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POPULATION CHANGES IN
OMAHA/COUNCIL BLUFFS YMCA BRANCH OFFICE AREAS

By

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Omaha, Nebraska
This report examines changes in the population of the six YMCA branch areas in Omaha and Council Bluffs between 1970 and 1980, as well as changes in the racial/ethnic composition of the areas. For the purposes of this report, an area of one mile radius surrounding each Omaha office and the Council Bluffs office was studied. All census tracts falling within the one mile radius were included. The locations of the Omaha branch areas are shown in Map 1. At this time 1980 Census data for age, gender, and income are not yet available. These data are expected to be released by late autumn by the Census Bureau.

Population Changes

A comparison of 1970 and 1980 Census data indicates that areas surrounding four of the five Omaha YMCA branches have experienced population declines. The Miller Park, North, Downtown, and West branch areas all lost population. (See Table 1 and Map 1.) Population losses by census tract ranged from lows of 1-14.9 percent (Census Tract 66.01 in the West branch and Census Tract 2 in Miller Park) to highs of 50-100 percent (Census Tracts 11 and 13.01 in the Downtown branch area and Census Tract 74.10 in the South-Southwest office*). This decline reflects a general trend of movement of the population from east to west to areas of recent suburbanization. The North branch area experienced the heaviest population loss (35.9 percent), dropping from 30,780 in 1970 to 19,707 in 1980. The Miller Park area declined in population by 20.5 percent, from 33,632 in 1970 to 26,734 in 1980 and the Downtown branch area by 25.3 percent, from 25,641 in 1970 to 19,137 in 1980. The West branch population decline was

*Population decline in this tract was offset by increases in other tracts in the area.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>25,641</td>
<td>19,137</td>
<td>-25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>30,780</td>
<td>19,707</td>
<td>-35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller Park</td>
<td>33,632</td>
<td>26,734</td>
<td>-20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>36,883</td>
<td>34,098</td>
<td>-7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-Southwest</td>
<td>23,150</td>
<td>28,027</td>
<td>+21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Bluffs (Not shown on map)</td>
<td>60,348</td>
<td>56,449</td>
<td>-6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MAP 1
POPULATION CHANGES FOR YMCA BRANCH OFFICES
1970-1980

- West (+7.6%)
- Miller Park (-20.5%)
- North (-35.9%)
- Downtown (-25.3%)
- South-Southwest (+21%)
a small one (7.6 percent), from 36,883 in 1970 to 34,098 in 1980.

The only YMCA branch area to experience growth was the South-Southwest, with a 21 percent increase in population since 1970. The South-Southwest population grew from 23,150 (1970) to 28,027 (1980).

The areas with the largest current (1980) populations are the South-Southwest (28,027), West (34,098), and Miller Park (26,734) branch areas. The North branch area, with a population of 19,707 and the Downtown, with a population of 19,137 are the least populated areas. The Downtown branch area, in the business center, serves a larger population than indicated by these data, however. The estimated population of the Downtown area during business hours is 30,000 to 35,000.* Persons who work in the downtown area but live in other areas may be inclined to use the Downtown branch facilities during after-work hours.

Race/Ethnic Composition

Areas including the Downtown and West and South-Southwest branches are populated predominantly by whites, as they were in 1970. In the West and South-Southwest areas, the black population has remained under 4 percent throughout the decade. In the Downtown branch area, the percentage of blacks increased from 6.6 percent in 1970 to 9.7 percent in 1980. Percentages of blacks in the population are shown on Map 2.

The North and Miller Park branch areas have the largest black populations. The percentage of blacks in the North area has increased only slightly from 80 percent to 82 percent since 1970. However, the black population has grown substantially in the Miller Park area, from 8.7 percent in 1970 to 26 percent in 1980. (See Table 2.)

*Omaha Chamber of Commerce estimate.
TABLE 2
Changes in Black Population
As Percentage of Total Population (1970-80)
By YMCA Branch Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branch Area</th>
<th>1970</th>
<th>1980</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller Park</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-Southwest</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Bluffs</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(not shown on map)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MAP 2
PERCENT BLACK (1980)
The American Indian and Hispanic populations are not concentrated in large numbers in any of the branch areas. Only one census tract has as many as 5 percent of its population identified as American Indian (Census Tract 14 in the North Branch area with 7.7 percent). The percentage of American Indians has remained stable since 1970. Map 3 shows data on Indians as a percentage of the total 1980 population, and Map 4 gives the data for Hispanic populations.

The Hispanic population constitutes less than 5 percent of the population, with the exception of two tracts in the Downtown branch area (Census Tracts 33 with 6.4 percent and 21 with 10.5 percent). A direct comparison between 1980 and 1970 Census data on Hispanics cannot be made, since the 1970 Census did not provide for a categorization of all self-identified Hispanics. The 1970 Census category which most closely approximates the 1980 category is the "Persons of Spanish language" category.* Persons of Spanish language comprised less than 6 percent for all branch areas in 1970.

Summary

In summary, the data indicate considerable population shifts in four of the six areas served by the YMCA branches. Population has declined dramatically in three of the five Omaha areas (North, Miller Park, and Downtown) and to a lesser extent in the West branch and Council Bluffs areas. Population has increased substantially in the South-Southwest branch. The largest concentrations of population are in the West, South-Southwest, and Miller Park areas.

Racial-ethnic composition of the West, South-Southwest, and Council Bluffs areas has remained largely white over the decade. The North and Downtown branch areas have shown a slight increase and the Miller Park area a substantial

*This category includes persons who report Spanish as their mother tongue, as well as persons in families in which the head or wife reports Spanish as his or her mother tongue.
increase in the percentage of blacks. The Hispanic and American Indian populations have remained small over the decade.