

the WEST END





PARK DUVALLE

Any Louisvillian who has lived here for more than a few years knows, almost instinctively, the boundary line between west Louisville and the rest of Louisville: Ninth Street.

Most white Louisvillians know it because they've heard some variation of the warning, "Don't go west of Ninth Street." They might have heard it when they moved to town and were looking for a place to live, or from parents or friends concerned about their safety. Or they might have absorbed it osmotically from watching local TV news, where the lead story is too often "another shooting in the West End . . ."

Although the notion that west Louisville is a dangerous and even foreign place is embedded in the mental map that many of us — even the most bleeding-heartedly liberal and racially tolerant, if we will admit it — carry around in our heads, it is rarely talked about in public. Or rather, one aspect — the regular drumbeat of news about the latest murder that occurred there — is constantly broadcast, but its underlying causes are seldom analyzed in any depth.

In the package of stories that follows, we hope to give our readers, who mostly live east of downtown, a broader and deeper understanding of the West End and the challenges the area faces. And, more importantly, we hope to encourage a discussion of what we as a city might do to improve the social and economic lives of our neighbors who live in west Louisville.

There are any number of reasons why this issue should be at the very top of the local political agenda. Besides the fact that bringing all parts of the city into the economic mainstream is simply the right thing to do, we must also recognize that as long as one area of our city lags so far behind the rest we cannot truly lay claim to being even a really good city, much less great or "world-class" or a place where possibility knows no limits.

— Dan Crutcher

WEST END

22 SELECTED CENSUS TRACTS

Unemployment
13.4%

African-American (79%)

WHITE (18%)

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: \$21,733



EDUCATION

Some College or Higher 38%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher 7%

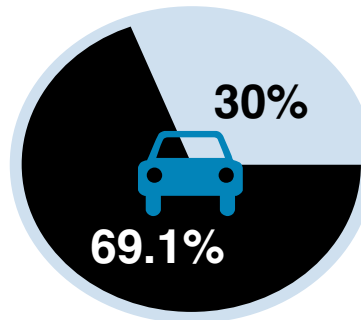


H O M E

Median Home Value \$66,977
Own Home..... 33%
Vacant Units 22%

Head of Household

MALE: 62% FEMALE: 38%



Own a Car
Don't Own a Car

NEIGHBORHOODS

Algonquin
California
Chickasaw
Park DuValle
Park Hill
Parkland
Portland
Russell
Shawnee

Population: 61,251

All Businesses 1,856

Supermarkets	5
Banks	13
Pharmacies	6
Hospitals	0
Pediatric Physicians	11
OB/GYN Physicians	3
Dentists	55
Attorneys	6
Veterinarians	1
Restaurants	30
Coffee Shops	1
Bakers	3
Liquor Stores	24
Clothing Stores	12
Movie Theaters	0
Hotels/Motels	0
Barbershops	26
Beauty Salons	36

For the purposes of our statistical comparison of West End and East End, we started with the 22 census tracts that compose west Louisville, which we define as the area bounded roughly by Ninth Street, Algonquin Parkway and the Ohio River, and then selected 22 census tracts in the East End where many of our readers live. (See map on page 29.)

For data on population, race, income, home values, jobs, education and housing we used the 2007-2011 U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey.

To get an idea of how the two areas stack up in the kinds of businesses and amenities available to residents, we used data from ReferenceUSA, a company that maintains a database of about 15 million U.S. businesses.

EAST END

22 SELECTED CENSUS TRACTS

African-American (4%)

WHITE (91%)

Unemployment

3.9%

92%

8%

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: \$59,600

Head of Household

MALE: 92%

FEMALE: 8%



EDUCATION

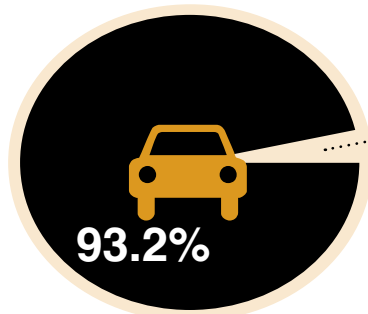
Some College or Higher 79%

Bachelor's Degree or Higher 55%

NEIGHBORHOODS

Clifton
Crescent Hill
Highlands
Middletown
St. Matthews
Mockingbird Valley
Windy Hills
Indian Hills
Strathmoor

Population: 68,523



Own a Car

Don't Own a Car



H O M E

Median Home Value \$229,623

Own Home 57%

Vacant Units 9%

All Businesses 6,352

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Our statistical quest started with one basic question: If you compared the West End to a relatively affluent area in the East End that has roughly the same population, what would each area look like? How different would they be?

The basic answer: Very.

As the accompanying data shows, in just about every economic statistical category — income, home values, unemployment, education — west Louisville's numbers are worse than the East End area's by a factor of about three. That's roughly three times lower in the case of income and home value and three times higher in unemployment rate and vacant housing units.

9
45
21
6
73
148
188
157
25
255
16
20
18
53
2
7
9
117



But if there is one statistic that stands out more than any other, it is the nearly eight-fold advantage the east area has over the west in college-educated adults. That disparity gives perspective and even greater urgency to the 55,000 Degrees campaign launched by the city's business, education and civic leaders, especially its goal of ensuring that 15,000 of those additional bachelor's or associate's degrees are obtained by African-Americans.

Some of the more striking differences between the two areas of town show up in looking at the amenities that are available in our neighborhoods — the banks, pharmacies, restaurants, shops, movie theaters and professional services that most of us use regularly.

For example, consider the social and economic ramifications of growing up and living in an area that has 255 nearby restaurants as opposed to one that has 30 — and then take into account that, of those 30 restaurants in west Louisville, 20 are fast-food or chain restaurants, and that not one of the 30 is a sit-down-and-be-waited-on restaurant. In the East End, 76 are chains or fast-food, while 179 are local, independent establishments.

Think of the number of jobs, many of them entry-level jobs such as waiters,

busboys and bartenders, provided by those restaurants, and the economic benefits that flow from those jobs.

And then consider the social benefits: the simple recreational pleasure of being able to go out and have a good meal served up by attentive waiters; the acculturation that naturally and unconsciously occurs in sit-down restaurant experiences — all of the interactive food rituals that teach us politeness, table manners, conversational skills, even things as simple as knowing when and how much to tip a server.

These kind of ordinary societal interactions, or the lack of them, may seem trivial when measured against larger social issues like unemployment, poverty, subpar housing and educational deficits, but their effects reverberate when it comes to knowing how to behave in social situations (like school) or in applying for jobs.

The scarcity of some amenities probably has a more direct effect: When there are one-sixth the number of pediatricians and one-third the number of dentists in one area compared to another, what might one infer about the health of children in each area, or their teeth?

In all, ReferenceUSA lists about 6,300 businesses in the east area and only 1,800 or so in the West End.

(Note: the ReferenceUSA data is based on listings the company is able to verify by phone and may not be completely accurate or up to date, but it should provide an accurate reading of the number of business types in one area relative to another.)

One inescapable conclusion is that the West End is badly lacking in many of the basic amenities that those of us who live in other parts of town take for granted.

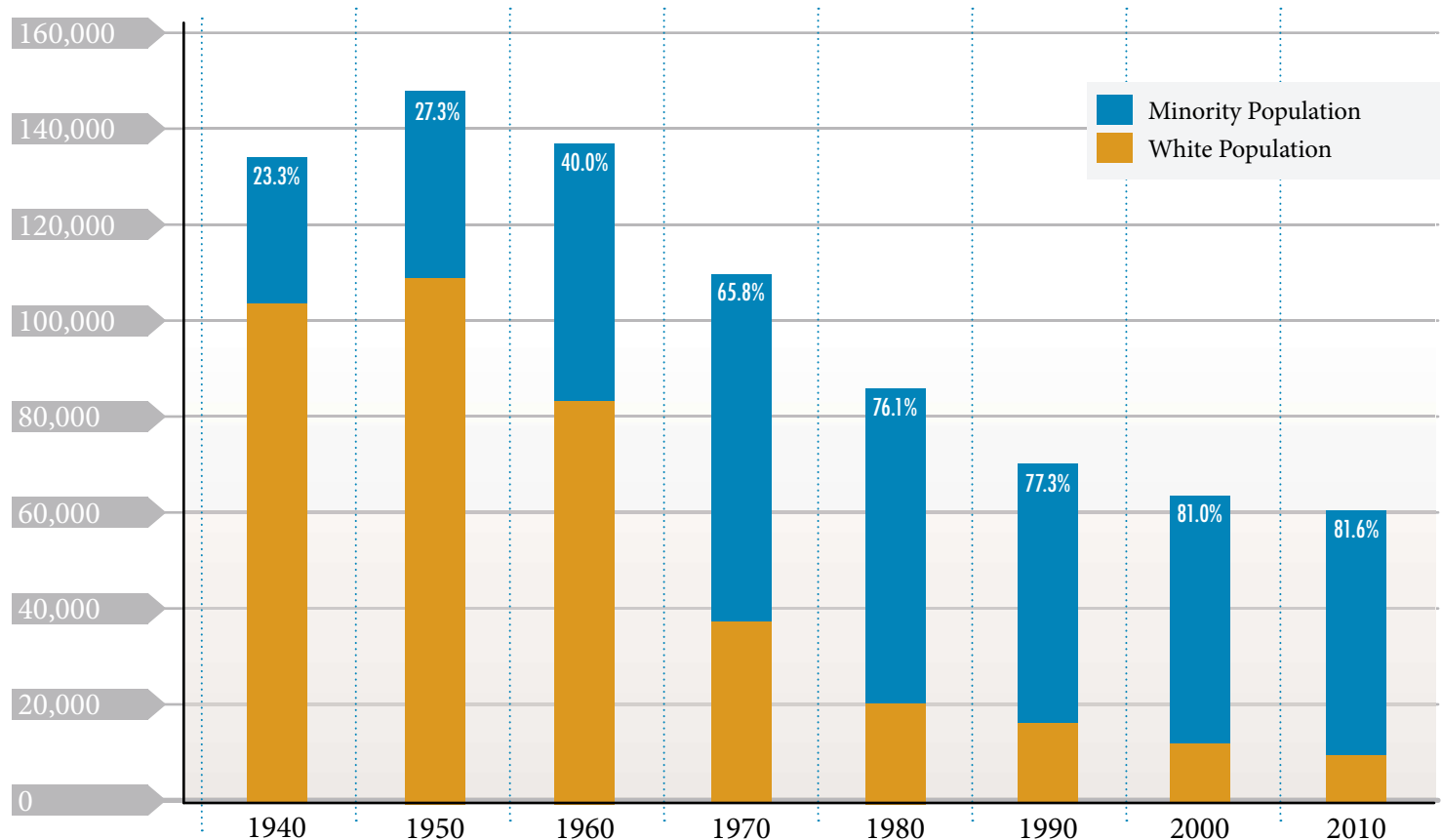
Another inescapable conclusion is that the economic data and the amenities are closely linked — a lack of disposable income in an area makes it harder to start and sustain independent retail or professional businesses, and the paucity of local businesses keeps the local economy depressed, and so it goes, around and around.

The most pertinent question is, how do you break out of the vicious economic cycle that much of west Louisville faces? What can a city do — assuming it wants to do anything — to lift up and improve an area as economically deprived as Louisville's West End?

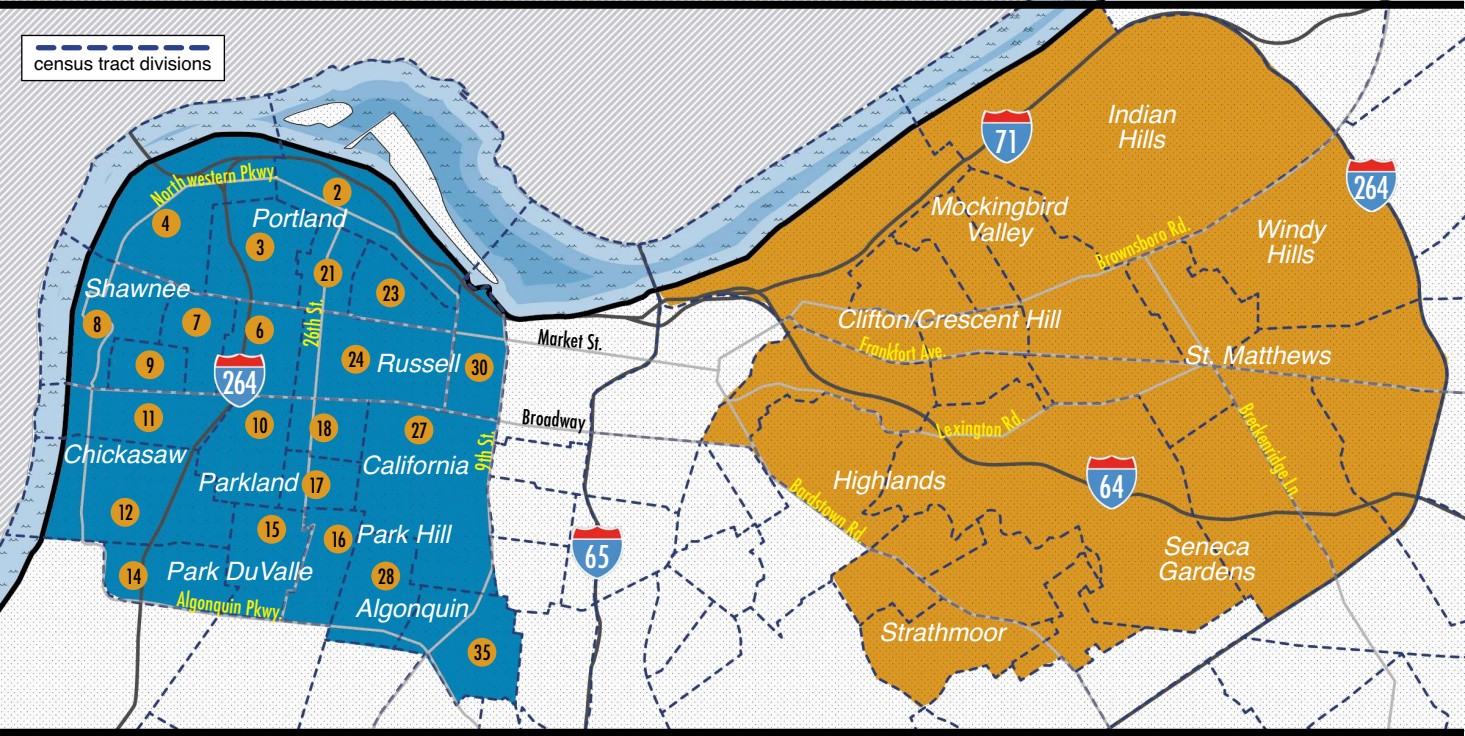
We will grapple with those questions in the pages that follow.

— DC

West Louisville Population and Minority/White Ratios, 1940-2010



Map of Selected Census Tracts for West End/East End comparisons



West Louisville Statistics by Census Tract (sorted by median household income)

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Pop.	% Black/ African American	Median HH Income	Median Home Value	Unemploy. Rate	% Vacant Housing Units	Bachelor's Deg. or Higher	% Female Head of House	% HH with No Vehicle
4	Shawnee/Portland	4,462	73.8%	\$34,205	\$82,000	11.6%	17%	7.6%	22.4%	27.8%
14	Park DuValle-West	2,573	98.3%	\$31,765	\$131,900	7.6%	13%	13.8%	52.5%	30.1%
3	Portland West	2,852	39.1%	\$28,348	\$65,400	6.3%	7%	3.8%	33.2%	16.9%
12	Chickasaw/S'Western	3,094	99.4%	\$28,125	\$75,400	14.6%	21%	9.9%	36.5%	30.4%
8	Shawnee Park	2,464	98.7%	\$27,551	\$93,200	11.1%	2%	10.4%	46.7%	25.3%
7	Shawnee	2,906	89.5%	\$25,451	\$65,400	10.9%	15%	8.6%	39.5%	19.8%
11	Chickasaw	3,365	93.8%	\$25,295	\$85,900	11.5%	20%	13.7%	40.7%	27.5%
21	Portland Central	2,656	33.6%	\$24,141	\$59,300	19.7%	26%	4.2%	46.5%	33.0%
18	Parkland	1,187	92.2%	\$23,824	\$62,600	12.2%	29%	6.6%	45.9%	18.7%
27	California/Park Hill	2,815	90.9%	\$23,739	\$70,600	12.2%	33%	10.8%	35.0%	23.5%
28	Algonquin/Park Hill East	1,461	85.1%	\$21,756	\$52,800	10.8%	32%	3.5%	38.2%	17.0%
9	Shawnee/Broadway	2,031	96.7%	\$21,470	\$83,500	15.4%	20%	12.7%	29.4%	25.1%
15	Park DuValle-East	3,061	91.0%	\$21,401	\$73,100	12.0%	26%	11.4%	37.2%	25.8%
6	Russell West	2,276	84.9%	\$19,450	\$60,200	20.7%	28%	5.0%	33.5%	29.3%
23	Portland East	2,597	32.6%	\$19,337	\$46,100	17.6%	26%	2.0%	28.9%	28.2%
2	Portland/McAlpine Locks	2,581	16.2%	\$19,102	\$47,000	11.3%	29%	1.4%	39.1%	18.9%
17	Parkland	1,837	85.7%	\$18,324	\$71,100	8.5%	39%	4.0%	32.0%	27.6%
24	Russell	4,753	88.6%	\$16,720	\$65,600	16.4%	31%	4.6%	40.3%	46.9%
16	Algonquin/Park Hill West	2,599	91.8%	\$14,906	\$57,900	13.8%	21%	4.9%	37.0%	39.6%
10	Parkland	2,370	97.3%	\$14,784	\$59,100	13.2%	30%	7.2%	34.9%	37.1%
35	Algonquin	2,887	67.1%	\$9,575	\$65,400	21.7%	13%	3.8%	39.1%	67.5%
30	Russell East	3,724	88.9%	\$8,858	*\$0	16.6%	6%	0.8%	54.4%	63.7%
TOTALS/AVGS.		61,251	78.9%	\$21,733	\$66,977	13.4%	22.4%	6.9%	38.1%	36.9%

* This census tract has no single-family homes.