C. YORKTOWN TODAY: DEFINING NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

YORKTOWN'S SOUNDSCAPE

In addition to the sense of seclusion in the Yorktown neighborhood created by its single-use districts and its distinctive block layout and housing styles, numerous residents pointed out another defining characteristic that sets it apart from areas just outside its boundaries: the sense of serenity and quiet in Yorktown stands in stark contrast to the high-volume bustle of Broad Street and Girard Avenue, the constant activity of the Temple campus, and the periodic clatter of SEPTA trains as they pass by on the elevated rail to the east of the neighborhood. This peaceful protection from high decibel generators was noted by community members as one of the neighborhood's greatest strengths.

NEIGHBORHOOD SHARED SPACES

A number of shared spaces and streetscape features in Yorktown's block structure further distinguish this neighborhood from its context and most other neighborhoods in the City. The elements are classifiable into three typologies: cul-de-sacs/circles, courtyards, and what the community refers to as "green" strips. All of these elements exist in the public right-of-way.[1]

Cul-de-sacs/Circles

Most of Yorktown's blocks feature two block-interior cul-de-sacs, one with its entrance on the north side of the block, and the other connecting to the street on the south side. Houses to the east and west of each cul-de-sac face the block-interior cul-de-sac. At the center of each cul-de-sac is a central raised area the community refers to as a "Circle." Yorktown's sixteen Circles come in a variety of shapes and sizes, some of them paved, some planted. Many of the planted Circles create an impressive centerpiece to the cul-de-sac, showcasing the green thumbs of neighboring residents. Others, however, are more eyesores than assets to the neighbors, with undermaintained planted areas or broken concrete surfaces. Another issue residents identified is that many of them have large trees that have grown to a height that interferes with the overhead utility lines.

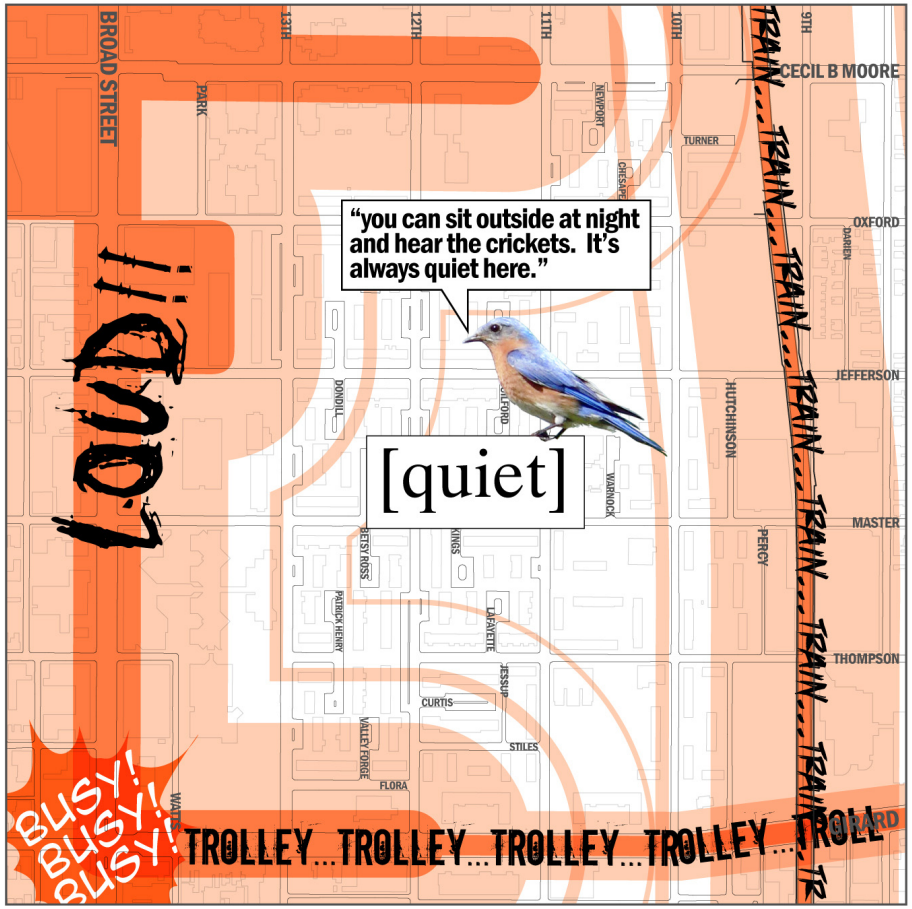

FIGURE 13: Yorktown's Soundscape

> "raising my sons in the cul-de-sac that we live in... in the beginning it was like a huge playpen, all of us watched out for everyone's kids, the children went out and played and had a good time, and they grew up with the squirrels and the crickets and all the birds."

1 A GIS parcel shapefile obtained from the Philadelphia Water Department indicates that the Kings/Lafayette courtyard crosses over two privately owned parcels on 11th Street, but the majority of the courtyard exists in an unparcelized right-of-way. The Chesapeake/Newport courtyard appears to have been infringed upon by neighboring residents. If the parcel file is correct, neighbors adjacent to this courtyard have annexed area outside their own properties, reducing the courtyard to the width of a sidewalk. Parcel boundaries should be verified with the City of Philadelphia for future reference, as occasionally data discrepancies are found to exist between the GIS parcel shapefiles in circulation among City agencies.

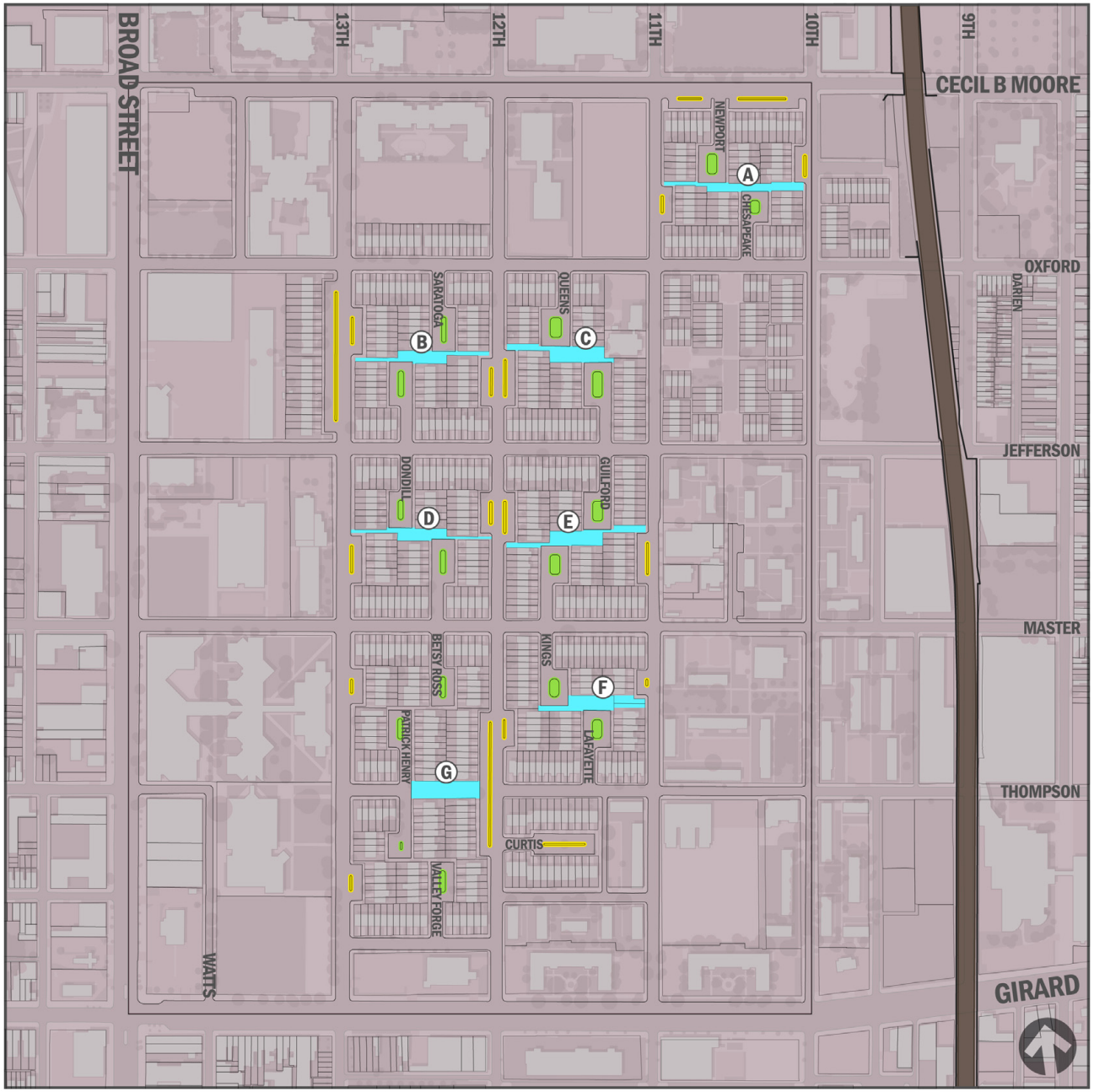

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FIGURE 14: Public Right of Way Elements

RIGHT OF WAY ELEMENTS

"green" strips

circles

courtyards

Ⓐ chesapeake/newport
Ⓑ saratoga/dondill
Ⓒ queens/guilford
Ⓓ dondill/betsy ross
Ⓔ guilford/kings
Ⓕ kings/lafayette
Ⓖ patrick henry

Courtyards

Each of Yorktown's complete blocks features a central courtyard area, except for the double block between Master, Flora, 12th, and 13th, which shares the Patrick Henry courtyard between the two combined square blocks. Aside from the Chesapeake/Newport courtyard, which has been reduced to the width of a sidewalk, the courtyards range in size from approximately 5,200 square feet (the Betsy Ross/Dondill courtyard) to 10,000 square feet (the Lafayette/Kings courtyard). Extending east and west from the courtyards (except for the Patrick Henry courtyard) are narrow pathways, most with a few steps at the edge of the courtyard, connecting the courtyard area to the sidewalks of adjacent streets.

At one time, Yorktown's courtyards featured benches and other furnishings for casual recreation, but over the years these items have deteriorated and have been removed to ensure safety, some after having been damaged by acts of vandalism and others removed so as to avoid attracting vandals. Yorktown's courtyards are almost entirely paved, but some of them have partial tree cover. The concrete surfaces have degraded over time without necessary repairs being done by the City. Some residents have made efforts to improve the ground condition in attempts to remove dangerous tripping hazards, which are made even more perilous at night by the lack of lighting in Yorktown's courtyards. However, many of these spaces are in need of attention beyond the "band aid approach," potentially requiring complete reconstruction in order to make them safe and usable shared spaces for residents. This will require outside resources beyond the means of the Yorktown community's volunteer upkeep efforts.

"Green" Strips

A number of long and narrow raised curb areas along the sides of Yorktown's main streets separate driveway-like "pull-ins" from the adjacent street. These concrete strips are referred to as "green" strips by the community, despite the fact that none of them are planted. The "green" strips are aligned with the sidewalks on either end, but there are no curb ramps between the sidewalks and the green strips, which intends to divert users around the loop of the pull-in driveway area. Pedestrians who continue along the desire line alongside the street and onto the "green" strip find that it doesn't make a very good sidewalk, due to its narrow width and the presence of periodic street signs placed in the middle of the strip.

Discussions with the community revealed that most residents believe these neighborhood elements have the potential to become great assets to Yorktown, but at present most of them either do not contribute to or negatively impact the quality of the public realm.

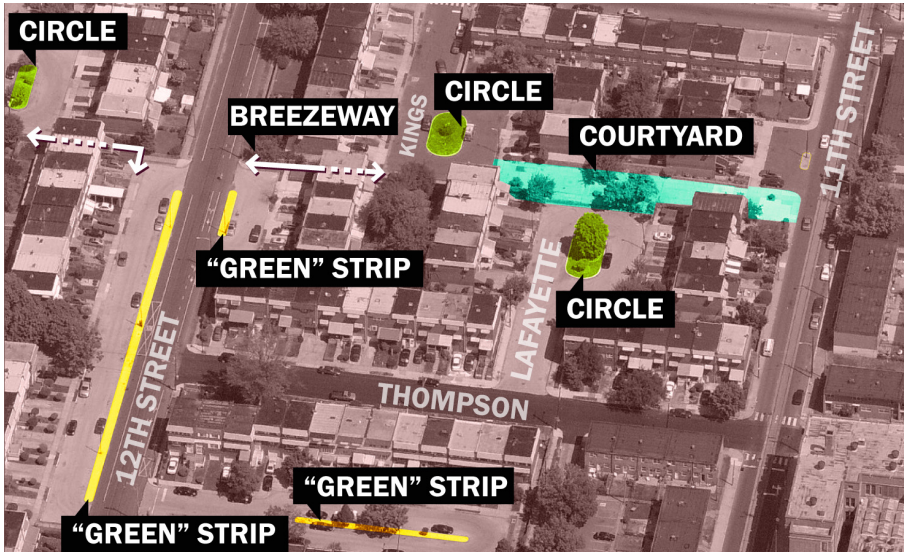

FIGURE 15: Public Right of Way Typologies

For decades, Yorktown residents have taken on the responsibilities of maintenanace of and minor repairs to neighborhood public spaces.

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FIGURE 16: Yorktown's Tree Canopy

9% of the study area has
TREE COVER

63% of yorktown's canopy contributes to the
PUBLIC REALM

> trees in front yards
> street trees
> trees in public spaces or visually accessible from the street

the city of philadelphia's
GREENWORKS
plan aims to increase the city's tree coverage city-wide to
30% by **2025**

TREE COVER

Yorktown's tree canopy covers only 9% of the study area, well below the City's tree cover percentage of 15.7%. 63% of the trees in the study area contribute to the public realm, meaning they are visible from Yorktown's streets and sidewalks, making them assets not only to individual homes, but to the neighborhood as a whole. Given the neighborhood's block structure and spacious street layouts, there is plenty of opportunity for planting of additional trees on Yorktown's sidewalks and shared spaces.

As an informal investigation of one of the many benefits of trees, the planning team measured sidewalk temperatures on a very hot summer day at three different locations in the neighborhood. A location under extensive tree cover at 10th and Thompson had a ground temperature that was more than 12 degrees cooler than the Kings and Lafayette courtyard just around the corner, which had a ground surface temperature of 104.7 degrees. Surprisingly, the Kings and Lafayette courtyard was even warmer than the Harrison School blacktop. Both of these areas suffer from a lack of tree shade, making them unpleasant socializing and play spaces on hot days.

Though there is a need for an expanded urban forest in the Yorktown, residents pointed out a number of issues with existing trees in the neighborhood, including root damage to sidewalks, the presence of "weed" trees (invasive voluntary growth trees), dead trees and trees in very poor health, tree branches interfering with overhead utility lines, and a general lack of maintenance of trees.

"We have trees that are 50 years old that are uprooting the ground. I have roots coming in my basement and breaking up the sidewalk!"

FIGURE 17: Measuring Ground Surface Temperature

36 COMMERCIAL SERVICES

The parcel land use survey included the gathering of data on the types of commercial services available in the study area. The mismatch between commercial services and resident demand appears to be the combined result of type and quality of commercial services. For instance, even though there are 11 restaurants in the study area, 46% of residents who participated in the community survey indicated that restaurants are a commercial service they would like to have closer or more accessible to Yorktown. In discussions with the community about this issue, it was discovered that most of the restaurants closest to Yorktown are fast food establishments, and community members expressed the desire for a more formal sit-down dining experience somewhere near the neighborhood. Other under-represented store types include: clothing stores, dry cleaners, florists, bakeries, hardware/gardening supply stores, and ice cream parlors.

FIGURE 18: Community Survey Results: Commercial Services

NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS AND PERCEPTION

The planning process asked residents to characterize the neighborhood's assets and shortcomings in a variety of ways in order to form a picture of what Yorktown's strengths can be built upon and which needs in the neighborhood overall should be addressed. As a part of the community survey, residents were asked to rate the conditions of a variety of aspects of the neighborhood overall. While residents rated these conditions generally "good" to "excellent," "fair" to "poor" ratings were given to on-street parking, courtyards/community spaces, sidewalks, cleanliness, and street lighting.

When asked to identify what neighborhood characteristics they liked best and which they held as their biggest concerns about Yorktown, residents identified the neighborhood's location and ease of access to the city and region, its community pride and spirit, and cleanliness and safety as the neighborhood's best assets. Identified as the biggest concerns in the neighborhood were safety and cleanliness, followed by community pride and spirit and parks and open space. It was notable that some aspects were identified both as an asset and a concern by the community—most notably, cleanliness and safety. It was speculated that this is likely a function of both where people live within Yorktown and a possible desire on the part of many residents for even better conditions no matter where they live—simply a function of varying levels of standards.

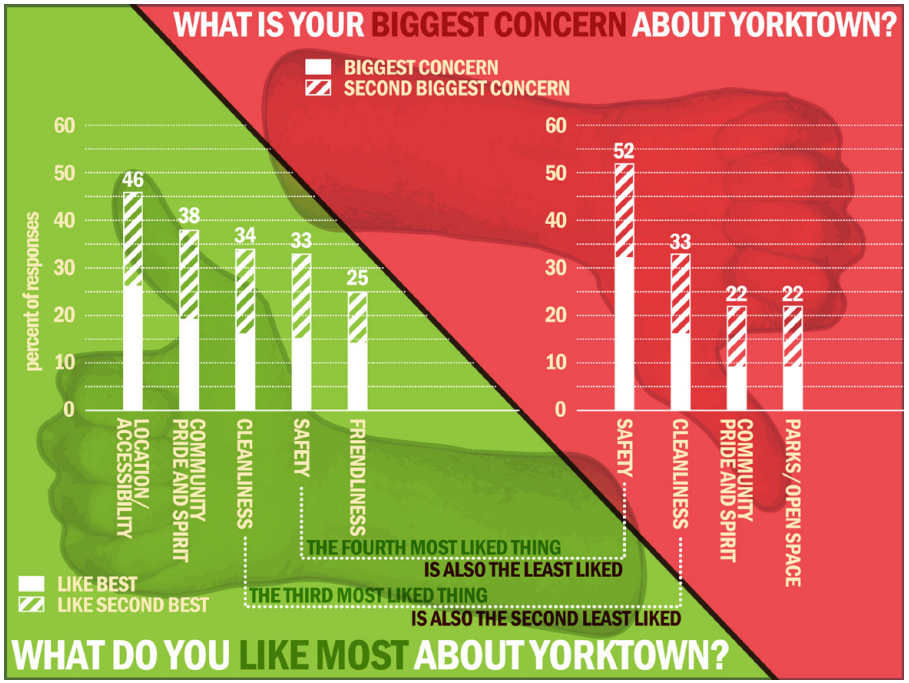

FIGURE 19: Community Survey Results: Likes & Concerns About Yorktown

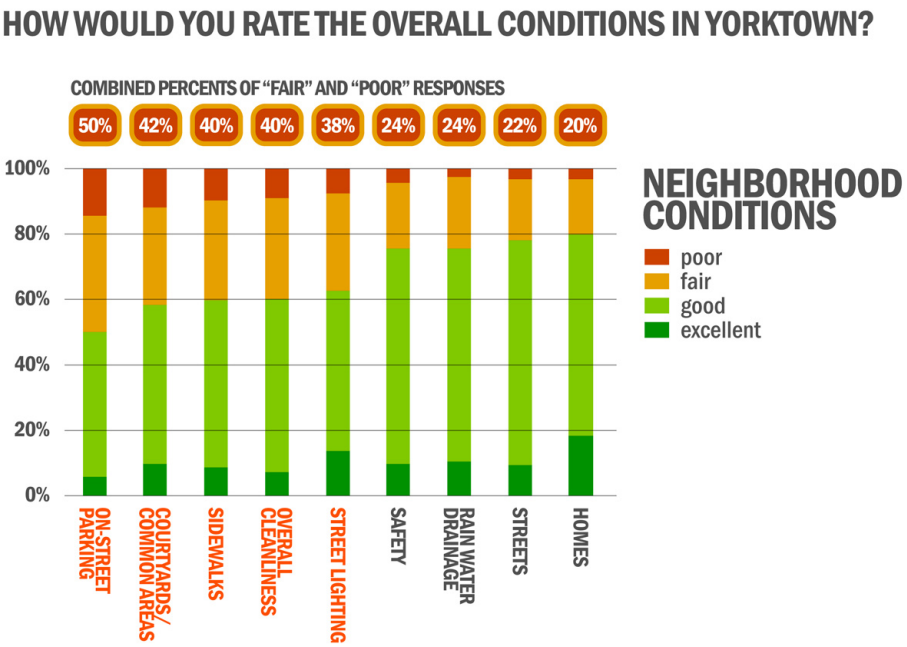

FIGURE 20: Community Survey Results: Neighborhood Conditions

HOMEOWNERSHIP

According to the Census, homeownership rates are slightly higher than the share of renters in Yorktown, which has been the trend since 1990. Higher homeownership rates were evident among those who participated in the community survey, at 68%. Among the homeowner surveyees, 40% have an outstanding mortgage or a home improvement loan obligation, 91% have homeowners insurance, and a very low proportion (4%, but still important) may be in jeopardy of losing their home due to tax or mortgage foreclosure.

Additionally, the following general observations about homeownership in Yorktown were drawn from the community survey results:

- owners place a high intrinsic and market value on their homes
- two-thirds of homeowners surveyed have been approached to sell their home or take-out an improvement loan
- owner-occupants tend not to own other properties in Yorktown. 25% would consider buying another home here as an investment property but are unsure how to begin the process
- seven of every 10 renters would like to become a homeowner, but many are unaware of how to begin such a process

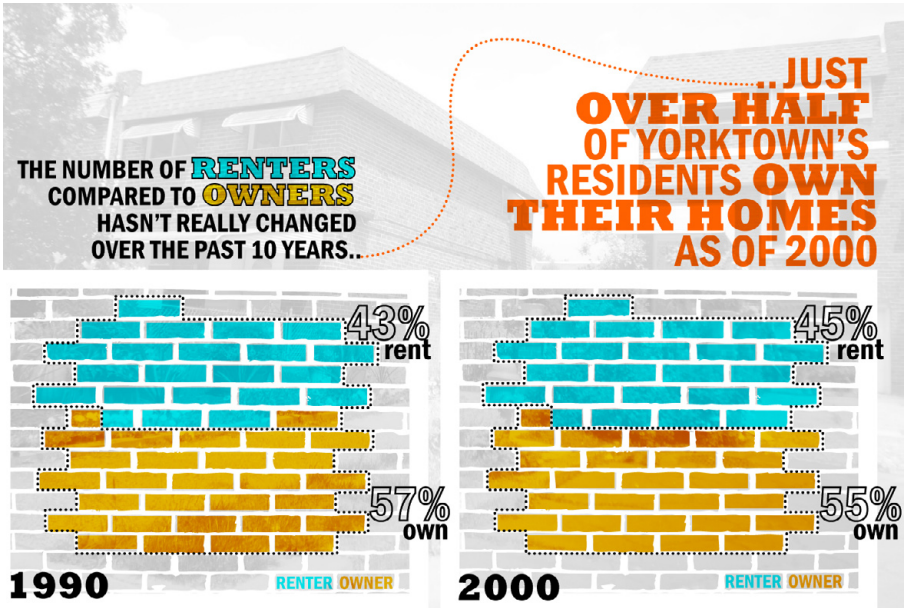

FIGURE 21: Census 2000: Home Ownership

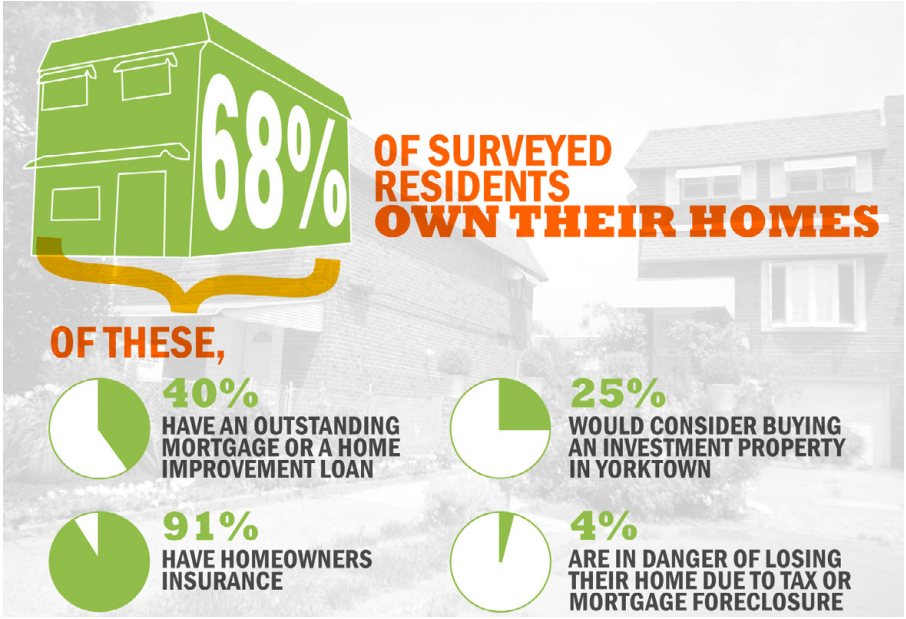

FIGURE 22: Community Survey Results: Home Ownership

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

According to the 2000 Census, 20% of homeowners and 42% of renters face a housing burden, which means they spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Overall, 29% of households in Yorktown face a housing burden. However, the percentage of Yorktown homeowners spending less than 10% of their income on housing costs, 28.2%, is fairly remarkable compared to other neighborhoods in Philadelphia. This could be partially a result of many of Yorktown's homeowners having paid off their mortgage loans, although 40% of those who participated in the community survey reported that they still have an outstanding mortgage or home improvement loan.

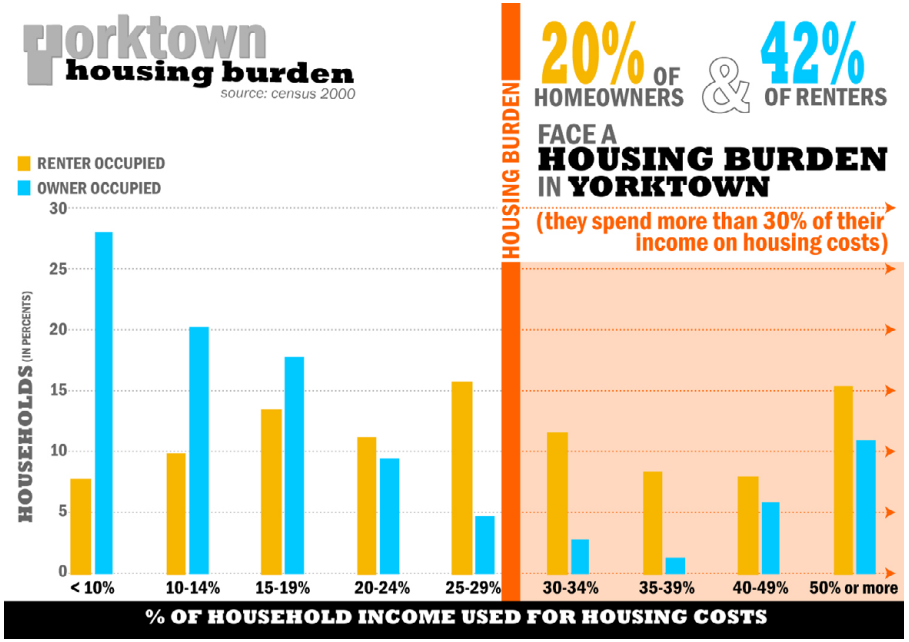

FIGURE 23: Census 2000: Housing Burden

RESIDENTIAL TYPOLOGIES

The Yorktown development featured four distinct housing types, each row of attached housing featuring a mix of two-story types or a mix of three-story types. The smaller Adams and Jefferson types are two stories with three or four bedrooms. These smaller homes feature car pads in lieu of ground level garages, which are features of the larger two housing types. The three-story Lafayette and Cornwalis housing types have three and four bedrooms, respectively, and are further distinguished from the two-story types by the inclusion of front porches leading to the entry doors. Yorktown houses range from 900 to 1600 square feet in size.

While each housing type has its own distinct look, all of the types draw from a common language of stylistic and architectural elements, including mansard roofs (most with asphalt roofing tiles), shutters, covered porches, and awnings (most constructed of corrugated plexiglass).

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FIGURE 24: Building Condition, 2010

BUILDING CONDITION

percentages based on parcel area

A - EXCELLENT [33%]

new construction /shows no signs of lack of maintenance or poor construction

B - GOOD [56%]

some signs of wear are visible / indicators of insufficient maintenance are present / defects are minor and merely cosmetic

C - FAIR [11%]

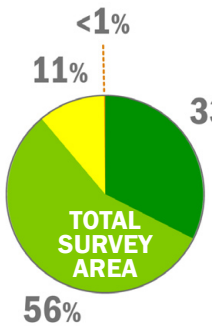
highly visible cosmetic defects as well as visible indicators of minor structural issues

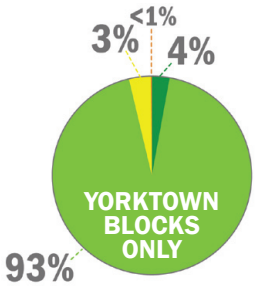
D - POOR [<1%]

significant structural issues may be present / building is danger of becoming hazardous

F - VERY POOR [0%]

structurally unsound, hazardous, and is not or should not be occupied





NEIGHBORHOOD BUILDING CONDITIONS

During the parcel survey, building conditions were observed and recorded throughout the neighborhood according to the following scale and condition indicators:

A: EXCELLENT
- New construction
- Building shows no signs of lack of maintenance or poor construction

B: GOOD
- Some signs of wear are visible
- Indicators of insufficient maintenance are present
- Defects are minor and merely cosmetic

C: FAIR
- Highly visible cosmetic defects
- Visible indicators of minor structural issues

D: POOR
- Significant structural issues are apparent
- Building's structural stability may be compromised
- Building is in danger of becoming hazardous

F: VERY POOR
- Building is structurally unsound and hazardous
- Building should not be occupied
- Rehabilitation is unlikely and building should be torn down

As an inherent limitation of conducting a "windshield survey" (approximating building conditions through a car windshield) without the opportunity to closely inspect all sides of the building or the building's interior, the resulting data is intended as an approximation of general building conditions in the neighborhood. Occasionally, a building's exterior appearance belies other problems that may be present on the interior or other problems not immediately apparent on the outside of a building. For instance, the condition of a home on the northwest corner of 12th Street and Jefferson was rated "Good" at the time of the parcel survey. Weeks later, the mansard roof was found to have partially collapsed due to deterioration that was happening away from view at street level. The lesson learned is that although many of Yorktown's houses appear to be in solid shape—93% were rated "Good" in the building condition survey—they are now over fifty years old and some issues are bound to emerge.

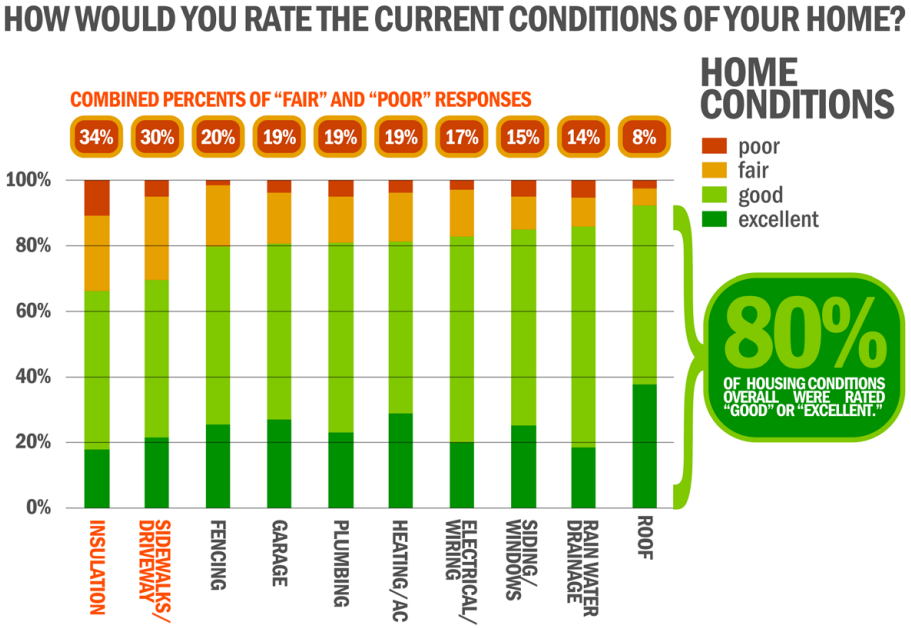


FIGURE 25: Community Survey Results: Home Conditions

It was learned during the planning process that some electrical problems had emerged in Yorktown houses. Almost one-third (31%) of surveyed home owners had not had their electrical systems upgraded and another 15% were not sure if such an upgrade had been done in their home. As all of these homes were built at the same time and using the same construction methods, it is likely that many of these homes will have electrical issues if preventative measures are not taken.

In order to form a more comprehensive understanding of the actual conditions of Yorktown homes, the community survey asked residents to rate the conditions of various elements of their homes. Overall, 80% of the housing conditions were rated "Good" or "Excellent" by residents, but two items stood out as housing elements that were rated "Fair" or "Poor" more than others: housing insulation and sidewalks/driveways.

Input from Yorktown residents determined the following high-priority housing needs with respect to preventive maintenance and upgrades:

ENERGY CONSERVATION

- insulation
- windows
- heating, ventilation, air conditioning

INTERIOR

- basic systems
- rewiring from aluminum to copper and to upgrade amperage to 100
- plumbing
- chimney cleaning

EXTERIOR/YARDS

- sidewalks and driveways
- porches and fencing
- driveways and garages
- awnings, roofs and gutters
- siding/tuck-pointing brickwork
- tree trimming and removal of dead, diseased and "dirty/weed" trees
- siding and trim painting
- electrical power lines to handle higher amperage into homes

> **"These houses are solid. But in the last two years, I've had to call the repair people a couple of times."**

NOT EVERYONE IS ON THE SAME PAGE WHEN IT COMES TO YARD MAINTENANCE...

> **"Overgrown trees and undermaintained properties are a big problem. My neighbor's yard is like a forest!"**

RESIDENTIAL YARD CONDITIONS

Many of Yorktown's residents take great pride in yard maintenance. Lush gardens and meticulously maintained planters dot the neighborhood's streets, adding great value to the neighborhood character and image. However, some properties are not so well maintained, and the trend of Yorktown houses being bought by absentee landlords and used for income-producing rental properties has been accompanied by some undesirable yard maintenance practices, including the paving over of entire front yard areas to reduce yard maintenance loads on landlords and to accommodate additional parking for renters. Of additional particular concern with respect to the condition of residential yards in Yorktown is the degraded condition of the neighborhood's many low brick retaining walls and brick fences. Many of these non-structural brick walls have suffered from a lack of maintenance over the years and some have fallen over, while others lean precariously, constituting a threat to public safety.

VACANCY

Given the neighborhood's history prior to Yorktown's construction and the existing conditions of areas just outside of Yorktown, the fact that the study area's vacancy rate is so low is quite remarkable. The occupancy rate of the buildings in the study area is estimated at 90%. 86% of the vacancy rate is attributable to two institutional vacancies: the former William Penn High School at Master and Broad, and an empty Temple building at Jefferson and Broad. The lack of vacant land is especially noteworthy, given the prevalence of vacant lots in other areas of North Philadelphia, including areas just across the 9th Street elevated rail line. It should be noted that the vacant lot at Oxford and Broad is now a construction site, slated for a new Temple student housing high rise building.

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FIGURE 26: Vacancy, 2010

the YORKTOWN study area is 90% OCCUPIED

86% of the VACANCY is attributable to underutilized INSTITUTIONAL spaces

VACANCY

- vacant building
- vacant commercial space
- vacant lot
- stabilized vacant lot

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FIGURE 27: Access to Open Space & Recreational Facilities

ALL YORKTOWN RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN A 10 MINUTE WALK OF A PARK!

IN FACT, 86%

of YORKTOWN is within a 10-MINUTE WALK OF 3 GREEN OPEN SPACES

GREENWORKS Philadelphia calls for 100 percent of residents to live within a 10-minute walk of an open space by 2025.

BUT.. many of the park ammenities aren't well suited to YORKTOWN'S community members

E. PARKS AND PLAY SPACES

ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

There are three recreational facilities in the immediate area of Yorktown: the Cecil B. Moore Sports Fields, on Cecil B. Moore between 10th and 11th; the Dendy Recreation Center (formerly known as Schwartz Playground), on 10th Street between Oxford and Jefferson; and the William Penn High School Sports Fields, on the south side of the William Penn High School grounds, on Girard between 13th and Watts. The new Althea Gibson Community Education and Tennis Center provides another recreational option on Girard between 10th and 11th. With so many park spaces nearby, 86% of the study area lies within a 10-minute walk of three open spaces. While the quantity and proximity to parks and play spaces is excellent, the quality of these spaces is less than desirable in some areas. Furthermore, while these recreational facilities provide the opportunity for participating in organized sports and active recreation, the neighborhood is lacking in passive park spaces designed for casual recreating and socializing. In other words, the park spaces that are convenient to Yorktown do not necessarily fit the needs of Yorktown's residents particularly well.

STREET NETWORK

- major two-way street
- minor two-way street
- one-way street (west and north)
- one-way street (east and south)
- local access street
- signalized intersection
- stop sign

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FIGURE 28: Yorktown Street Network

F. GETTING AROUND IN YORKTOWN

STREET NETWORK

The Yorktown area is bounded by two of Philadelphia's most prominent and well-traveled surface streets, Broad Street and Girard Avenue, which both accommodate bi-directional traffic. Aside from the bi-directional Cecil B. Moore to the north of the neighborhood, nearly all of the other streets in the study area are one-way streets that alternate direction from one street to the next. In addition to this grid of one-way streets, the neighborhood's distinct pattern of cul-de-sacs and pull-ins provide access to and parking for Yorktown homes. In the interior of the Yorktown blocks, traffic is regulated by stop signs, but there are traffic signals at several intersections at the edges and outside of Yorktown's boundaries.

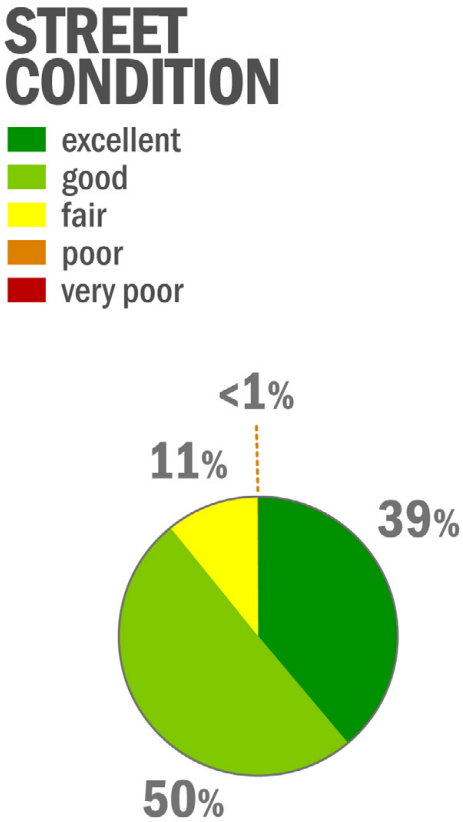

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FIGURE 29: Yorktown Street Condition

STREET CONDITION

A comprehensive analysis of street conditions was conducted by the planning team at the time of the parcel survey. Each street was given a condition rating on a scale ranging from “Excellent” to “Very Poor,” with the exception of Girard Avenue, which was given separate condition ratings for the center of the street as distinct from the outer travel lanes, given the degree of street condition degradation caused by the trolley tracks in the center of the street. Overall, 50% of the study area streets were determined to be in “Good” condition. The majority of streets in “Fair” condition are constituted by pull-ins along 13th Street, segments of 11th Street south of Jefferson, and the center trolley track area of Girard Avenue. It is notable that some degree of street degradation on 11th Street is attributable to potholes and asphalt damage along the (unused) trolley tracks on that street.

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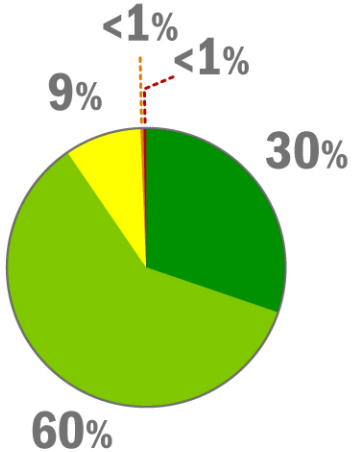
FIGURE 30: Sidewalk Condition

40% of surveyed residents rated Yorktown's sidewalks "FAIR" or "POOR"

SIDEWALK CONDITION

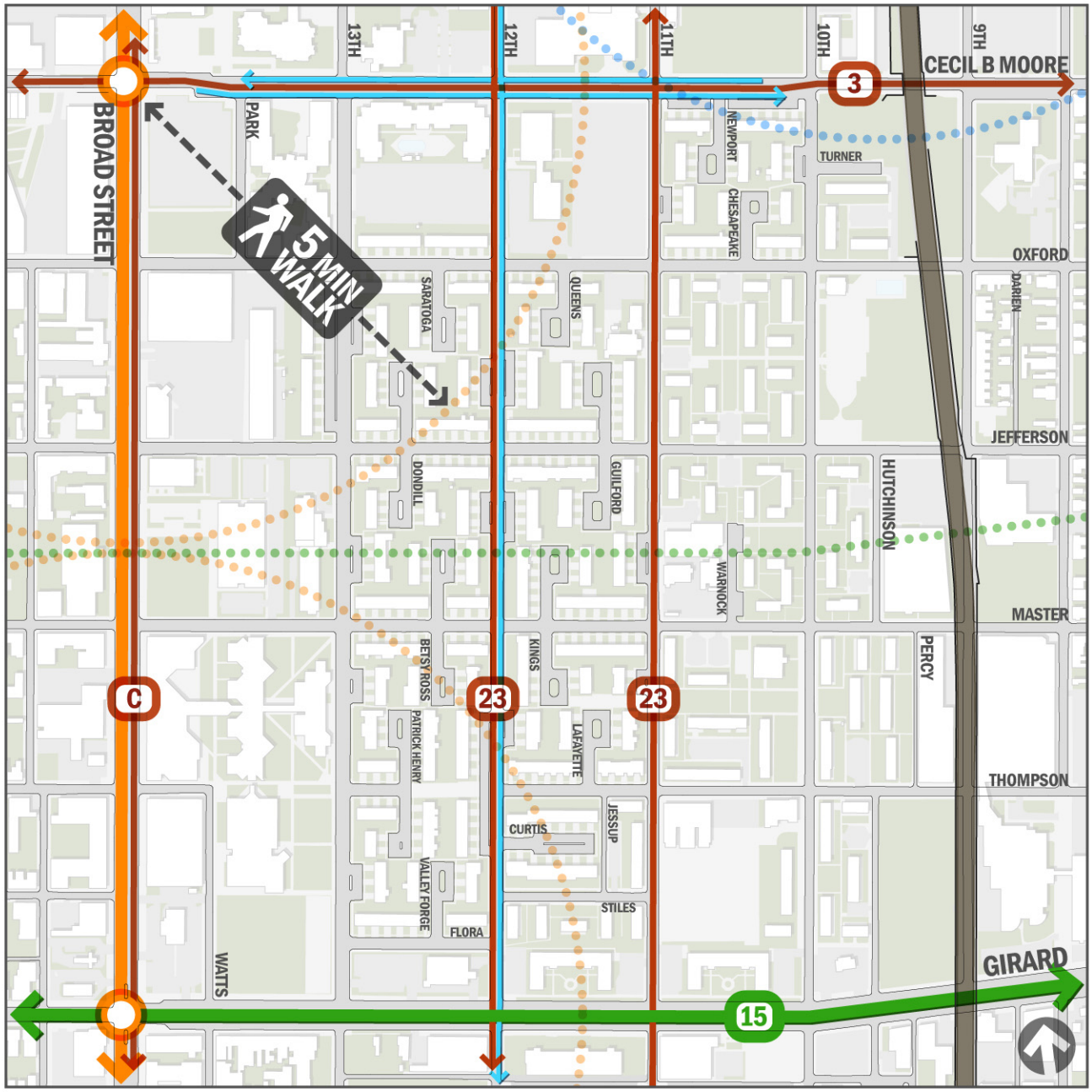
- excellent
- good
- fair
- poor
- very poor



SIDEWALK CONDITION

Pedestrian-friendliness and sidewalk accessibility is especially important in Yorktown as walking was identified as the second most common primary means of transit by residents who participated in the community survey. Major walking trips included accessing groceries, shopping, and going to church. However, ratings of “fair” or “poor” accounted for 40% of the responses of participants in the community survey when asked about the condition of Yorktown’s sidewalks. In addition to poor sidewalk conditions in some areas, the neighborhood has a few additional barriers to walkability and accessibility, including discontinuous sidewalks and missing curb ramps at the “green” strips, narrow sidewalks not easily traveled upon by wheelchair users, and further narrowing of already-narrow sidewalks by the intrusion of utility poles and other street infrastructure into the pedestrian zone.

> “it’s so convenient, I can get anywere without driving...”



ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

- broad street line subway
- ¼ mile radius from subway
- ¼ mile radius from temple regional rail station
- girard avenue trolley (route 15)
- ¼ mile radius from trolley
- bus routes
- bike lanes

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FIGURE 31: Alternative Transportation

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

Yorktown is well-connected to a multitude of public transportation options. Two stops on the Broad Street subway line are within close walking distance of the neighborhood, while the Girard Avenue Route 15 Trolley provides additional rail connections in the neighborhood. The well-utilized Route 23 bus route on 11th and 12th Streets is supplemented by bus routes on Broad Street and Cecil B. Moore. The community survey revealed that after personal car use and walking, riding the bus is the third most common primary means of transportation, and is most commonly used to make health and medical-related trips and to access shopping destinations.

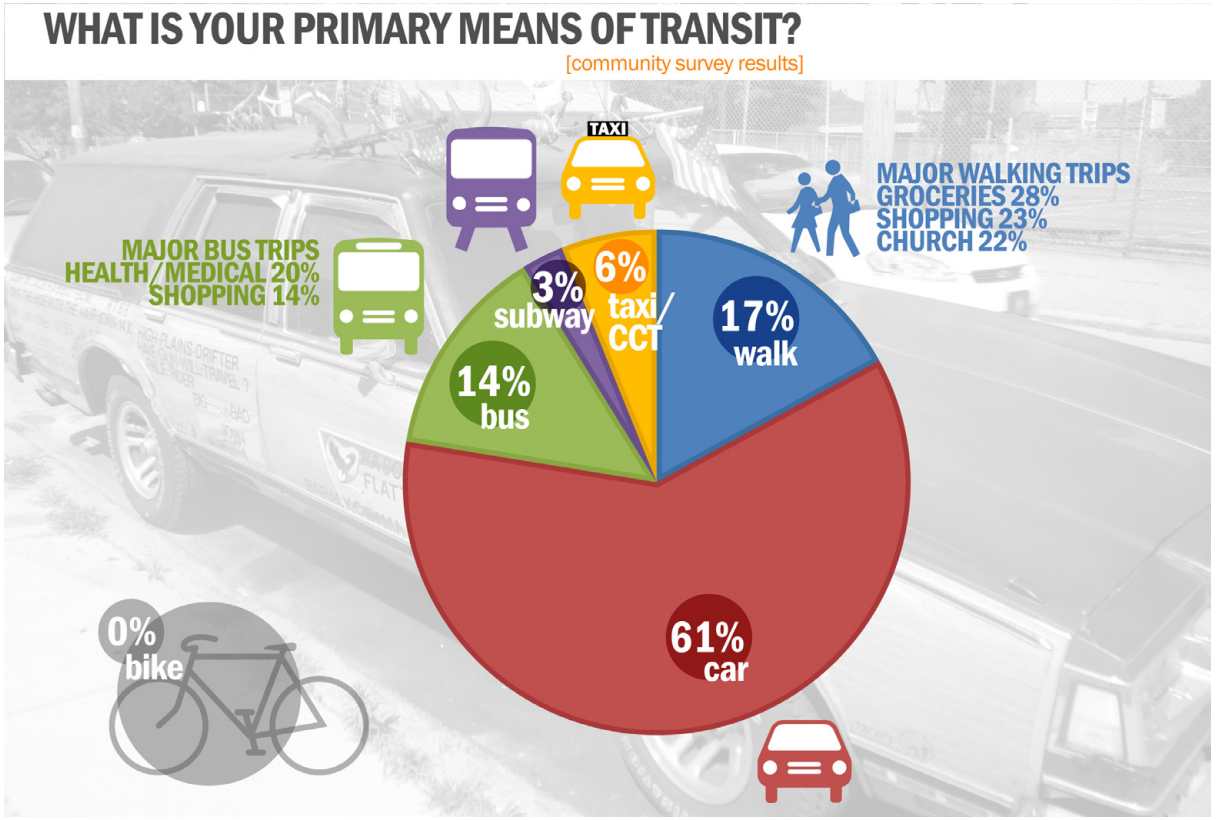


FIGURE 32: Community Survey Results: Alternative Transportation

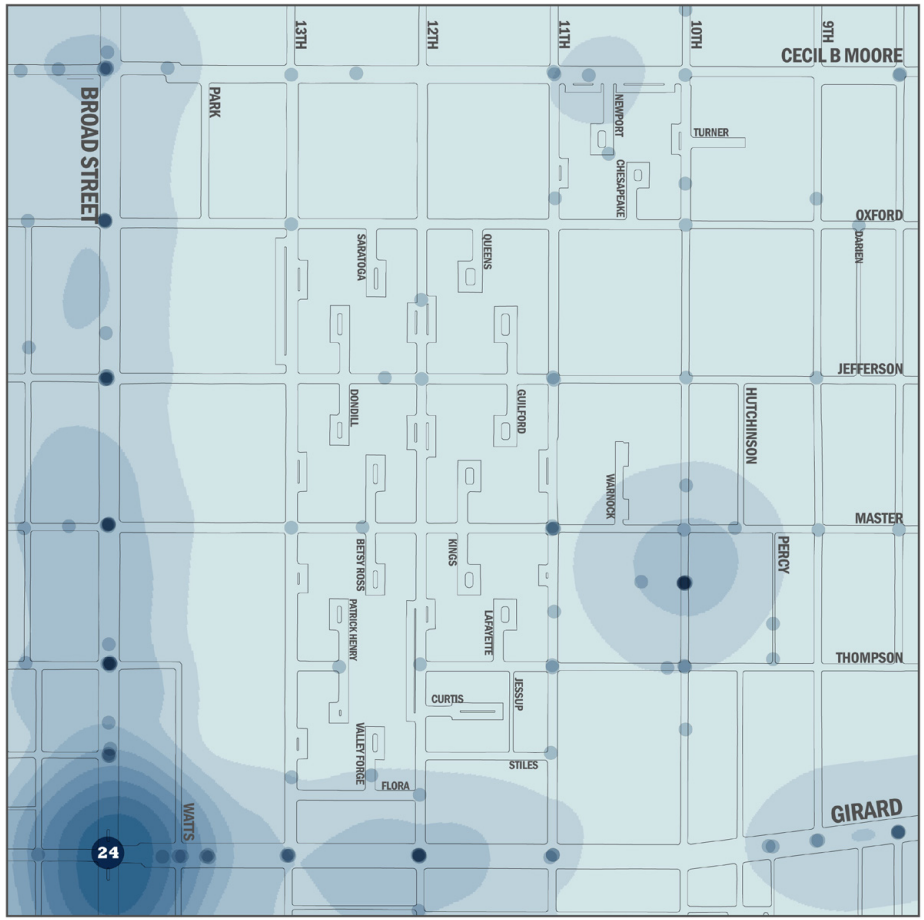


FIGURE 33: Serious Crime Against Persons, 2008

SERIOUS CRIME AGAINST PERSONS 2008

incident intensity

low high

single incident

15 number of incidents over 10

CRIME BY TYPE

ROBBERY 49%

ASSAULT 43%

RAPE 7%

HOMICIDE 1%

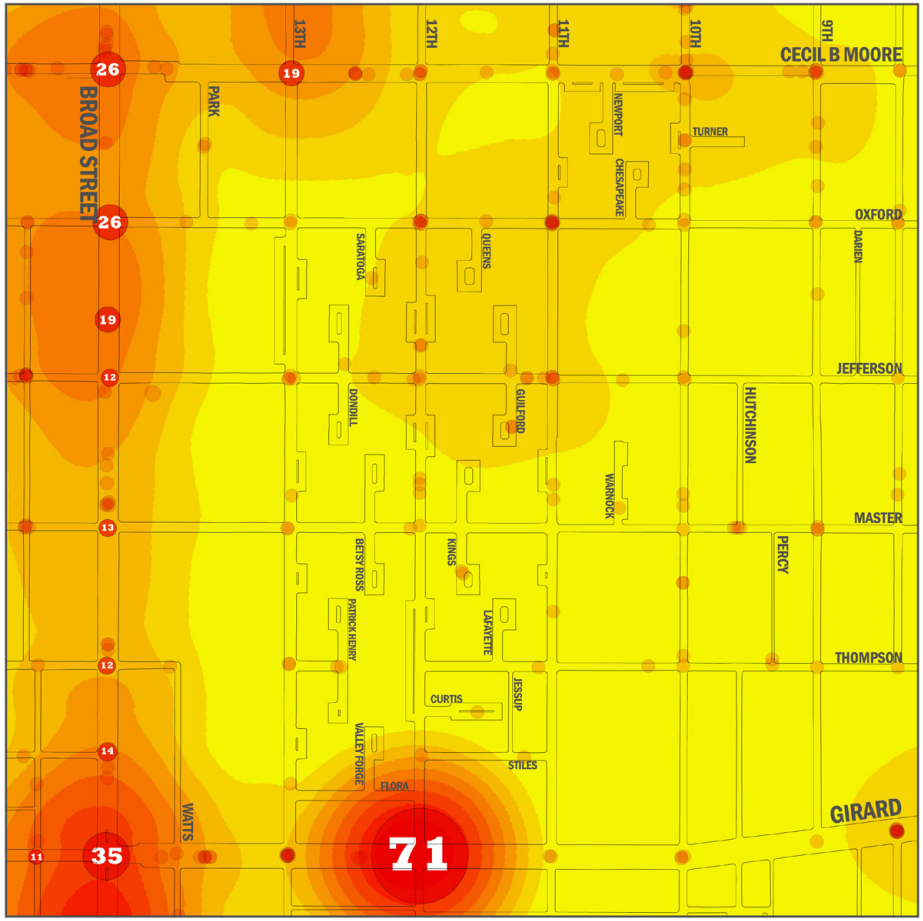


FIGURE 34: Serious Crime Against Property, 2008

SERIOUS CRIME AGAINST PROPERTY 2008

incident intensity

low high

single incident

19 number of incidents over 10

CRIME BY TYPE

THEFT 85%

AUTO THEFT 10%

BURGLARY 5%

G. CRIME AND THE PERCEPTION OF SAFETY

Residents who participated in the community survey identified safety as the biggest concern in the neighborhood, with 52% of the surveyees identifying it as either their biggest concern or second biggest concern.

CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

A trend line analysis of serious crimes against persons and against properties in the study area census block groups reveals that the rate of crime incidents against properties has generally decreased between 1998 and 2006, the most prevalent incidents being theft, auto theft, and burglary. Over the eight-year period, 78% of all serious crimes were against property, while 22% were against persons. Serious crimes against persons remained more or less constant over the time period, with the major crimes against persons being robberies and aggravated assault.

Crime maps generated from the data suggest that there are certain points in the Yorktown area that tend to attract more criminal incidents than others. In 2008, serious crimes against persons tended to occur much more frequently at the corner of Girard Avenue and Broad Street, and generally along Girard Avenue and Broad Street. A secondary focus point of these crimes is found on 10th Street between Master and Thompson. The map of serious crimes against property in 2008 also reveals a criminal activity hotspot at Broad and Girard, but the most prominent concentration of these incidents is located at 12th and Girard. Incident data suggests that many of these crimes are happening at the Rite Aid store at that intersection.

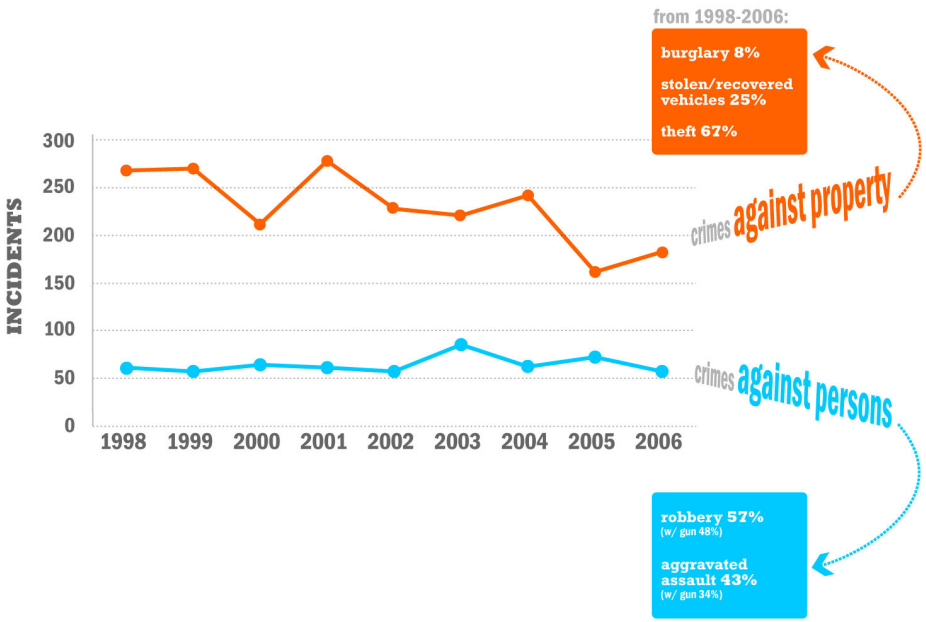


FIGURE 35: Serious Crime Trends: Yorktown

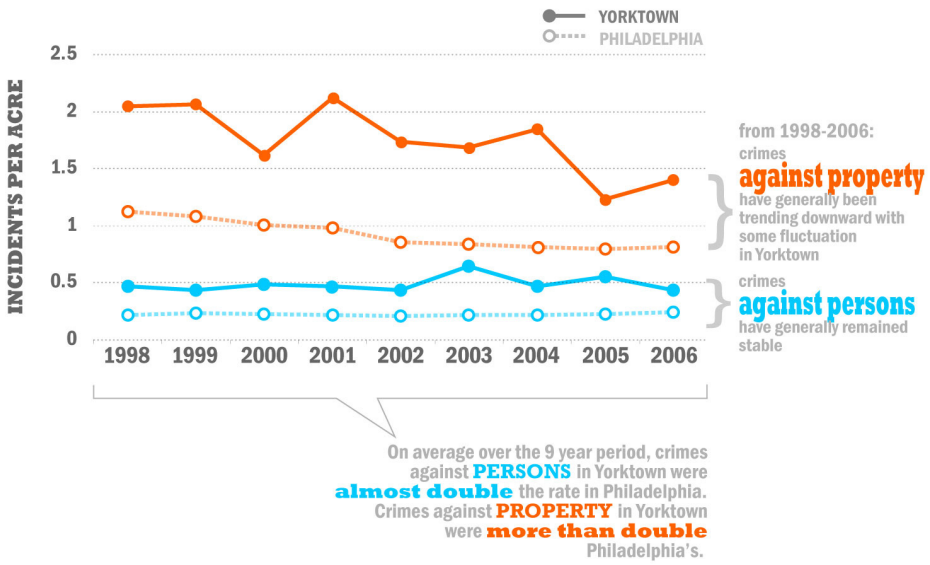


FIGURE 36: Serious Crime Trends: Yorktown vs. Philadelphia

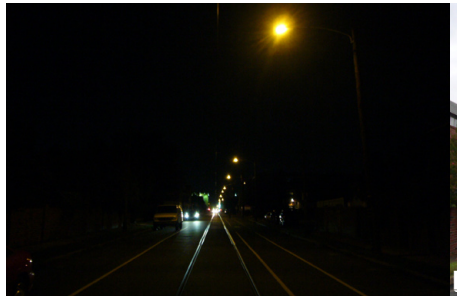
NIGHTTIME VISIBILITY

With the majority of the night lighting being supplied by the brownish haze emitted from cobra-head style street lamps, night visibility in the majority of the study area is poor. The neighborhood stands in stark (or "dark") contrast to the Temple campus, which glows like a beacon of light at the neighborhood's edge, further emphasizing the lack of proper street lighting in Yorktown. A survey of Yorktown's nightscape revealed several locations in the neighborhood that are particularly not well-lit, making them feel less safe after dark:

- Though most of Yorktown's houses have post lamps in front of them at the sidewalk's edge, many of them were observed to be broken, not turned on, or otherwise not functioning, resulting in extremely dark conditions in many of the neighborhood's cul-de-sacs.
- The courtyards are not lit at all, and are completely dark at night.
- The breezeways are especially dark, given that their narrow width blocks out any ambient light from adjacent areas
- The block layout in Yorktown sometimes results in house orientation away from the north-south numbered streets. In some cases, both sides of a street are fronted by back yards or rear fences. These stretches of streets are particularly dark, as they are less likely to have a post lamp or other pedestrian-scale lighting to supplement the slight glow from the overhead street lamps.
- Parks spaces in the Yorktown area are quite dark, especially Dendy Recreation Center

STREET FRONTAGE

Unlike the typical rowhouse block layout typical of many Philadelphia neighborhoods, which very rarely results in the back of a house facing the street, Yorktown's block layout orients many houses towards the block-interior cul-de-sacs, leaving the back of the house facing the street. This results in fewer "eyes on the street," limiting opportunities for natural surveillance of the neighborhood in some cases. Other forms of "inactive frontage"—fences, vacant buildings, buildings that are set significantly back from the street, sides of buildings with no entrances or ground floor active uses—are found throughout the neighborhood, as shown in Figure 37. In some cases, both sides of a street are faced with inactive frontage, and therefore feel less monitored, and, to some, less safe. The street segments in Yorktown that have inactive frontage on both sides of the street are shown in Figure 38. In some of these cases, the general level of activity on the street (depending on the time of day) may make up for some part of the lack of natural surveillance provided by adjacent buildings, as in the case of Cecil B Moore, Girard Avenue, and Broad Street. However, less active neighborhood streets with long stretches of inactive frontage, such as 12th Street and 13th Street, tend to feel unmonitored and "behind everything," which has the potential to have negative impacts on the pedestrian experience, especially with respect to the perception of safety.



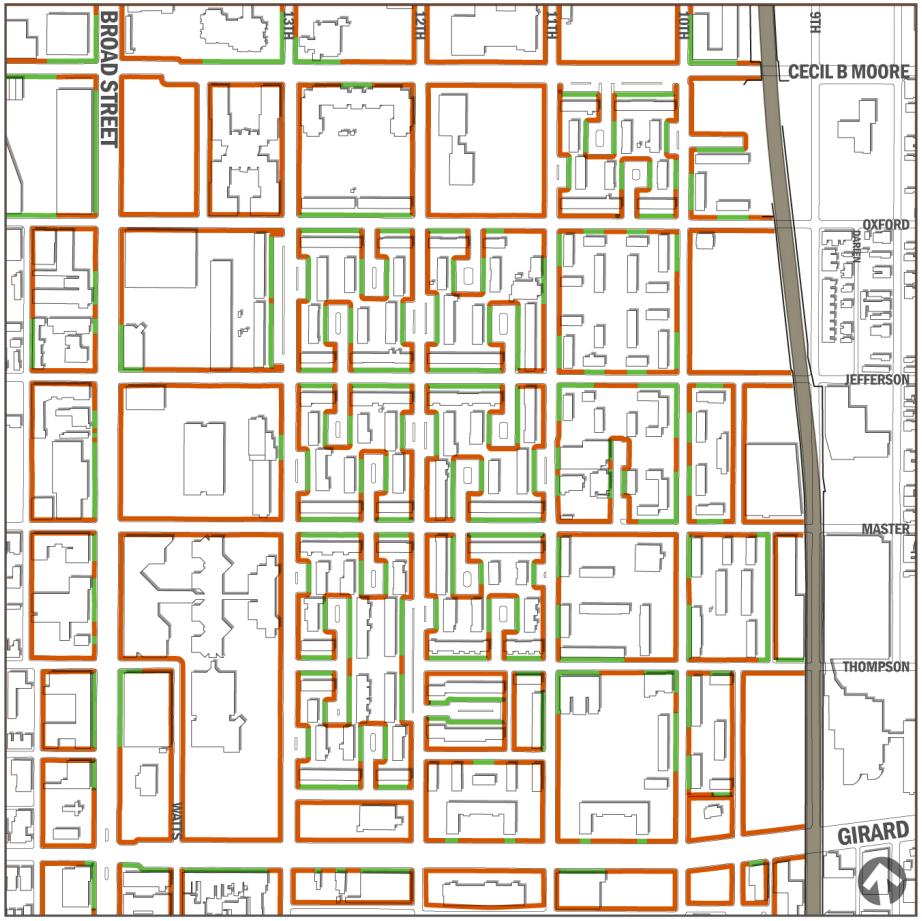


FIGURE 37: Frontage Activity

FIGURE 38: Inactive Street Frontage on Both Sides

FRONTAGE ACTIVITY

- active frontage
  fronts of buildings at street edge; active ground floor uses with entry facing the street
- inactive frontage
  sides of buildings; buildings set back from street edge; vacant buildings; buildings with no active ground floor use; buildings with no views of the street; fences; parking or vacant lots

INACTIVE STREET FRONTAGE

- inactive street frontage
  street segments with inactive frontage on both sides of the street

H. MEETING AND STAKEHOLDER BASED PROFILE OF YORKTOWN

Through the many meetings, large and small, that took place during the planning process, the direct engagement of residents, and at special events such as Yorktown Day on August 14th, other perspectives emerged about the status, needs and future of Yorktown. Many reinforced what had been conveyed or reflected in the data or the survey results, and are offered below.

COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

- Strong community development and neighborhood-serving institutions in Yorktown
  - Bright Hope Baptist Church
  - Columbia North YMCA
  - OIC of Philadelphia
  - Progress Plaza
  - Yorktown Community Development Corporation
  - Yorktown Community Organization
  - Yorktown Arms Residents Council
  - William Penn Coalition

- Closer coordination needed between these institutions to:
  - ensure resident interests are served
  - advocate as one voice for resources to help sustain Yorktown

STRENGTHS AND ASSETS

- YCDC executive director's vision, energy, and passion for Yorktown YCDC capacity to:
  - carry out community development work
  - passion for the work
  - resources to engage technical support to fill gaps

- Yorktown Arms I and II, examples of YCDC's capacity to develop and manage a major real estate portfolio enabling seniors to "age-in-place" by transitioning to quality, affordable rental housing within the community

CHALLENGES AND NEEDS

- Uneven maintenance/upkeep of some homes and common areas

- Better self-enforcement of covenants that govern residents' roles in maintenance of common spaces (courtyards and circles)

- Proliferation of illegal multi-family/student rental units

- Underutilized/less effective block captain system for facilitating access to news/information and resident interactions

- Unfulfilled community agreements/commitments by Temple University

- Identification of resources – particularly financial – that are available to Yorktown in general and to Yorktown residents whose incomes may preclude them from government-funded programs that tend to target low- to moderate-income households compared to a neighborhood whose incomes tend to exceed those income levels.