

Chapter 5

The Everyday City: Portland's Changing Neighborhoods

Carl Abbott

Department of Urban Studies and Planning
Portland State University

Americans like to keep tabs on the typical. Giant corporations search for average cities in which to run market tests for new brands of crunchos and fizzits. The targets tend to run to comfortable communities like Rochester, N.Y., Columbus, Ohio, or Des Moines, Iowa.

Political commentators also feel the impulse to characterize typical Americans. When political pundits Richard Scammon and Ben Wattenberg a few years back pronounced that the average voter was a 40-year-old housewife living in the suburbs of Dayton, Ohio, they were indulging in the national habit of carefully defining the middle American.

What about Portland and its neighborhoods? Does the city on the Willamette have its own equivalent of middle America - a community that offers average neighbors, average convenience, and average urban problems?

Data presented in the City of Portland's annual *Neighborhood Information Profiles* allow the definition of the most statistically typical of eight geographic districts within the city limits, each of which includes several neighborhoods (Figures 5.1, 5.2). The measures range from basic demographics (age, race) to economic status (education, household income) and patterns of every day life (transit use, residential stability). Totaling the absolute values of the deviations (ignoring plus and minus signs) gives a rough indication of the extent

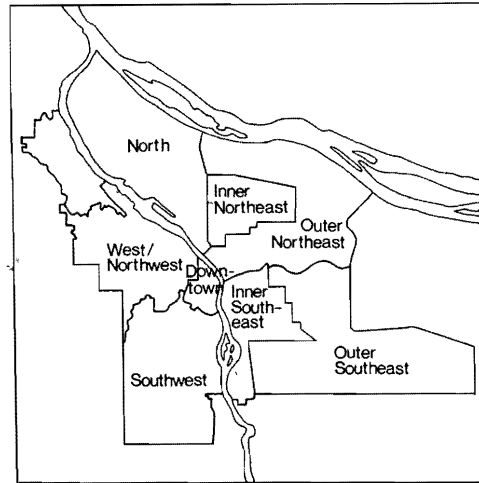


Figure 5.1 Portland's residential districts as defined for the city's *Neighborhood Information Profiles* of smaller neighborhoods (Portland Office Fiscal Administration, 1983).

to which each district diverges from the middle (Table 5.1).

It's no surprise that Downtown runs off the scale as a wildly atypical neighborhood. The west side also differs sharply from the city wide averages. Closest to the norm is Inner Southeast, followed by Outer Southeast (Table 5.1). Both districts are close to the average in every category. As a sort of "middle Portlandia", the southeast area has a life of its own at the same time that it is tied to the larger metropolis. Most of its workers find jobs within the city, but only one in ten

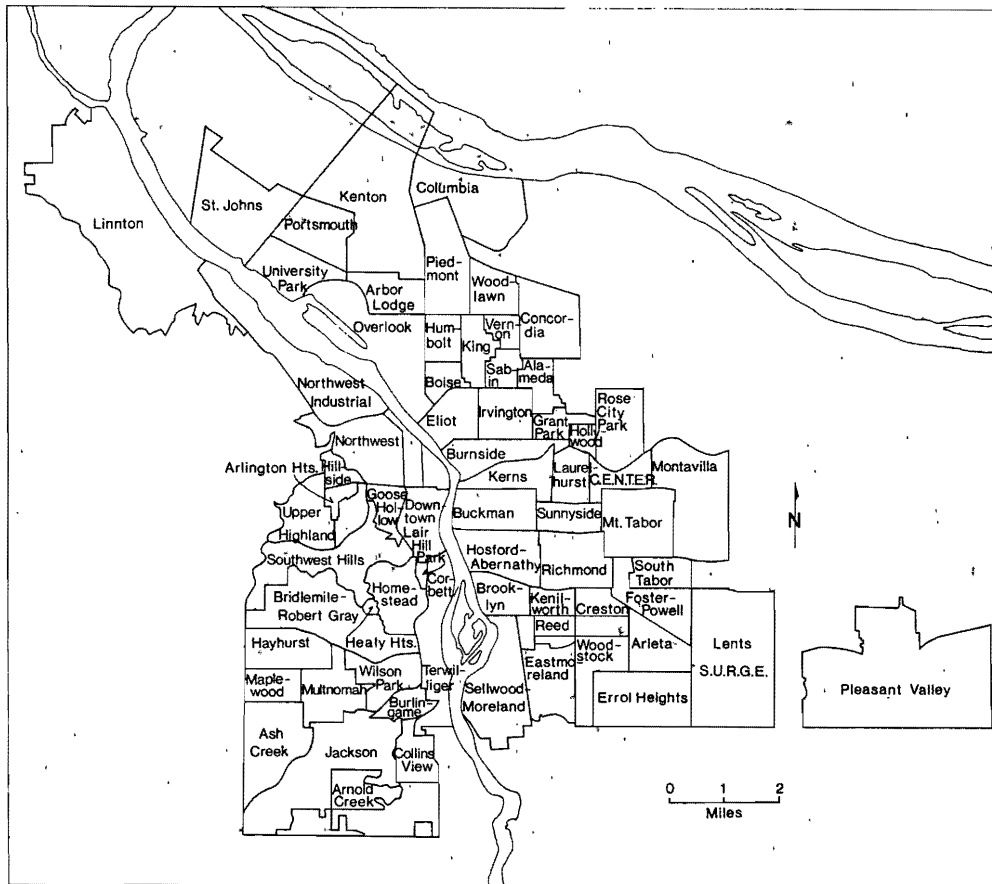


Figure 5.2 Portland neighborhood boundaries. The city recognizes neighborhood boundaries as defined by its independent neighborhood associations (adapted from Abbott, 1983, p. 190).

commute into downtown. Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard is a rapidly revitalizing business street that attracts customers citywide, but many southeast businesses serve local markets.

The same area is also the geographic center of population in metropolitan Portland. Although the exact spot shifts with every new subdivision on one side of the city or the other, it has been somewhere on the southeast side for

the last 75 years. By the early 1980's, the center of population was somewhere in the eastern end of the Sunnyside neighborhood near Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard and 39th Avenue, 2 1/2 miles east and 1/2 mile south of the historic focal point of Portland's downtown at 5th and Morrison streets (Ferriday, 1984, pp. 13-15; Deleuw Cather, 1971).

In larger perspective, central southeast preserves something of the community life of the 1920's and 1930's with an overlay from the 1980's. Within a mile of the metropolitan population center we can find three theaters that still show clean movies (with Saturday matinees). The upper middle class

Table 5.1: *Portland neighborhood characteristics, percentage deviation from city average (Portland Office of Fiscal Administration, 1983)*

	North	Inner NE	Outer NE	West/ NW	SW	Inner SE	Outer SE	Down-town
Percent White	+2	-36	+7	+9	+12	+5	+9	-1
Percent College graduates	-59	-27	0	+45	+91	-9	-18	-5
Percent 60+ years	+5	-10	+15	+45	-20	+10	+5	+65
Median household income	0	-9	+14	-32	+43	-14	+12	-62
Percent Professional occupations	-42	-15	+23	+27	+50	-12	-15	+4
Percent Houses owner occupied	+17	+11	+28	-69	+21	-25	+17	-90
Percent Commuters by bus	0	-6	-31	+13	+6	-12	+13	+31
Years in neighborhood	-25	+2	+9	-14	-15	-8	-1	-41
Median value of houses	-20	-18	+8	+94	+42	-11	-1	NA
Rate of Major crimes	-9	+18	-20	+7	-55	-1	-29	+550
Total Deviation (Sum of Absolute values)	179	152	155	355	355	107	120	940

Laurelhurst neighborhood, built with gracious curves and symbolic entrance gates, shares the area with working class housing and with upgrading neighborhoods where young families are recycling bungalows and boxy four-square houses from the 1920's. One of the old transit shopping streets has gone yupscale with trendy restaurants and antique shops for weekend browsing. Another is dotted with Chinese, Vietnamese, and Filipino businesses. A third shows little change from the 1950's.

The neighborhood life and neighborhood patterns that we see in the southeast district and elsewhere in Portland are the combined product of the general processes of urban growth and of

deliberate policy choices. Portland's neighborhoods have been shaped by the same economic, social and technological forces that have molded most other American cities. At the same time, its "natural" neighborhoods from the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth have been reshaped by conscious choices, first to encourage the outward shift of population and then to conserve the existing urban fabric. The remainder of this essay explores the impacts and interaction of markets and politics by (1) sketching the evolution of Portland's neighborhoods over the last century (2) describing key patterns of social geography that have resulted and (3) analyzing the evolving goals and tools of

neighborhood policy.

The section of central Southeast Portland mentioned above includes examples of three of Portland's five basic neighborhood types. Over the decades, competition for space, view sites and prestige have created four irregular rings around the central business district. Portland's downtown, its stopover neighborhoods, its everyday neighborhoods, its highlands and its automobile suburbs are each differentiated by history, housing type, social function, and social status (Figure 5.3).

As in many other cities, the central business district is simultaneously Portland's oldest and newest neighborhood.

It contains the contracted remnant of the skid road/lodging housing district that once stretched for a mile along the city's waterfront. With cheap lodgings, second hand stores, missions, saloons, brothels, and employment agencies, the district served the needs of a transient labor force of lumberjacks, farm workers, seamen, and railroad construction gangs who wintered over or passed through Portland. At its height in the early twentieth century, the district may have housed between 5,000-10,000 men, giving Portland proportionately one of the largest skid roads in the nation (Sawyer, 1984, pp. 493-99). The remnant now at the north end of

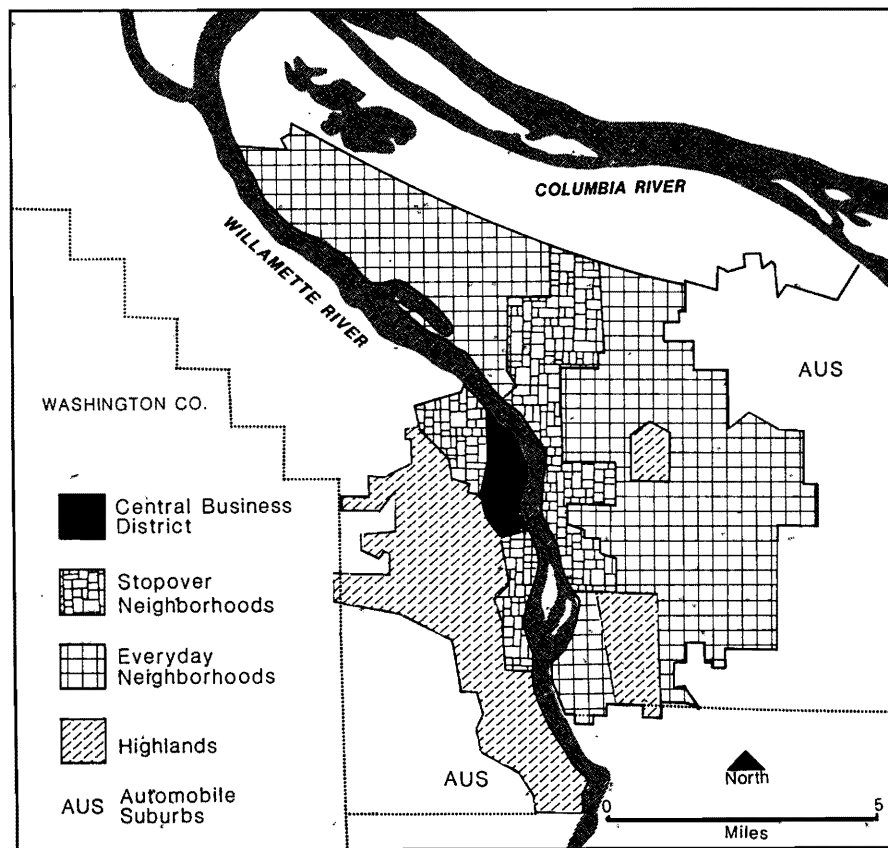


Figure 5.3 Portland neighborhood types (from Abbott, 1983, p. 24).



Figure 5.4 South Portland in the 1920's was a bustling "stopover neighborhood." This corner at S. W. First and Caruthers was obliterated by the construction of the inner loop I-405 (From Oregon Historical Society, Negative No. 47144).

the central business district meets the needs of a few hundred transients and another thousand or so residents of single room occupancy hotels. Elsewhere in downtown Portland, particularly on the southern and western edges, a new downtown community has begun to form with moderate and upper income housing for the elderly in new or converted buildings. In total, downtown houses approximately 10,000 people, divided roughly equally between low income and moderate/upper income.

Expansion of the central business district and its ancillary uses such as coliseum, freeway loop, and public

university has destroyed significant portions of Portland's stopover neighborhoods. In the early years of the century, these were Portland's nearest equivalent to the large ethnic communities of New York or Chicago. The crescent of lower land around the central business district below the West Hills and the inner tier of east-side neighborhoods was largely settled by the early years of the century (Figure 5.4). With minor exceptions, these areas offered cheap housing for transient workers, European immigrants and their children, orientals, and a scattering of blacks. At the start of the Great Depression, these areas housed the overwhelming majority of Portland's foreign-born and its racial minorities (Figure 5.5). No single European ethnic group provided the majority of residents in any one neighborhood between 1910 and 1930. However, Jews and Italians set the tone for South Portland, Germans for Goose Hollow,

Slavs and Scandinavians for Northwest Portland, Scandinavians, Central Europeans, and German-Russians for the Albina-Union Avenue district, and Italians for Brooklyn for the Southern Pacific yards (MacColl, 1979, pp. 47-63).

Successful immigrants or their children did not settle permanently in the stopover neighborhoods. Newcomers used the cheap housing for a year or a decade to learn the rules of their new home and to land a decent job before finding a better house in a better neighborhood. Since the curtailment of European immigration in the 1920's, there have been few replacements for the Italians or Poles who moved on. The inner neighborhoods had Portland's highest density and almost all of its apartment buildings in 1930, but had already begun to lose population. One prominent real estate firm described the area as the city's "break-up zone" in which new land uses were destroying old residential patterns (Strong and McNaughton, 1924). Since 1950, large tracts of land in the old stopover neighborhoods have also been taken for I-5 and the I-405 freeways, for urban renewal, and for institutional, industrial, and commercial use. Nevertheless, stopover neighborhoods continue to house approximately 70,000 Portlanders (Figure 5.3).

Stopover neighborhoods have assumed the disproportionate burden of Portland's poverty because of their special use by newcomers to the city. During World War II, Harlan P. Douglass (1945, pp. 30-33) used seven measures of social status and real estate value to define social quality. South Portland and Albina ranked at the bottom of his list, with Northwest Portland and the inner southeast also below average. Analysis of 1960 census data showed a continued match between deteriorated

housing and poverty in the same neighborhoods (Portland City Planning Commission, 1967, pp. 23-32). Another study in 1972 described a smaller area including lower Albina, Buckman, and downtown residential areas as the city's postwar slum zone, which fell further and further behind the rest of the city on standard social indicators (Columbia Regional Association of Governments, 1972).

Black population in the Portland area has grown from 2,000 in 1940 to 33,000 in the SMSA in 1980; most housing has been available in the stopover neighborhoods of the northeast side. There is no ghetto that approaches the nearly total racial isolation of South Side Chicago or Bedford-Stuyvesant, but 10,000 black Portlanders live in a compact corridor along Union and Williams avenues from Russell to Killingsworth, where more than 60 percent of their neighbors are also black. The degree of racial concentration in this core community has not changed since 1970. However, the suburban housing market is now at least partially open to black families. During the 1970's, black population rose from 400 to 800 in Clackamas County, and from 200 to 1,100 in Washington County, mostly in Beaverton. Another 1,800 black residents are scattered among the middle-class neighborhoods between 82nd Street and Gresham. For the metropolitan area as a whole, the number of census tracts in which blacks constituted one to five percent of the total population increased from 23 in 1970 to 59 in 1980.

Within the city, the center of Portland's black community has moved more than a mile north from N.E. Union and Broadway in 1940 to N.E. Union and Skidmore in 1980 (Portland City Planning Commission, 1936, plate

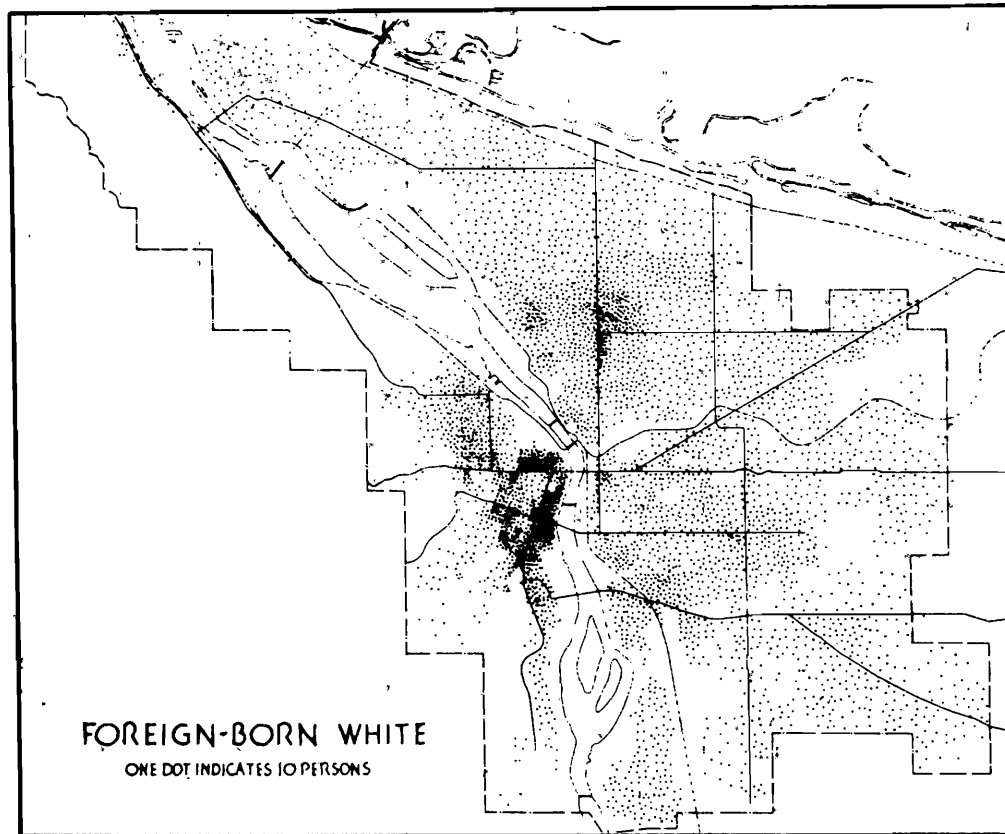


Figure 5.5 Foreign-born residents, 1930. European and Canadian immigrants clustered in low-rent neighborhoods north and south of the central business district and in northeast Portland (From Portland City Planning Commission, Report on Public Recreational Areas, 1936).

7). The process started with the land clearance for the Coliseum in the 1950's and continued with the construction of Interstate 5 in the 1960's and the Emanuel Hospital redevelopment in the 1970's in the historic heart of Albina south of Fremont and west of 18th Street. Housing rehabilitation programs in Irvington reversed an eastward movement of blacks south of Fremont,

and whites in recent years have discovered the Eliot neighborhood as a target for recolonization (Figure 5.2). In contrast, analysis of census tract data shows that the Vernon-Concordia-Cully area north of Fremont and east of 15th Street saw the black population grow from 2,000 to 5,500 during the 1970's. At the same time, movement of black residents into Woodlawn, Piedmont, Kenton, Portsmouth, and other neighborhoods that lie north of Killingsworth and west of 15th Street has raised the black total from 3,800 to 6,500.

Portland's everyday east side neighborhoods have evolved gradually from streetcar suburbs (Figure 5.3). Between 1890 and 1920, land developers platted thousands of acres on the east



Figure 5.6 Everyday neighborhood: east Portland. Taken in 1944, this scene is typical of a score of east-side neighborhoods largely developed in the bungalow style of the 1910's and 1920's (From City of Portland Archives and Records Center).

side of the Willamette in the zone between 1 1/2 and 6 miles from the central business district (Snyder, 1979). St. Johns, University Park, Overlook, Piedmont, Concordia, Alameda, Irvington, Rose City Park, Montavilla, Mount Tabor, Richmond, Ladd's Addition, Woodstock, Sellwood, and Westmoreland were within a half hour trolley ride of downtown in 1930 and a half hour bus ride in 1980 (Bartholomew, 1932, plate 16). Buildings filled block after block in these neighborhoods in two great building booms of 1904-13 and 1922-28 (Figure 5.6) (Public Administration Service, 1959, p. 6; *Portland Daily Journal of Commerce*, June 7, 1929). Even Ladd's Addition - now a historic conservation district - was built largely in the 1910's and 1920's. Most of

the remaining lots were used for new one-story houses to meet the needs of war workers and returning veterans in the 1940's.

The home typical of these streetcar neighborhoods is the Portland bungalow. Only a decade ago, this Northwestern version of a California housing style seemed old-fashioned. Now we have rediscovered the appeal of wide porches, overhanging roofs, exposed rafter ends, and unboxed eaves (Figure 5.6). Today's real-estate ads show that this "Old Portland" style is popular once again. We have also discovered that the bungalow's open floor plan is as livable in the 1980's as it was seventy-five years ago. The Rose City Park and Ladd's Addition neighborhoods provide particularly rich samplings of styles.

The highlands also date from the twenties, thirties, and forties, although there was also settlement in the 1910's (Figure 5.3). The high-status communities that provide homes for most of Portland's upper middle class and its upper crust are draped over the crest

of the West Hills from Willamette Heights and Arlington Heights on the north, through Portland Heights, Council Crest, Burlingame, and south beyond the city limits in Dunthorpe and Lake Oswego. The areas are a natural expansion of the Nob Hill and King's Hill neighborhoods that housed Portland's upper class at the turn of the century (Marlitt, 1978; Portland Historic Landmarks Commission, 1979). East of the river, the same groups occupied the slightly higher land of Alameda, Eastmoreland, and Laurelhurst (Figure 5.2). Overall site planning with curving streets, large middle-aged houses, mature trees, and the banishment of neighborhood cleaners and groceries make them residential enclaves that shelter residents from the outside world. From the start, the majority of West Hills householders expected to commute to work by automobile rather than trolley, although Eastmoreland and Laurelhurst did have streetcar connections. The clubby tone of the highlands is similar to that of Alamo Heights in San Antonio, the eastshore suburbs of Detroit, and the Country Club district of Kansas City — all twentieth-century neighborhoods whose social status has been protected by geography and tradition since the start of the automobile era.

The automobile suburbs built after 1945 occupy by far the largest portion of the metropolitan area. The suburban impulse has followed corridors of settlement that were defined by electric interurban railroads early in the century. Southern Pacific and Oregon Electric lines reached west to Beaverton and Tualatin, while the Portland Electric Company ran trains to Oregon City and Gresham. Use of automobiles in the 1930's accelerated the dispersal that reached massive proportions after

World War II (Throop, 1948). On the east side of the Willamette, they ran roughly east from 92nd Street, which marked the approximate limit of streetcar and bus service before 1940, and south from the Multnomah-Clackamas County line. With minor exceptions, these areas lay outside the city of Portland. West of the river, the new housing after the war spilled down the far slope of the West Hills onto the rolling farmland of Washington County. Westside annexations by the city of Portland since 1950 have added typical suburban problems of substandard roads and overtaxed sewers to the worries of city officials. Across the political boundary of Washington County residents have complained for two decades about these growing pains while refusing to spend the money to deal with them.

Growth of this ring of one-story housing and shops has been dependent on aid from the federal government. The loan insurance and guarantee programs of the Federal Housing Administration and Veterans' Administration primed the huge building boom that added more than 300,000 housing units in the metropolitan area between 1950 and 1980. Federal grants for parks, planning, and especially sewers have made it economically feasible to build the new neighborhoods that thousands of Portlanders have preferred. Without this aid, growth in Washington and Multnomah counties would have been seriously slowed after 1970.

These basic types of Portland neighborhoods can be compared with well-known models of urban social geography developed by sociologist Ernest Burgess and his colleagues (Park, Burgess, and McKenzie, 1925) and by historian, Zane Miller (1969) (Table 5.2). The Portland zones show a

Table 5.2: *Zonal models of American cities*

Chicago 1920 (Burgess 1925) The Loop	Cincinnati 1900 (Miller 1969) The Circle	Portland 1900-1980 (Abbott, 1983) Central Business District
Zone in Transition Workingmen's Homes	Zone of Emergence	Stopover Neighborhoods Everyday City
Residential Zone	Hilltops	Highlands and Automobile Suburbs
Commuter Zone		

partial match with those defined by Burgess, who drew particularly on the growth patterns of Chicago. In part because of the intense demand for commercial and industrial land in Chicago in the early twentieth century, that model contains two zones that are essentially non-residential rather than the one business core zone for Portland. Miller's model of Cincinnati, a city roughly comparable in size to Portland, matches the Portland zones more closely. The Portland model defines four residential zones rather than two because it deals with a city in which automobiles have helped to create additional distinctions among residential areas, whereas Miller focused on the decades around the turn of the century. All three models define the sections of the city in terms of evolving social functions rather than demographic or socioeconomic variables at a point in time.

Portlanders themselves are much more likely to think in terms of a simple division of their city into east and west sides than to distinguish in detail among individual neighborhood types. By the 1930's and 1940's, the expense of

residential construction on steep West Hills slopes in contrast to the largely level land east of the river had clearly established a socioeconomic differential. The vast quantities of land that new cars and new highways made available for urban development in the postwar decades allowed Portlanders to sort themselves further out by economic class and to confirm the Willamette River as a social barrier.

The growth of working class Portland induced by World War II had its most immediate impact on the east side. The bulk of wartime public housing was located in east-side neighborhoods and most of the city's new black residents settled in older housing just east of the river. With undeveloped and buildable land and easy access to centers of industrial employment, the east side absorbed much of the area's lower-income and middle-income housing between 1945 and 1960 as tract ranch homes in new neighborhoods filled the role played earlier by the ubiquitous bungalow (Portland City Planning Commission, 1965). Beyond the city limits, eastern Multnomah County showed the highest growth rate among

suburban counties, with a share of metropolitan area population that climbed from 9.9 percent in 1940 to 18.3 percent in 1960 before dropping in the sixties. The unincorporated section of Multnomah County in the 1950's and 1960's was in many ways a classic suburb. It counted a high percentage of workers who commuted to Portland and its percentage of residents who had moved from the central city was twice that of the other SMSA counties (according to census *Subject Reports on Mobility for Metropolitan Areas*).

As Multnomah County filled with subdivisions, the flow of new development shifted westward to Washington County in the 1960's, creating new suburban communities that took their social tone from the adjacent Portland neighborhoods. Although the county's share of total SMSA population rose only from 7.8 percent to 8.7 percent during the forties, it reached 19.7 percent by 1980. If Multnomah County's suburban communities have retained close ties to the central city, those in Washington County have been considerably more independent. Among the several suburban jurisdictions, it has had the highest proportion of residents arriving directly from outside the metropolitan area. With the exception of Clark County in Washington, where cross-river commuters were confined to a single bridge until the 1980's, Washington County also had the lowest percentage of workers who commuted to Portland and the highest percentage working in the county of residence.

The new communities that blossomed on the far slope of the West Hills took on something of the social tone of the adjacent highlands. Washington County in 1940 ranked below Clackamas County, Portland, and the remainder of Multnomah

County on the standard socioeconomic indicators of education, income, and occupational mix. The county drew even with the rest of the metropolitan area by 1950, surged ahead in 1960, and widened its lead by 1980 (Abbott, 1980, pp. 89-91). The difference between the eastern and western halves of the metropolitan area is even more dramatic if the West Hills census tracts in western Portland and Multnomah County and the Clackamas County tracts west of the Willamette River are grouped as separate subareas. In 1960, 1970, and 1980, the median values for the tracts in each of these west-side areas far exceeded the values of the entire county of which they are a part (Table 5.3). The east side of the SMSA can claim several prestige neighborhoods that are known to eastsiders, but an address almost anywhere from Portland Heights west to Hillsboro and south to Wilsonville carries the cachet of respectability.

The east/west split simultaneously unifies and divides the metropolitan area. It overlies and mitigates the socioeconomic contrast between central city and suburbs and thereby prevents a degree of social polarization. At the same time, however, it deeply influences local politics, which have frequently been stated in terms of west side "haves" and east side "have-nots". In local imagery, as journalist Keith Moerer (1984) has pointed out, eastsiders characterize the west side as "rich, snooty, where the city's fat cats live and work; where status seekers begin their climbs". Westsiders, in turn, argue that the east side is poor, flat, dull, and dangerous. Indeed, there are more bowling alleys and RV dealers east of the Willamette, more stockbrokers on the west.

From the adoption of Portland's first

Table 5.3: *Socioeconomic status indicators, west side Portland SMSA. Educational attainment refers to median number of years completed for persons 25+ years, 1950-1970. For 1980 it shows percentage high school graduates, for persons 25+ years. Income for 1950-70 indicates median income for families and unrelated individuals. For 1980 it indicates median household income.*

	1950	1960	1970	1980
Percentage of Population in Professional and Managerial Jobs				
SMSA	8.5	8.9	9.9	11.5
Washington Co.	7.1	10.5	12.3	14.6
West Clackamas Co.	N.A.	14.2	15.0	17.2
West Multnomah Co.	14.2	14.8	17.2	19.6
Educational Attainment				
SMSA	11.4	12.0	12.4	78.5
Washington Co.	10.9	12.2	12.6	85.0
West Clackamas Co.	N.A.	12.6	13.0	90.6
West Multnomah Co.	N.A.	12.8	13.6	91.6
Income				
SMSA	\$3,044	\$5,356	\$ 8,378	\$18,423
Washington Co.	2,964	5,863	10,083	25,882
West Clackamas Co.	N.A.	6,920	11,184	27,954
West Multnomah Co.	N.A.	6,823	10,996	22,743

zoning ordinance in 1924 to the *Comprehensive Plan* of 1966, Portland had a consistent neighborhood policy -- to protect and enhance middle and upper income enclaves, and to divert the costs of growth to low income neighborhoods.

The guiding principles of the 1924 zoning code were simplicity and social segregation (Portland City Planning Commission, 1925; Abbott, 1983, pp. 87-90). The scheme divided Portland into four use zones. Areas restricted to single-family houses (Zone 1) covered 20 percent of the city land area. The zone that allowed duplexes and apartments (Zone 2) covered 45 percent of the city. Commercial as well as residential activities were allowed in 25 percent of the city (Zone 3). The unrestricted land in Zone 4 was intended primarily for industrial use. Well-organized and affluent neighborhoods like Mount

Tabor, Laurelhurst, Eastmoreland, University Park, Alameda, Grant Park, Irvington, and Portland Heights received full Zone 1 protection under the new ordinance (Figure 5.2). Second-class Zone 2 status went to working-class neighborhoods with large numbers of rented houses. As in other cities in the 1920's, Portland's first system of zoning thus sanctioned and encouraged the existing division of land among economic functions and social classes. The use of only two residential zones and the uneven enforcement of a new housing code were intended to reinforce a distinction between newer and more spacious neighborhoods for the affluent and older, low-status neighborhoods with smaller houses and apartments.

A more complex neighborhood policy emerged in the 1950's that combined redevelopment, transportation, and

neighborhood unit planning (Abbott, 1983, pp. 186-190). Urban renewal and related projects targeted districts on the downtown fringe. The residential areas that hugged the lower land along the Willamette appeared to have outlived their role as staging areas for newcomers to the city (with the possible exception of the black community of northeast Portland). Given the consensus that blight "continues to get worse until clearance of an area may be the only feasible solution", the city accommodated demands for land for "central" uses through its redevelopment program (Portland City Planning Commission, 1967, p. 10). City agencies obliterated substantial parts of two neighborhoods in the late 1950's to make room for the Coliseum and for the South Auditorium renewal project. In the neighborhoods of inner Southeast and inner Southwest, the corollary was the replacement of single-family housing by cheap apartments to hold the land at an increased return until it was also needed for more intensive use.

The complementary strategy to writing off the inner ring as a residential area was the effort to hold middle-class population in the everyday neighborhoods and highlands by making them as suburban as possible. The planning commission and its staff applied the ideas about the preferred characteristics of a neighborhood unit that had been defined in the 1930's (Perry 1939). They hoped to retain low population densities, to block out nonresidential activities, to insulate neighborhoods from traffic, and to increase open space. The 1959 plan for the St. Johns district of North Portland summarized the principles of neighborhood design (Portland City Planning Commission, 1959, p. 55):

It is generally accepted that the 'neighborhood', an area inhabited by persons who

are likely to have some common interests and activities, should not be broken up by major trafficways, should contain some local shopping facilities, and should have an elementary school and neighborhood park as a focal point for common activities at this level.

The Planning Commission summarized its broad goal in its *Comprehensive Development Plan*, a city wide map of proposed land uses and public facilities prepared in 1958 and revised in 1966. The highlands needed little change, for the West Hills, Laurelhurst, and Eastmoreland were well-defined and well-maintained areas that could compete with upper status suburbs on their own terms. For southwest Portland, the Planning Commission helped to designate school locations that enhanced neighborhood identity. The proposals for the remaining eastside neighborhoods -- the everyday city -- were more drastic. The *Comprehensive Development Plan* suggested relocation of five schools in southeast Portland and fifteen schools in northeast and north Portland in order to reconstruct neighborhood patterns. It also called for 50 miles of new eastside freeways and expressways in addition to I-5 and I-205 in order to define neighborhood borders and to make the area appealing to auto-oriented Americans. In a summary written by Planning Director Lloyd Keefe and signed by Planning Commission president Harry Sroufe (1966, p. 13), the Commission's efforts were "directed toward restructuring our residential sections into secluded units protected from the encroachment of conflicting urban uses."

The changes that transformed neighborhood policy in Portland between 1967 and 1975 began with efforts by a score of largely self-defining neighborhood organizations (Abbott, 1983, pp. 190-206). Nearly every one of

the stopover neighborhoods and another half dozen of the everyday neighborhoods began to argue vigorously for its own version of revitalization in the later 1960's. Neighborhood associations themselves were not new, but the positive character of their agendas was a significant departure. By 1971 and 1972, active neighborhood associations and planning committees had established a presence that politicians and planning administrators could not ignore. Indeed, their critical mass required attention not as single problems or single neighborhoods but as a neighborhood movement.

The origins of this movement were different in every section of the city. Portlanders now tend to remember the group with which they were directly involved as the first to storm the barricades of the City Hall establishment. In fact, the process of neighborhood mobilization began on the east side with local efforts to influence federally assisted programs. Northeast Portland neighborhoods helped to plan and implement a Model Cities program that challenged kneejerk racism and dismayed many bureaucrats (West, 1969). Portland Action Committees Together, a local anti-poverty agency, helped organize half a dozen neighborhoods in southeast Portland to participate in community action programs. Southeast Uplift was a locally organized equivalent of Model Cities for the entire set of southeast neighborhood that had developed between 1900 and 1950 and that included several low-income communities.

The neighborhood movement gained its most articulate spokespersons among middle class "colonists" of the physically deteriorated neighborhoods of the west side, whose new residents united to fend off urban renewal

bulldozers. The Northwest District Association formed in 1969 to deal with a proposed hospital expansion. It worked with the Planning Bureau from 1970 to 1972 to develop an alternative plan that would preserve Northwest as a high-density residential neighborhood of Victorian houses and 1920's apartments. (Haldeman and Heiser, 1972). With a mix of the elderly, students, second generation immigrants, and younger professionals, it is Portland's most cosmopolitan neighborhood.

The Hill Park Association organized in 1970 to fight the possible clearance of the Lair Hill neighborhood, located just south of the downtown urban renewal zone (Uris, 1971). After the John's Landing development for converting abandoned industrial land along the west bank of the Willamette into office, trendy shops, and riverside condos was unveiled in 1971, the Corbett, Terwilliger, and Lair Hill neighborhoods joined in the development of their own district plan to preserve old working class neighborhoods for a new generation (Corbett-Terwilliger-Lair Hill Planning Committee, 1974).

The cooperative effort between the Planning Commission and the Northwest District Association was the catalyst for giving neighborhood groups a formal role in city decisions. City Council established the Office of Neighborhood Associations (ONA) in 1974 to assist local organizations through central and district offices. Neighborhood associations must be open in membership and record minority as well as majority opinions. In return, the ONA facilitates local activity. "Neighborhood needs reports" introduce neighborhood shopping lists into the city budget process. The Planning Bureau notifies neighborhood associations of zoning change requests and

has worked with individual communities on district plans and downzoning proposals to preserve residential environments.

The changes extended even to the definition of neighborhoods themselves. Neighborhood associations in the 1970's largely ignored the carefully defined neighborhood units of the *Comprehensive Development Plan* when they set their own boundaries. The neighborhoods on the 1966 map are compact and tidy units that float between arterial streets like the bubbles in a carpenter's level. The map of neighborhood association boundaries maintained by ONA is an untidy hodgepodge (Figure 5.2). Several associations claim overlapping territories. Other sections of the city have no active association. The size of neighborhoods varies substantially. Neighborhoods sandwich major traffic streets and commercial nodes that constitute natural centers of activity. Only half of the neighborhood associations carry names from the 1966 map. Especially on the east side, where neighborhood identities were set in the 1920's, the same name was applied to substantially different areas by planners in the 1960's, and by residents in the 1970's.

Neighborhood conservation has been supported since the 1970's by central policy decisions as well as grass-roots action. One of the key decisions of the early 1970's was the cancellation of the Mount Hood Freeway, a five-mile connection that would have displaced 1,700 households in southeast Portland (Abbott, 1983, pp. 255-57). As well as preventing the destruction of half a dozen neighborhoods, the decision was coupled with a shift to a balanced transportation system involving improved bus service and a rapid transit line. Ladd's Addition, one of the neighbor-

hoods saved from the Mount Hood Freeway, became one of the city's first historic conservation districts in 1977 (along with the Lair Hill neighborhood just south of downtown).

Portland also targeted the new Housing and Community Development (HCD) program of 1974 to neighborhood assistance. Since the HCD area included approximately 140,000 residents, it was possible to use federal funds for a general housing rehabilitation program. About half of Portland's HCD money during the second half of the 1970's went to housing rehabilitation, in contrast to 10 percent in a comparable city like Seattle. The program helped to account for more than 7,000 home rehabilitation grants and loans. Louis Scherzer, a savings and loan executive who chaired the Portland Development Commission, commented in 1977 that Mayor Neil Goldschmidt had "gotten some of these archaic local lenders to turn around. These are high risk neighborhoods we're going into through the Public Interest Lender program, but he convinced us, got a staff together that knows rehabilitation . . . The basic thing is keeping these neighborhoods attractive. The gut issue is the little guy who takes out a loan for a paint job or a new furnace. It has a tremendous ripple effect throughout the neighborhood" (*The Oregonian*, December 18, 1977).

Many of the forces at work in Portland during the last twenty years have been the product of national trends. Portlanders were not responsible for the rise of a neighborhood participation movement or the inflation of housing prices that made old neighborhoods relatively attractive. At the same time, Portland has provided a receptive environment for the conservation and reuse of everyday neighborhoods. It stands as a

virtual textbook example in which the changes can be clearly traced and defined. Portland is a city with distinguishable neighborhood types arrayed in identifiable crescents around the downtown. It is therefore easy to analyze the ways in which planning for neighborhood change or stability allocated the impacts of growth among different parts of the metropolitan area. With the help of the policy choices of the last two decades, Portland made a conscious decision for neighborhood conservation. We are, in the 1980's, as much a city of neighborhoods as we were in the 1920's.

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