

Chapter XX: The Community Survey¹

XX.1 Summary

The Highland Park Community Plan has distributed and evaluated a survey of residents of Highland Park and portions of nearby neighborhoods in order to better understand the characteristics and attitudes of those who might participate in or be affected by the community planning process. Analysis of responses from individuals chosen at random from the study area indicates that these residents are not completely representative of Highland Park or surrounding communities. We find that while respondents generally like their community, profess strong ties with their neighbors, support political action and appear tolerant of opposing political views, respondents appear to demonstrate a significant level of disengagement from local institutions. We find that, compared to respondents who have resided in and around Highland Park for seven or more years, more recent movers appear to be younger and more highly educated but no more predisposed to move from the neighborhood. Finally, we propose that a key to retaining current residents is efforts to make them feel “at home” and to provide them with opportunities to connect with their neighbors and to improve their neighborhoods.

These findings suggest that Highland Park may have some characteristics of a “bedroom community”, in which residents, who like their community overall, may nevertheless have strong institutional and social ties outside the community. Also, efforts to address the expressed concerns with Highland Park and surrounding areas must focus on efforts to enable residents to make direct, tangible investments in neighborhood institutions, and for community organizations to help residents feel at home and part of a meaningful community-building process.

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XX.2 Introduction

The primary goal of the Highland Park Community Plan is to provide a ‘roadmap’ for the future consisting of a vision, goals, strategies and implementation tasks. The context for this ‘roadmap’ is knowledge about the current state of the community. This community ‘snapshot’ is based on a variety of qualitative and quantitative data. In this chapter, we describe the process and results of a community survey that provides important information about Highland Park and portions of surrounding communities: who we are, where we shop, where we worship, where our children are educated, our hopes and fears for the community, and our feelings about engagement with our neighbors to improve our community.

This survey was designed by the members of the HPCP Planning Team in collaboration with Brean Associates and researchers from Carnegie Mellon University’s Community Connections program, an initiative to pursue Internet-enabled democratic discourse at the local level, housed at the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management. The full text of the survey is available in the Appendix to this discussion document.

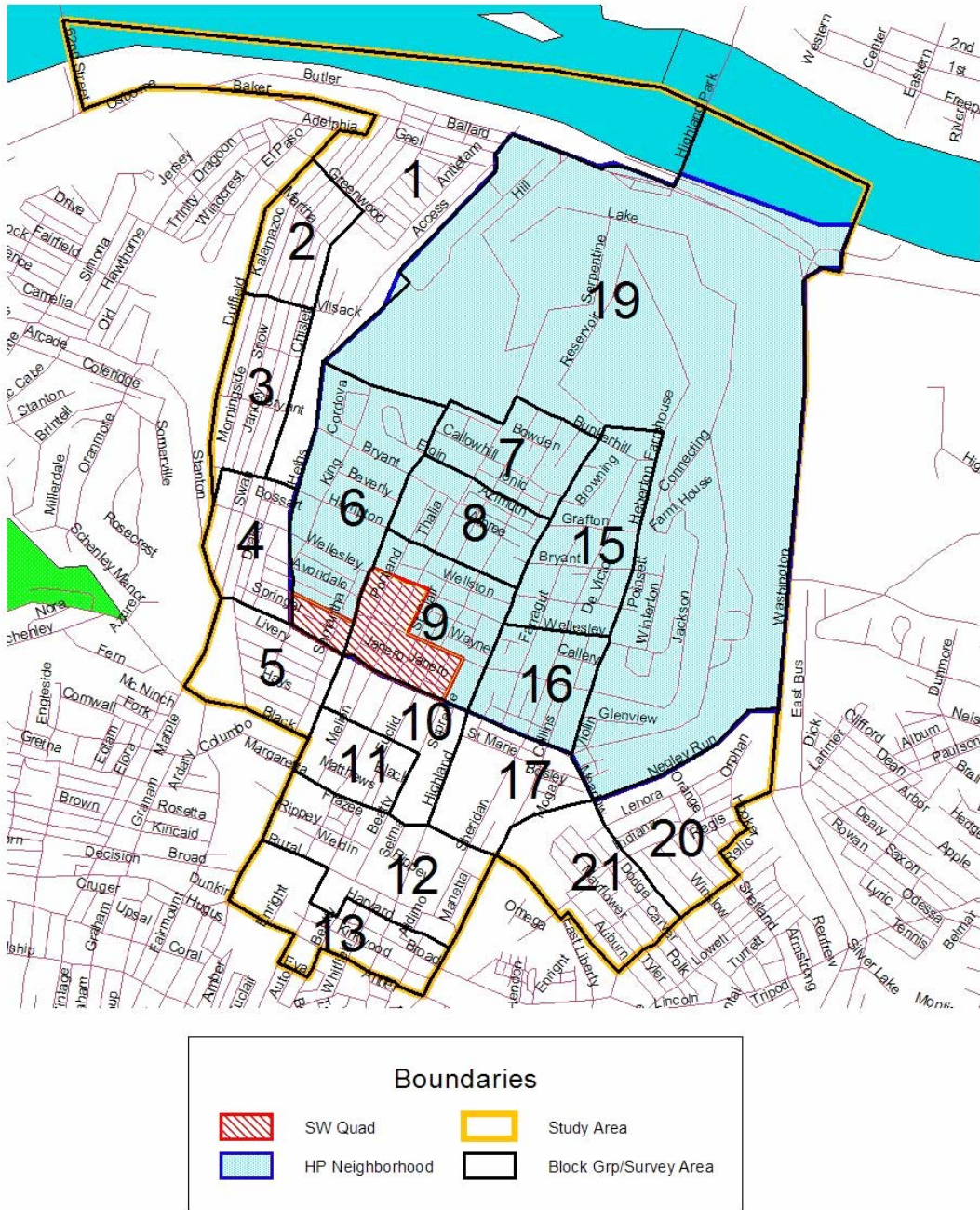
The HPCP Planning Team decided to create a research-quality community survey in order to answer with confidence, inquiries regarding community attitudes, preferences, actions, and so on from funding agencies, city government entities, and other community development oriented organizations. In addition, the HPCP Planning Team wanted to collect data that would enable questions that are key to Highland Park’s identify and vitality to be answered with confidence, such as: “Who is moving to Highland Park and why?” “What are the most important indicators of reduced confidence in the future of our community?” and “Do attitudes about Highland Park differ in some systematic way across respondents as a function of race, class,

geography or some other factor?” By gaining insight into motivations and trends in attitudes across the community, we provide additional tools for community planning and development.

The survey was intended to generate results that are reliable and reflective of the diversity of Highland Park and surrounding communities. Thus, survey results are grouped in two categories, which we will refer to as “random” and “non-random” samples. The random sample results are based on respondents chosen via stratified sampling using Claritas’ Marketshare and New Movers files to be representative of the demographic characteristics of Highland Park and portions of Morningside, East Liberty and Larimer. Households in the random sample received a paper copy of the survey in the mail along with a prepaid mailer for return to the Community Connections office. These households could also fill out the survey on-line by providing a unique identifier. Individuals in the non-random sample took the survey on their own volition, either by filling out paper copies of the survey available at HPCP meetings or local retailers, or filling out the survey on-line.

To generate “random” respondents, we sent paper copies of the survey to residents of the following neighborhoods: Highland Park (regions 6 – 9, 15, 16 and 19); portions of Morningside (Chislett St. and east in region 1, and region 4); portions of East Liberty (regions 5, 10, 11, 17) and portions of Larimer (regions 20 and 21). For ease of analysis, we identified additional regions of surrounding communities to allow respondents increased flexibility in identifying their “home” neighborhoods: Morningside (regions 1 – 4); East Liberty (regions 12 and 13). Details are contained in Figure 1, below.

Revised Community Connections Boundaries (3/2/03)



[Figure 1: Target Region for Highland Park Community Plan Survey]

While we are interested in all responses to the community survey, both random and non-random, emphasis in this chapter will be given to results from the random sample. Although respondents in this set are not as representative of the broader community as we would wish, we can state with some confidence the extent of the disparity, and assert that the results we do present are representative some portion of the service area for the Community Plan.

An innovative component of the Community Plan survey is its reliance on information technology to gather data and to market the planning process. By making the survey available on the World Wide Web via the HPCP website www.highlandparkcommunity.com, respondents were able to complete the survey at their own pace, and in a variety of locations. For example, the Community Plan installed an Internet-enabled PC at a local coffee shop and was thus able to allow users to combine survey data entry with other tasks. In addition, the presence of the public PC allowed the wider community to learn more about Highland Park and a variety of public information resources, in addition to the Community Plan. However, many community residents were not able to take advantage of this public information technology resource, either because they did not patronize the coffee shop regularly, or because they did not have ready access to the Internet. We believe that this example of the “digital divide” provides one explanation as to why survey respondents--both “random” and “non-random” groups—were unrepresentative of the community as a whole.

The rest of this chapter is organized as follows: Section XX.3 describes the policy goals that the survey results are intended to support. Section XX.4 describes the design of the survey. Section XX.5 describes survey administration: distribution, collection, reducing the size of the random sample, and so on. Section XX.6 presents tabulations of survey results and descriptive

statistics, with some preliminary policy insights. Section XX.7 contains more detailed hypothesis testing and policy recommendations. Section XX.8 summarizes and identifies next steps.

XX.3 Survey Goals

The Highland Park Community Plan survey had the following specific goals:

- To create an overall portrait of Highland Park;
- To gather data to be utilized in the focus groups, and
- To encourage and facilitate civic engagement

The survey process has resulted in significant progress on all three of these measures and has generated a large and detailed dataset that will assist Highland Park in this and further planning initiatives.

The benefit of creating an overall portrait allows residents and community planners to understand who makes up the community and to identify any trends in the community's opinions. For example if a significant portion of the sample has brought up the concern that shopping in Highland Park is difficult perhaps planners can then use this information to guide and direct merchants for the good of the community. Administration of the survey has greatly facilitated data collection via focus groups; preliminary analysis of survey data in November 2002 allowed Brean Associates to identify specific issues that are known to be of greatest interest to the community, and to devise solutions and implementation strategies that have the greatest likelihood of success. Finally, administration of the survey has facilitated civic engagement; formal and informal feedback to the survey has convinced us that community members have taken the survey seriously and have built high expectations for local institutions to devise community improvement strategies that reflect local strengths and preferences. Even the fact that survey respondents have not been as representative of the community's diversity as we

would like has allowed the HPCP Planning Team to make specific recommendations regarding outreach to underrepresented groups.

XX.4 Survey Design

The survey is composed of the following sections (see the Appendix to this discussion document for a complete copy of the survey):

- Community Overview
- Amenities
- Demographics
- Community Ties (Civic Engagement)
- Community Concerns (Political Attitudes)

The Community Overview section consists of questions intended to identify respondents' core characteristics, e.g. asking respondents to identify numbered regions on a map corresponding to Census block groups in which they live, and concerns about Highland Park, e.g. "What do you like most about living in Highland Park?" and "How motivated are you to do something about Highland Park's problems?"

Questions in the Community Amenities section are intended to provide insight into the places that respondents shop, engage in recreational and entertainment activities, and send their children to school. The Demographics section queried respondents as to their race/ethnicity, educational level and employment status.

The Community Ties section contains a set of questions provided by social scientists on the survey design team that are intended to measure the extent of "civic engagement" and social ties among respondents, e.g. prompting for scaled responses to the questions "People in my community are willing to work together on common problems" and "My friends are very diverse

(define “diverse” as you like)”. In addition, questions in this section attempted to measure the strength of local ties to civic organizations such as churches or community groups, and the extent to which these organizations appear to be engaged in discussion of important community issues.

Finally, the Community Concerns section contains questions, again provided by social scientists on the survey design team, that are intended to measure the extent of engagement in the political process by respondents, e.g. prompting for scaled responses to the questions “Sometimes people need to act politically even if the actions cannot succeed” and “Political discussions between people with different political views can be productive.” In addition, the survey includes a space for free-form responses on any issues important to the respondent not addressed by the survey. This section has yielded particularly rich and direct comments on life in Highland Park, both positive and negative.

The full text of the survey is available in the Appendix to this discussion document.

XX.5 Survey Administration

The survey was administered through paper and online media and was made available in to two populations: a “random” sample selected so as to be representative of the population living in a study area defined as Highland Park plus portions of adjacent communities, as shown in Figure 1 (see Section XX.1), and a “nonrandom” sample dependent completely on individuals accessing paper copies of the survey at local merchants or at public meetings, or via the Web.

In early August 2002 we sent 1,193 paper copies of the survey to households in the “random” sample. 789 (66%) of these surveys went to households in the Highland Park neighborhood, and 113 (9.5%) went to Highland Park residents living in the so-called “southwest quadrant”, a portion of the neighborhood with higher-than-average levels of property blight and undesirable behavior, as measured for example by 911 calls. gave these respondents the choice

of filling out and returning the paper survey in a prepaid envelope, or filling out the survey on-line using a unique identifier. We made approximately 1,000 paper copies available to self-selected participants as well.

Approximately one month after the representative surveys were mailed we compiled data to identify households that had not yet responded. We attempted to contact these non-participant households by phone and home visitation to encourage them to fill out the survey. These in-person visits, combined with tabulations of surveys returned to Community Connections by the U.S. Post Office because of non-existent addresses, or households no longer at addresses, and on-line searches of Social Security data to identify households for whom the head of household was deceased enabled us to eliminate certain households from the set of potential respondents. This process of “reducing the N” yielded a final potential respondent set of 899 households in the random set.

Of these 899 households, 275 surveys were returned to Community Connections in paper or electronic form as of April 2, 2003; of these 275 surveys, 262 have useful values that have been coded for analysis, yielding a response rate of 29.1%. 413 surveys from respondents in the “non-random” set have been received as of April 2, 2003; of these, 360 contain useful values for analysis.

Paper surveys—both random and non-random—were entered into the computer system by analysts, CMU graduate students and community volunteers, including local high school students. This “first pass” of data entry was not designed to address systematic response errors on the part of respondents, or errors in question wording or response scales in the survey itself. All of the analysis in this chapter is based on the “first pass” data entry. We have entered all of the survey data into the computer system a second time to identify data entry errors during the

first pass, and we are currently attempting to inspect all survey responses manually to correct for systematic errors by respondents or by the survey designers. We hope that the output of these second and third “passes” will result in survey data that is as reliable as possible and suitable for research-quality analysis.

We have noted that Community Connections donated a PC to a local coffee shop to enable electronic survey entry as well as access to a variety of Internet resources. A log placed at the workstation revealed that between January 21st and March 6th the station was used 67 times with an average use time of 34 minutes per session. We are continuing analysis of usage of this public computer, as well as counting the number of surveys returned in paper form as compared to the number of surveys completed online. These preliminary usage statistics, combined with observations by the owner of the coffee shop that the presence of the computer has improved business, is an indication that information technology has had at least a small impact on the community planning process.

The Highland Park Community Plan has developed an extensive dataset of survey responses for both the random and non-random respondent groups, as well as data on survey administration. We would be glad to make these data available to interested persons on request.

XX.6 Descriptive Statistics

Basic Demographics

Results from the random set of survey responses yielded a respondent profile that is female (55.94% of all responses), homeowners (76.63% of all responses) as compared to renters or those with other living arrangements, white (79.77% of all responses) as compared to African-American (12%) and those of other race/ethnicities, Highland Park residents (92.31% or all

responses) and well-educated (78% of all responses indicate a college degree or higher educational attainment).

In comparison, the survey study area (the numbered regions in Figure 1), as well as Highland Park proper, has demographic profile that is significantly different in many respects, according to Census 2000 statistics: 54.19% of the study area (65.36% of Highland Park) is white, 45.42% of the housing units in the study area (50.37% of the units in Highland Park) are owner-occupied, 42.69% of the population of the study area lives in Highland Park, and 34.95% of all residents 25 years of age or older in the study area (53.07% of such residents in Highland Park) have a college degree or higher educational attainment. This is a preliminary indication that the set of respondents from the random sample is not representative of either the study area as a whole or Highland Park in particular with respect to these characteristics. Therefore, all subsequent analyses and conclusions will be subject to this important caveat.

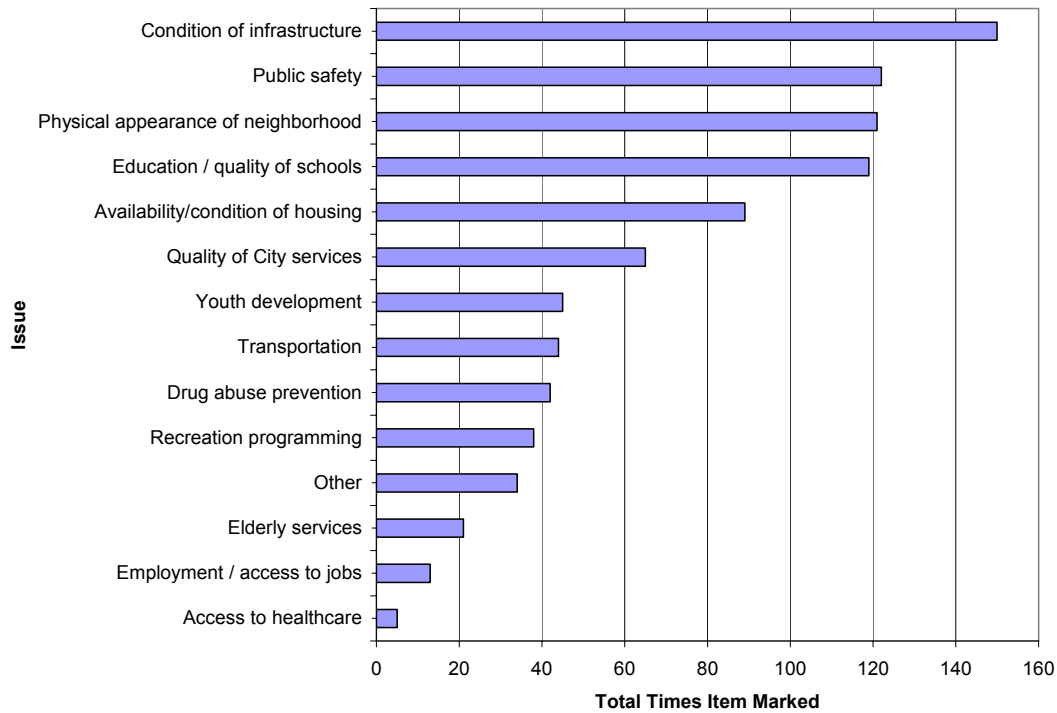
The nonrandom sample is more representative of study area characteristics in certain ways: while 60.56% of such respondents are female, 74.13% of all respondents are homeowners, 84.38% are white (as compared to 7.99% of whom are African-American), 70.57% are Highland Park residents and 80.90% indicate a college degree or higher of educational attainment.

Other Basic Characteristics

Respondents in the random sample tend to live in households without children (59.17%) and have lived in Highland Park a relatively short time: though average tenure in Highland Park is 13.57 years, the standard deviation of this measure is 15.09 years, and approximately 55% of respondents have lived in Highland Park for 6 years or less. Only 6.2% of respondents report working in Highland Park. Most respondents report moving to Highland Park from other East End neighborhoods (51.94% of all responses); the next most popular region of origin is outside

of Western Pennsylvania (17.83% of all responses). These trends are similar to those recorded for the non-random sample.

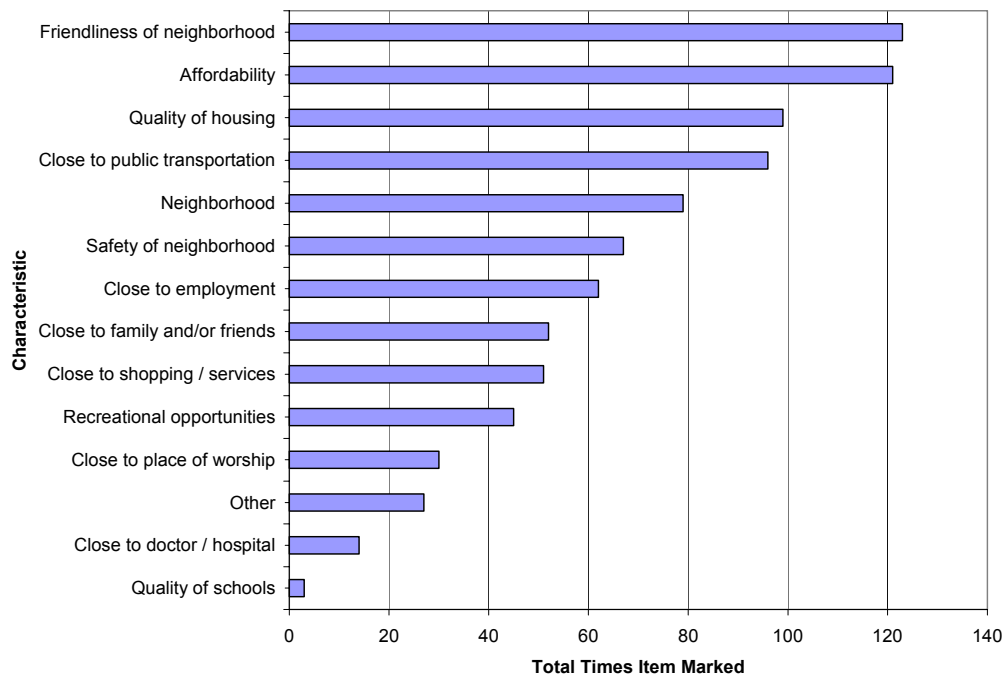
While respondents feel that Highland Park is a very good place to live or work (mean = 4.52 where 0 = “poor” and 6 = “excellent”), there are a number of issues that concern residents. As Figure 2 indicates, “condition of infrastructure” is by far the prevalent concern (16.52% of all responses), followed closely by “public safety”, “physical appearance of the neighborhood” and “education/quality of schools”, all at about 13% of all responses.



[Figure 2: Most Important Neighborhood Issues]

In contrast, respondents identified four strengths of Highland Park (Figure 3): “friendliness of neighborhood”, tied with “affordability” with about 14% of all responses, followed by “quality of housing”, tied with “close to public transportation” with about 12% of all

responses. The biggest problems with Highland Park identified by respondents include “lack of safety in the neighborhood” (18.57% of all responses), “quality of schools” (17.41% of all respondents) and “far from shopping and services (12.38% of all responses). These responses are matched very closely by those of respondents in the non-random sample.



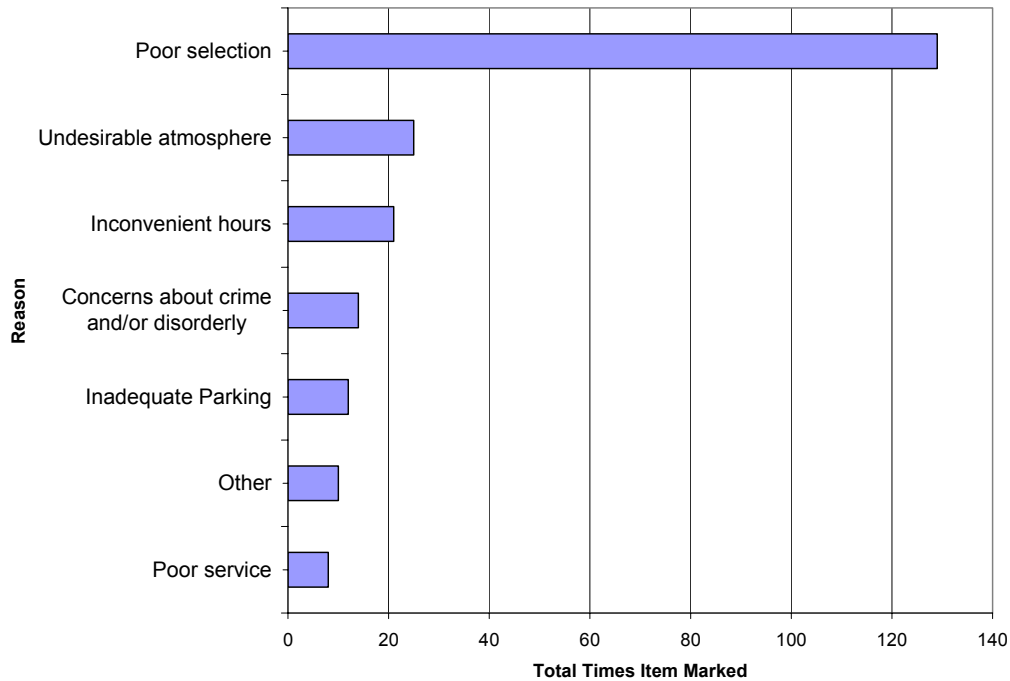
[Figure 3: Strengths of Highland Park]

Respondents appear concerned about Highland Park’s problems (mean = 4.29, where 0 = “not important” and 6 = “very important”) though somewhat less motivated to do something about them (mean = 3.71, where 0 = “not motivated” and 6 = “very motivated”). Nearly 30% of all respondents say they are currently considering moving from Highland Park; free-form responses to this question indicate that jobs, taxes and blight are primary motivating factors. Support for this result derives from responses to the statements “The condition of Highland Park is now ___ than 5 years ago (mean = 0.36, where -3 = “much worse”, 0 = “neither” and 3 =

“much better”) and “I am ___ with the city’s services to Highland Park (mean = 0.21, where -3 = “very dissatisfied”, 0 = “neither” and 3 = “very satisfied”).

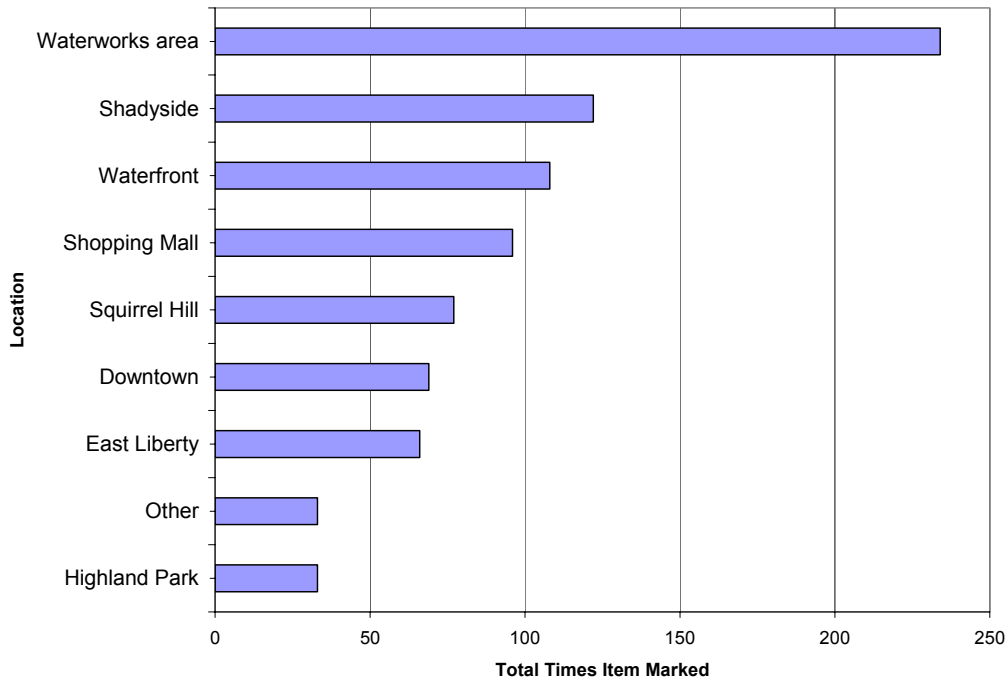
While respondents have close relationships with neighbors that are important to them, as measured by their responses to questions “quality of relationships with neighbors” (mean = 1.78, where -3 = “very unfriendly”, 0 = “neither” and 3 = “very friendly”) and “how often help or are helped by neighbors with small tasks (mean = 2.76, where 0 = “never” and 6 = “often”, and though 87.64 percent of respondents feel that they can call on their neighbors for help in an emergency, they report a moderately high level of crime in their neighborhood: the self-reported mean level of crime is 3.05, where 0 and 6 represent minimum and maximum ratings. To put this result in context, “Part I” (serious) crime rates per 100 residents reported by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette for 2000 (http://www.post-gazette.com/neighbor_city/20020224citypart1stat9p9.asp) indicate that Highland Park’s crime rate, 4.7 per 100, is significantly less than the citywide average of 6.0 per 100 and lower than that of Shadyside (6.7) though higher than that of Squirrel Hill North (2.2) and Point Breeze (3.7).

Respondents rarely shop, seek entertainment, educate their children or worship in Highland Park. 65% of all respondents report shopping in Highland Park “every couple of months” or “hardly ever”, and respondents in this category list “poor selection” (overwhelmingly), followed by “undesirable atmosphere” and “inconvenient hours” as primary reasons why they do not shop in Highland Park (see Figure 4).



[Figure 4: Reasons for Rarely Shopping in Highland Park]

Respondents indicate that the most important services missing in Highland Park include: grocery store (25.68% of all responses), post office (20.89% of all responses) and professional offices such as dentist or doctor (12.16% of all responses). These results are striking inasmuch as Highland Park already has one moderate-size grocery store and three deli-type shops. Waterworks Mall, followed by Shadyside, The Waterfront and other shopping malls are all much more popular shopping destinations than Highland Park (see Figure 5).



[Figure 5: Neighborhoods in which Respondents Usually Shop]

Similar results for shopping are seen for entertainment: Waterworks, The Waterfront, Downtown, Shadyside and Squirrel Hill are all far more popular entertainment destinations than Highland Park. Respondents overwhelmingly (90.08%) worship outside of Highland Park. In contrast, 64.92% of respondents report using recreational facilities in Highland Park.

Respondents, who, according to the survey, are disproportionately members of childless households, do not typically have household members attending primary or secondary school (23.64%). Of those respondents with school-age children, about 12% report sending their children to local public schools, about 47% send their children to non-local public schools, and the remainder, 41%, have enrolled their children in private or parochial schools.

Community Ties

In contrast to the relative pessimism expressed regarding the current state of Highland Park and the self-reported tendency to pursue a variety of activities outside of Highland Park, survey respondents appear to feel strong ties with other community members. They feel that community members care about community problems (mean = 3.85, where 0 = “not true” and 6 = “very true”), that community members can be trusted (mean = 3.89, where 0 = “not true” and 6 = “very true”) and that community members are willing to work together to solve common problems (mean = 3.9, where 0 = “not true” and 6 = “very true”).

However, respondents are not as optimistic about the ability of officials to solve community problems on their own (mean = 2.06, where 0 = “not true” and 6 = “very true”), and tend not to discuss community issues in organizations to which they belong (dominated by churches, 34.35%): 56.22 report no such discussions in their organizations. Moreover, few (38.69%) of respondents belong to any organizations which have taken local action for social or political reform.

Respondents’ networks of friends appear to be geographically dispersed and not particularly inclined to address concerns regarding the strength or attractiveness of Highland Park. Though respondents claim that their friends are “diverse” (mean = 3.94, where 0 = “not true” and 6 = “very true”), relatively few of these friends live in Highland Park and few discuss community issues: 43.95% of respondents report that none of their five closest friends live in Highland Park, and 49.58% of respondents report that none of their friends talk about concerns such as crime or housing.

One promising result regarding civic engagement concerns the Highland Park Community Plan itself: though only 9.34% of respondents reported attending a meeting of the

Community Plan in the previous six months, 39.52% reported a willingness to attend a meeting of the Community Plan in the next six months.

Community Concerns

Responses to questions in this section, which measured propensity for political action, indicate that while respondents are very busy (mean = 1.93, where -3 = “strongly disagree” and 3 = “strongly agree”), they believe that political action is warranted even if it may not succeed (mean = 2.08, where -3 = “strongly disagree” and 3 = “strongly agree”). (Note that our survey did not ask if the respondents *themselves* would commit to such political activism.) Respondents appear to be quite tolerant of opposing views: they do not take it personally when others disagree with their political views (mean = 1.5, where -3 = “strongly disagree” and 3 = “strongly agree”) and disagree with the notion that people with differing political views cannot rationally discuss politics (mean = -1.18, where -3 = “strongly disagree” and 3 = “strongly agree”).

Free-Form Comments

By combining free-form comments at the end of the survey for both the random and non-random samples, we are able to identify important issues that respondents felt were insufficiently addressed by the survey. We used Atlas/ti software to identify responses that correspond to the following popular topic areas: Animal Control, City Issues, Commerce, Diversity Issues, Education, Housing, Neighborhood Appearance, Public Safety, Recreation, Community Plan Issues, Traffic, Youth Issues, and Zoning. Commerce and Public Safety appear to be the most popular categories for free-form responses. Examples of responses in selected categories follow:

City Issues

Issues concerning city services included such topics as garbage collection and street maintenance.

- “The city needs to do a better job of repaving streets when they deteriorate”
- “I wish the city and county would work better together for the good of Highland Park”
- “Property tax issues are a big problem forcing some to move out of larger homes”
- “Please help us restore the sidewalks and empty lots.”

Commerce

By far one of the primary issues on the mind’s of Highland Park residents. Comments in this section included primary concern with the lack of shopping choices in Highland Park and the general feeling that the Bryant St. corridor could be significantly improved.

- “Highland Park is a lovely place to live but we do not have enough shops, restaurants, or entertainment venues”
- “I wish there were more inexpensive family restaurants or diners. It’s all either bars or pizza.”
- “My left arm for a decent grocery store!”
- “The community would really profit from a more robust retail area”
- “I think the shopping area on Walnut St (Shadyside) could be easily replicated or taken as a model in Highland Park, and I am sure it would be a great success.”

Diversity Issues

This category addresses feelings of disengagement, gentrification and segregation.

- “Race relations in Highland Park needs to be addressed”
- “I love the diversity of Highland Park”
- “I think that there are a lot of people here who wish to be more involved than they are”
- “The Highland Park Citizens Club is only interested in their own property values...(they only represent) the white middle class (not all of Highland Park).”

Education

Reflecting education choices made for their children as reported above, respondents identified quality of local public schools as a key area of concern.

- “It’s all about schools (that make a good neighborhood)”
- “Fulton needs help; none of our friends would even consider putting their kids in school there if they could help it”
- “Who wants to live in a neighborhood where they can’t trust their children will get a quality education”

Housing

Reflecting the concerns expressed in the main portion of the survey regarding housing and infrastructure quality, respondents identified particular housing issues including absentee landlords or homeowner upkeep.

- “Properties owned by absentee landlords effect the community...we need to enforce code”
- “What type of action can one take against a slum lord?”
- “We need to return homes into single family dwellings”
- “I would like to see an increase in owner occupied housing”

Neighborhood Appearance

Not only was the neighborhood proper a concern but the park itself was an area of concern with regard to its appearance.

- “It would be great if they finished the REALLY LONG construction at the park so that it will begin to look nice again”
- “Highland Park has a bad image...especially in east end pockets”
- “Littering is major problem on Bryant St. I would like to see fines enforced”
- “Graffiti on mailboxes, newspaper boxes, walls, signs, etc. needs to be addressed.”

Public Safety

The level of concern regarding public safety is somewhat at odds with Highland Park’s relatively low crime rate as compared to city-wide levels. Nevertheless, fear of crime is clearly a factor in the level of dissatisfaction with the quality of life in Highland Park.

- “I am concerned about drug sales in the park”

- “Get drug addicts out!”
- “I hear gunshots from the Lincoln area at night, police need more presence there”
- “Police need to respond faster”
- “There is a lot of vandalism happening to parked cars in the area”
- “Whatever happened to our Community Beat Patrol Officer?”
- “There doesn’t seem to be anywhere a child can go and play and really feel safe”
- “Safety is the key issue in this neighborhood”
- “Major issues of concern to me are safety and cleanliness of the neighborhood and park.
- Safety, cleanliness, and commerce are going to be the primary issues with the development of Highland Park residents need to see clean streets and feel safe also, landlords must be responsible for their property this neighborhood will rival Shadyside for attractiveness and property value if managed correctly.”
- “I run in the neighborhood and feel mostly safe, but lighting could be improved especially on Negley.”
- “Some streets in Highland Park don’t feel safe. Transient population is high/ lack of stability a problem. Landlords do not keep up property and tenants are not responsible.”
- “Several of my neighbors have moved out of the neighborhood for this reason there have been several instances of young women being followed at night and or peeping tom problems.”

Recreation

Recreation comments included park issues as well as age specific recreation opportunities. Overall the comments expressed an interest in improving recreation opportunities even while survey results showed a high level of satisfaction with the public park.

- “Youth need more recreation and enrichment opportunities.
- “I would like to see the park have more recreation activities for young adults and teens. Give them something to do in the summertime.”
- “Why not build a skateboarding track? This will get kids off the roads. Kids also ride their bikes down big hills for a thrill. It’s dangerous.”

- “Bike trails in Highland Park would be great”
- “An ethnic food festival in the park would be good”
- “A public recreation center with senior citizen classes, indoor basket ball gym, etc. would be positive for the neighborhood.”

Community Plan Issues

These comments were specific to the community planning process, including the survey.

- “Why the emphasis on "political" in this survey when the goal is to improve the community? “
- “This is a very small box for comments.”
- “This form is too long”
- “I think I may have made a mistake on one of my entries. The survey did not allow me to go back and review the answer (which would have been helpful) the on-line survey and paper copies did not match exactly, which is somewhat problematic”
- “I'm concerned about the answers I entered for the survey I'd almost separate some of the questions into neighborhood versus Highland Park.”
- “I haven't attended community planning meetings because I have not had info about when and where.”

Traffic

Traffic was a surprisingly big area of concern particularly the speed issue on residential streets. This issue is also related to public safety concerns.

- “Speeding on residential streets is a problem.”
- “Speed limit for autos cars going to fast.”
- “Noise control from roving traffic stereos.”
- “A few of my major concerns are the noise problems associated with car stereos, the speed in which cars and busses travel and also alley ways littered with junk.”

Youth Issues

Youth issues are closely connected with recreation and education issues but the comments here specifically dealt with what turned out to be perceptions of supervision and a

concern that unsupervised children are at risk for victimization or alternately participating in criminal or nuisance behavior.

- “Unsupervised children in the neighborhood seem to be increasing.
- “What about having block parents? I've noticed that there doesn't seem to be anywhere a child can go to feel safe if there is a problem before or after school when a responsible adult is not around”

XX.7 Hypotheses and Policy Analyses

The previous section presented simple tabulations and descriptive statistics regarding questions in the Highland Park Community Plan survey with categorical (e.g. yes/no) or scaled (e.g. 0, ..., 6) responses. The conclusions that can be drawn from these data are limited inasmuch as they must address the “central tendency” of all respondents. A more detailed analysis of survey data would test *hypotheses*, that is, identify whether responses to certain questions tend to differ based on the personal characteristics of respondents, or, more generally, the extent to which responses to certain questions are affected by the personal characteristics of the respondent, characteristics of the neighborhood in which the respondent lives, or other considerations. An extension of survey analysis that tests hypotheses would be *policy recommendations*, that is, specific recommendations as to programs or services that the community could provide that, according to quantitative survey analysis, are likely to result in certain beneficial community outcomes.

In this section we present preliminary results of analyses intended to test hypotheses and make policy recommendations regarding neighborhood mobility, an important issue for those interested in marketing a neighborhood to potential residents, or convincing current residents not to move. In particular, we wish to answer three simple questions:

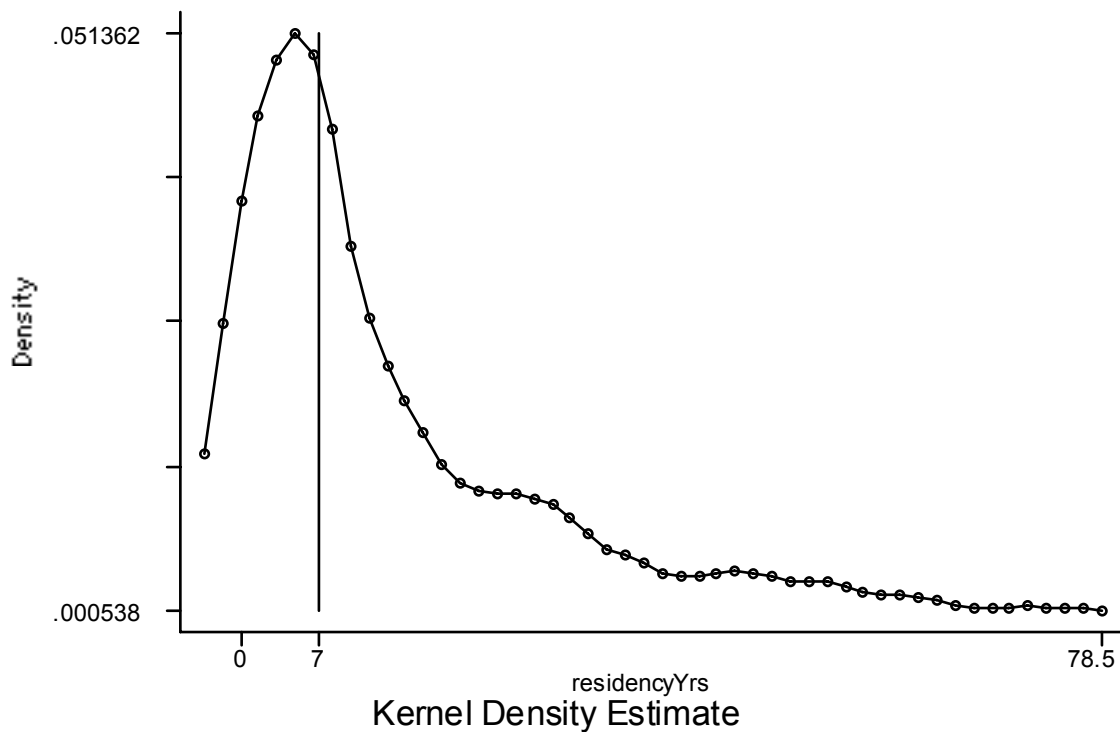
- Who is moving into Highland Park, and why?

- Why do people move to Highland Park?
- Why do people consider moving out of Highland Park?

When answering these questions, we use “Highland Park” to refer to the Highland Park neighborhood plus portions of surrounding communities, as defined in Section XX.2 and focus solely on respondents in the “random” set.

Who is moving into Highland Park, and why?

To start, we use responses to the question “How many years have you lived in Highland Park (or nearby if you are not currently a resident)?” to generate a histogram of neighborhood tenure (see Figure 6). The median tenure (half of respondents below and half above) for respondents in the random sample is about 6 years, and there is a very long tail of people who are more permanent residents.



[Figure 6: Distribution of Tenure in Highland Park or Nearby Neighborhoods, Random Respondents]

For ease of statistical analysis, we define a “mover” as someone who has lived in Highland Park or in nearby neighborhoods seven or fewer years. This constitutes a sample of 134 of the respondents. We define a “permanent resident” as someone who has lived in the survey study area for more than seven years, which constitutes a sample of 127 people.

To see whether movers differed from permanent residents, we conducted a set of “t-tests” that compare the mean values of some variable, such as age, for movers and permanent residents to see if there is a statistically significant difference between these means. Results (detailed tabulations are available from the Highland Park Community Plan) indicate that those who moved into Highland Park, as opposed to permanent residents:

- Are much younger;
- Have households with fewer adults (1.76 vs. 2.02--there are more singles without kids, but no more single parents);
- Have the same number of kids;
- Are not more or less Caucasian;
- Have higher education;
- Are more likely to be working full time;
- Are no more or less likely to own their own home;
- Are no more or less likely to work in Highland Park;
- Are no more or less likely to be planning to move out of Highland Park;
- Are no more or less likely to have kids in school; and
- Do not have significantly more or fewer children in school.

The finding that movers are no more likely than permanent residents to plan to move out of the neighborhood is very interesting. It suggests that movers may be as stable additions to the neighborhood as permanent residents.

Another way in which movers might differ from permanent residents is in their “social capital”. Social capital includes trusting others in the community and social networks (organizational affiliation, close friends, etc.). For the following measures: whether residents expect other people in Highland Park to be easy to work with to solve social problems, whether residents count on neighbors to help them in an emergency, to borrow things, etc., whether residents feel at home in the neighborhood, and whether residents feel that officials can be counted on to solve problems, and whether residents feel that people can generally be trusted, we found that movers were no different than permanent residents. This is a good finding because it suggests the movers are not more alienated or harder to reach.

In addition, we found that movers, as compared with permanent residents:

- Belong to no more or less HP organizations, community issue organizations, or organizations that have taken action;
- Have significantly fewer close friends in HP (.9 vs. 1.6);
- Have significantly fewer friends who talk with them about HP community issues (.9 vs. 1.3); and
- Do not have more diverse friends.

On the whole, then, the movers do not seem to have substantially less network social capital, except when it comes to close friends in HP or friends with which to talk with about community issues. The latter could matter, however, in terms of engagement with community issues.

We found that movers reported significantly higher levels of being very busy people, but lower levels of taking political conversation too personally (getting angry) and lower subscription to the belief that it is not possible to resolve political questions rationally with others in discussion. Because being a busy person rarely seems to affect participation, it would seem that movers should on the whole be more inclined to participate politically, at least with respect to these attitudes.

Finally, in terms of willingness to address problems in the neighborhood, movers are about as willing as non-movers. They see local problems as just as important as permanent residents, they are just as motivated to address the problems, they are as likely to have attended a community plan meeting, and are significantly more likely to say that they intend to attend (44% to 34% of respondents in each category).

Why do people move to Highland Park?

We cannot answer this question directly because we do not have a sample of people who thought about moving to Highland Park but decided not to move here. However, perhaps we can gain some little insight into this question by comparing movers with permanent residents. Perhaps mover's perceptions differ systematically in ways that will reveal why they moved. Compared with permanent residents, movers are:

- Significantly more happy with the condition of Highland Park than permanent residents;
- More likely to think conditions are changing for the better;
- Appreciably more satisfied with local services; and
- No different than permanent residents in the number of services they believe are missing.

This pattern is consistent with the view that new residents see themselves as moving from a poorer location to a better one. They are aware of the same problems as permanent residents, they just are happier despite these problems. It may be, however, that the longer they remain the less happy people become with the situation.

Why do people consider moving out of Highland Park?

The following analysis tries to predict whether or not a person is planning to move out of Highland Park based on a number of variables. Intriguingly, people are *not* significantly more likely to say they are moving out if:

- They are unhappy with the condition of Highland Park;
- If they don't think the condition is changing for the better, or
- They report more satisfaction with local services.

The number of services they say are missing does have a marginally significant and modest size impact. By far the most powerful factor is whether the person feels at home in Highland Park-- which greatly reduces the chance of saying they want to move out. Deliberative social capital (defined above as the expectation that it is possible to work with others to fix community problems) has the second most powerful reducing effect, with reported intention to attend a meeting of the Highland Park Community Plan the third most powerful effect. This suggests that people are more likely to say they will stay if they feel they have a chance to improve neighborhood conditions.

What affects feelings of being at home in Highland Park? Feeling at home in the neighborhood is related most strongly to being friendly with the neighbors, followed closely by overall social trust and number of close friends in Highland Park. Having helpful neighbors one

can count on in a pinch does not help, nor does belonging to HP organizations, or feeling officials can be trusted to solve problems.

This preliminary analysis indicates three things. First, recent movers to Highland Park differ in a number of ways from more established residents, though recent movers appear to be as likely to be stable residents as more established residents. It is possible that recent movers may be more likely to stay if their networks of friends are centered in Highland Park and if they have the opportunity to talk with their friends about local issues. Second, recent movers are more satisfied with Highland Park and more optimistic about the future of the community. This indicates that local organizations may have an opportunity to leverage this optimism to design programs by which recent movers can “give back” to the community. Finally, the strongest indicator of continued residence in Highland Park is the extent to which residents feel “at home”, represented by levels of friendliness with neighbors, social trust and number of close friends in the community. Perhaps community social events such as block parties or arts performances could make current residents feel more at home.

XX.8 Next Steps

We have described an effort in the community planning process in Highland Park to create a “community portrait” through a survey. This survey, created with the assistance of information technology professionals and social scientists at Carnegie Mellon University’s Community Connections project, provides a broad and deep perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of Highland Park and portions of surrounding communities as expressed by respondents.

Descriptive statistics indicate that respondents in the “random” survey sample demonstrate a rather high level of disengagement from local institutions such as schools,

businesses, places of worship and other community organizations, and a low level of engagement with the community planning process, or discussions regarding community improvement more generally, and strong indications of dissatisfaction with certain aspects of Highland Park’s quality of life. However, there are opportunities to improve the quality of life for residents of Highland Park and surrounding communities based on resident characteristics: fairly high levels of educational attainment, strong ties to neighbors, and a positive outlook on political action. More detailed analyses indicate differences between those respondents classified as “recent movers” and those classified as “permanent residents” and identify opportunities to retain current Highland Park residents—especially recent movers—based on increasing their feelings of being “at home” in the community.

Thus, there is a role for initiatives like the Highland Park Community plan to identify specific problems, propose tangible, feasible solution strategies, and provide clear guidance as to the types of action and cooperation among local institutions that could result in real improvement in the perceived quality of life in Highland Park and surrounding communities. One particular solution strategy could consist of social events such as block parties, arts performances and networking activities that can help current residents increase their ties with other local residents. Other strategies, focused more directly on challenges to the health of Highland Park identified in this survey and in “focus group” meetings held over the past year, are presented in subsequent chapters in this discussion document addressing “issues”, “goals”, “strategies” and “implementation plans”.

It appears that ideas contained in this Community Plan discussion document for improving Highland Park and surrounding communities should directly engage the “human element”. That is, we in addition to identifying particular programs or activities to change the

quality of life for residents in areas such as housing, public safety, education or recreation, we should take seriously the notion that residents who feel more comfortable in our community and who have stronger social ties to our community are more likely to take actions to improve the community.

Doing so may be facilitated by even more substantive analysis of survey results. We hope that by the time that the Community Plan final document is ready to be released to the public—around August 2003—we will perform many more analyses of these survey data, such as learning more about the relationship between the personal characteristics of respondents, attributes of the local neighborhood (e.g. Census block group) in which respondents live and expressed opinions about the larger community. In this way we may provide guidance for community engagement and community-building strategies that are “customized” for specific demographic and geographic segments, and which further the goal of diversity, inclusion and engagement in community improvement.