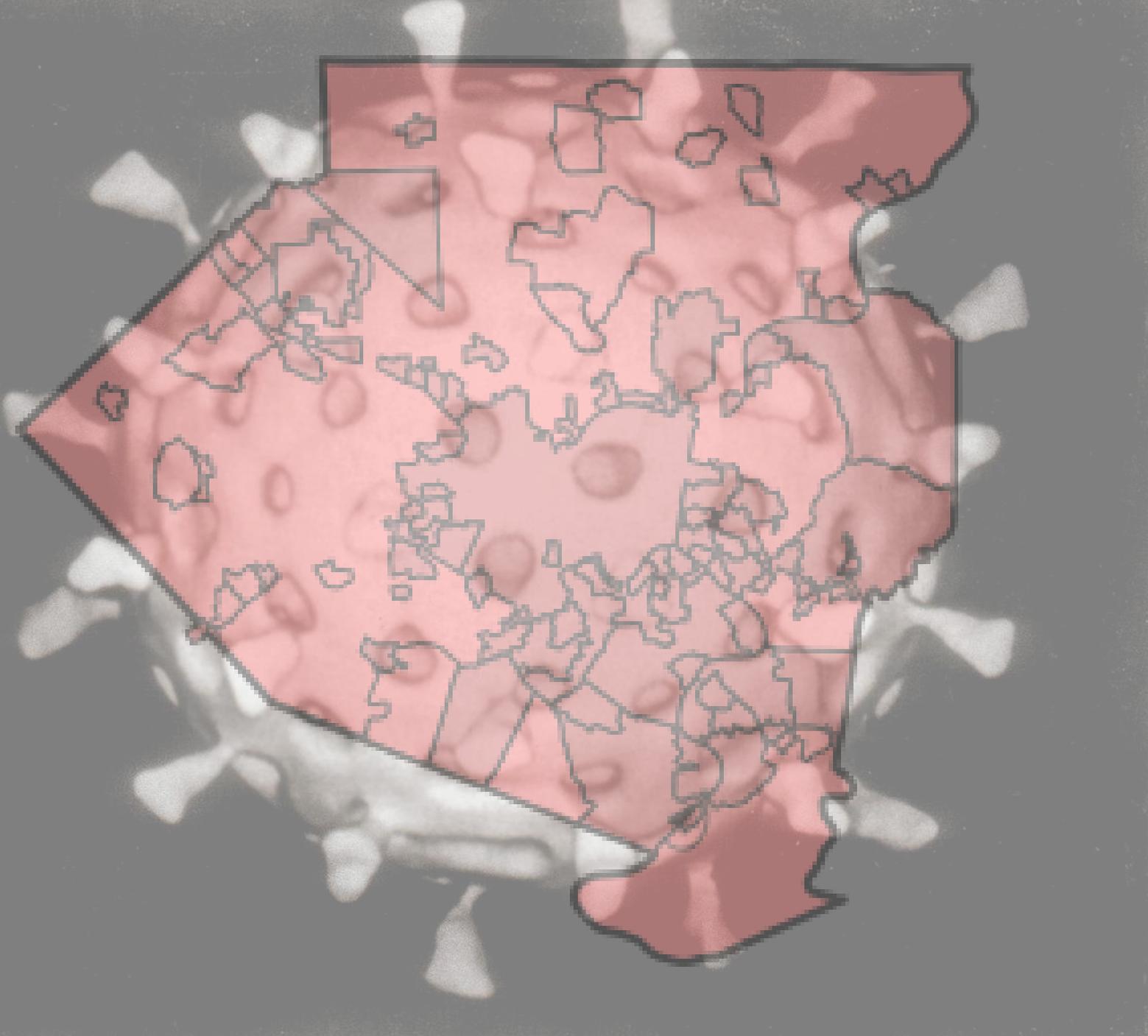


Community Violence Prevention Project Homicide Review Findings Report (2020)



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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Key Findings	3
Technical Notes	4
Background and Overview	4
Methods.....	5
Results	7
Geographic and Temporal Trends	8
Victim: race, gender, and age 2015 and 2020.....	9
Homicide by Day of the week.....	10
Homicide by Time of day	11
Homicide by Month.....	12
Cause of Death.....	13
Homicide and Victim Characteristics.....	14
Conflict context definitions.....	15
Conflict context.....	16
Victim: previous criminal charges.....	17
Key Contributing factors	18
Seven year comparison	19
Recommendations.....	20
Community Resources	24
Allegheny County Police Zone Map	25
Pittsburgh Police Zone Map.....	28
Bibliography	29

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Executive Summary

Our detailed review of Allegheny County's 108 homicides in 2020 further supports the need to distinguish between types of homicide cases. The 2020 homicide total for the City of Pittsburgh was 53 (increase in 54% from 2019) and for the suburban areas was 55 (decrease of 8% from 2019).

Allegheny County Homicide Demographics 2020

- 95 (88%) victims were male (compared to 82% in 2019).
- 87 (81%) victims were black (compared to 85% in 2019).
- 12 victims were killed in Wilkinsburg area, leading the most deaths in one neighborhood.
- The median age of a homicide victim was 31.
- 25% of homicide victims were African American males between the ages of 21-30.

A Typical Homicide in Allegheny County

- **Victim**
 - Male
 - African American
 - Between 21-30 years old
 - Has between 1 and 3 prior arrests
 - Has prior drug and/or burglary arrest on arrest history
 - Was or previously on probation/parole
- **Suspect**
 - Male
 - African American
 - Between 18-28 years old
 - Has between 1 and 5 prior arrests
 - Has prior drug and/or weapon arrest on arrest history
 - Was or previously on probation/parole
- **Homicide Circumstances**
 - The victim and suspect were peers (they had something in common)
 - The incident occurred between 9pm-12am
 - The incident occurred on Wednesday
 - The homicide involved a firearm

Key findings from 2020 show that:

- **Homicide victimization continues to be unevenly distributed across populations or places.** While only 13% of Allegheny County residents are African American, 81% of the victims were black. Fifteen percent of the homicides occurred in just one zip code of Allegheny County's 130 neighborhoods, zip code 15208.
- **Firearms are the main cause of death.** 90% of homicides were firearm related.
- **Social context matters for homicide victimization.** Chronic, multigenerational involvement in violence and illegal activities; additional opportunities for conflict through increased use of social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, twitter, YouTube and websites attracting extremists); prevalence of drugs, alcohol, and access to firearms; biases and violence as normative behavior were identified as relevant in the homicides.

The complexity of homicide and intentional injury prevention has become increasingly clear and points to the urgent need for efforts to address violence at multiple levels within Allegheny County communities. The recommendations include:

- **Identify and involve the support networks of at-risk individuals and engage those at risk who are not currently involved in mandated health or behavior programs.** Engaging individuals and families at risk of violence victimization in non-traditional settings (e.g., community-based organizations, primary care clinics) is a strategic way to address the complexity of peer conflict. We must begin to vet the agencies that deliver health and behavioral health services, to make sure we get the proper fit to assist families, communities, and children affected by this disease.
- **Modify community programs' participation requirements to ensure equal access.** Engaging individuals will improve participation and commitment: Modify participation requirements (e.g., parent/guardian signature payments), adapt service delivery to include non-traditional methods in communities, increase communication and coordination among behavior, health, and social programs and systems. After-school programs are a necessity for meeting the community members in community areas.
- **Increase community participation and investment in violence prevention efforts.** Combat attitudes of violence as normative behavior and promote an appropriate form of conflict resolution; support existing anti-violence groups and coalitions that provide awareness, education, and prevention; improve and strengthen community-police relations; and distribute anti-violence materials throughout Pittsburgh. Provide more education to change perceptions. We want to change community norms through education and resources.
- **Enhance the homicide review process to better inform our understanding of contributing factors and potential solutions.** Recruit new community and law enforcement members; enhance data collection efforts, specifically to better account for the unique factors involved in peer relationship homicides; increase police involvement; and enhance dissemination method.

Technical Notes

The Pitt Public Health Community Violence Prevention Initiative, within the Center for Health Equity and Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences at the Graduate School of Public Health, began in August 2012. Applying a public health perspective, the project gains an enhanced understanding of the contextual and underlying factors impacting community violence so recommendations specific to the needs of Allegheny County communities can be made. Using our greater understanding and the experience gained from the 2012 through 2020 Homicide Reviews, this represents our ninth findings report. As of 2014, we expanded our reporting to include data for all of Allegheny County and not just for the City Pittsburgh.

Background and Overview

In March of 2020, COVID-19 virus hit the community, and we were placed on red curfew at 8pm, everything was closed besides hospitals, grocery stores and other businesses that were considered essential until June of 2020. For the two months we were in lockdown, homicides and shootings were almost the same as 2019, with slightly less shootings. In June, homicides spiked with the highest number of homicides committed in the year of all 12 months. With adult and youth frustrations of being confined to their homes for so long, people started throwing COVID-19 parties which violated the governor's order. With many young people in lockdown, we have seen more of a presence on social media. Many feuds were born during the pandemic, and when Allegheny County went from red to yellow and the lockdown was lifted, we saw an uptick in shootings and homicides, which was in June.

As in our previous reports, we started to see the trend of more homicides being committed in the communities outside of the city of Pittsburgh. To the city's effort with its Group Violence Intervention (GVI), we have seen a steady decrease in the city of Pittsburgh's homicide rate. GVI is made up of a relationship with Pittsburgh Police and outreach workers working together to address issues in the neighborhoods of the city.

Outreach workers are men and women from the community that have the relationships and expertise to talk with people of all ages in the community and to calm situations that could turn into deadly occurrences. The key to GVI's success is that law enforcement has taken a new approach to situations that happen every day in the communities they serve. The partnership created with GVI enables better understanding of community occurrences and dynamics. If an outreach worker can calm a situation and offer services to address an issue it helps prevent violence resulting in homicides.

As previously mentioned, homicide rates in the city of Pittsburgh have declined while rates in suburban communities' increased in 2019 and decreased in 2020. The city of Pittsburgh has done a lot of work in the city and the downtown areas, causing gentrification in many city communities. In the past ten or more years, we have seen housing communities close and city residents displaced due to the closing of certain housing communities into county communities. Affordable housing is almost non-existent in the city communities. Section 8 housing is at an all-time low, which has forced past residents to look outside the city for relief.

It should be noted we have more than 142 municipalities in Allegheny County. We have a lot of landscape to cover, and each of those municipalities has their own police

department. Some or most do not have the adequate training, which many new police officers' need. Through our work on the Mayor's Police Reform Taskforce, we reference the need for more training such as de-escalation techniques, and changes in the "use of force" policies. In the Mon-Valley, many of the officers are part-time officers and work other jobs to make an average salary. For men or women who are interested in being an officer, an affordable pay and training is essential in changing the relationship with the community at-large.

In the suburban communities, we must work harder at creating the same things the city has done. First, we must improve police-community relationships but also establish projects like GVI county-wide. Second, there must be communication between officials and community workers to address issues in the communities.

This report shows that over 80% of victims were African American men and most were between 21 -30 years of age. In our statistics, you will also see the majority of these incidents occurred between 9pm – 12am. Homicides were most likely to occur on a Wednesday, and they were most likely to occur in or on the streets. This differs from other reports in the past where homicides were more likely to occur on the weekends. When we had written our report last year, McKeesport was the county community that showed an uptick in the homicides. In both 2019 and 2020, Wilkinsburg was the community in the county that had the most homicides. Looking at the City of Pittsburgh's numbers, the East End of Pittsburgh has continued to lead in the homicide count as it relates to zone 5. While last year, the South Side neighborhoods had an uptick in the homicides. We know that many of the shootings as well as the homicides that have occurred in the past couple of years is due to people moving from the city to the county, and county to city. Many of the people we speak to in the community always speak about not knowing many of the new people in their community, which makes it hard for law enforcement and community outreach workers to build relationships with the community.

We see that more interventions like what has been done in Pittsburgh is needed in county communities, starting with communication among people and law enforcement.

Our broad goals are to:

1. Uncover patterns among incidents of homicide.
2. Identify key preventable factors that contributed to the homicide.
3. Develop recommendations for homicide prevention.
4. Disseminate information and engage in community dialogue about violence prevention within Pittsburgh and Allegheny County neighborhoods.

- Richard Garland

Partnership Coordination Using a participatory-based approach, key local stakeholders were identified and invited to partner on project activities. Community partners involved representatives from a variety of organizations, each invested and contributing expertise to the project's objectives. Partners included adult and juvenile courts, county jail, city and county social service providers, public health professionals, trauma physicians and health

care professionals, schools, anti-gun violence advocates, and community members with long-standing experience with violence prevention efforts in Allegheny County.

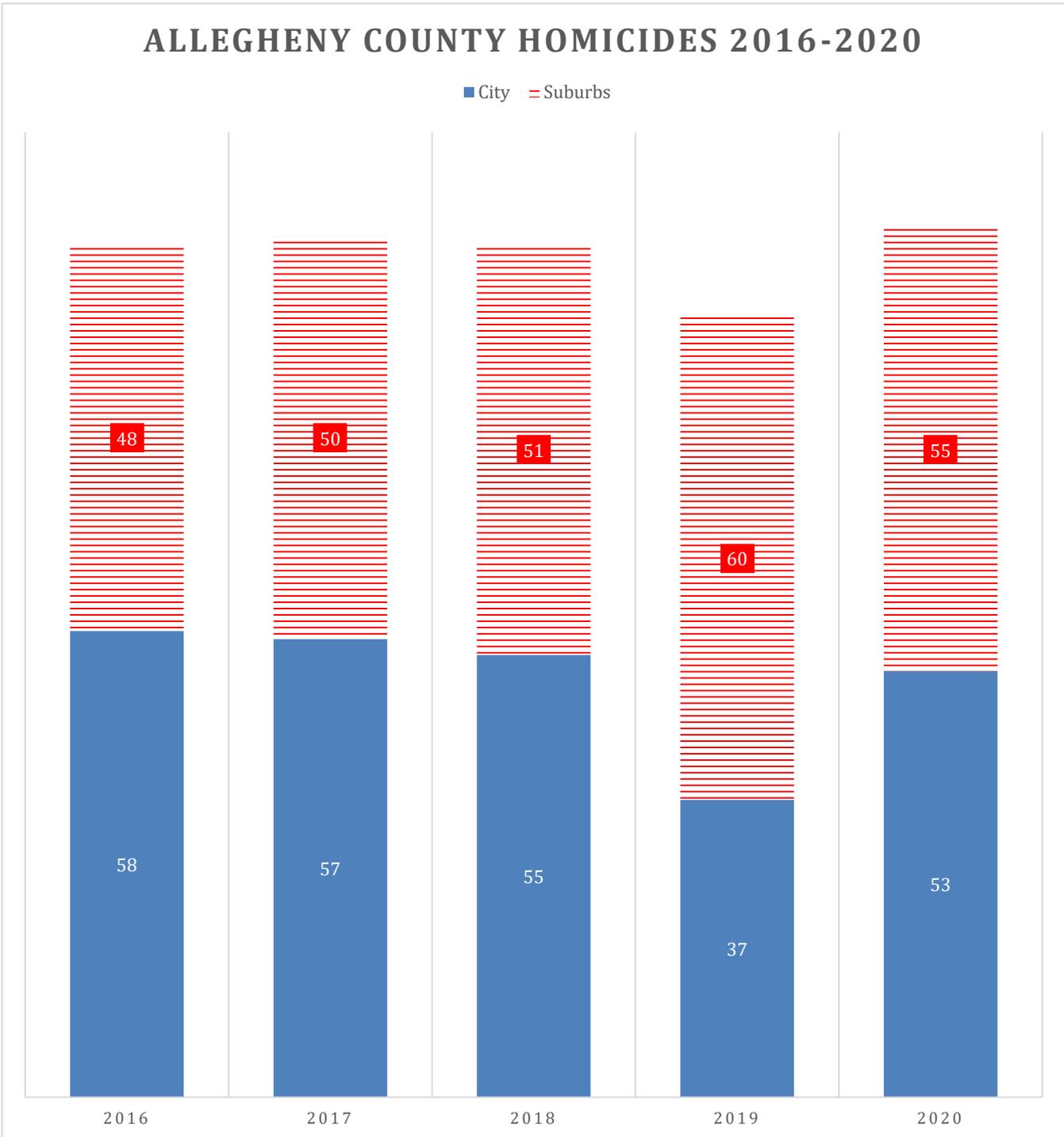
Data from Partners Data were collected on the 97 homicides through complementary sources of information including the Allegheny County Jail, Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Allegheny County Adult and Juvenile Probation, Health networks various social media sites and the Allegheny County Medical Examiner's Office. Partners were responsible for searching their own agencies for victim-specific information (e.g., previous involvement or supervision history, previous criminal charge) and sharing in preparation for review meetings.

Data from Community Two coaches - two academic research staff - constituted the "outreach team," who gathered fine-grained, contextual information surrounding the homicides from communities impacted by violence. Our outreach team members (Life Coaches) are long-term residents of Allegheny County with extensive violence prevention experience, particularly around retaliatory violence and street outreach. The outreach team discussed homicide cases with key neighborhood members and attended local community meetings to collect further detailed information. Information was gathered for each homicide and victim, including such things as relationship of the victim with the suspected perpetrator, evidence of previous conflict between the two, and family history of violence. The outreach team used information gathered from the community and media outlets to reach a consensus on whether the risk of retaliation was likely.

Homicide Review Group Composed of community partners, six homicide review group meetings took place with an average of 8-15 people per review attended. The reviews were held in person (at the Homewood Community Engagement Center and GSPH) and then virtually because of the pandemic from January 2020 to January 2021, and we reviewed 67 homicides. Community-based groups specific to the neighborhood where homicides occurred also were invited to attend the review. Meeting leaders encouraged brainstorming underlying causes of violence, intervention implications, and recommendations. All review meeting participants signed a non-disclosure statement.

The information discussed in this report represents a summary of collected data and information shared in homicide review group meetings and does not represent individual or organizational perspectives.

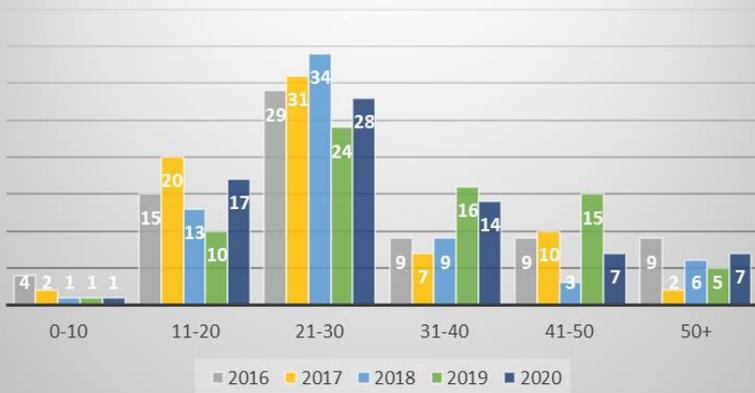
Results



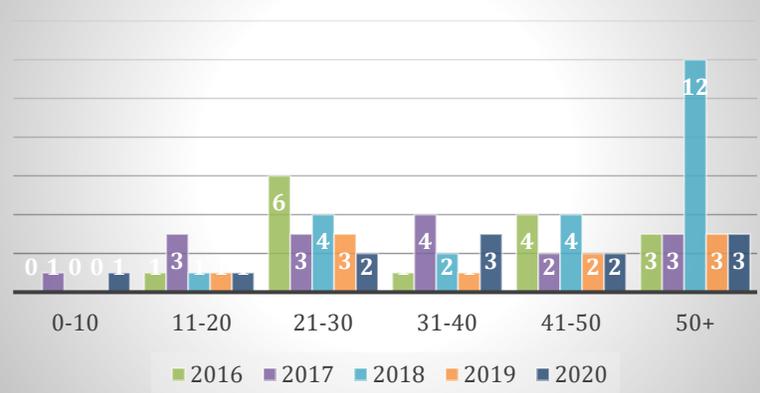
Zip Code	Neighborhood(s)	Land Area	Population	Police Department	Homicide Victims 2016	Homicide Victims 2017	Homicide Victims 2018	Homicide Victims 2019	Homicide Victims 2020
15236	Baldwin	5.9 sq mi	19,812	Baldwin P.D.	0	2	0	0	3
15202	Bellevue	1.01 sq. mi	8624	Bellevue P.D.	3	1	1	0	0
15102	Bethel Park	10.35 sq. mi	29, 529	Bethel Park P.D.	0	0	0	1	0
15014	Brackenridge	0.51 sq. mi	3262	Brackenridge P.D.	1	0	0	0	0
15221	Braddock Hills	1.0 sq mi	1880	Braddock Hills P.D .	0	4	0	0	0
15104	Braddock	2.45 sq. mi	8839	Braddock P.D .	3	2	2	0	4
15227	Brentwood	1.45 sq. mi	9613	Brentwood P.D.	3	5	0	2	1
15017	Bridgeville	13.045 sq. mi	16,690	Bridgeville P.D.	0	0	0	1	0
15106	Carnegie	11.16 sq. mi	18,536	Carnegie P.D.	0	0	0	1	0
15025	Clairton	2.8 sq. mi	11,343	Clairton P.D.	3	0	4	0	1
15216	Dormont	0.7 sq mi	8593	Dormont P.D.	0	1	0	0	0
15110	Duquesne	1.82 sq. mi	5547	Duquesne P.D .	0	1	4	2	0
15112	East Pittsburgh	0.4 sq mi	1822	East Pittsburgh P.D .	1	1	1	2	0
15223	Etna	0.73 sq. mi	3397	Etna P.D.	2	0	0	0	0
15238	Forward Township	19.9 sq. mi	3771	Forward Township P.D.	0	0	0	0	2
15045	Glasport	1.9 sq. mi	4,483	Glassport P.D.	0	1	0	0	0
15101	Allison Park	13.82 sq. mi	21, 741	Hampton Township P.D.	1	1	0	0	0
15065	Harrison Township	7.36 sq. mi	10,292	Harrison P.D.	0	0	0	1	0
15120	Homestead	1.90 sq. mi	3079	Homestead P.D.	2	0	2	5	0
15215	Kennedy, Sharpsburg	6.1 sq mi	11,118	Kennedy/Sharpsburg P.D.	0	0	0	0	1
15237	McCandless, Ross	24.21 sq. mi	41499	McCandless P.D.	0	0	1	1	1
15136	McKees Rocks	11.13 sq. mi	23184	McKees Rocks P.D .	3	3	9	5	7
15132	McKeesport	5.65 sq. mi	21057	McKeesport P.D.	4	14	5	7	6
15146	Monroeville	19.8 sq mi	28386	Monroeville P.D.	0	0	0	0	1
15108	Moon	39.47 sq. mi	38927	Moon Township P.D .	0	0	0	0	0
15228	Mt. Lebanon	6.08 sq. mi	33,137	Mt. Lebanon P.D.	0	1	1	0	0
15120	Munhall	4.67 sq. mi	18833	Munhall P.D.	0	0	2	0	0
15137	North Versailles	8.2 sq. mi	10,229	North Versailles P.D .	0	0	1	1	1
15139	Oakmont	1.59 sq. mi	6412	Oakmont P.D.	1	0	0	0	1
15235	Penn Hills	14.66 sq. mi	33681	Penn Hills P.D.	3	7	4	6	4
15140	Pitcairn	3.5 sq. mi	3,689	Pitcairn P.D.	0	1	0	1	0
15239	Plum	28.96 sq. mi	27,126	Plum P.D.	0	1	0	0	0
15104	Rankin	0.44 sq. mi	1,955	Rankin P.D.	2	0	1	3	0
15116	Shaler	11.7 sq mi	29,757	Shaler P.D .	0	0	0	1	0
15144	Springdale	1.09 sq mi	3,828	Springdale P.D.	0	0	1	0	0
15218	Swissvale	1.3 sq mi	9,653	Swissvale P.D .	0	5	0	2	2
15084	Tarentum	1.4 sq. mi	4,530	Tarentum P.D.	0	1	0	1	1
15145	Turtle Creek	1.97 sq. mi	6,945	Turtle Creek P.D.	1	2	0	0	1
15241	Upper St. Clair	10.4 sq. mi	19,651	Upper St. Clair P.D.	0	0	0	0	1
15147	Verona	10.12 sq. mi	17743	Verona P.D.	0	1	0	1	1
15122	West Mifflin	14.2 sq mi	20,313	West Mifflin P.D.	3	0	1	2	4
15229	West View	1.0 sq mi	6771	West View P.D .	0	0	0	0	0
15221	Wilkinsburg	6.15 sq. mi	31069	Wilkinsburg P.D.	12	0	9	10	12
15148	Wilmerding	0.4 sq. mi	2,190	Wilmerding P.D.	1	0	0	0	0
15212	Northside	6.22 sq. mi	27135	Zone 1 P.D .	9	6	4	4	8
15214	Northside	4.7 sq. mi	14293	Zone 1 P.D .	7	2	0	3	3
15233	Manchester	0.279 sq mi	2130	Zone 1 P.D .	0	2	0	0	0
15222	Strip District	0.81 sq. mi	3525	Zone 2 P.D .	1	0	0	1	0
15219	Hill District	2.29 sq. mi	17684	Zone 2 P.D .	3	5	4	6	4
15210	Allentown, Arlington, Beltzhoover, Carrick, Knoxville, Mount Oliver	3.34 sq. mi	20,663	Zone 3 P.D .	9	0	7	0	11
15211	Mt. Washinton	1.139 sq mi	8799	Zone 3 P.D .	1	1	0	2	2
15203	Southside	0.94 sq. mi	5,726	Zone 3 P.D.	0	1	1	1	0
15213	Oakland	2.13 sq. mi	25066	Zone 4 P.D .	1	1	1	0	1
15207	Hazelwood, Hays	4.79 sq. mi	10779	Zone 4 P.D .	0	2	1	1	2
15217	Squirrel Hill	1.2 sq. mi	11,363	Zone 4 P.D.	0	0	11	1	0
15232	Shadyside	0.921 sq. mi	13,915	Zone 4 P.D.	0	1	1	0	0
15201	Stanton Heights, Lawrenceville	2.48 sq. mi	12850	Zone 5 P.D .	1	0	0	0	1
15206	East Liberty, Larimer, Lincoln Lemington, Homewood	2.838 sq. mi	12584	Zone 5 P.D .	1	12	6	3	16
15208	Homewood, Point Breeze	1.61 sq. mi	10, 486	Zone 5 P.D .	10	8	7	7	1
15221	East Hills	0.541 sq mi	3, 169	Zone 5 P.D .	2	0	6	1	0
15224	Bloomfield, Garfield,	1.2 sq. mi	12, 117	Zone 5 P.D .	3	2	4	2	1
15205	Crafton Heights, Robinson	0.754 sq mi	3814	Zone 6 P.D .	2	2	1	2	2
15216	Beechview	1.46 sq mi	7974	Zone 6 P.D .	0	0	0	0	0
15204	Chartiers, Esplen, Sheraden	1.86 sq. mi	7986	Zone 6 P.D.	4	1	1	2	1
15220	Elliot	4.94 sq. mi	18023	Zone 6 P.D.	2	0	0	0	0
15226	Brookline	2.54 sq. mi	13551	Zone 6 P.D.	1	0	0	0	0

The graph above shows the number of homicides in the City of Pittsburgh compared to suburban neighborhoods of Allegheny County from 2016 - 2020.

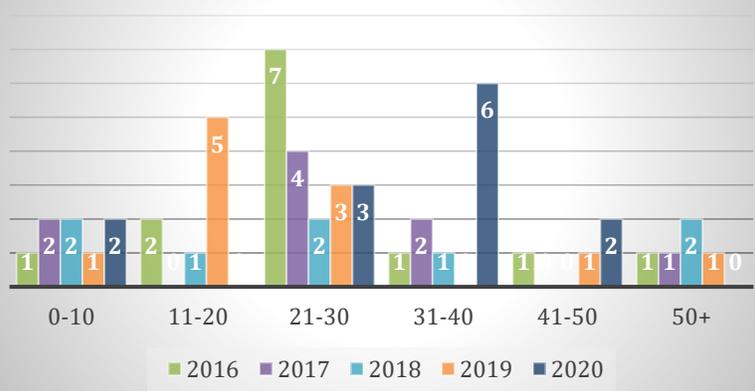
Black Males



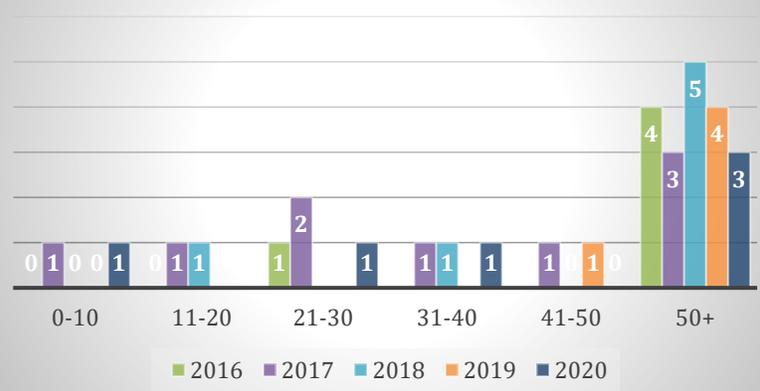
White Males



Black Females

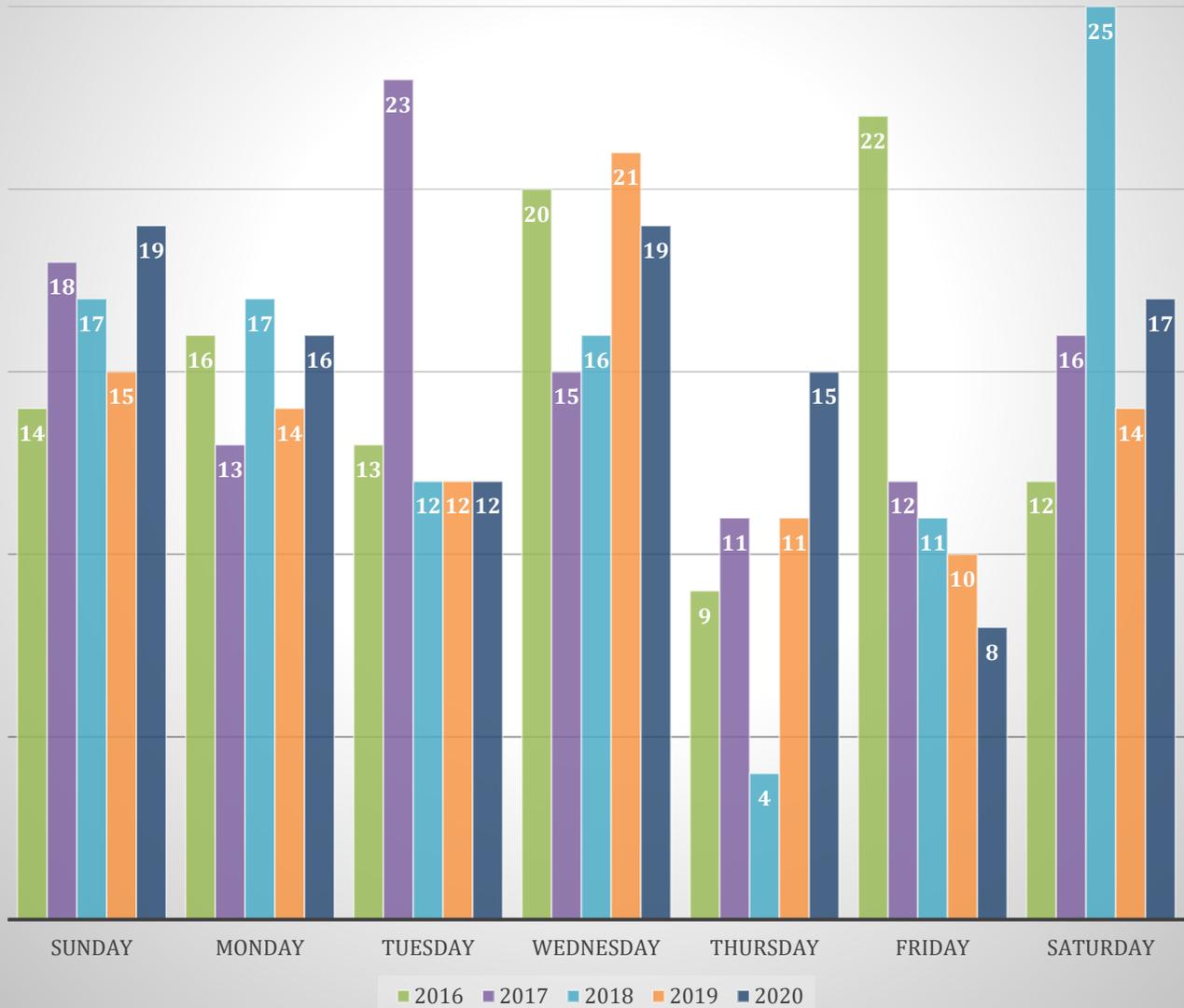


White Females



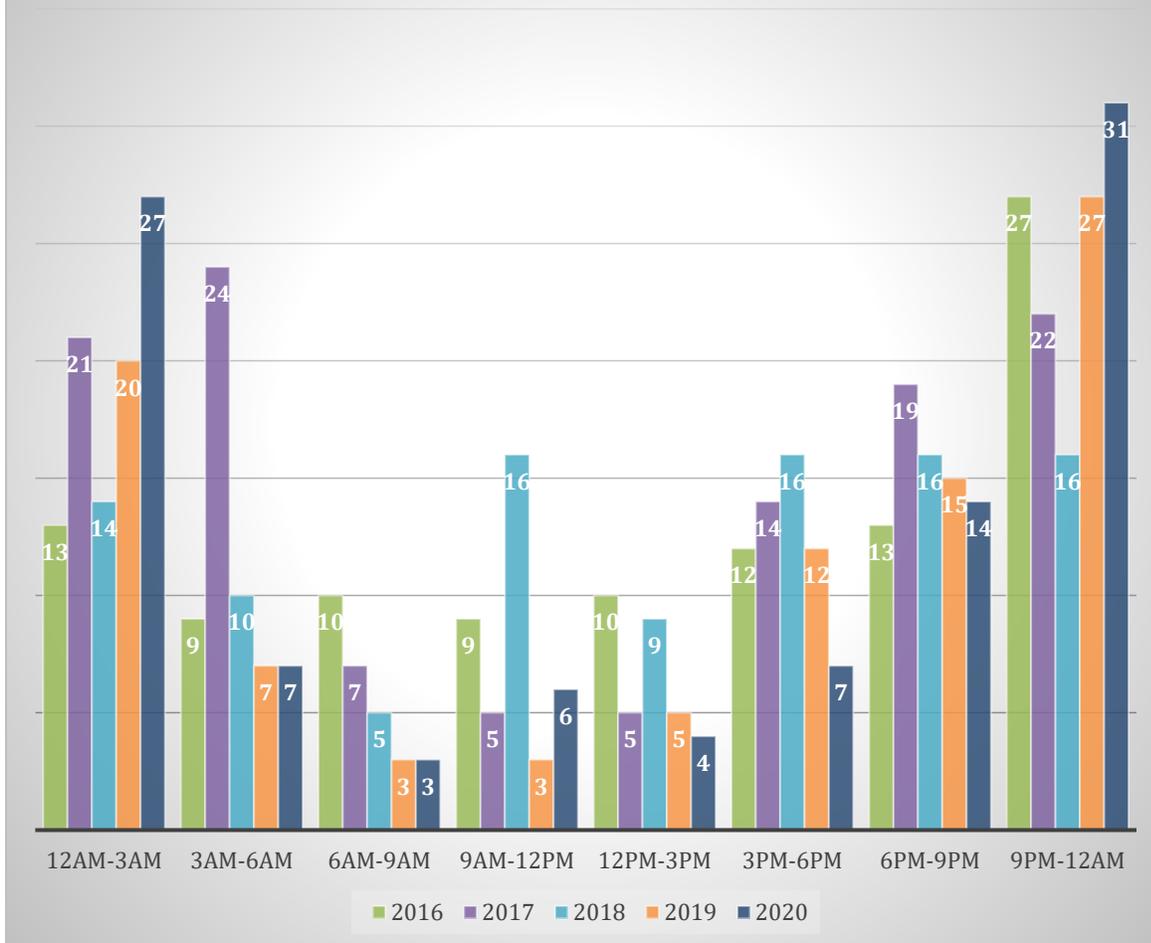
- Black males lead in the number of homicides (74) in 2020 followed by 13 black females, 12 white males and 5 white females. Numbers not graphed include 1 Hispanic female age 0-10 years of age, 1 Asian, and 1 Hispanic male(s) between the ages 31-40.
- The most common race, age, and gender of a homicide victim in Allegheny County in 2020 is black, males between the ages of 21-30, which has been for the past 5 years.
- Most of the 50+ population homicides were domestic related or, as in 2018, hate crimes where 10 people 50+ were killed.
- In the United States, Black's account for 53.73% of homicides, while Black's account for only 13.7% of the United States population.

Incident Days of the Week



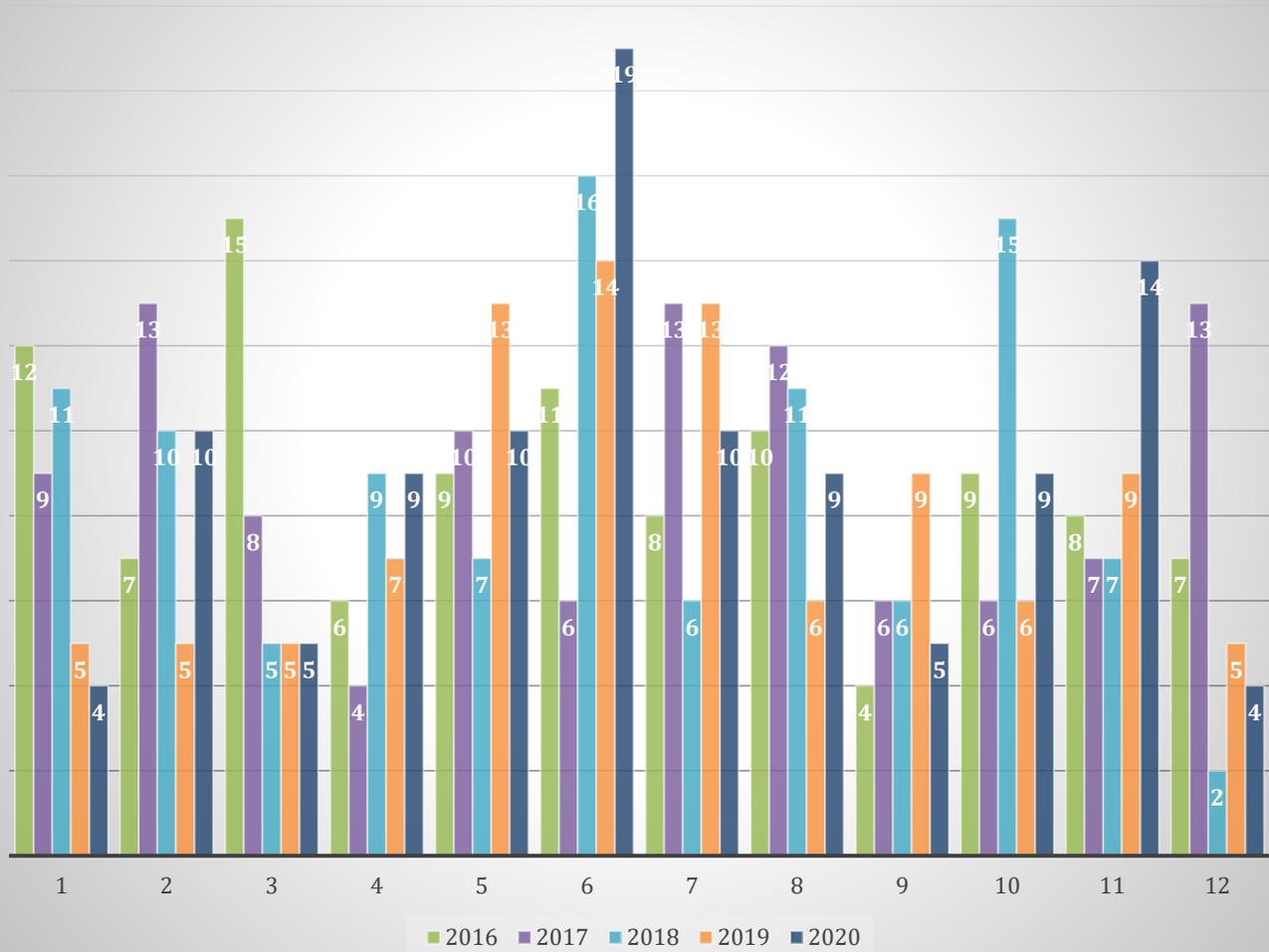
- Each year, homicides tend to happen more on the weekend days than weekdays. In 2020, we saw an increase on Sunday's and Wednesday's more than ever before and a decline on Fridays.
- In the past five years, 120 people were killed on a Wednesday and 120 on a Saturday, which led in days of the week when homicides occurred. The least homicides occurred on Thursdays with 76 homicide incidents from 2016 to 2020.
- The population of Allegheny county is estimated to be 1,216,045 with a land mass of 720 sq. mi.
- Allegheny County consist of 130 Municipalities, plus the 32 neighborhoods in the City itself.

2016-2020 Time of Incident



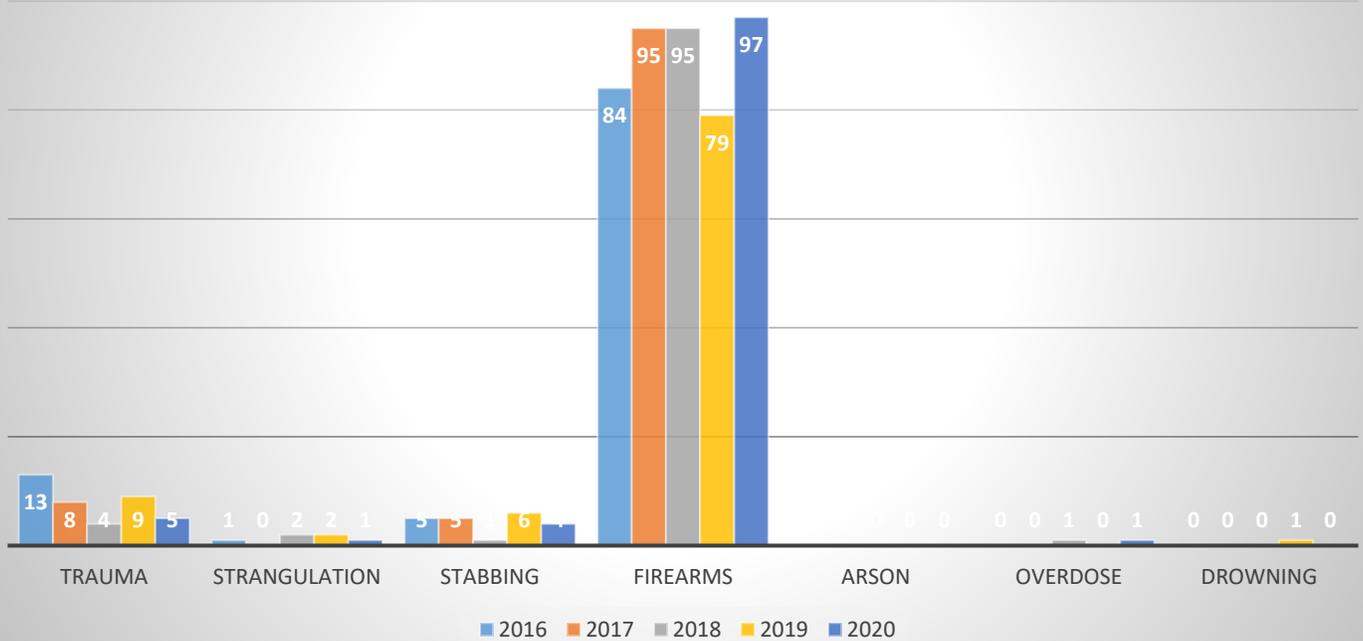
- Times in which a homicide usually occurs is always high during 9pm-3am. In 2020, times peaked between 9pm-12am. These are the usual night life hours where people are out in bars, clubs, or lounges.
- In 2020, from the beginning of March to the beginning of June, Allegheny was on was under the Governor's stay-in order due to the pandemic. The whole county had a curfew at 8pm. As shown in the chart, there were still rises of homicides during the hours no one should have been out. We see a decrease from previous years from 3pm-9pm then they climbed again from 9pm-3am more than previous years.

2016-2020 Month of Incident



- In June of 2020, we seen the most homicides in one month in the past 5 years. June this year is when the pandemic lock down was lifted from red to yellow, allowing more businesses to open up and the 8pm curfew being lifted.
- A significant increase in November around the Holidays was also noticed in 2020.

2016-2020 Cause of Deaths



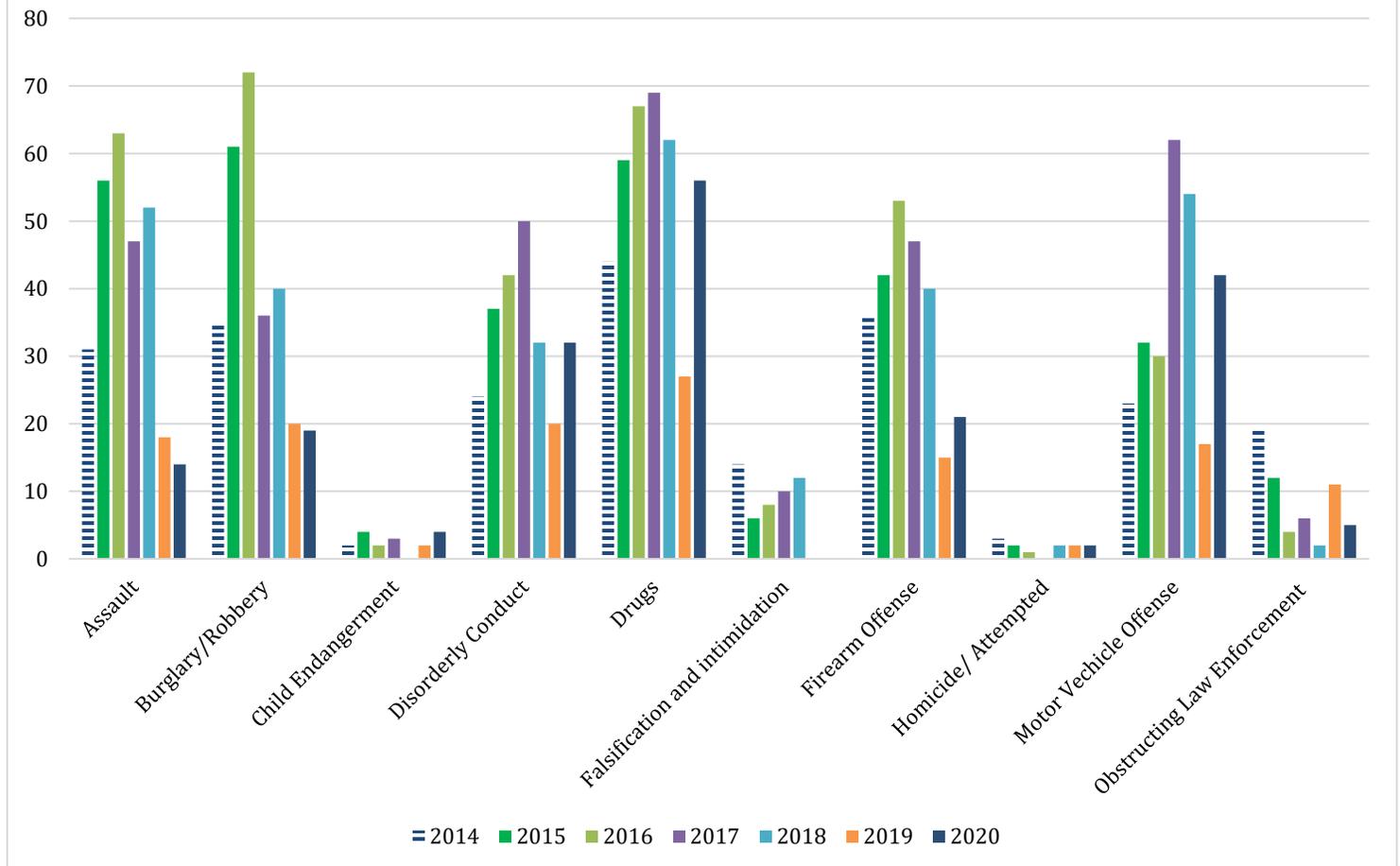
- Firearms are the leading cause of homicides each year. The accessibility to get a firearm is effortless and very common to have amongst all ages, ethnicities and genders.
- Not only does Allegheny County lead homicides in firearms, according to the Gun Violence Archive, a total of at least 19,223 people lost their lives in America due to gun violence in 2020. That is 25% jump from 2019.

Characteristics	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Number of Homicides	106	107	106	97	108
Location Type					
Street, Road, Avenue	35	36	51	32	49
House/Home	3	35	20	38	22
Housing Authority Housing	7	0	1	2	3
Apartment	2	5	5	3	4
Automobile	16	15	10	12	14
Bar, Club, Business	0	2	3	5	1
Park, Parking lot, Wooded area	3	7	5	4	4
Group home, Correctional facility	0	0	0	1	0
Other (i.e. vacant building, river, business)	5	5	11	0	11
Residence of Victim at time of death					
Pittsburgh	44	39	42	28	30
Suburbs	48	51	40	54	48
Homeless	1	0	0	2	1
Unknown/out of state	12	14	24	7	2
Outside of Allegheny County	1	3	0	6	1
Killed in Neighborhood of Residence	43	62	57	61	69
Others injured in incident	15	14	12	17	23
Received DHS Services	48	72	68	72	80
Perpetrator/Suspect					
Arrest made	45	42	51	58	22
Deceased (e.g. murder-suicide)	2	4	3	2	6
Charges pending (e.g., self-defense)	1	0	0	3	4
Law Enforcement	1	1	2	4	1
Unknown	57	60	50	29	67

Conflict context, definition (Allegheny County, 2018)	
Conflict Context	Definitions & Clarification
Peer conflict* *Peer - move in the same circle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposeful, self-motivated • Peers or individuals with something in common (e.g., avocation, residence, age) with more than a superficial familiarity • Conflicts may stem from such things as drugs, money, power, or disrespect, but not gang business
Gang/Group related	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Department of Justice gang definition is used, specifically there is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Identifiable leadership and internal organization ◦ Collective identification by employing a common name, slogan, sign or symbol, style or color of clothing • Conflicts are “gang on gang” or one named gang versus another named gang and may involve such things as turf/territory, intimidation, power, pride and respect, or gang business (e.g., drugs, stolen commerce, firearms, prostitution) • Geographically defined boundaries in Pittsburgh that determine with what gang you should affiliate
Isolated Incident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents that are criminally motivated, but do not involve aspects of a peer or gang-related conflict • Considered an isolated event • Conflicts may stem from such things as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Robbery, home invasion ◦ Argument/conflict ◦ Contracted killing
Child abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentional injury or violence towards a child
Intimate partner/Domestic violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentional injury or violence perpetrated by a current or former intimate partner (e.g., boyfriend, girlfriend, wife, husband) • Domestic injury or violence between family members or household affairs
Non-criminal or unintentional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidents that are not criminally motivated and do not involve aspects of a peer or gang-related conflict • Conflicts may stem from such things as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Unintended target ◦ No apparent motive ◦ Negligence or improper firearm storage ◦ Personal protection or self-defense
Hate Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically, one involving violence that is motivated by prejudice based on race, religion, sexual orientation, or other grounds
Law Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any incident that involves law enforcement
Unknown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown due to incomplete information

Conflict Context Allegheny County	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Peer conflict	43	49	25	28	29
Gang-related	0	0	0	0	0
Isolated Incident	16	9	13	20	18
Intimate partner or Domestic Violence	7	6	10	6	13
Child abuse	1	2	2	1	5
Non-criminal or unintentional	2	3	1	2	3
Hate Crime	0	0	12	0	0
Law Enforcement	1	1	2	4	1
Unknown	36	37	42	36	39

Allegheny County *Victim's* Previous Criminal Charges 2016-2020



- The above offenses are the top ten relevant to homicides and ten most common offenses committed by either a homicide victim or suspect.
- Drug charges were the leading charges victims received - majority were the manufacturing, delivery, or possession with intent to manufacture or deliver. Not shown in graph are sex offenses. There were 4 sex offense charges committed by victim(s) in 2020.
- Charges shown in the graph are only adult charges, 40% of victims in 2020 had juvenile charges also starting as young as 11 years of age.

Key Contributing Factors

Public information and news outlets often oversimplify intentional injury and homicides in Allegheny County, frequently identifying street gangs and illicit drugs as the source of conflict. Through community engagement and academic-community partnerships, greater contextual information was gathered, and homicides were found to involve a variety of factors. Numerous contributing factors were identified and discussed with partners as relevant to homicides from 2020.

Discussion took place around the role of street drugs, multigenerational family involvement in violence, and illegal activities. This cycle of violence, and its impact on the breakdown of a family unit, was identified as a contributor to a victim's involvement in violence. This is why we are taking the public health approach that sees violence as a disease that is passed on.

The increasing access to and use of social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat and Instagram) was still extensively discussed around homicide cases, particularly social media as an additional opportunity for conflict (i.e., beyond face-to-face arguments) especially during the pandemic and being on lockdown. These social media platforms are beginning to play a larger role in sources of conflict among individuals, often leading to future violence and intentional injury. Additionally, drugs, alcohol, and access to firearms were also frequently highlighted as related to the homicides. In these social media platforms, there are music videos with very detailed messages of different feuds going on, people who are feuding, and which people belong to which groups.

Violence as normative behavior and an appropriate form of conflict resolution was discussed as a significant contributing factor to the homicides. A lack of mentoring or positive behavior modeling within families, in addition to a potential familial cycle of violence was identified as relevant in the homicides from 2018 and still in 2020. This kind of violence is then carried out in the schools and in their neighborhoods.

Year by year Comparison: Emerging Differences

Victim and homicide differences emerged between 2012 and 2013. Female victims represented a larger number of homicides in 2013, (17% of total homicides, of which 50% were related to intimate partner violence). Furthermore, female intimate partner homicides were associated with a variation in cause of death compared to 2012 with 50% due to a gunshot wound, 25% due to poisoning, and 25% due to stabbing.

Age of homicide victim differed between the years, with most victims aged 18 to 25 years in 2012 compared to the majority 35 years or older in 2013.

In 2014, firearm charges for victims and suspects before the homicide incidents took place were more frequent. There were victims and suspects with more than one firearm charge usually juveniles to adults. Increasingly, the victims and suspects involved in our homicide incidents were charged with firearm violations in the past. In 2014, more than 50% of victims and suspects had prior firearm charges.

Data on victim's neighborhood of residence at time of death illustrates that one quarter of 2015-2016 Allegheny County homicide victims were living outside of city limits at time of death.

In 2017-2018, we have noticed a rise in domestic violence both intimate partner violence and domestic family violence with 9% of homicides being classified as domestic. Also, we have seen an increase of home invasions and robberies accounting for 12% of homicides committed on the person committing the act and, on the person(s) being robbed.

In 2018-2019, we saw a decrease in domestic incidents and an increase in isolated incidents where home invasions and robberies turned out to be a homicide. This being the perpetrator in the incident at 12% of these isolated incidents.

In 2019-2020, we saw an uptake in domestic violence and home invasions. We believe the pandemic had people stuck in the house with each other, causing the domestic abuse. Home invasions and robberies were also at an all-time high due to people not working or knowing of other stimulus money or new things they bought. The pandemic should have caused a decrease in homicides and gunshots, due to the precautions that were taking the stop the spread of one disease we should of seen a decrease in the spreading of the violence as a disease.

Recommendations

The complexity of homicide and intentional injury prevention has become clear over the past five years of project activities. In order to be effective, a range of interventions need to take place at multiple levels. The remainder of this report outlines recommendations from partners that incorporate information and insight gained in 2015. Some of the recommendations are like those made following the review of homicides from 2012-2020, illustrating the improvements that still need to take place. Divided into *Individuals and Peers at Risk*, *Service Improvement*, and *Community Action*, the recommendations identify potential opportunities to further understand, increase awareness, and prevent and respond to violence impacting Allegheny County communities.

Individuals and Peers at Risk

- **Identify and involve the support network of at-risk individuals.** Natural supports are key assets in encouraging an individual's engagement, commitment, and success in health and behavior programs. Natural supports help at-risk individuals through their advocacy and should be identified and engaged in violence prevention and intervention activities.
- **Reach out and engage those at risk for violence who are not currently involved in a mandated health or behavior program.** Due to regulations of local health and behavior programs (e.g., juvenile court), individuals who are not under mandated involvement, but who may be at risk for violence, are unable to access services that may benefit them. Emphasis should be on engaging and referring these individuals

at multiple points of contact (e.g., primary care clinics, community-based organizations, after school programs) to appropriate health and behavior programs.

Service Improvement

- **Enhance connections between behavior, health, and social programs and systems.** Continuity between behavior, health, and social systems is crucial. Connections between systems should be improved to avoid any interruption in use or loss to follow-up.
- **Focus on engagement.** Individuals, particularly youth, may be more willing to participate in community health and social programs if they are engaged, rather than identified as needing a particular service.
- **Modify participation requirements.** Community adolescent or youth programs often require a parent/guardian's signature or payment to participate. These requirements eliminate potential participants who are unable to provide either a signature or payment. Program modifications or exceptions to participation requirements would ensure that all interested adolescents have a chance to participate, and overall, increase their access to a supportive community.
- **Adapt structure of service delivery in community settings.** Community stigma and distrust of certain institutions are significant barriers to access and use of existing services. Health and social service organizations should adapt their structure of service delivery to include non-traditional methods (e.g., having more men and women walking neighborhoods) to not only increase awareness and program participation, but also better understand why current services are underutilized and to combat stigma or distrust.
- **Increase communication and coordination among organizations concerned with violence prevention efforts.** Numerous organizations are currently working with individuals and families at risk for violence or around local violence prevention efforts. Increased communication and coordination between these organizations would promote earlier intervention with at-risk individuals, as well as foster a larger network of individually tailored violence prevention efforts.

Community Action

- **Combat attitudes of violence as normative behavior and an appropriate form of conflict resolution.** The normalization of violence exists within Allegheny County families and communities, and overall, supports a cycle of violence. The following recommendations help to stop the cycle of violence: increased anti-violence initiatives that combat such attitudes, promotion of positive behavior modeling for children, youth, and young adults, and teaching/encouraging appropriate conflict resolution strategies.
- **Improve and strengthen community-police relations.** Poor community-police relations negatively impact and undermine violence prevention efforts. Increased

trust, respect, and accountability between both groups is essential in order to work toward creating safe communities.

- **Distribute anti-violence and homicide awareness, education, and prevention materials throughout Pittsburgh.** Homicide and community violence information should be distributed throughout communities, local government and county agencies, and local media. Through increasing awareness and knowledge of homicide prevalence, greater attention and discussion can take place around the urgency for more effective prevention efforts.
- **Increase community participation and investment in violence prevention efforts.** Numerous community organizations, groups, and coalitions are already providing anti-violence awareness, education, and prevention throughout Allegheny County. Local governmental agencies, academic institutions, and community assets (e.g., barbershops and beauty salons, religious institutions, funeral homes) should support these existing efforts, so a diverse coalition to confront the violence impacting our communities can be created.
- **Moms group support other moms and families during the time of loss.** Having a group of moms mostly but other family members who have already been through the loss of a loved one.

Community Recommendations

- **Enhance data collection efforts.** Toxicology reports by the medical examiner's office, victim's social media presence, and prior residence information, as well as information on surviving children and other family members, would allow for an improved review of homicides. Additionally, data collection efforts should be expanded to better account for the unique factors involved in intimate partner homicides, such as history of abuse, including Protection from Abuse (PFA) filings and prior police-involved incidents; history of substance abuse; weapons in the home; use of community resources; and previous use of mental health and other behavioral health services by perpetrator.
- **Increase police involvement.** Collaboration for the City of Pittsburgh Bureau of Police and all the different municipalities police and their involvement and representation in homicide review meetings is crucial to gaining a comprehensive understanding of homicides within Allegheny County. Their commitment and participation may also foster improved community relations.
- **Disseminate findings through multiple methods.** Findings should be disseminated widely, including non-traditional methods. One suggestion is to share information from public safety meetings with neighborhoods and communities impacted by violence to encourage community engagement and dialogue around appropriate intervention and prevention efforts. Placing copies of the report in barbershops, hair salons and community libraries, for the community to read.

- **Track initiative involvement.** It is important to keep track of the diverse violence prevention initiatives around Allegheny County and to observe their impacts on the homicide rate. Bringing representatives from these initiatives to the table to share with all homicide review members is essential; they may also assist in disseminating information to these communities where coming from.
- **Increase awareness of Social Media.** Informing community members to check children, family members and friend's social media pages for threats of violence. Social media has a huge effect on the violence in schools, businesses and communities. Being aware of the issues before they occur through the social media lenses will help prevent a lot of the violence we see in our communities. Advertising positive events and positivity through social media to reach the population.
- **Support homicide victims' children.** Support through mentorships, activities and guidance through school, community programs and after school activities and needs for future success. Other communities' members connecting with guardians of the children to give them a strong support system. Often families are affected physically, financially, and mentally by the homicide loss and linking children with a trusted mentor in the community will strengthening the child and community.

Community Resources

Center for Victims

3433 East Carson Suite #300
Pittsburgh, PA 15203
(412) 482-3240
24-hour crisis hotline 1-866-644-2882

Community Empowerment Association

Arts, Culture, & Training Center
7120 Kelly Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15208
(412) 371-3689

First United Methodist Church

1406 Cornell Street
McKeesport, PA 15132
(412) 672-5352

Department of Human Services

1 Smithfield Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
(412) 350-5701

Hill House Association

1835 Centre Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
(412) 392-4400

Homewood Community Engagement Center

622 N Homewood Ave
Pittsburgh, PA 15208
(412) 383-0830

Manchester Citizens Corporation

1319 Allegheny Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
(412) 323-1743

National Council for Urban Peace and Justice

P.O. Box 99746
Pittsburgh, PA 15233
(412) 606-0059

Neighborhood Resilience Project

2038 Bedford Ave,
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
(412) 261-1234

The Pittsburgh Project

2801 North Charles Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15214
(412) 321-1678

The Corner Pittsburgh

200 Robinson St
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412) 683-1400

Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh

610 Wood Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

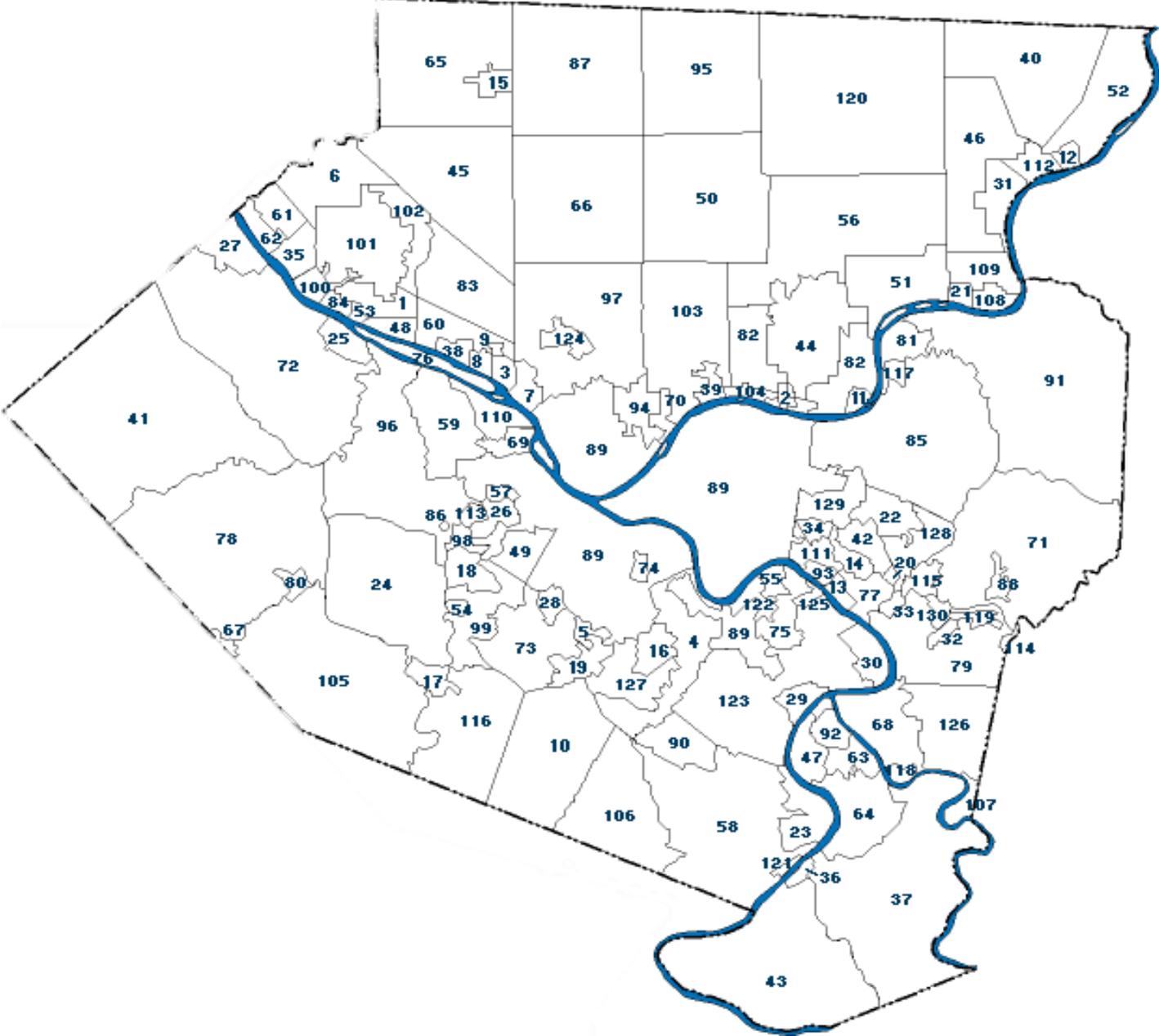
YMCA Homewood

7140 Bennett Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15208
(412) 243-2900

Kingsley Association

6435 Frankston Ave
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
(412) 661-8751
kingsleyassociation.org

Appendix A. Allegheny County Zone Map

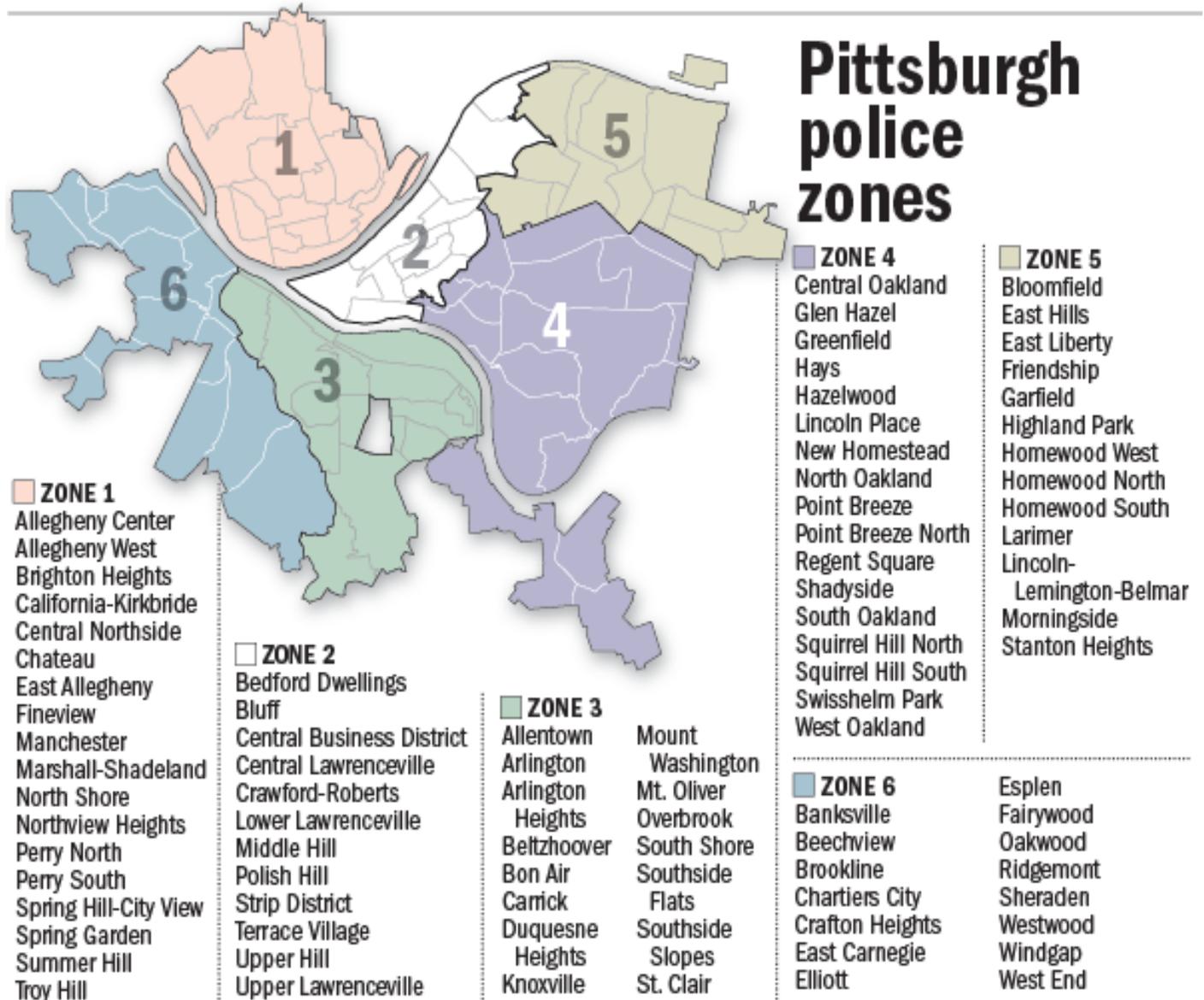


Source: <http://apps.alleghenycounty.us/website/MuniList.asp>

- 1 Aleppo Township
- 2 Borough of Aspinwall
- 3 Borough of Avalon
- 4 Borough of Baldwin
- 5 Baldwin Township
- 6 Borough of Bell Acres
- 7 Borough of Bellevue
- 8 Borough of Ben Avon
- 9 Borough of Ben Avon Hts.
- 10 Municipality of Bethel Park
- 11 Borough of Blawnox
- 12 Borough of Brackenridge
- 13 Borough of Braddock
- 14 Borough of Braddock Hills
- 15 Borough of Bradford Woods
- 16 Borough of Brentwood
- 17 Borough of Bridgeville
- 18 Borough of Carnegie
- 19 Borough of Castle Shannon
- 20 Borough of Chalfant
- 21 Borough of Cheswick
- 22 Borough of Churchill
- 23 City of Clairton
- 24 Collier Township
- 25 Borough of Coraopolis
- 26 Borough of Crafton
- 27 Crescent Township
- 28 Borough of Dormont
- 29 Borough of Dravosburg
- 30 City of Duquesne
- 31 East Deer Township
- 32 Borough of East McKeesport
- 33 Borough of East Pittsburgh
- 34 Borough of Edgewood
- 35 Borough of Edgeworth
- 36 Borough of Elizabeth
- 37 Elizabeth Township
- 38 Borough of Emsworth
- 39 Borough of Etna
- 40 Fawn Township
- 41 Findlay Township
- 42 Borough of Forest Hills
- 43 Forward Township
- 44 Borough of Fox Chapel
- 45 Borough of Franklin Park
- 46 Frazer Township
- 47 Borough of Glassport
- 84 Borough of Glen Osborne
(formerly Osborne)
- 48 Borough of Glenfield
- 49 Borough of Green Tree
- 50 Hampton Township
- 51 Harmar Township
- 52 Harrison Township
- 53 Borough of Haysville
- 54 Borough of Heidelberg
- 55 Borough of Homestead
- 56 Indiana Township
- 57 Borough of Ingram
- 58 Borough of Jefferson Hills
- 59 Kennedy Township
- 60 Kilbuck Township
- 61 Leet Township
- 62 Borough of Leetsdale
- 63 Borough of Liberty
- 64 Borough of Lincoln
- 65 Marshall Township
- 66 Town of McCandless
- 67 Borough of McDonald
- 68 City of McKeesport
- 69 Borough of McKees Rocks
- 70 Borough of Millvale
- 71 Municipality of Monroeville
- 72 Moon Township
- 73 Municipality of Mt. Lebanon
- 74 Borough of Mt. Oliver

75 Borough of Munhall
76 Neville Township
77 North Braddock Borough
78 North Fayette Township
79 North Versailles Township
80 Borough of Oakdale
81 Borough of Oakmont
82 O'Hara Township
83 Ohio Township
85 Municipality of Penn Hills
86 Pennsbury Village
87 Pine Township
88 Borough of Pitcairn
89 City of Pittsburgh
90 Borough of Pleasant Hills
91 Borough of Plum
92 Borough of Port Vue
93 Borough of Rankin
94 Reserve Township
95 Richland Township
96 Robinson Township
97 Ross Township
98 Borough of Rosslyn Farms
99 Scott Township
100 Borough of Sewickley
101 Borough of Sewickley Hts.
102 Borough of Sewickley Hills
103 Shaler Township
104 Borough of Sharpsburg
105 South Fayette Township
106 South Park Township
107 South Versailles Township
108 Borough of Springdale
109 Springdale Township
110 Stowe Township
111 Borough of Swissvale
112 Borough of Tarentum
113 Borough of Thornburg
114 Borough of Trafford
115 Borough of Turtle Creek
116 Upper St. Clair Township
117 Borough of Verona
118 Borough of Versailles
119 Borough of Wall
120 West Deer Township
121 Borough of West Elizabeth
122 Borough of West Homestead
123 Borough of West Mifflin
124 Borough of West View
125 Borough of Whitaker
126 Borough of White Oak
127 Borough of Whitehall
128 Wilkins Township
129 Borough of Wilkinsburg
130 Borough of Wilmerding

Appendix B. Pittsburgh Bureau of Police Zone Map



Source: Pittsburgh Bureau of Police

James Hilston/Post-Gazette

Appendix C. Bibliography

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