places as identified on the county's Future Land Use Plan.
- Target infill housing where needed and support redevelopment of current housing stock.



- Promote accessible and “visitable” housing in communities with desirable amenities.
- Develop good access to transportation corridors. The Brownsville Road Corridor is a mixed-use hub of retail, office, dining, commercial and residential uses.
- Use tools such as TNDs and PODs to promote and protect the character of older, established neighborhoods.
- Require that new developments provide for pedestrians and are completely accessible to individuals with disabilities.
- Promote an efficient multi-modal transportation system to provide access to jobs.





## APPENDIX A – SURVEY RESULTS

DRAFT

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## APPENDIX B – FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SUMMARIES

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## APPENDIX C – COMMUNITY TAPESTRY SEGMENTATION

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## APPENDIX D – PAVEMENT RATING PLAN

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APPENDIX E – CURRENT ZONING MAP

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## APPENDIX F – FUTURE LAND USE MAP

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