

University at Albany, State University of New York

Scholars Archive

Campus Conversations in Standish

2-22-2017

98 Acres in Albany: Telling the Social History of Urban Renewal

David Hochfelder

University at Albany, State University of New York, dhochfelder@albany.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/campus_conversations



Part of the [History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Hochfelder, David, "98 Acres in Albany: Telling the Social History of Urban Renewal" (2017). *Campus Conversations in Standish*. 4.

https://scholarsarchive.library.albany.edu/campus_conversations/4

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Archive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Campus Conversations in Standish by an authorized administrator of Scholars Archive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@albany.edu.

98 Acres in Albany: Telling the Social History of Urban Renewal

David Hochfelder
History Department
22 Feb. 2017



State Buys 40 Blocks In Heart of Albany

In the boldest single stroke of urban renewal in the nation's history, the State of New York this morning will acquire title to nearly 100 acres in the heart of Albany at a cost of \$20 million.

The Temporary State Commission on the Capital City announced late yesterday that a tract embracing 3,300 dwelling units and scores of business establishments, as well as schools and churches, is being claimed for the State's downtown office building complex.

Parking for 10,000 cars and acres of landscaped mall will be included, too, within an area that will stretch in a vast cornucopia from near Madison Avenue and Broadway westward to Eagle Street,

where it will take on the shape of a half-mile-wide rectangle extending two blocks west to Swan Street. On its widest side, along South Swan Street, the area will be from State Street (at the State Office Building corner) virtually to the edge of Lincoln Park. Occupants "will not be disturbed" until necessary; they will receive "ample notice," and the State is developing a resettlement program.

Mayor Erastus Corning 2nd, in a statement to the commission, objected vigorously to the project. He declared that the "human rights" of the residents would call for building of housing first, to prevent a "completely unnecessary tragedy" in uncertainties of relocation. He promised to "protect the people of

Albany" against an action which he described as "hasty, ruthless, inhumane." He threatened court action to halt the State's project.

Forty city blocks, in whole or in part, are involved. An estimated 6,800 people live there. A few landmarks, such as churches—St. Paul's Episcopal, St. Sophia's Greek Orthodox, First Methodist—will go, along with schools—P.S. 2 and Cardinal McCloskey High School—and commercial and public structures, such as city police headquarters and the old Lyon Block. Some newer buildings, including some built in recent years between State and Chestnut Streets, from Eagle to Swan, also are to be destroyed.

A few major buildings on the fringes of the area, such as the Executive Mansion, the New York Telephone Company's main building on State Street, and

the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, will remain.

From the affected area, scores of businesses and thousands of people will be moved over a period of years. Meanwhile, probably this morning, the State will take title to all the properties and will become the landlord to all the tenants. The city will collect taxes from occupants of the land.

On the site, within the next several years, will rise a number of new state buildings, together with impressive approaches and park-like areas. With the exception of the few principal existing buildings which will be allowed to remain within the extreme borders of the area, the land will be entirely cleared and its character will change completely.

**FINAL
EDITION**

★ ★ ★
**Complete N. Y. Stocks
Latest Sports**

THE
TIMES UNION

106th YEAR—No. 341

ALBANY, N. Y., TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 1962

F 7 CENTS

Land Appropriation Map

Page 6

Answers to 16 Key Questions

Page 16

Eight Pages of Stories, Photos















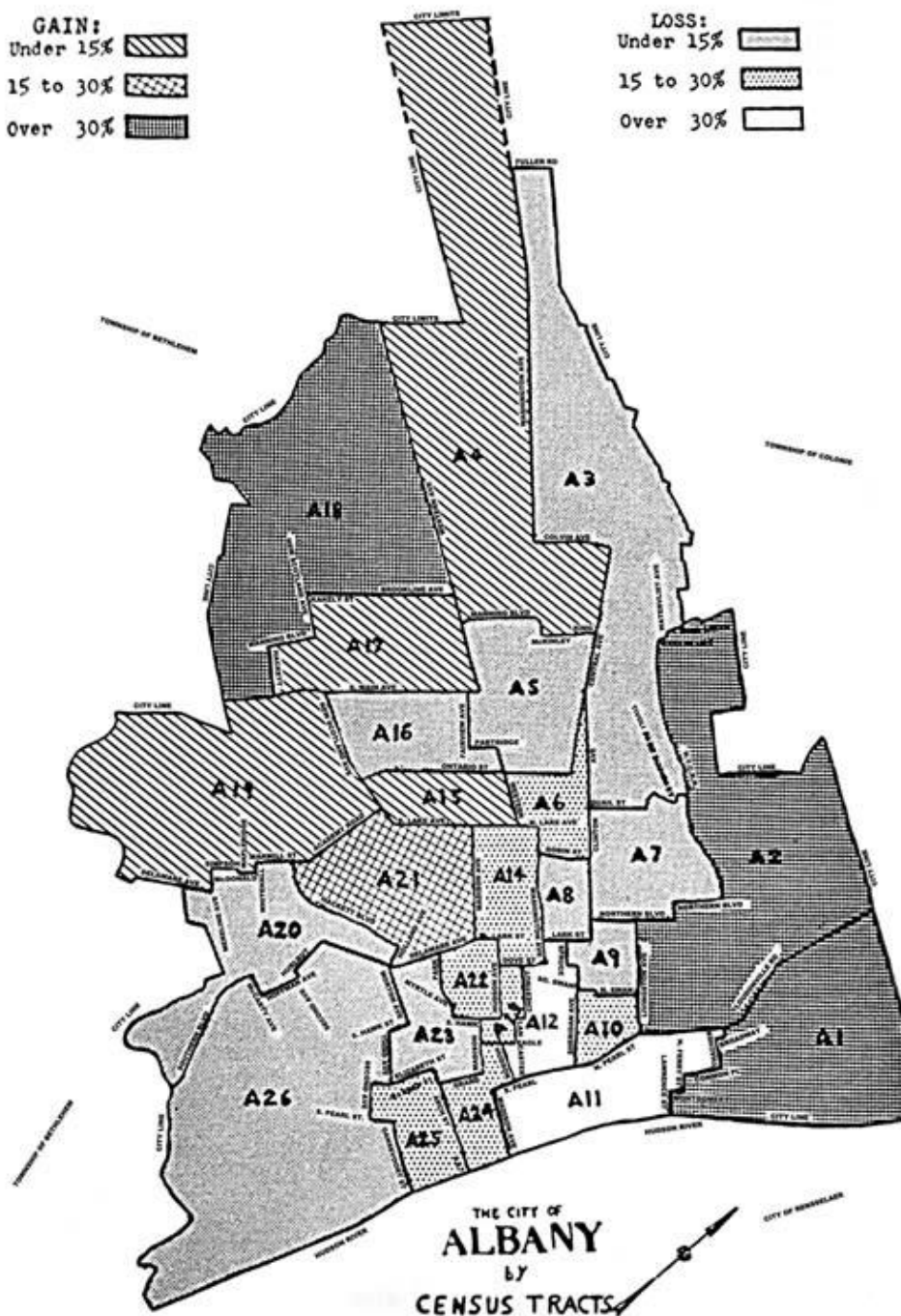




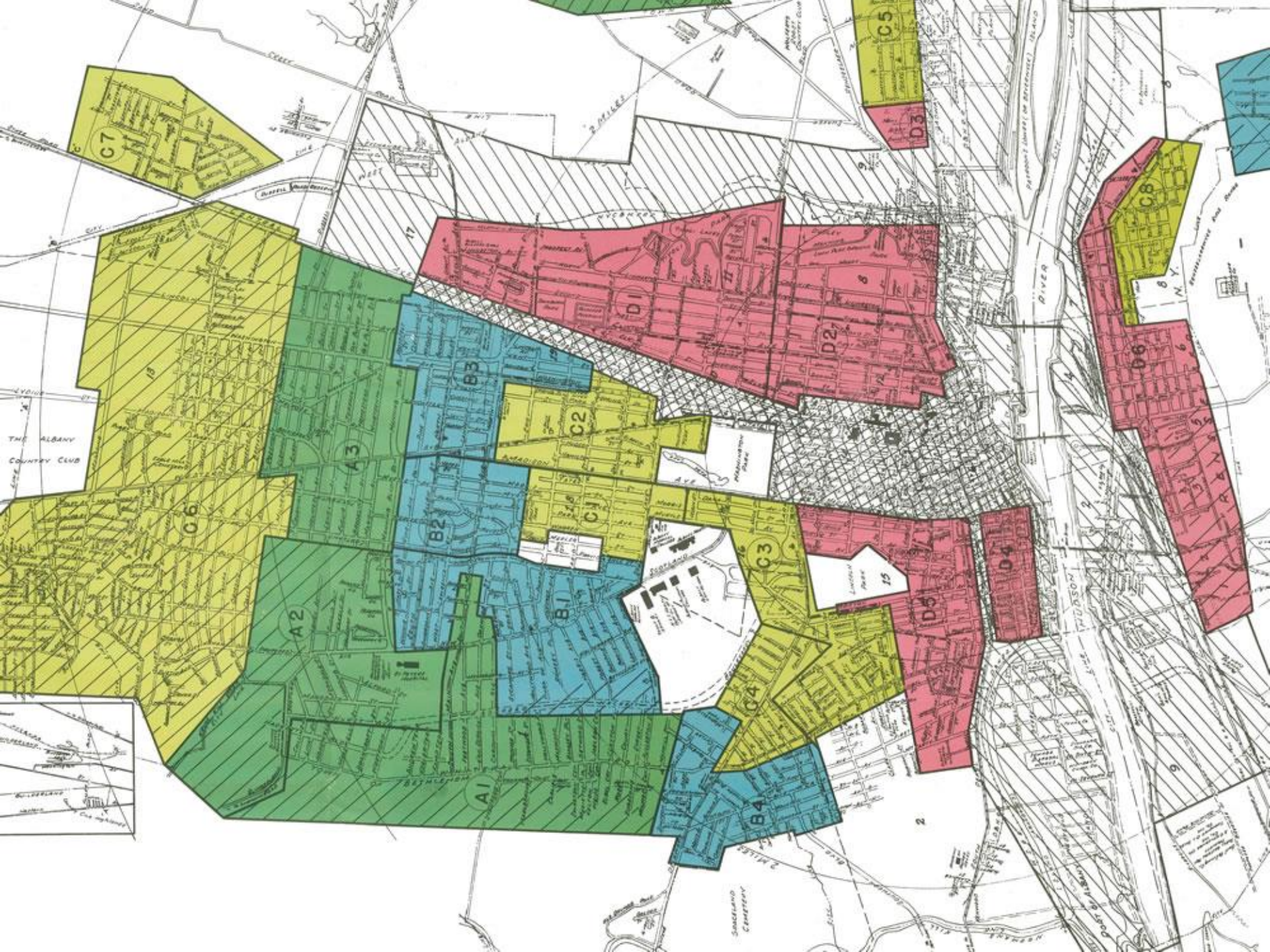
POPULATION CHANGE FROM 1950 TO 1960 IN EACH CENSUS TRACT

GAIN:
 Under 15% 
 15 to 30% 
 Over 30% 

LOSS:
 Under 15% 
 15 to 30% 
 Over 30% 



| | Population | % housing units occupied by nonwhite households | % owner occupied housing units | % dilapidated or deteriorating housing units | % housing units vacant |
|-----------|------------|---|--------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| Take Area | 7,066 | 10.4 | 14.2 | 29.7 | 14 |
| Albany | 129,726 | 7.1 | 39.7 | 18.3 | 5.7 |

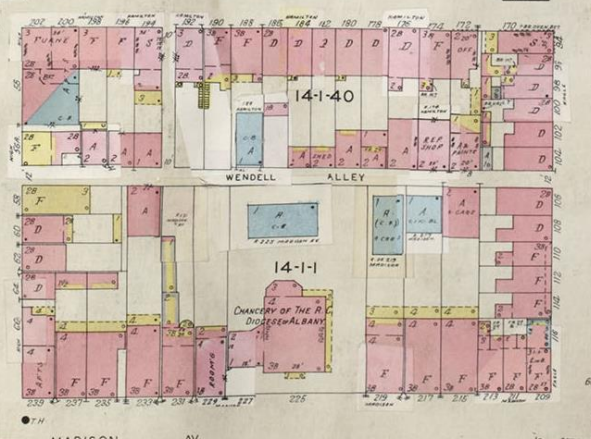
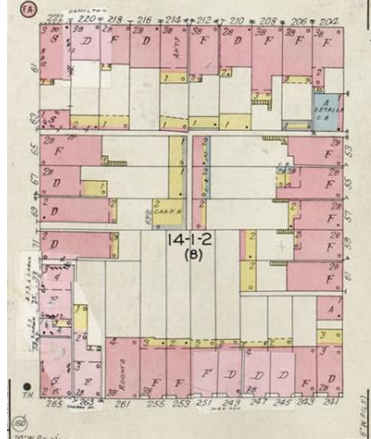
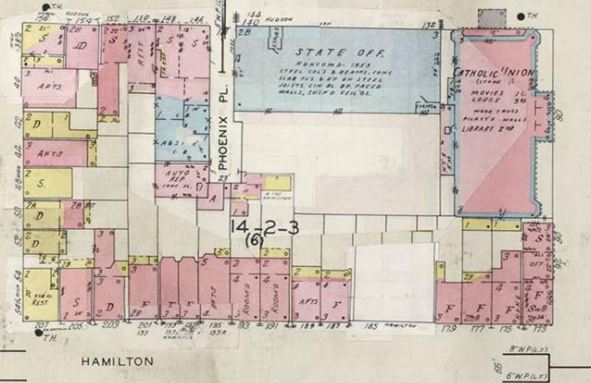
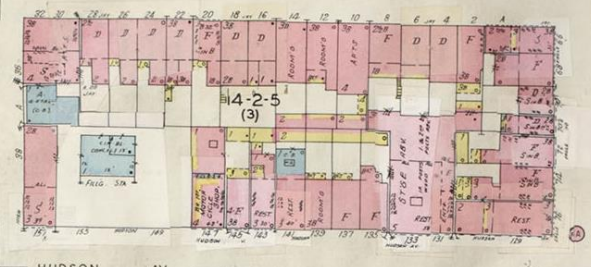
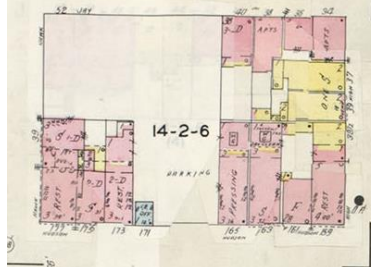
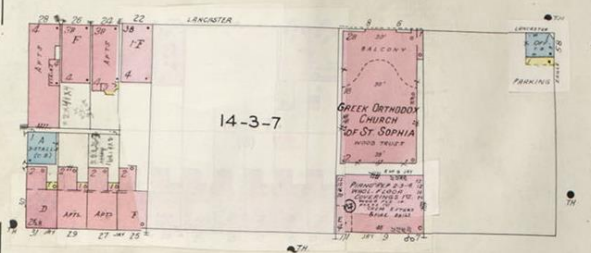
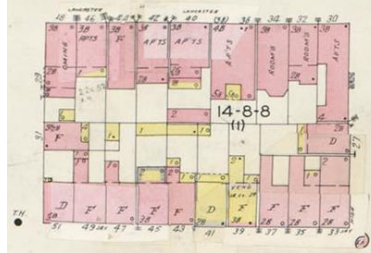


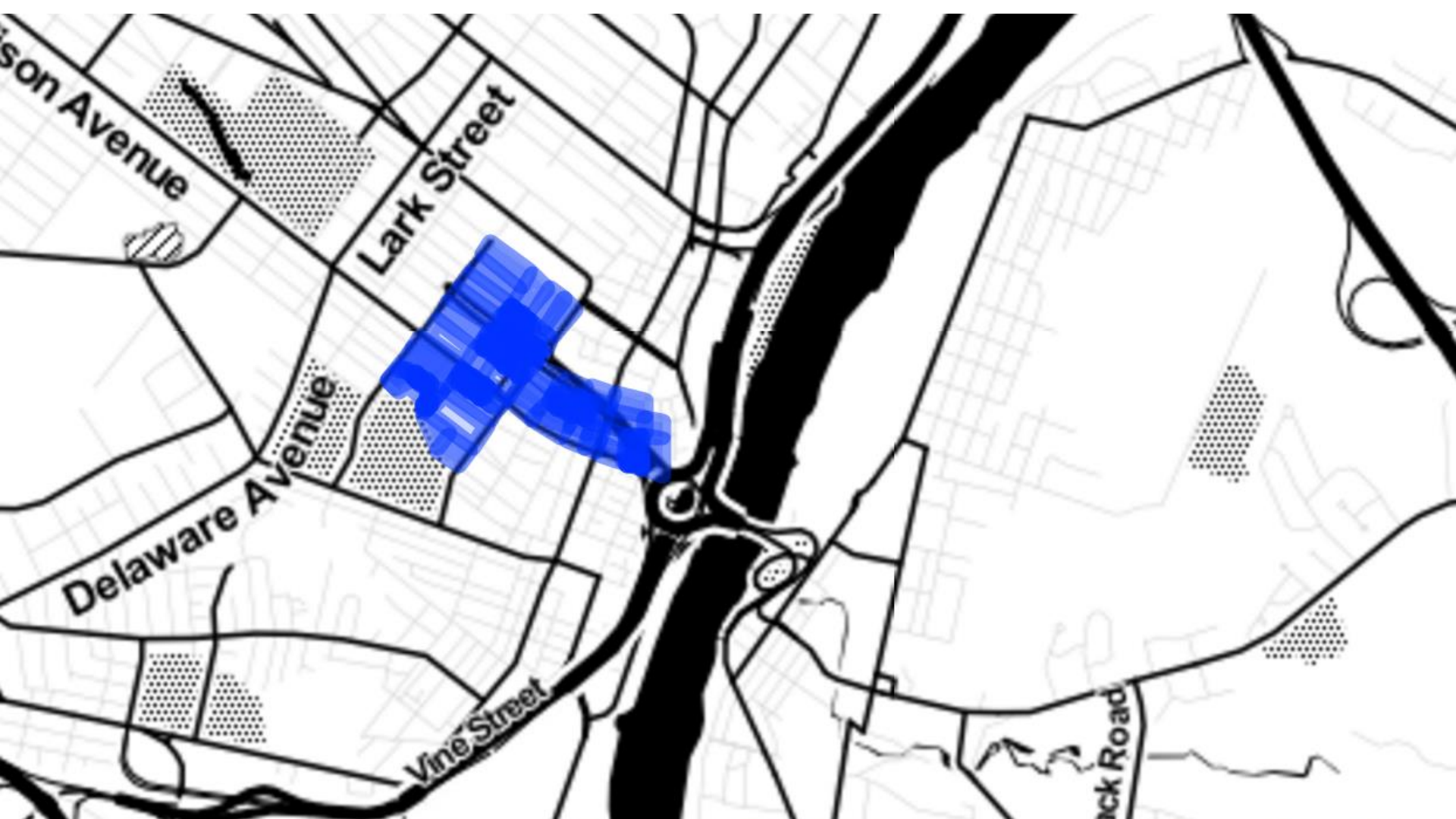
City Block Characteristics

Table 2.—CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSING UNITS, BY BLOCKS: 1960—Con.

["Total population" contains no persons in group quarters unless preceded by asterisk: one asterisk (*) denotes less than 10 percent; two asterisks (**), 10 percent or more]

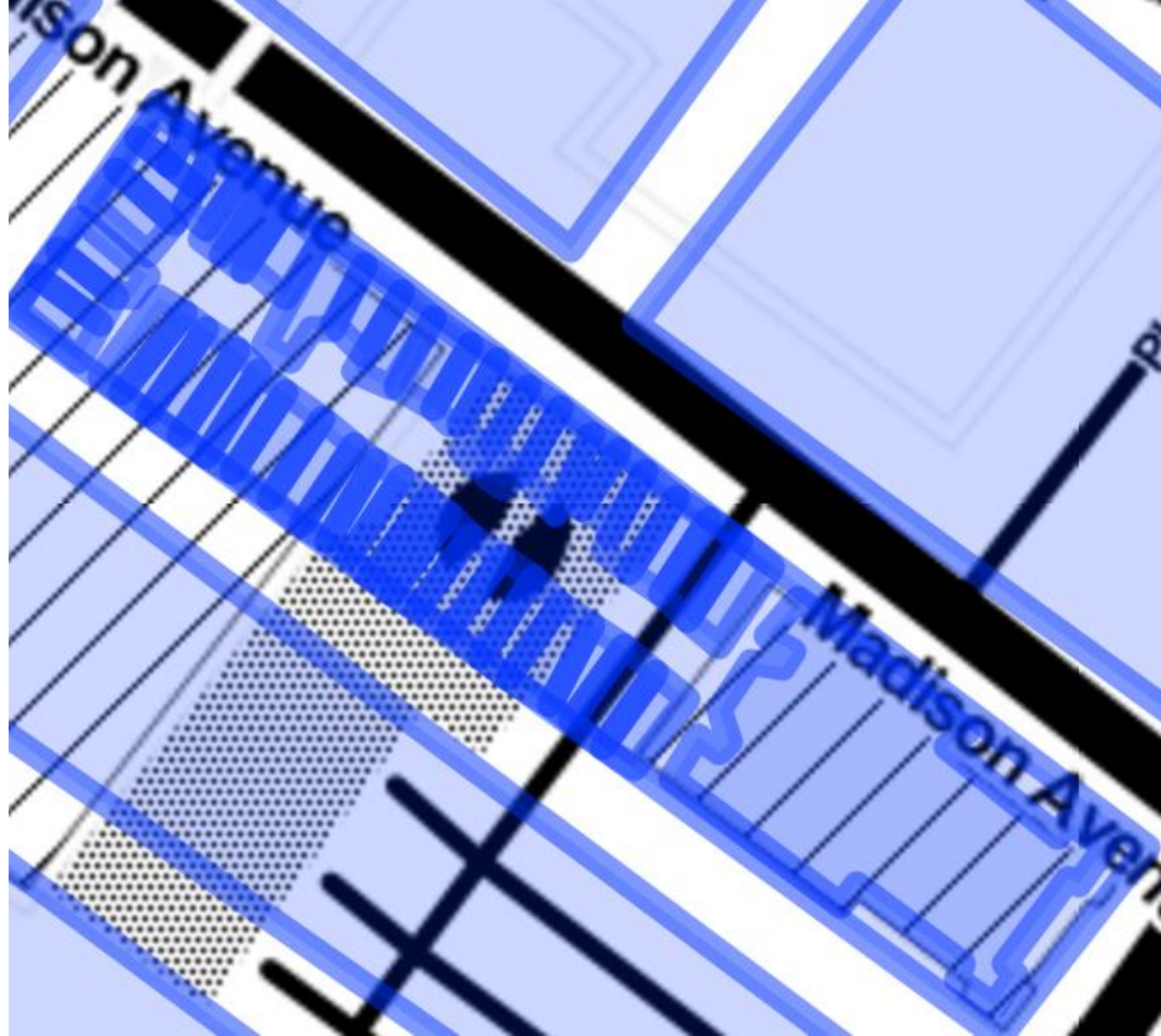
| Blocks within census tracts | Total population | All housing units by condition and plumbing | | | | | | | | | Occupied housing units | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---|-------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| | | Total | Sound | | | Deteriorating | | | Dilapidated | Owner occupied | | | Renter occupied | | | Occupied by non-white | 1.01 or more persons per room | |
| | | | Total | With all plumbing facilities | Lacking some or all facilities | Total | With all plumbing facilities | Lacking some or all facilities | | Total | Average value (dollars) | Average number of rooms | Total | Average contract rent (dollars) | Average number of rooms | | | |
| | | | | | | | | With flush toilet | | | | | | | | | | No flush toilet |
| 8... | 47 | 29 | 28 | 15 | 13 | 1 | 1 | ... | ... | ... | 1 | ... | ... | 28 | 45 | 2.5 | ... | 2 |
| 9... | *147 | 58 | 57 | 45 | 12 | 1 | 1 | ... | ... | ... | 10 | 6500 | 8.1 | 37 | 50 | 4.1 | 14 | 7 |
| 10... | *202 | 92 | 88 | 54 | 34 | 4 | 4 | ... | ... | ... | 16 | 8000 | 6.0 | 72 | 43 | 3.0 | 12 | 4 |
| 11... | *306 | 122 | 90 | 83 | 7 | 26 | 24 | 2 | ... | 6 | 24 | 6000 | 6.2 | 88 | 48 | 3.8 | 17 | 6 |
| 12... | **199 | 65 | 60 | 54 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 1 | ... | 2 | 5 | ... | 6.4 | 54 | 54 | 3.5 | 14 | 8 |
| 13... | **213 | 101 | 73 | 63 | 10 | 16 | 10 | 6 | ... | 12 | 13 | ... | 4.8 | 78 | 53 | 2.8 | 5 | 5 |
| 14... | *88 | 55 | 48 | 29 | 19 | 7 | 1 | 6 | ... | ... | 1 | ... | ... | 44 | 55 | 2.5 | 1 | 5 |





Leaflet | Map tiles by Stamen Design, CC BY 3.0 — Map data © OpenStreetMap

https://cerees.github.io/ninety_eight_standalone_map/









36





PEPSI-COLA
say "Pepsi, please"











40 Blocks, Thousands of Stories

- <https://98acresinalbany.wordpress.com/>
- <https://twitter.com/98AcresinAlbany>
- <https://www.facebook.com/98AcresinAlbany>
- <http://alloveralbany.com/archive/2017/02/16/albany-redlining-history>