The Findlay Market District--

A Comparative Demographic Analysis

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THE FINDLAY MARKET DISTRICT -- A COMPARATIVE DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

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Executive Summary

Assessing the Findlay Market District

Findlay Market is located within several blocks of Downtown Cincinnati, in two of Cincinnati's oldest residential neighborhoods, Over-the-Rhine and the West End. The nine-block Findlay Market District includes 1,636 residents. However, more than 20,000 residents of Over-the-Rhine and the West End live within walking distance of Findlay Market and are impacted by its presence. By assessing the demographic and economic characteristics of residents in the Findlay Market District, we found the following results.

The data show that the Findlay Market District is one of concentrated poverty and urban decay. The level of income among regional residents is not sufficient to match expenses for children, and the number of working adults is low. Furthermore, access to employment is limited due to reliance on public transportation.

Findlay Market residents are predominantly African-American.

Within the Findlay Market District, 76 percent of residents are black, and 24 percent are white. This contrasts with the racial composition of the Greater Cincinnati area, where 12 percent of residents are black and 87 percent are white.

The Findlay Market District contains a larger than average number of children under the age of six.

Over 15 percent of children in the Findlay Market District are not old enough to attend school. In comparison, 10 percent of children in the U.S. are of pre-school age. Elderly residents (over 65) make up 11 percent of the population in the Findlay Market District. More than 95 percent of children under the age of six and 20 percent of elderly residents live in poverty.

A significant proportion of households in the Findlay Market District include families with a single parent.

The mean income of single parent (female) families is about $4,432 in the Findlay Market District -- nearly 11 times less than married couple families in the United States. Most single parent families are headed by women and include children under the age of six. Furthermore, two-thirds of single fathers and three-fourths of single mothers with pre-school children are not participants in the labor force.

I. How To Use This Report

As a public market located in one of Cincinnati's oldest, most central neighborhoods, Findlay Market is an important asset to the residents of Cincinnati's downtown. A source of reasonably priced food and specialty items, the market represents a unique resource for the diverse inhabitants of the Findlay Market District. The market also serves as a potential source of employment for Findlay Market residents. Improvements and expansions to Findlay Market have direct social and economic implications for the people living in its vicinity.

This report provides a demographic and economic profile of the Findlay Market District and compares this locality with the broader Over-the-Rhine and West End neighborhoods, the Greater Cincinnati region, and the United States. By analyzing more than 80 demographic and economic variables, we have provided a picture of the similarities and differences between the Findlay Market District and the rest of the region.

Equipped with this information, the City of Cincinnati and community leaders may plan strategies and pursue objectives that result in an enhanced market atmosphere, while developing the strengths of the surrounding neighborhood. This report and the coinciding data base, may be used as a comprehensive, accurate source of base-line information about the local community. The data base and subsequent analysis will allow market officials and city planners to record and measure progress in the Market's ability to serve as a catalyst for economic development and improved quality of life for local people.

II. How We Conducted This Study

To conduct this research, the Economics Research Group at the University of Cincinnati worked in cooperation with the City of Cincinnati and Aaron Zaretsky, head of the Grove Arcade Public Market Foundation in Asheville, to develop a data base of demographic and economic characteristics of residents of the neighborhood surrounding Findlay Market. These data provide a baseline for ongoing comparison of data about residents of the Findlay Market District, the surrounding communities of Over-the-Rhine and the West End, Hamilton County, the Greater Cincinnati region, the State of Ohio and the United States.

III. Demographic Characteristics of Findlay Market Residents

Cincinnati resembles a number of mid-sized, Midwestern municipalities in its overall demography and economy. The downtown region is represented by a majority of African-American residents, many of whom live in poverty. Many of the households are led by women who do not work and who have small children in the home.

A. Ethnicity -- Cincinnati's Inner-City is home to the Region's African-American Community.

The Findlay Market District is a neighborhood with a high concentration of black residents -- 3 out of 4 residents living in the area are black. The ratio of black to white residents increases in the Over-the Rhine/West End Region, where the population consists of 83 percent black residents. Very few other minorities inhabit the Findlay Market District. These data are reflected in Figure 1 on the opposite page.

The racial composition of the Findlay Market District contrasts with the overall racial make-up of the Greater Cincinnati region and the United States. Within the Hamilton County, 78 percent of residents are white, compared to 21 percent black and 1 percent of other minorities. Looking at Greater Cincinnati, the differences become even more pronounced. Here, 87 percent of the broader Cincinnati region are white, with just 12 percent black -- exceeding national averages for the percentage of whites within the total population. The racial composition of the broader region is a reverse image of the ratio Downtown. Figure 2 on the opposite page compares racial composition for these areas.

IV. Economic Characteristics of Findlay Market Residents

Findlay Market is characterized by high unemployment rates and income levels that are four times lower than the national average. Jobs held by Findlay Market residents are predominantly found in the service sector, which may not provide adequate wages and employment conditions for unskilled workers. In addition, a vast majority of Findlay Market residents live below the poverty level.

A. Income Levels -- Income Levels in the Findlay Market District are Nearly Four Times Lower than Income Among Greater Cincinnati Residents.

In the Findlay Market District, the per capita income in 1990 was $3,554 compared with $14,500 in Greater Cincinnati and $14,420 in the United States. The per capita income was slightly higher in the Over-the-Rhine/West End region, at $5,359. Per capita income in the Findlay Market District was 25 percent of the national average, compared to the Greater Cincinnati region, which was 101 percent of the national average. These figures are reflected in Figure 8 on the opposite page.

Married Couple Households In the Findlay Market District Make Less than in Other Areas

The average income of married couples with children under 18 was $15,046 for residents of the Findlay Market District, nearly half the average of residents in the Over-the-Rhine/West End region, at $31,193. In comparison, married couples of the Greater Cincinnati region brought home $51,270 -- nearly three and a half times that of couples in the Findlay Market District.

Nationally, married couples brought home slightly more ($48,860) than the single mothers and single fathers combined ($44,130), indicating that a married household is better off financially than single parent households, on average. This trend among married couple income is accentuated in the Findlay Market neighborhood. In the Findlay and Mohawk Districts combined (Census Tract 16), married couples earned $18,717 which is well beyond the combined income of single male householders and single female householders ($8,396).

For additional information contact the Economics Center for Education & Research, email Econeduc@uc.edu.
Please reference report: 1997-IA-1001 ES Findlay Market Report