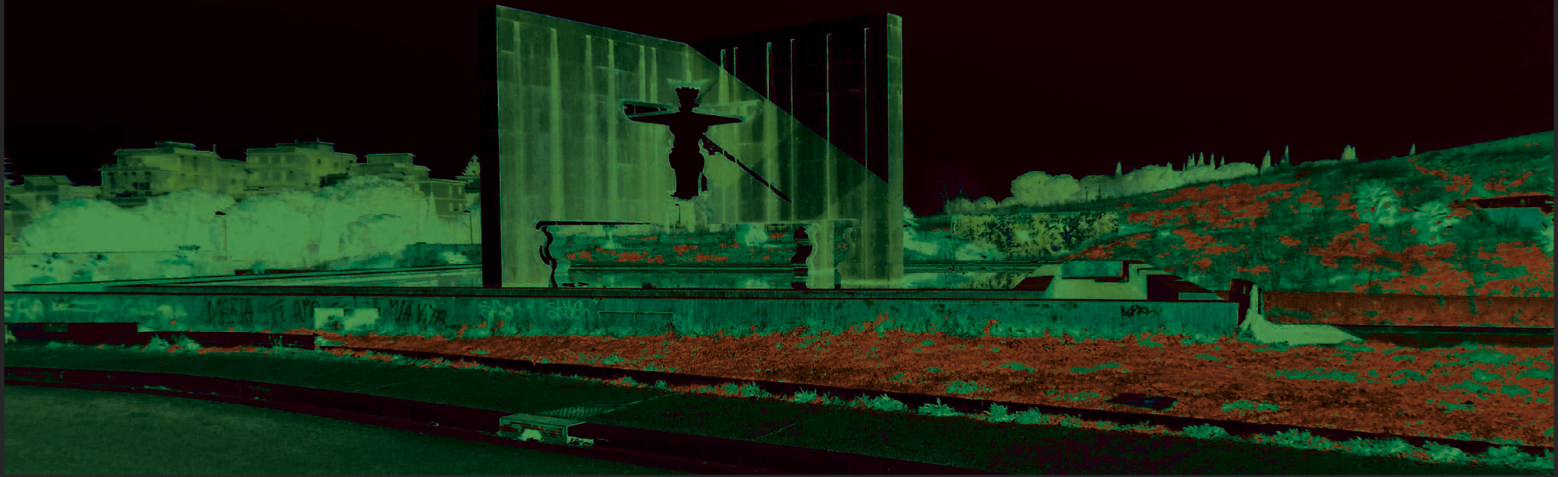


CRP 4160 - **Rome** Workshop  
Cornell University - Spring 2011

Marc Dominianni, Susanne Fortunato  
Jackson Hunter, & Angela Sun  
with Davide Spina



# LABARO



**Figure 1:**  
Map of Labaro, shown  
in red, within Rome.  
*Source: Google Maps.*



## Introduction

Labaro is a small suburban community located about seven miles north of central Rome. Situated within the Municipio XX, Labaro is sometimes denoted Z. LVII because it is the 56th Zona di Roma.

Via Flaminia, one of ancient Rome's major northern access routes to the Adriatic, runs straight through eastern Labaro along the Tiber. The neighborhood's name comes from the Latin *labarum*, a flag with the Greek symbols *chi* and *rho*, which compose the first two letters of "Christ". In 312 CE, just before the battle of Milvian Bridge against Maxentius, Emperor Constantine had a vision commanding him to emblazon the labarum on the shields of his troops to guarantee their protection in battle by the Christian god. While marching past the area of contemporary Labaro, Constantine accidentally let his own labarum fall, and the site has been known as Labaro since.

Though sometimes considered a marginal community, Labaro is well connected to the rest of the city. A train line runs directly from Labaro into Flaminio, providing access for commuters and shoppers. In addition, Rome's major belt highway, the Grande Raccordo Anulare (GRA) passes just to the south of Labaro. To an extent, Labaro fits John Agnew's model of "linear growth along major highways" (Agnew, 1995). Thanks to these connections, Labaro is very convenient for commuters and disproves the general misconception that peripheral neighborhoods are isolated and hard to reach, just as Agnew indicates. Transportation links have been key to Labaro's development. (**Figure 1**).

Major topological features have played a significant role in the shaping of the neighborhood. Some of the earli-







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est settlements were close to the Tiber River along the Via Flaminia, all at lower elevations convenient to the train line and nearby agriculture. Development then crept up Labaro's double-crested hill, which offers grand views across the Tiber to the Apennine Mountains. To the north, the slope of the hill down towards Via Frassineto, a large drainage ditch, and Prima Porta provides a clear boundary. To the east, Via Flaminia and the Tiber provide a development boundary, similar to the GRA to the south. To the east, Labaro fizzles out into open space and agricultural land beyond Via Mache-rio. (**Figure 1**).

The earliest public housing units were built beyond the crest of the hill, northwest of the train station. In subsequent years, infill development, mostly in the form of self-built houses and duplexes, appeared in the saddle between the two hillcrests. This area contained roads connecting the original public housing to the train station, possibly showing a conscious effort of the planners to encourage infill development. The rest of the major public housing structures to the north were built in the 1970s and 1980s, in addition to some of the large avenues with blunt ends.

One of the most important structures in Labaro, and one of the few recognized by some non-residents, is Chiesa di San Melchiade on Via Costantiniana, completed in 1959. Another is the modern concrete fountain at the intersection of Viale Gemona dei Friuli and Via dei Monte della Valchetta. Looking to the future, no major construction projects appear to be underway in Labaro, indicating that the urban fabric ought to remain much the same as it is today.

# Qualitative Fieldwork

## Initial Visits

### Photo-Grid Fieldwork:

We superimposed a grid onto a map of Labaro (**Figure 3**). Working from this grid, we visited each coordinate point and surveyed the area. Through completing this exercise, while traveling on foot from point to point, we were able to see a large proportion of the neighborhood. For each point, we used a survey instrument by Professors Smith and Olpadwala that focused on building, street, and sidewalk typology, morphology, use, and maintenance. We completed this survey as one group so that we could have common definitions for concepts such as “fast cars,” “narrow street,” and “lots of people.”

From this data, we chose five main categories that focused on different building typologies: apartment buildings (**BLUE**), neighborhood center (**ORANGE**), single-family houses (**RED**), open spaces (**YELLOW**), and peripheral spaces (**BROWN**). (**Figure 4**).

Open space comprised about ten percent of our pre-defined area. We encountered a wooded knoll, a grassy field, and a large park-like space. The park-like space was not unmaintained, and at midday on a sunny Thursday we encountered an old couple taking a stroll together through the area. (**Figure 4**, points **A3**, **C2**, & **C3**).

Tucked in to the green space, mostly along the eastern edge of Labaro, were a few streets of private homes. These houses were situated on a one lane, two-way streets with no sidewalk. Architectural styles, number of stories, and size of footprint all varied, but each house was designed to take advantage of the view of the city below. The public space

**Figure 3:**  
Map of Labaro with  
superimposed grid.  
*Source: Google Maps.*





was well maintained, as were the private gardens and lawns behind the gated driveways. We saw a number of expensive cars drive through the area. Our initial impression was that it was a relatively wealthy part of the neighborhood. (**Figure 4**, points **C1**, **C5**, & **C6**)

The apartment buildings throughout the neighborhood vary greatly in size, proximity, use (single or mixed) and even orientation to the street. (**Figure 4**, points **B1**, **B2**, **B3**, **B4**, & **B5**). All were of similar size, shape, and architectural style. They were extremely tall, lacked balconies and decoration, and some were positioned at cocked angles to the street. They were also close to a wide, busy street that connected to a highway. Though the sidewalks were generally well maintained, they were oftentimes narrow which made walking along them feel unsafe (there were many fast cars and no parked car barrier).

Other apartment buildings were positioned on narrow side streets, usually one lane, one or two way. They varied in height, color, architectural details, footprint size, and distance from the road. Our initial impression of these apartment buildings is that they were better maintained, privately owned, and belonged to residents of a higher socioeconomic class.

Some additional apartment buildings were positioned along more major streets, and contained commercial space on their ground floor. (**Figure 4**, points **C4**, **D2**, **D3**, **D4**, **D5**, **E5**, & **D6**). We included these in our study of the neighborhood center, as they were generally clustered together. Buildings were usually mixed use, and varied in size and design, but were about the same distance from the street in

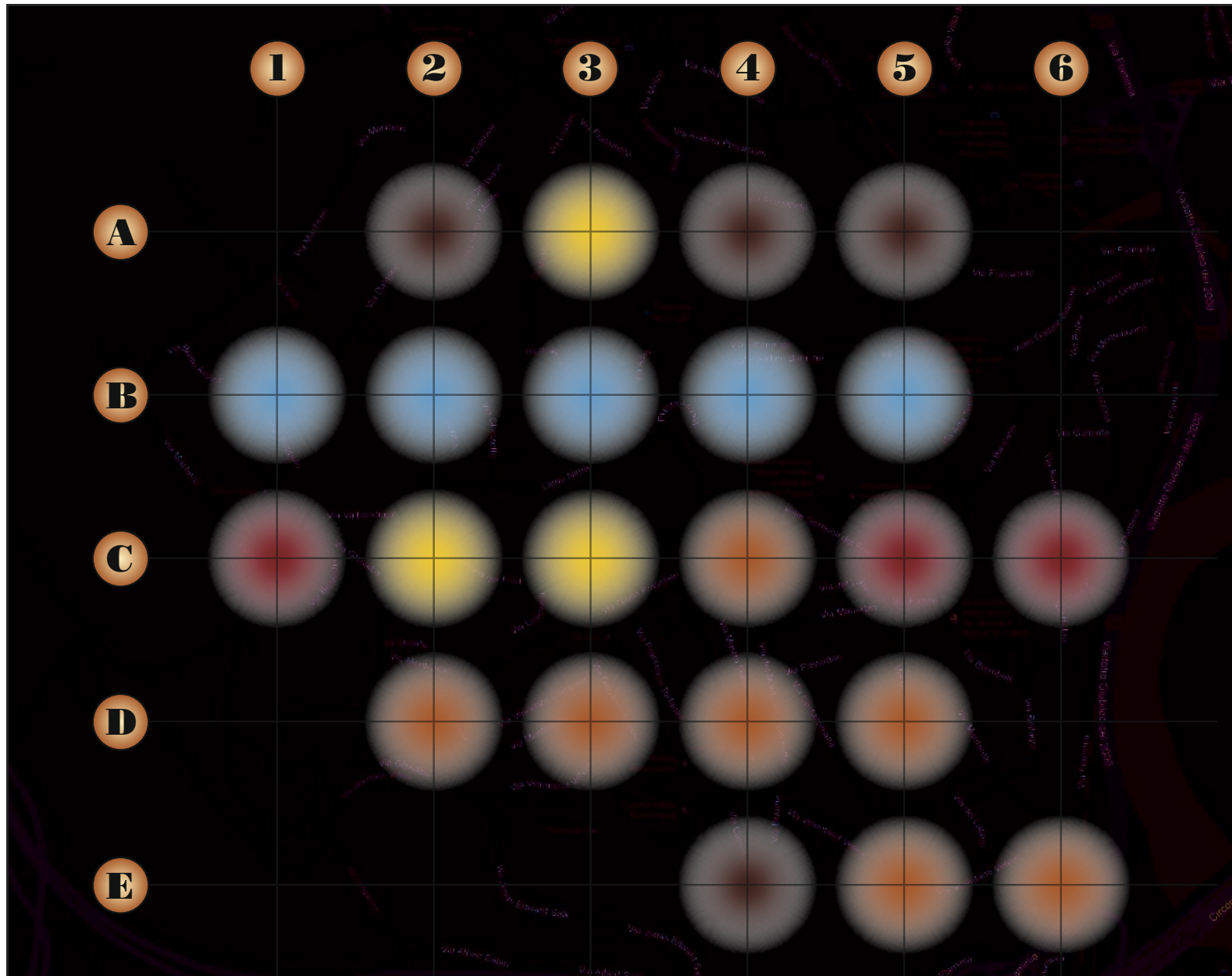
these regions. Stores rarely existed independent of a larger apartment building. The main types of commercial space we were encountered were for eating (restaurants, pizzerias, and bars), but we also saw a mechanics store, *tabaccheria*, barbershop, and a small grocery store. We were surprised that we did not encounter a larger grocery store, but it may have been outside of our walkable range.

This neighborhood was not particularly walkable. Connecting streets were few and far between, and the area was hilly. As a result, we were pretty conspicuous as non-natives as we walked up and down the hills with notebooks and cameras. We were stopped a few times by old men who asked us what we were doing. Susanne replied in broken Italian “*Stiamo studiando architettura e urbanistica*” or “We are studying architecture and urban design”.

In many ways Labaro is a typical suburban neighborhood to our American eyes and sensibilities. Far from the city center, winding, poorly connected streets, an occasional lack of sidewalk, and a not very walkable feel. However we also realized that the area is actually quite accessible via public transit. The train ride is short and inexpensive, and we saw a number of buses go by. We thought that one would not need to own a car in order to live in this region. Our impression was that Labaro was a mixed income neighborhood, encompassing public housing and expensive single-family homes, and has a fair amount of mixed-use space.

#### **Specific Study Area:**

We chose fifteen statistical areas (census tracts) for our in-depth study. Their boundaries are shown in **Figure 5**. We chose three large tracts encompassing most of the public



**Figure 4:**  
Categorized & color-coded map of Labaro. Key: apartment buildings (**BLUE**), neighborhood center (**ORANGE**), single-family houses (**RED**), open spaces (**YELLOW**), and peripheral spaces (**BROWN**). Source: Google Maps.



housing in the northern half of the neighborhood (**BLUE**), four large tracts close to the train station and eight tracts around the commercial center, an elementary school between the center and the public housing, and a piece of the older neighborhood with private housing and some small shops (**ORANGE**). We chose these areas to get the most effective cross section of Labaro citizens, and to accentuate the public/private differential.

During our first visits to Labaro, we saw what appeared to be some extremely well maintained private single-family homes (not included in the study area), some well-maintained private apartments and multi-family homes, often with gates, and public housing blocks. These regions are spatially separated by major roads and hills. From what we could infer from the quality of perceived usage of these roads, we predicted that they were built at different times. According to ISTAT statistics, we found out that the public housing was most recently built. We were intrigued by the social and spatial differences between these spaces. As we continued to explore, we saw that public space and public housing were generally less well kept than private spaces and private housing. Investigating the public/private differential thus became the focus of our study.

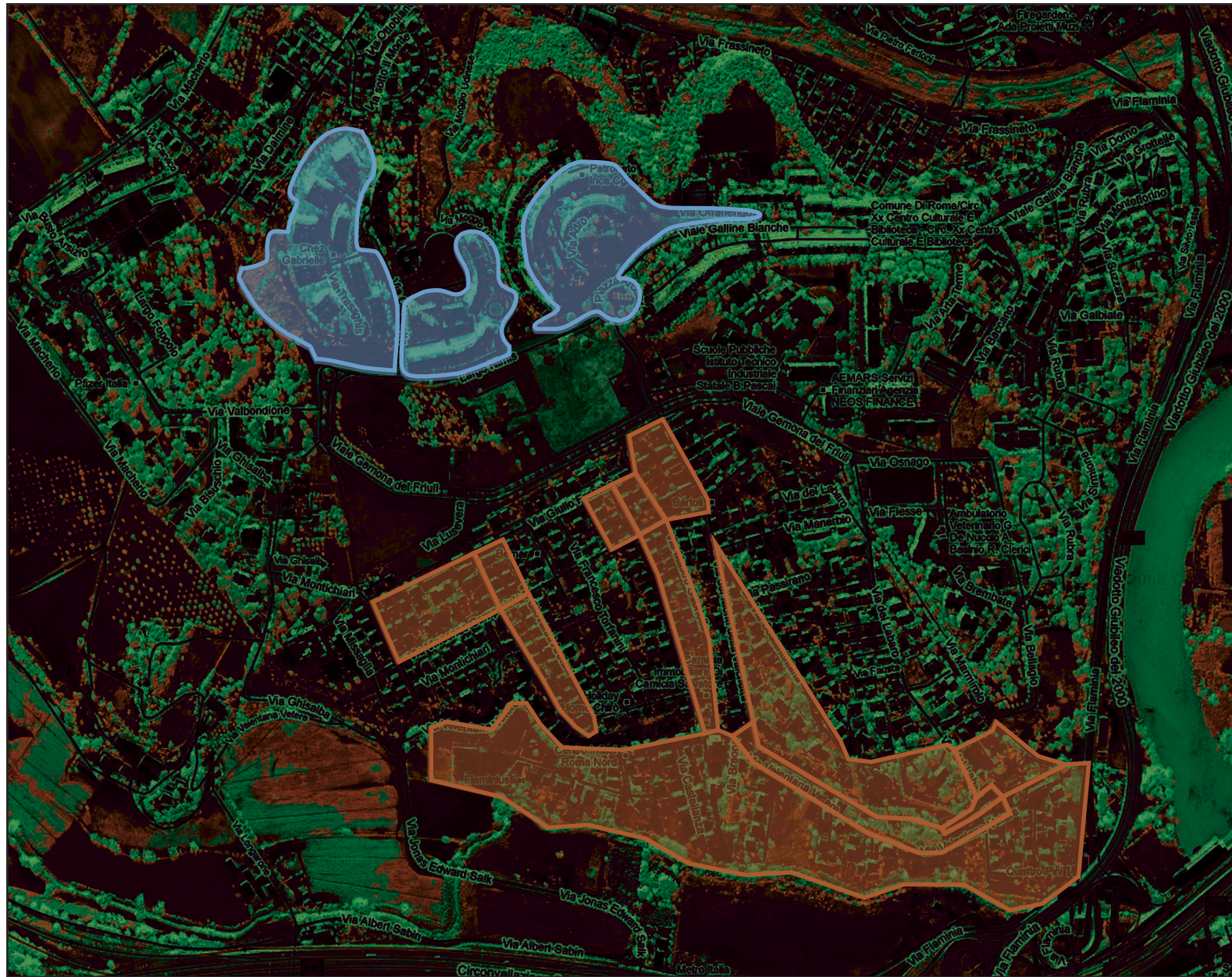
For the second stage, we split in to two groups. Angela and Susanne took notes on the southwestern tracts by the train station and towards the neighborhood center. Although the overall shape was ambiguous, it extended approximately from Via Giangiacomo Caraglio to the west to Via Constantinia to the east, as well as the areas along Via Veientana Vetere and Via del Labaro. Marc and Jackson investigated the high-

rise section of Labaro. Three census tracts were chosen in this area to highlight the high-rise housing space in the north: enclosed by Largo Nimis to the south, Via Offanengo to the northeast, Via Trasaghis to the east. Each census track represents a different housing development varying in outer characteristics, but similar in form and function.

Our survey techniques continued to be based off of the initial instrument given to us by Professors Smith and Olpadwala, covering street and sidewalk type and condition, noise level, housing size and style, and presence of people. Our investigations also began to include citizen interviews, and more specific notes on public space. We encountered few problems in recording the data, but had to make many inferences. This second round of street surveys focused more on building typologies and space as we anticipated those to be our focus.

The group made some basic assumptions: that the people they saw were most often residents of the neighborhood, that the citizens' behavior was typical, and the movement patterns were similar at other times in the day. We assumed that cars parked outside specific houses in residential regions belonged to those houses. We were unsure if car usage was limited to traveling to and from Rome, or if it was common to drive short distances within the neighborhood too.

Angela and Susanne assumed that the housing stock they saw in the mixed-use center area was privately owned based on the upkeep, age, variety of housing style, value of the parked cars, and presence of elderly, ethnically Italian people. Marc and Jackson inferred that the housing they encountered towards the north was public housing due to the



**Figure 5:** Map of Labaro with our specific census tracts. Public housing areas are to the north (**BLUE**) and the center is to the south/southeast (**ORANGE**). *Credit: Google Maps.*



similarity of housing age and style, the size of the buildings, the location of the buildings (on a busy road), and the presence of younger, ethnically non-Italian people.

After speaking with Claudia, an assistant for our course, we began to infer that markers like a lack of proper sidewalk and a variety of building typology indicated an area that was unplanned, and perhaps originally built illegally.

The cars parked on the streets and in the lots surrounding the high-rise section were for the most part average: older Opels, forgettable Fiats, and regular Renaults. There were a few exceptions to this rule though, including a sparkly Range Rover or the previous year's BMW M3. Davide offered a possible explanation: sometimes a culturally appropriate way of expressing wealth is to purchase a big-ticket item like an expensive car rather than investing in long-term reward items like real estate or education. In addition, for relatively few residents walking around, every parking lot was curiously full.

For the most part, these high-rise developments seem to operate independently from the older core of Labaro. Low street connectivity leaves these buildings somewhat stranded on their own dead-ends. Based on the some business operating on the first and second levels of the buildings, however, the high-rises do not operate completely autonomously. Many of the shops were closed even during the late morning, and some of the space appeared disused or without tenants, despite having six or eight floors of potential customers overhead. The grocery store "Maxi Sidis" in the western statistical area was busy, however, and the regional office of the Communist party in the eastern statistical area appeared

operational.

Our primary concern thus far was the consistent time of day of our observations. All of our experiences with the streets so far have been during the late morning/midday. The streets could see varying traffic levels, pedestrian activity, and use during the evening or early morning.

## **Street & Building Typologies**

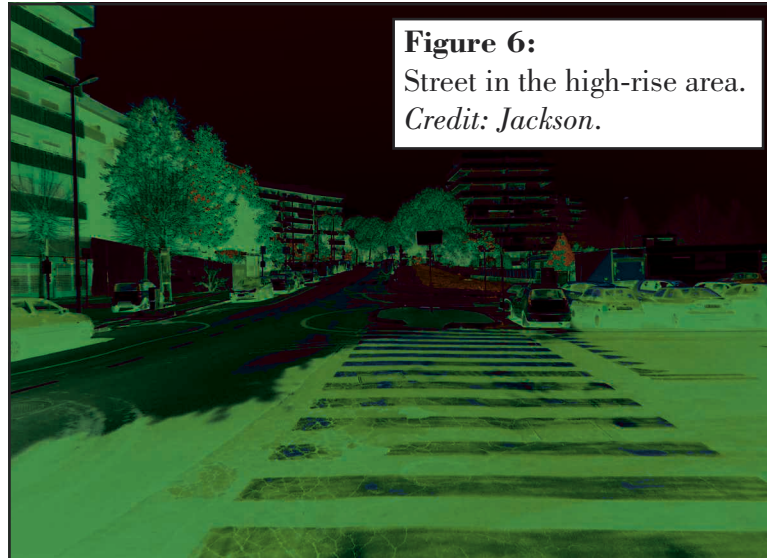
### **Street Typologies:**

There were a variety of street types in Labaro. The streets were not arranged in a comprehensive grid structure, instead, they were organic and winding, and often had to accommodate the hilly terrain of Labaro. The streets were poorly connected which occasionally made it difficult to walk from point to point.

Streets towards the north, closer to the public housing were wider and often had two lanes. Cars travelled at much higher speeds and there was more traffic. The streets were well maintained and clean, and looked like they were constructed much more recently than the streets closer to the center and in the older parts of town. (**Figure 6**).

Streets near the center were narrower than those in the north. Those that contained mixed-use and commercial units had more cars and more parking. More people were walking around. The quality of the sidewalks was not as high as those closer to high-rise buildings. This could be because they are older and because they are receive more foot traffic. Some areas did not have sidewalks, and people were forced to walk on the street. (**Figure 7**).

Streets and sidewalk quality varied in the denser resi-



**Figure 6:**  
Street in the high-rise area.  
*Credit: Jackson.*



**Figure 7:**  
Street in the center.  
*Credit: Angela.*

dential areas in the center/south. Closer to the center, streets were narrow and one lane/two-directional. Where there was room there were parked cars. Occasionally there were no sidewalks. These smaller streets were the least maintained of the three types, as there were often cracks in the sidewalks and litter. There were also dumpsters. The quality of the streets contrasted with the nicely maintained private spaces and gardens behind gates and bars.

The streets were grouped in the following four categories:

**YELLOW** - one-lane, two-way streets. These are narrow and little to no parallel parking, as this would block passing vehicles. Sidewalks, if any, are poorly maintained and deteriorating.

**BROWN** - one-lane, one-way streets. These are also narrow. There is little parallel parking. Sidewalks vary in quality.

**RED** - two-lane, two-way streets. These streets are wider and there is more parallel parking. Sidewalks are of a higher quality. Some bus routes run on these streets.

**TAN** - multilane streets with dividers. These are the widest streets in Labaro. There is no parallel parking. Sidewalks are well maintained. Cars travel higher speeds. Bus routes also run on these streets.

The high-rise (**BLUE**) and center (**ORANGE**) statistical areas are shown for context, as well. (**Figure 8**).

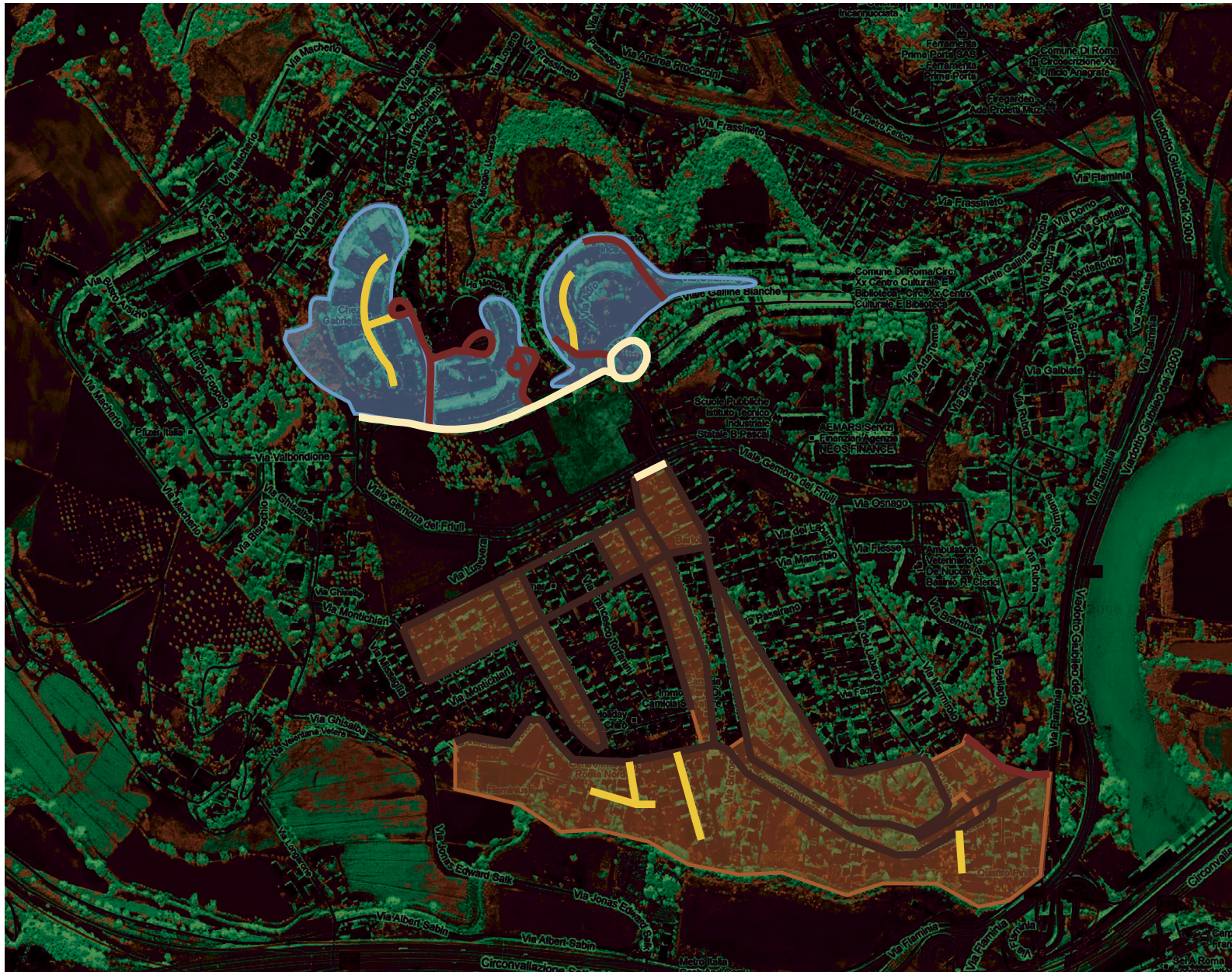
### Building Typologies:

We split buildings types into the following four major groups: public apartment buildings (**Figure 9**), private apartment buildings (**Figure 10**), mixed-use buildings (**Fig-**



**Figure 8:**

Map of Labaro with street types within our specific census tracts, the high-rise (**BLUE**) and center (**ORANGE**). Street types: one-lane, two-way (**YELLOW**); one-lane, one-way (**BROWN**); two-lane, two-way (**RED**); and those that are multi-laned, have dividers, etc. (**TAN**). *Credit: Google Maps.*





ure 11), and houses or private residences (Figure 12).

The north side of Labaro is newer than the center and south, and consists of many new and taller apartment buildings. We were told by Davide, Professor Smith, and later, local residents, that many of these tall apartment buildings were publically owned.

Houses closer to the center usually had 3-4 stories and apartment buildings with balconies and windows. In the morning and early afternoon, there were a lot of women who came out and hung laundry on their balcony and were at the same time observing us. The houses often had a front yard, which was used for gardening and many of them had dogs. There were often gates that indicated it was private property. Quality and architecture of these houses varied. Claudia told us that high variation in architecture often meant that the neighborhood often began as an informal settlement, as opposed to the public housing that was uniform in style and a public initiative.

On the periphery we often saw some older, 1-2 story houses that looked like they had been abandoned. Some looked like they had been abandoned while undergoing construction and were left unmaintained for a long time. There was usually a lot of rubble and garbage.

A secondary classification of building typologies is shown in Figure 13. We invented this set for the purposes of creating distinction while mapping. The building types shown are the following: multi-family (LIGHT BLUE); small apartments, 2-4 stories (YELLOW); medium apartments, 4-6 stories (RED); large apartments, 6+ stories (BROWN); miscellaneous (TAN).



**Figure 9:**  
Public apartment buildings. *Credit: Jackson.*



**Figure 10:**  
Private apartment building. *Credit: Jackson.*

**Figure 11:**  
Mixed-use buildings.  
*Credit: Angela.*



**Figure 12:**  
House/private residence.  
*Credit: Angela.*



## **Initial Perceived Issues**

From our first round of qualitative research (first visit, photo-grid and census tract street surveying), we came up with several issues that we thought could be prevalent in Labaro.

### **Public & Private Housing:**

First and foremost, we saw a wide variety of both public and private housing in Labaro. Private housing units were generally in the form of 3-4 story houses that were split into two or three units. There were also some apartment buildings, usually 5-6 stories high. We could assume from the level of maintenance, the architecture and the location within Labaro that there were probably a variety of income classes living in these private units. On the other hand, public housing units were usually in the form of taller apartment buildings. The architecture was much more simple and modern. We initially assumed that public housing implied a residents of a similar income class, however we were later unable to find specific statistics to support this claim. We did however, find statistics that showed other differences between these two populations within Labaro.

### **Public & Private Structures (Non-residential):**

Public structures in Labaro included the train station and the public library. Private structures included a private school (affiliated with the local church) and a senior citizens' home. Similar to housing, private spaces were gated and unwelcoming, whereas public spaces were open and accessible.

### **Public & Private Space:**

Space in Labaro was also divided into both public and private. Private spaces were usually defined by gates that

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made it clear that you needed to be a resident or a member of the private community in order to enter. Gates, or some physical representation of a boundary, were found both in the public housing and private housing sectors. Beyond the gates were oftentimes smaller aesthetically pleasing gardens featuring nicely maintained potted plants and trees or larger private parking spaces and playgrounds. Public space, on the other hand, consisted of two major types: the sidewalks, and built public space such as the fountain on Viale Gemona dei Friuli and Via dei Monte della Valchetta.

What we observed when comparing the private and public space was the disparity in maintenance. Public space was less maintained, as we could see from degrading sidewalks, graffiti and occasional litter, whereas private spaces were much better maintained. It seemed that residents cared a lot about the maintenance of their private space as we saw many elderly people come out of their houses in the mornings and early afternoons to tend to their gardens. On the other hand, public space was often ignored. On one street a couple blocks from the center, we saw a construction/excavation in the middle of the street that must have been started and abandoned. Leaves and rubbish had started to gather around and over it, which means that it must have been left there for some time. This showed that public maintenance and construction was not a priority in the neighborhood.

### **Choosing a Direction:**

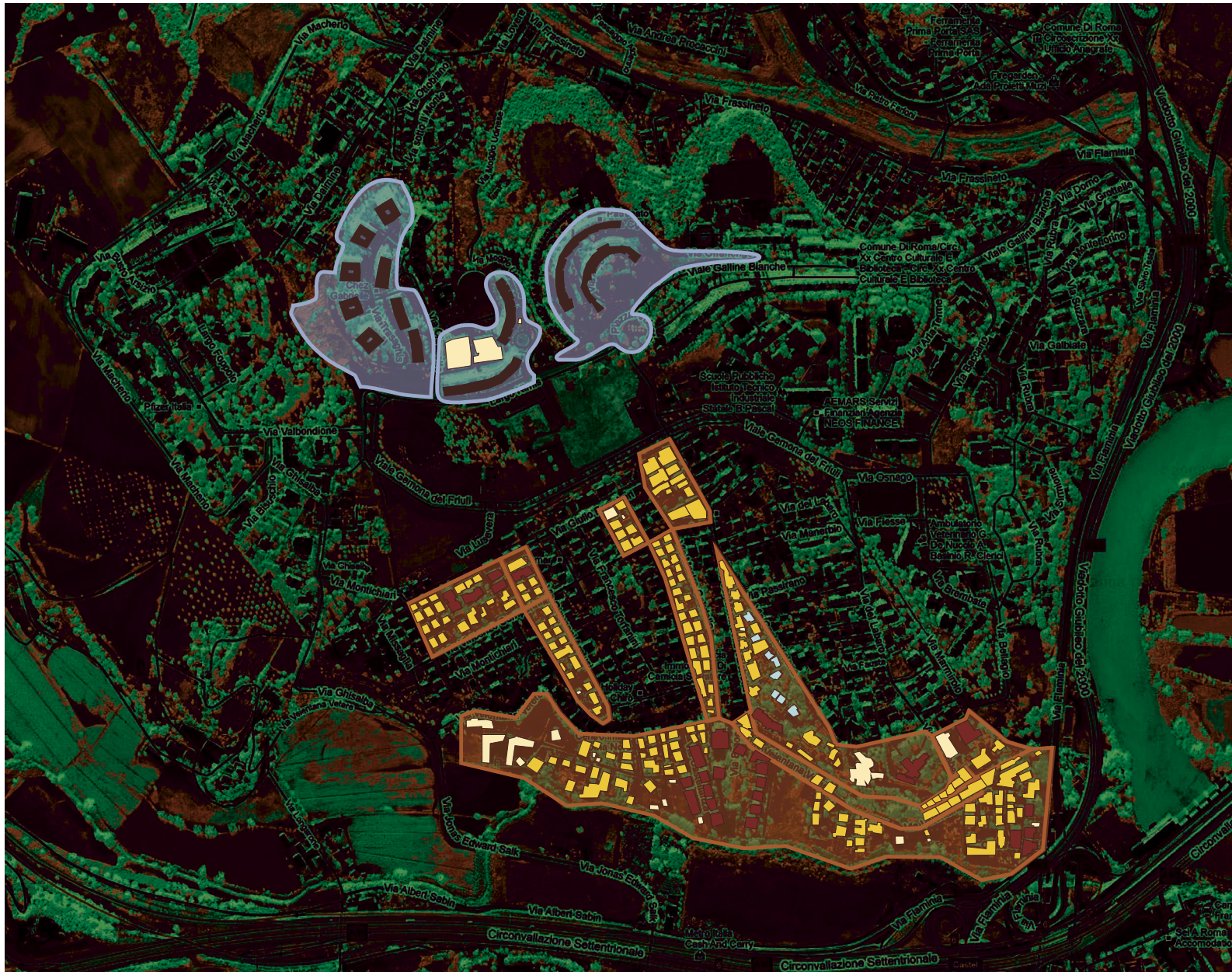
From these observations, we wanted to explore the different private and public actors in Labaro who create these differences in quality and maintenance of public and private

spaces and structures. Public space seems to have more structure as it incorporates social interaction through public space and access to public transportation, although it lacks the maintenance and attention that private spaces seem to get. Private spaces have developed more organically, yet are gated and unwelcoming. Through further quantitative and qualitative research, we later discovered more specific issues stemming from this initial survey into public and private space.



**Figure 13:**

Map of Labaro with building types within our specific census tracts, the high-rise (**BLUE**) and center (**ORANGE**). Building types: multi-family (**LIGHT BLUE**); small apartments, 2-4 stories (**YELLOW**); medium apartments, 4-6 stories (**RED**); large apartments, 6+ stories (**BROWN**); miscellaneous (**TAN**). *Credit: Google Maps.*



# Quantitative Research

From our initial impressions of Labaro we noticed a very strong topographical divide between the high-rise district and central low rise district. For this reason we chose census tracts over these two areas and in our statistical analysis of the neighborhood we wanted to better compare differences that might exist between these two areas.

## Statistical Analysis

### Methodology:

We used the 2001 ISTAT Italian census data for our analysis. From the GIS files located on the Cornell Rome network, we extracted specific data for each of our fifteen census tracts. To further analyze the difference between the high rise area and the central area, we broke our data up into two categories, as well as created a section of aggregate Labaro and aggregate Rome data. In our analysis, High-Rise as yellow, Central as grey or white, Rome as purple and Labaro Total as blue (see the keys of applicable figures).

The data provided by the ISTAT files was very extensive, and we choose specific values we felt relevant to the study. We took basic population data, education rates, age of the population, occupation of the population, number of homes, home occupation, home rent, home ownership, building age, and immigration.

In order to create comparable values between each area, we derived percentage. For instance if rent to occupied homes in the high rise district was 200 to 500, and the rent to occupied homes in the central district was 50 to 400 comparable values would be 40% to 12.5%. By doing this we

could evenly compare between the four divisions.

Some of the values were either simplified or derived from other value. We created three different values for age groups rather than the original 16. A rough estimate of family size was derived from the ISTAT data by dividing the total population by the total number of families in Labaro. (**Appendix B** for all statistical data).

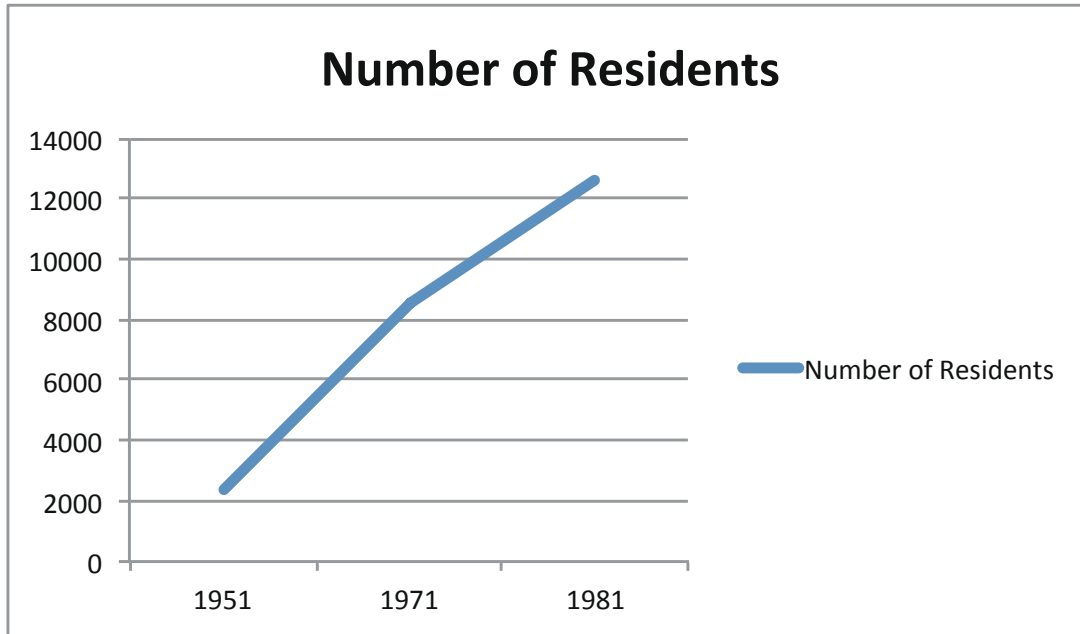
### The Population of Labaro:

The population of Labaro has a higher number of children under the age of 15 and a lower number of residents older than thirty compared to greater Rome. The High Rise district in Particular has a higher number of children and lower number of residents over 60. Education rates in Labaro are lower than Rome. Secondary education rates in Rome are around 32% of the residential population, while in Labaro the number is around 28%. In the central district versus the high-rise district we see a discrepancy with the central area being less educated than the high-rise area. This difference continues into university education. We see a much larger drop off than secondary, the discrepancy between the central district and the high-rise district remains. (**Figure 16**).

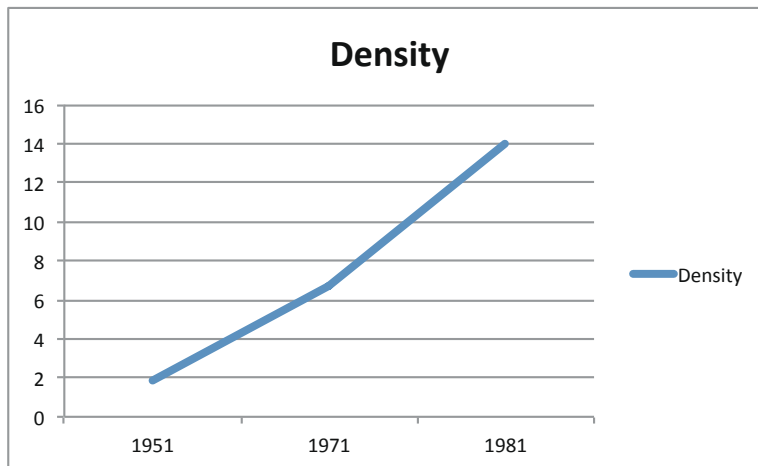
### Occupation:

Labaro in general has a higher unemployment rate than Rome. The unemployment rate is highest in the high-rise district. Labaro in total has similar occupation patterns as greater Rome, but there is a distinction between the High-rise area and the Low-rise area. There are more professionals in the high-rise area than in the central area. This may





**Figure 14:**  
Labaro: Number of residents, 1951-1981.



**Figure 15:**  
Labaro: Residents per square kilometer, 1951-1981.

be related to the higher education rate we see in the high-rise area. In the central area we see a higher percentage of self-employed than in the high-rise area and greater Rome. The number of dependent laborers in the high-rise area is higher than in the central area. (Figure 21).

**Housing:**

In reviewing the housing data we looked at occupancy rate, property ownership and property rental. The data shows that the occupancy rate in Labaro is higher than that of Rome, which is interesting because from our initial survey we would have thought that many buildings were in disrepair or abandoned. To the contrary we see a 94% occupancy rate vs. a 90% rate in greater Rome. In the areas of ownership and rental we see a big difference between the high-rise area vs. the central area. In the high-rise area, the rental rate is almost 82% while in the central area it's only 17%. Conversely in terms of property ownership we see a much higher rate of ownership in the central district at 70% vs. 16% in the high-rise area. This might be a result of the people in the center living in self-built housing rather than rental properties, and the people in the high-rise area living in social housing. (Figure 25).

**Building Age:**

Through one of our interviews, we learned that the first buildings in Labaro were down by the train station. In the 60-70 the first housing projects were built and most of the central part of the town filled in from there. In analysis the data on building age we hoped to see a pattern to correlate with this history. From the data we can see that after the



building of the first high-rise in the 60's the central area of town gained much of it's growth, and much of the later growth in the high-rise area come even later. This data however might be incorrect due to the methods used in collection. Rather than dating the houses directly, the census gages the age of the buildings based strictly how old it looks. (**Figure 27**).

From analyzing the data, there is a difference in the two areas that we initially wanted to study. Central Labaro is mostly self-built privately owned properties. The population is older, and their education is lower. The high-rise area is more educated and involved with more professional jobs. The population in the high rise is younger, which might be a result of a large amount of the high-rise structures being built later.

#### **Problems with the Data & Analysis:**

We focused on the following specific statistical categories concerning employment type in Labaro recommended by Professor Smith:

- *Imprenditori e liberi professionisti*. [Businessmen and professionals]
- *Lavoratorio in proprio*. [Self-employed workers]
- *Coadiuvanti*. [Assistants]
- *Lavoratori dipendenti*. [Dependent workers]

This data comes with flaws, unfortunately. The sum of residents accounted for in these four categories falls about 2% short of the total occupied population for Labaro.

Other problems such as ambiguous labeling made the census data hard to decipher. Data filtered by age proved to

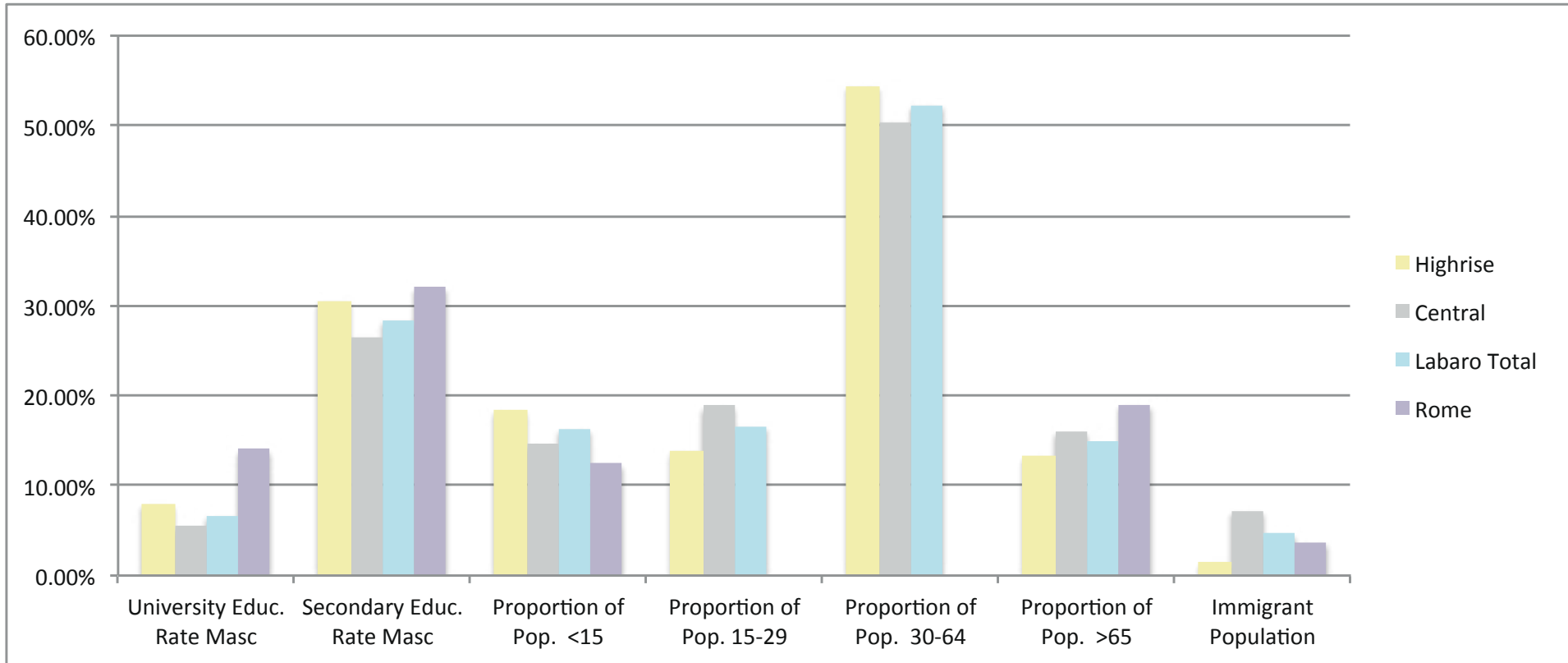
be troublesome, with data only available for the group aged over fifteen as a whole, instead of broken down into groups such as ages 30-64. For the total occupied dwellings figures about Rome as a whole, we used data referred to as “dwellings used”. In addition, some categories’ descriptions, when translated to English, sounded confusingly similar. Our interpretation of these categories could have been skewed, depending on our interpretation of labels. For example, categories 51 and 58 appeared to be the same figure, but contained two different values:

- 51 MAS\_6P\_LAU - Popolazione residente maschi 6 anni e pi~ - laurea+diplomi universitari+diplomi terziari di tipo non universitario. [Resident male population ages 6 and above with university degrees or non-university tertiary degrees]
- 58 MASCHI\_LAU - Popolazione residente maschi con laurea+diplomi universitari+diplomi terziari di tipo non universitario. [Resident male population with graduate degrees, university degrees, and tertiary non-university degrees]

In this preliminary analysis, absolute precision is difficult given the age issue—this data was collected in 2001—and these inaccuracies and discrepancies.

## **Historical Statistical Overview of Labaro, 1951-2001**

In an attempt to better understand the history of Labaro we began an analysis of past statistical data our area. On Thursday, March 31, 2011 we went to the headquarters for



**Figure 16:**  
Labaro: population by age and education.

statistical data in Rome with the intent of view our census tract data over the last hundred years.

We found that prior to the 2001, data on specific census tracts in the region known as the “*Agro Romano*” (roughly the area outside of the GRA highway circumnavigating the city) was not broken down by census tract. On top of that, the area known as Labaro was not even counted as its own zone (57) until the 1951 census. For these reason we choose to review three periods of census data from 1951, 1971, and 1981 encompassing zone 57 known as Labaro. (**Appendix B** for all statistical data).

**Population:**

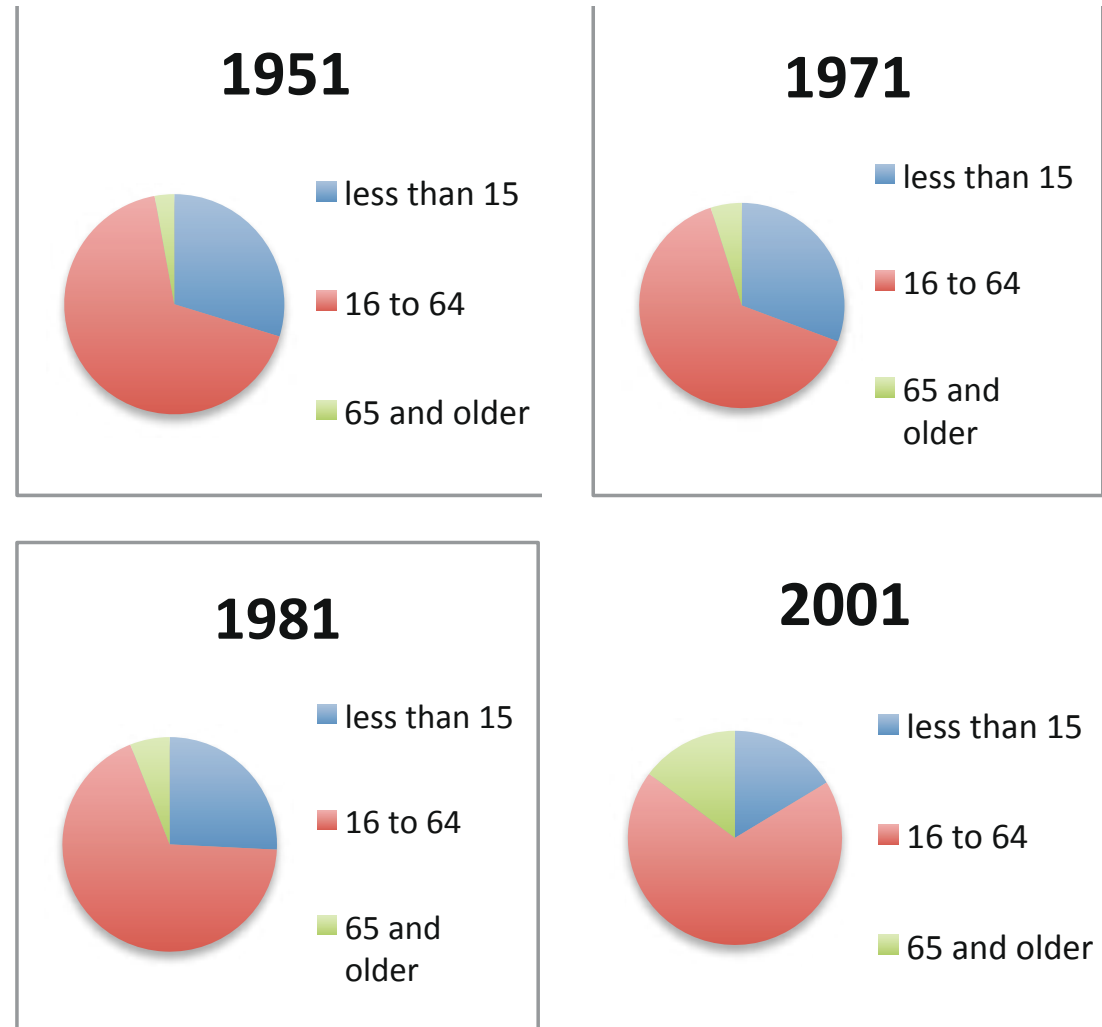
In 1951 the population of Labaro stood at 2,364 with a density of 1.86 people per hectare. By 1971 the population grew to 8,582, more than tripling in just 20 years. Then in 1981 the population reached 12,586. The rise in population of Labaro is a trend that has continued to this day. (**Figure 14**).

The number of youth in Labaro has followed the same downward trend as much of Italy. In 1951 almost 30% of the population was under the age of 15. By 1971 this number climbed a little more to almost 31%, however in 10 years by 1981 the percentage had dropped to 26%. In 2001, our census tract data shows just 16%; still higher then the 12% in the commune as a whole. While the percentage of youth has continued to go down in Labaro, it’s worth noting that compared to aggregate Rome, the percentage of has always been higher. (**Figures 17, 18, 19 & 20**).

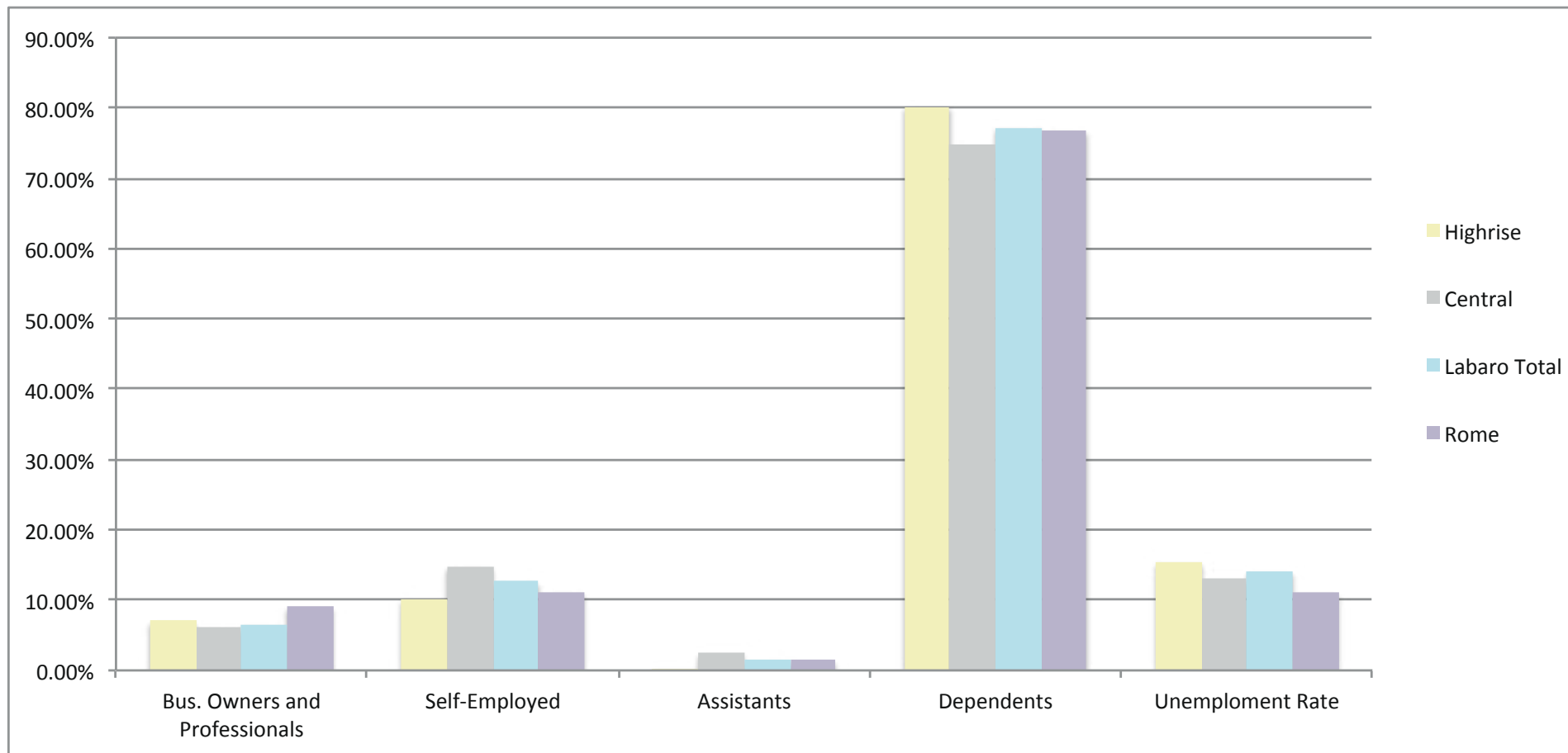
While the percentage of youth in Labaro has gone down

**Figures 17, 18, 19, & 20:**

Historical age proportions in Labaro.







**Figure 21:**  
Labaro: Occupation of residents.

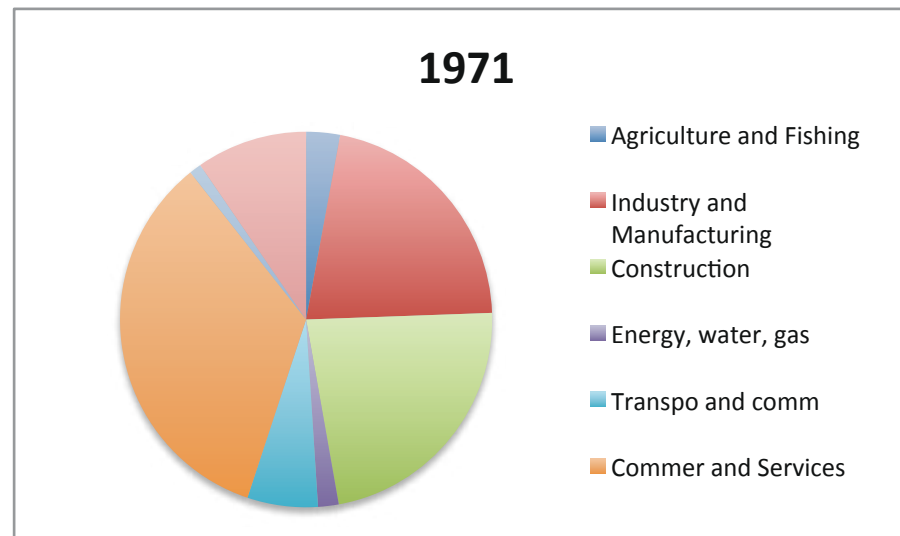
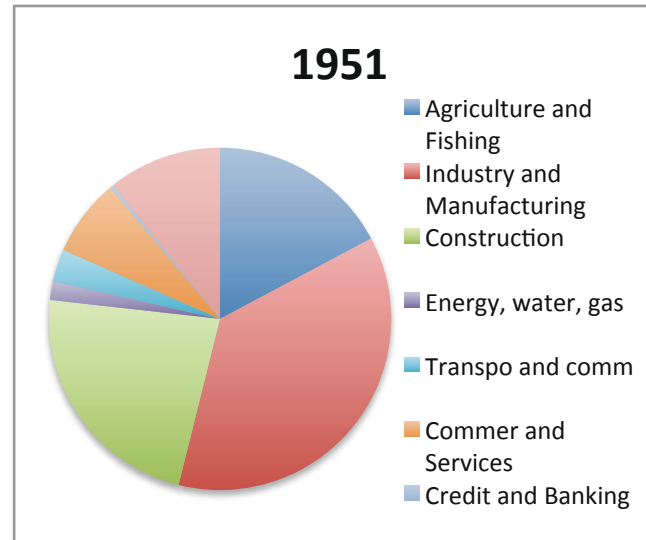
over the last 50 years the percentage of residents over 65 has follow a converse trend. In 1951 there were just 2.88% resident over 65. In 1971 that climbed to 4.92%, then climbed again to 6% in 1981. By the year 2001, our census tract the percentage of residents over 65 had jumped to 15%; high but still lower than the 19% in aggregate Rome. This trend follows the aging population trend of Italy, but also indicates that Labaro has maintained a younger average age than most areas. (Figures 17, 18, 19 & 20)

**Education:**

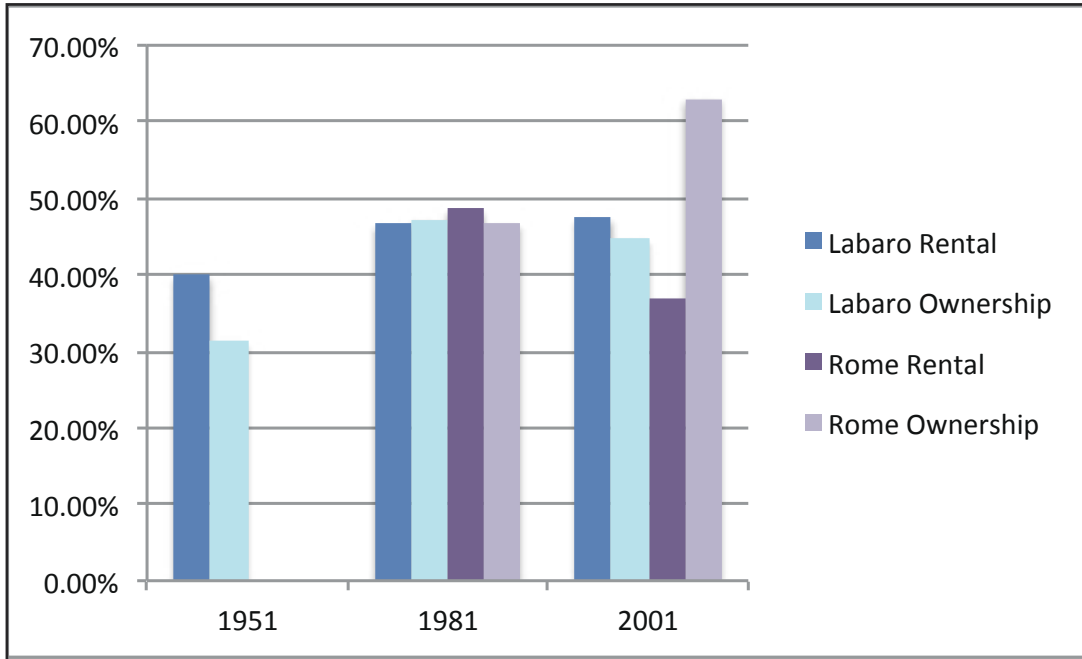
By 1951, 67% of the residential population had an elementary school education. Only 5% had an education from Scuola media, and only .3% of the population had a university education (all 6 of whom were men). 9.29% of the population was illiterate. Unfortunately data on education was not available for the year 1971. 1981 saw an overall increase in education level, but Labaro still lagged behind the aggregate Rome levels. Secondary school education rose from 5% to 27%. The number of residents with a university education rose from .3% to 1.41%. The data for our census tracts for 2001 follow similar differences between aggregate Rome. Percentage values had improved since 1981, but Labaro continues to lag behind the greater Rome average.

**Occupation:**

The data regarding occupation has varying continuity between different census years. The definitions that we used for occupation in our census tracks (which we took from Agnew, John, 1995, *Rome*. Chs. 6-8) were not in use until after the 1981 census. 1951 and 1971 categories were based



**Figure 22 & 23:** Labaro: Historical occupation data of residents.



**Figure 24:**  
Labaro: Historical housing data, 1951-2001.

more on horizontal types of industry. 1981 categories were organized similar to 2001; areas like employees and managers are grouped together. 2001 categories are based more around economic levels.

**1951 to 1971:** Between 1951 and 1971 we saw significant changes in the job types of the population in Labaro a couple different areas. The agriculture and fishing occupation decreased from 17% of the population to 3% of the population. Industry and Manufacturing decreased from 37% of the population to 22% of the population, we see a light increase in percentage involve in Transportation jobs and communication from 3% to 6%. Finally, we see a significant increase in the percentage of the population involved in Commerce and Services from 7% to 34%. We think these changes represent a more general trend in Italy markets from rural to urban, a loss of industry, an increase in the commercial economy, and an increase in technology related services. (**Figures 22 & 23**).

**1981:** The percentage of residents occupied as professionals, managers, and employees was below the aggregate value of Rome.

#### **Housing:**

Housing occupation types in Labaro have seen an interesting change since the 1981 census. As seen in **Figure 24**, the rental and ownership rates use to be on par with aggregate Rome in 1981, but by 2001 Labaro has a far higher proportion of residents who rent rather than own their homes.



**Unemployment:**

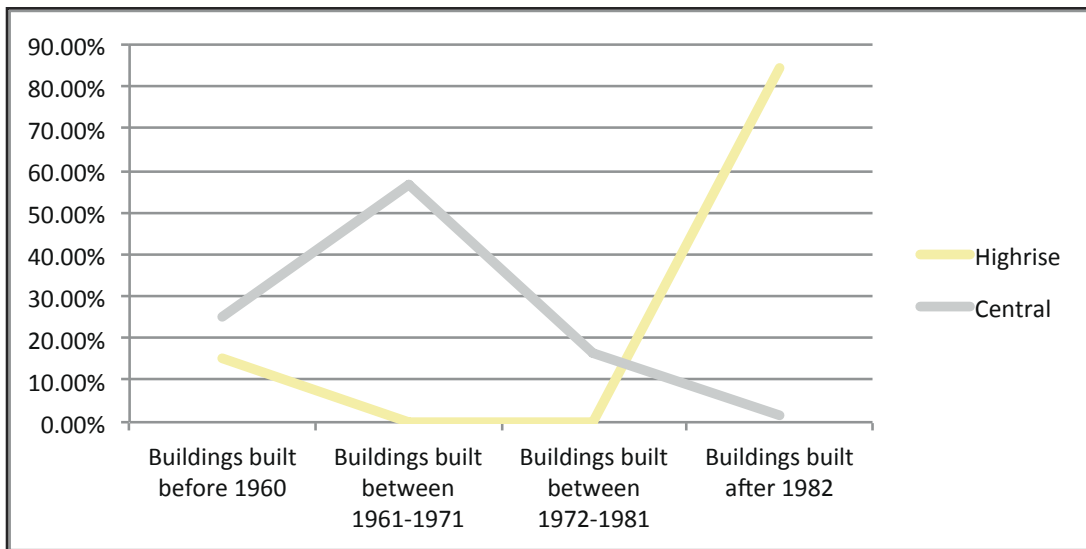
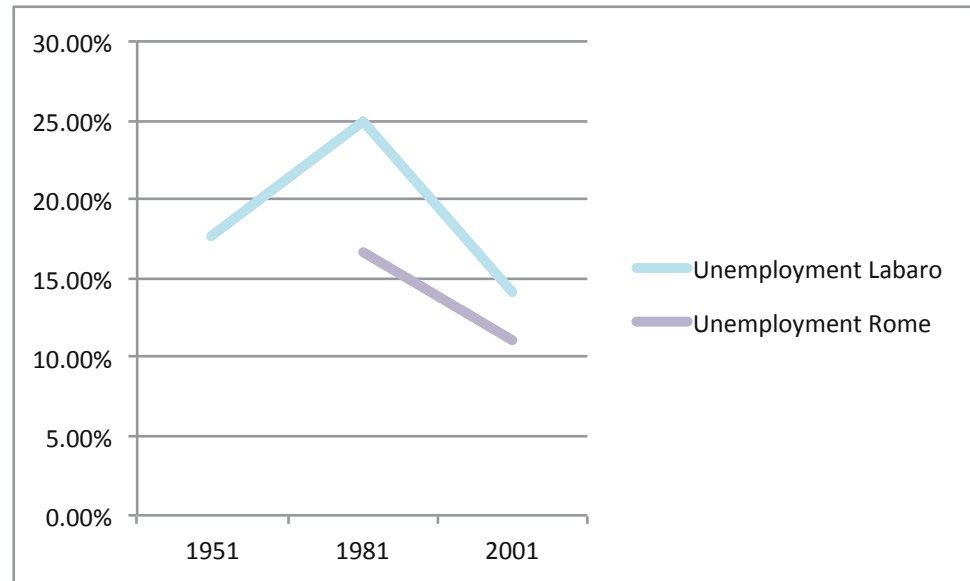
Unemployment values are somewhat hard to discern over different decades do to the way in which they are reported. We couldn't locate unemployment levels for 1971. In 1951 and in 1981 the value is reported along with such values as "domestic" and "searching for first job." In these cases, in order to determine unemployment we took all those in the work force that didn't have jobs and were looking for jobs, excluding those that choose not to work. (See **Figure 21**).

Labaro has grown and followed many of the economic trends that greater Rome has followed, but in many ways the population of Labaro has always been a little less developed economically than the average for the commune. It does seem however from much of the data that over the last 50 years, that the gap has been closing slowing. Perhaps in the next decade or two we will see a Labaro that is on par with greater Rome.



**Figure 25:**  
Labaro: Present housing and occupancy data.

**Figure 26:**  
Labaro: Unemployment, 1951-2001.



**Figure 27:**  
Labaro: Building age.

# Qualitative Research

## Student-Generated Lynch Map

After several visits to Labaro, we had enough qualitative data to come up with a Lynch map. **Figure 27** shows our interpretation of the neighborhood post photo-grid and census tract street surveys. The map identifies nodes, landmarks, borders/edges and districts that we found most important.

### Landmarks:

- *The sculpture & steps* - selected because it is a common meeting point when the group splits up to survey the two major areas in Labaro (north – public housing, south – private housing).

- *The Church* - a landmark that we walk by almost every time we visit Labaro; on two streets, the lower and higher ground. It is a landmark also because of its unique architectural style that makes it stand out from the rest of the buildings.

- *The Bar* - A meeting/waiting place for the group, and perhaps the spot that we have spent the most stationary time at Labaro.

- *Train station* - A meeting place when either of the TAs or professors come to see us out in the field.

### Nodes:

- *Train Station* - Connecting Labaro with other stops along the train line (from central Rome to Viterbo).

- *Intersection between public housing & the mixed-use center* - Physically represented by an actual traffic intersection.

- *Intersection between the residential district & the mixed-use center* - Via Constantinia and Via del

Monti della Valchetta is an intersection that connects the two districts. It is a clear transition point between a purely residential district and a more diversified mixed-use district. Some commercial units located immediately beyond this intersection include a pharmacy and a fish market.

### Borders & Edges:

- *Between public housing district and the mixed-use & private housing districts* - there is a wider road (two lane, two way) that crosses an intersection and runs along this edge. This road is a physical representation of the border and a clear division.

- *Between the mixed-use district and the primarily residential district*

### Districts:

- *Public Housing district*

- *Open space*

- *Mixed-use center*

- *Residential district*

### Explanation:

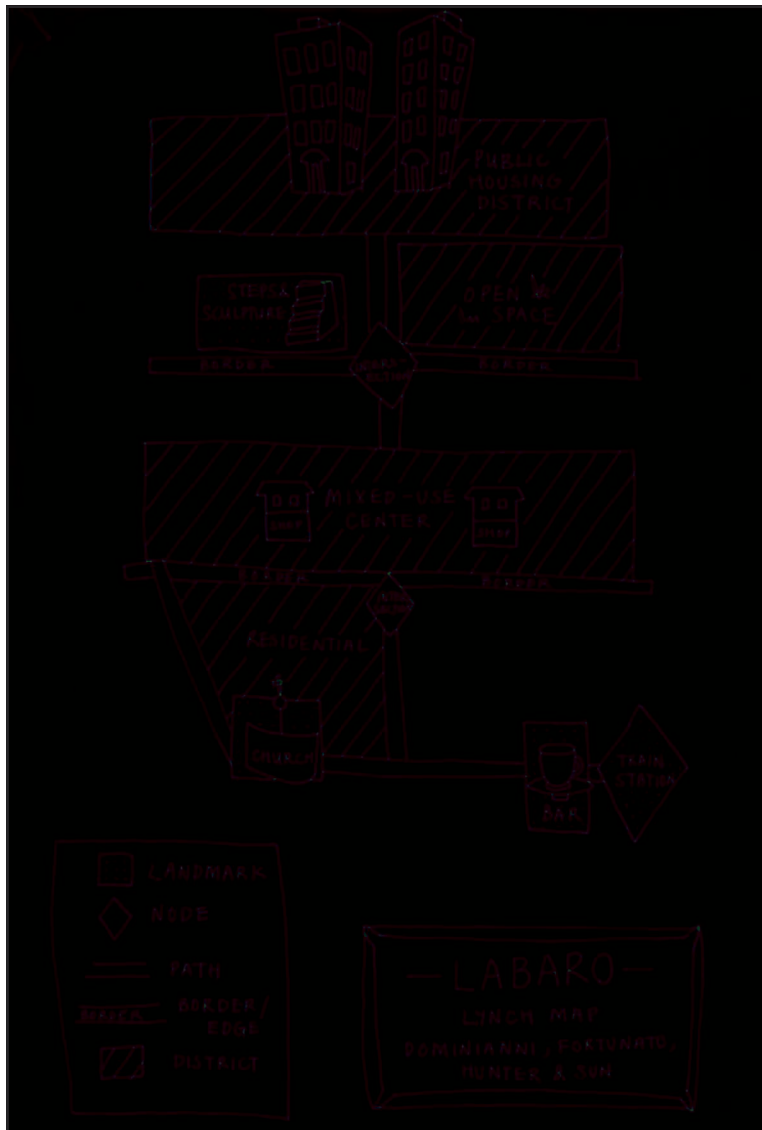
By creating this Lynch map, we can compare citizen interviews and Lynch maps with our own and explore the differences that may exist. Even since this neighborhood study has ended, our cognitive map of Labaro has remained the same.

## Citizen Lynch Maps

In order to further explore our initial theme of private versus public, we performed citizen interviews, asked residents to draw maps Lynch maps of Labaro for us, and inter-



**Figure 27:**  
Student generated  
Lynch map, drawn by  
Angela.



viewed an author who had written a historical narrative of the neighborhood. When we spoke to citizens, Claudia and Davide helped us communicate.

We continued our studies in our chosen census tracts, and generally maintained a split group structure for this half of the qualitative data collection: Angela, Susanne, and Claudia studied the tracts by the train station, and in mixed-use, geographic center of the neighborhood; while Marc, Jackson, and Davide performed interviews and mapping exercises in the three chosen census tracts containing public housing buildings. In order to maintain continuity, we created guideline questionnaires for both the interviews and the mapping exercises. (**Appendix A**).

#### **Old Man at the Cafe:**

The six of us performed our first citizen interview together. The first man we spoke to was sitting outside of a café near the train station. He was elderly, surrounded by friends, and hesitant to talk to us at first. His friend literally walked away from us when we began to ask questions. This man was older and had lived in Labaro for “many years”. He stayed in the neighborhood for everything he did, and claimed that Labaro had everything anyone could need. Unfortunately, we could not interest him in drawing a map. He seemed more bored with us than reluctant to draw. However, Angela has drawn a Lynch map based on his narrative of the space (**Figure 28**).

#### **Anna the Pharmacist:**

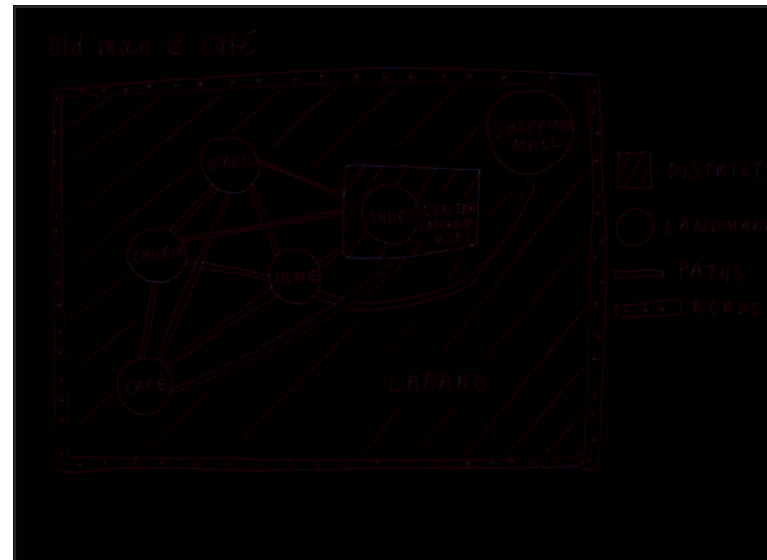
Angela, Susanne and Claudia went to the center mixed-use area and stepped into the pharmacy to ask questions to with whoever would speak with them. Two of the pharma-

cists were from Labaro, and they spoke to one in particular: Anna, a woman around 28-35 years old. Anna described Labaro as consisting of *quartierini*, or multiple little quarters. She didn't find there to be problems between the residents of the public and private housing, and described the train as being a useful means of transportation for all residents. (This is different from other interviews conducted, which suggested more turmoil and that the train was only for the immigrants and poorer residents.)

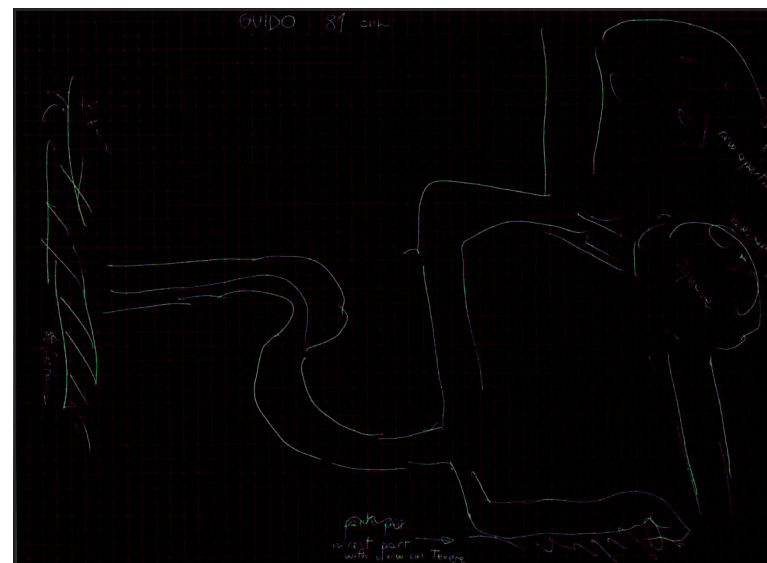
On evenings and weekends, she said, Labaro was empty – teenagers (*raggazzi*) sometimes hang out in the few bars in Labaro at night, but mostly head to the center of Rome or other neighborhoods. According to Anna, Labaro has everything you need (pharmacy, schools, grocery stores), but it also lacks cultural centers like a theater, movie cinema, or bookstore. In terms of important areas, both she and the other pharmacist could only think of their own houses. Perhaps the church would be important to some people, they said, but not to either of them. Anna drew a map of Labaro for us, first drawing Via Flaminia, and then dividing the rest of the space up in to rectangular sections. The last thing she did was the mark off and crosshatch green space. (Figure 29).

**Guido, the Man at the Bus Stop:**

Angela, Susanne and Claudia then spoke to an old man waiting at a bus stop, Guido. Guido also had a problem with the lack of theaters, cinemas, or bookstores in Labaro. Not even a place to buy nice clothes! He lamented the lack of transportation as he'd been waiting at the bus stop for a long time. This was different from what we have usually heard about the relative ease to get to the city center. Guido



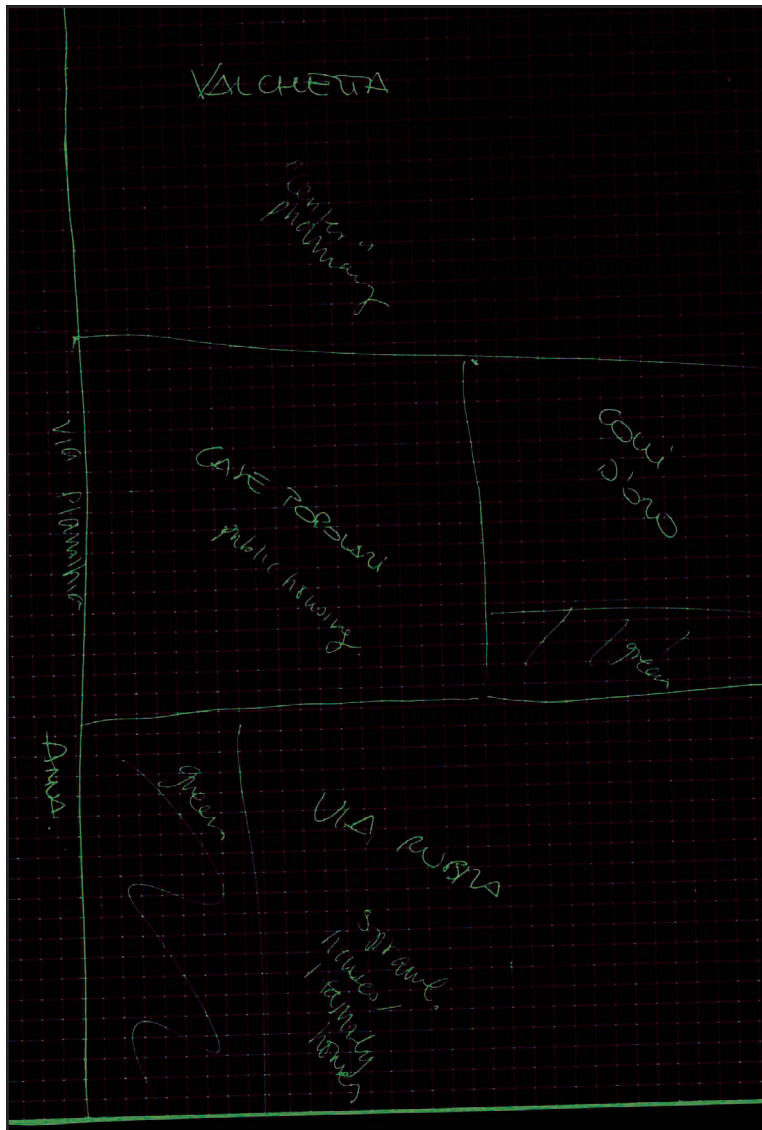
**Figure 28:** Lynch map drawn by Angela based on the interview of the old man at the cafe.



**Figure 30:** Lynch map drawn by Guido, the man waiting at the bus stop.

**Figure 29:**

Lynch map drawn by Anna, the pharmacist in Labaro's center.



recognized that there was no place of aggregation, no public center. He thought Labaro lacked sports facilities, which he thought was a common problem of peripheral areas. He had no idea where young people hang out, but he knew that they do not take to the streets of Labaro come aperitivo hour. He then protested for a few minutes against drawing a map, and eventually drew a curvy, street-based map for us, starting with what looks like Via del Labaro, focusing on the mixed-use city center, and finishing with the train station and new apartments. He indicated the “best part of Labaro”, Labaro Alto, the high ground with beautiful views, where he lives, with cross-hatching. (Figure 30).

**Seventy-Two Year-Old High Rise Resident:**

Marc, Jackson, and Davide spoke to a seventy-two year old retired man who lives in the high-rise buildings. He goes to the shops in the mixed-use center of the neighborhood for most things, and to the center city for specific things he cannot find in Labaro. While he finds there to be little crime in Labaro, he says the place is dead. There are no jobs, and a majority of the population is over sixty-five. Young people, he said, do nothing but sleep all day and go out at night while their parents pay the bills. He lamented the decline in political interest among the population as well as the municipality's waning engagement with Labaro. This man, who has lived in Labaro for most of his life, refused to draw a map for us as he was “too old and cannot draw”. Angela has drawn a Lynch map based on this conversation. (Figure 31).

**Elderly Couple:**

Marc, Jackson, and Davide also spoke to an elderly retired couple walking along Largo Nimis. They moved to

Labaro fifteen years ago and before that lived in the center of Rome for thirty-five years. They found Labaro to be a dead place. The biggest thing that happens is the market on Tuesdays. They go to the center of Rome a couple of times a week to enjoy themselves and take in the atmosphere. The man drew a map of Labaro for us (Figure 32).

**Reflections:**

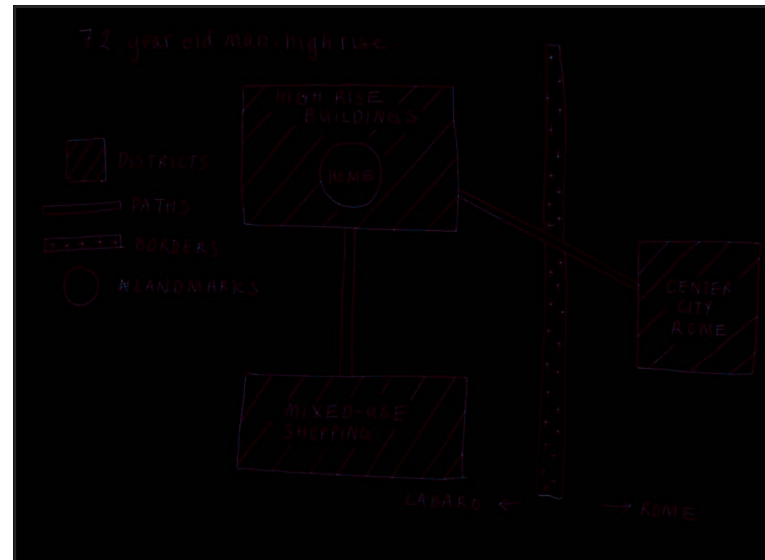
All six of us experienced a fair amount of hesitation from Labaro residents. We only approached people who appeared to be in good moods and not in a hurry, and still had well under a 50% response rate. Most residents claimed to have nothing to say, but after one or two questions couldn't be stopped from talking.

**Davide's Citizen Interviews**

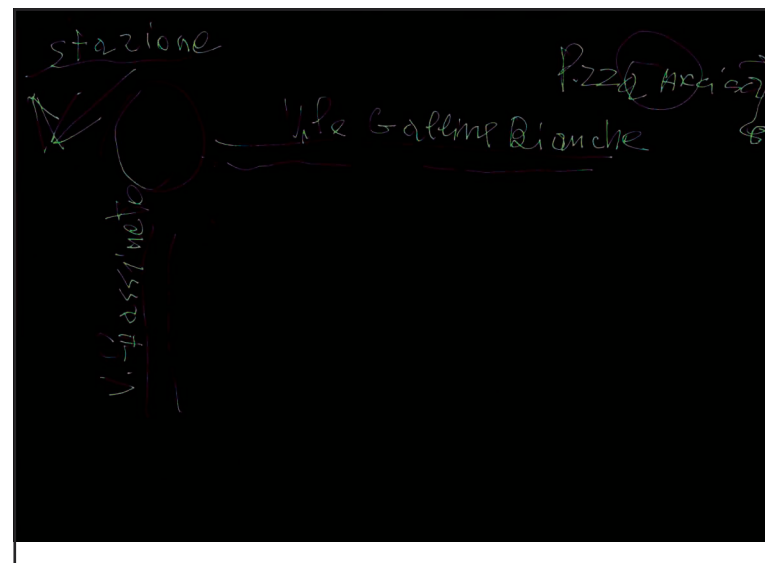
Davide spent time on his own interviewing other citizens of Labaro. He spoke with several people about their own life stories, when they moved to Labaro, what issues they saw, etc. He also had many produce a quick Lynch map sketch, which he then refined and organized into a more comprehensible map. These interviews were primarily performed on the weekend, in contrast to the weekday interviews performed by the team as a whole. In addition, being solo, there were no non-Italians to potentially make interviewees uncomfortable.

**Ottaviano: Figure 33**

Though owning a home along Largo Nimis in Labaro since 1994, Ottaviano traveled extensively as a young man. He retired in 2004 and spends much of his time walking through parks with his dogs and looking at flowers. He says that Labaro makes him think of green, big, quiet spaces,



**Figure 31:** Lynch map drawn by Angela based on the interview of the old man walking around the public housing district.



**Figure 32:** Lynch map drawn by the old man walking along Largo Nimis.





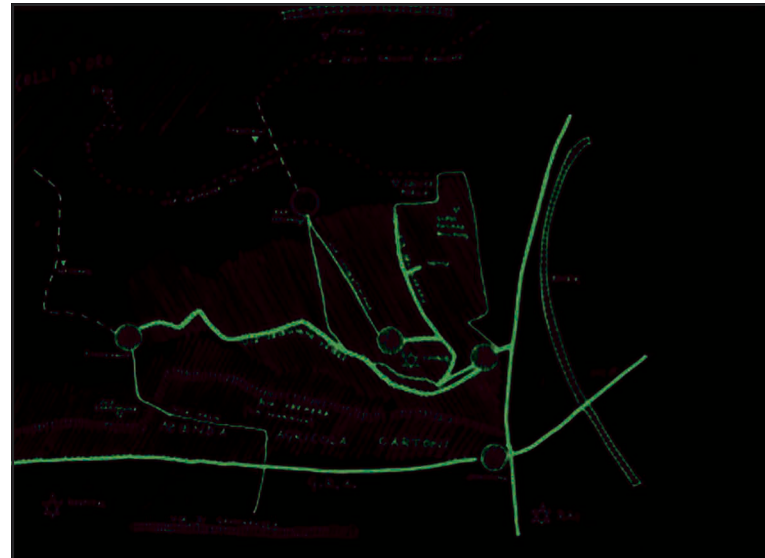
torio was born in Labaro in 1939, back when there were only sharecroppers (some of his ancestors were sharecroppers). After serving in the military and working, he finally retired in 1994 and has lived in Labaro consistently. His favorite mental image of Labaro is the church visible from the GRA standing out from all of the houses. He says that it's a shame that there is no square for people to spend time and get together. Building that fountain was an attempt, though it failed, he says. The most important node is by Bar Meloni at the intersection of Via Constantinia and Via Monte della Valchetta. He likes that Labaro's hill can be seen from far away.

**Isabella: Figure 36**

Born in Labaro in 1983, Isabella has studies and lives elsewhere recently. When she was growing up she used to meet all the other kids by the church. As a teenager, she and her friends could easily do whatever they wanted without bothering anyone. She thinks that Colli D'Oro, the open area, is a good place for jogging, but she does not feel very safe on the road there and always goes in the mid-afternoon. To her, Labaro's main landmarks are the soccer field and Mama's restaurant by the train station. She thinks that the fountain is a spot where only drug addicts hang out.

**Interview with Vittorio D'Amico**

We met Signor D'Amico at his residence in Labaro. He lives on Via del Labaro, in a 6-story apartment building. For the most part, D'Amico simply said the answers to our questions could be found in his book Labaro. He said that his book talked about history and true facts only. This has been a good source of background history, looking at early



**Figure 35:** Lynch map drawn by Davide based on a conversation with Vittorio.



**Figure 36:** Lynch map drawn by Davide based on a conversation with Isabella,

residents and the creation of the neighborhood. D'Amico was accompanied by his wife during the interview, who also helped answer some of our questions.

**According to D'Amico:**

- No Labaro residents actually work in Labaro, unless they own the small bars and cafes in the center. All Labaro residents commute to Rome to work.

- Commuting is not by the train that we usually take, but by car. Almost every family in Labaro has a car. The train is for foreigners, immigrants and tourists only.

- There are some Romanian immigrants in Labaro, but they are culturally and socially integrated into the neighborhood, so there is little tension.

- In terms of social class, D'Amico explained that in general, all of the residents of Labaro are of the same socioeconomic class. Although some houses look nicer, and others look older, they cost the same. There is no defined wealthier district, and even those who live in public housing are financially comfortable. The choice between apartments and houses is more of a personal one, not really based on financial statuses.

- There is little to no tension in general in Labaro. D'Amico and his wife stressed the fact that Labaro is a quiet and peaceful residential neighborhood. All the residents get along with each other. There is no social tension between classes and public/private residents.

- Although one of the Communist headquarters

is in Labaro, they are not very active. D'Amico says, "They're 'Communist' but not really."

- Although there is no large supermarket/ grocery store in Labaro proper, there is a large supermarket a couple of minutes down the highway. This is easily accessible by car (as most residents have this), but is not something that you would know as a visitor/ observer, like us.

- There is a middle school and primary school in Labaro, but the high school is further away, accessible by car primarily.

- D'Amico explained that there is really no 'center' in Labaro, and that services and stores are spread evenly throughout Labaro.

- Labaro is still expanding, with more construction of apartment buildings going on in the periphery.

Much of what D'Amico told us conflicted with our initial impressions on Labaro – especially that of potential tension and disparity between the public and private sectors of the neighborhood. It did, however, agree with the statistical data. D'Amico and other citizens we interviewed disagreed about the existence of problems in the neighborhood – D'Amico felt there were none, while other residents cited a lack of communal or cultural space.

### **Davide's History of Labaro**

Some Etrurian and Roman ruins are still standing in the area. There is a tower a few hundred meters from the GRA junction, and a bridge on the Cremera stream. The ancient city of Veio is only a couple of kilometers away.

Since its construction in 220 BC, the Via Flaminia, the consular road that leads to Rimini across the Appennines, passes by Labaro. This explains why Labaro is never isolated from the rest of the city.

On the plain of Saxa Rubra, in 312 AD, a battle takes place between Maxentius and Constatine. It ends in Constatine's victory and the institution of the Christain faith as the Roman Empire's official religion.

For hundreds of years Labaro is part of the Church's State and it was only exploited as pasture land.

In 1874, right after the birth of Italy as a nation state, the Vatican rents the property to Count Piacentini.

Development of the area takes shape in 1892 with the construction of the bridge on the Tiber River 200 meters south of the hill. The eastern and the western banks are connected for the first time at this part of the river.

In 1908 Mr. Erminio Cartoni, a local merchant, buys 130 hectares of land along the Cremera stream for 250,000 lire.

A few years later, in the early 1920s, the Fascist regime carries out a drainage system as it does in many other rural areas by the capital. This is when Mr. Cartoni's son, Gino, starts a big farm. By 1925 more than 30 families (5-10 people each) work here as sharecroppers.

Most of them move in from the swampy counties in the agro romano, but also from Abruzzo, Friuli, and Calabria. They are all escaping situations of extreme poverty in their homelands.

Landlord Cartoni makes arrangements to establish a strong link between the farm and the government.

In 1932 the Roma Viterbo railroad is completed. Sev-

eral trains go back and forth to the very center of Rome in Piazza del Popolo every day, and the phenomenon of commuting starts with a large number of travellers.

In the mid-1930s a first residential complex called "Sette Villini" is built by the Cremera stream, and owners are all middle class people.

After September 8th, 1943 Labaro is home to a German anti-aircraft unit. Therefore it is bombed several times by the United States Air Force (USAF) and it suffers minor casualties among the population. The iron bridge on the Tiber is destroyed. Also, for some weeks US soldiers camp here and few episodes of violence towards the population are reported.

In the years following the war the area develops enormously and loses its agrarian image.

In 1951 a hydroelectric dam is built on the Tiber to increase the production of electricity. Rome generally sees a demographic boom and, as a consequence, it grows incredibly fast. The rules intended to regulate its development are not enforced.

By 1955 land prices rise and Mr. Cartoni sells all of his property, the farm shuts down, and the main activity seems to be related to the many brick-kilns involved in the production of construction materials required for the city's physical expansion.

As in the WWI aftermath, hundreds of families move in looking for an improvement in living conditions, but this time most of the newcomers are from the southern regions of Italy.

The neighborhood is densely populated by construction workers who are mostly commuters.

Labaro's physical shape changes from a farm-like land-



**Figure 37:**

A historical view of Labaro. Credit: Labaro, by Vittorio D'Amico.



scape to a borgata, in this case a confusing collection of single-unit spontaneous buildings built without control from the public administration.

The main issue during this time is that the city government absolutely ignores these people's needs. In fact anyone outside of the GRA is not considered a full-fledged citizen and does not even have voting rights in the local elections. This applies to approximately 30,000 families living mostly in shacks. The social pressure is therefore very high.

It is not a coincidence that the dramatic loss of draining soil, due to an evidently unwise management of the process of urbanization, causes several episodes of hydrogeological instability and worsens the consequences of the 1965 flood on the northern side of the hill. The episode is still imprinted in the population's memory as a symbol of its marginalization.

Labaro, just like many other *borgate*, is part of a "red belt" that surrounds Rome; the Italian Communist Party (CPI) obtains up to 60% of the vote here.

Throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s this area is the theatre of a struggle for the recognition of the basic rights to vote, to have public services, infrastructure, and, in general, consideration from the Campidoglio.

In the mid-1970s a few things happen. A new church is built in the historical core of the borgata. The architectural language of the new building belongs to what is called "informal style" and it stands out in the anonymous urban fabric that surrounds it. Most of the people working in the construction yard are locals. To many people this church is still an important landmark.

A couple of years later, on the northern side of the hill a huge brand new public housing project rises. It is an event that is to be considered within the wider scenario of efforts done in order to solve an endemic housing problem. People from other illegal borgate move in as IACP assignees. The typology and density of the project meet these needs and the architecture reflects the trend of the time: high rise buildings, circular masterplan, heavily prefabricated concrete elements, etc. It is worth mentioning that it provided the neighborhood with the primary infrastructural elements which were still missing: a library, a center for the elderly, a doctor's office, etc.

At the same time proper roads such as the Via Gemona fel Friuli are built and street lighting is ensured.

The birth of this new residential core coincides with the rise of a social plague that affects the community for more than a decade: drugs, and as a consequence, crime. It is nevertheless a phenomenon limited in time and finishes in the early 1990s.

It's probably correct to say that during what is commonly called "The First Republic" (1948-1992), political debate is an everyday reality in Labaro. With the fall of the traditional parties' tensions, the struggles become milder and milder. Today that neighborhood is safe and relatively wealthy, much more so than the neighbors of Prima Porta to the north. The reason lies in its strategic position, it's placement by the junction of the GRA and Via Flaminia, just fifteen minutes away from the center. Today the challenge is to step up from a borgata to a quartiere in all intents and purposes.

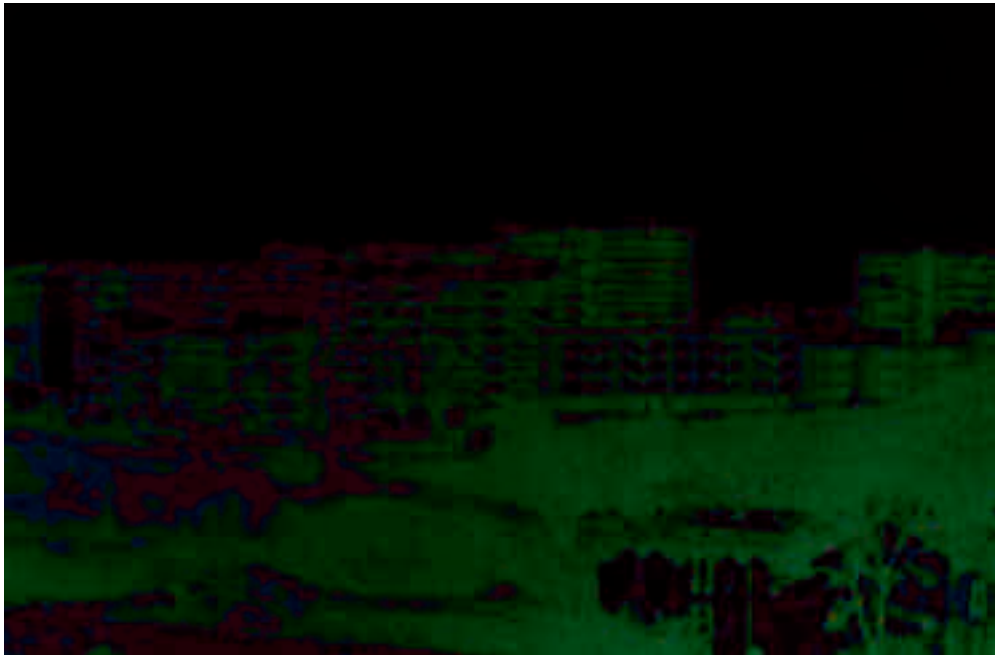
In the last fifteen years we witness a moderate gentrifi-



**Figure 38:**  
A historical view of Labaro. *Credit: Labaro, by Vittorio D'Amico.*

**Figure 39:**

A historical view of Labaro. *Credit: Labaro, by Vittorio D'Amico.*



cation, with immigrants moving in, largely Romanians working in the construction industry. The Colli d'Oro projects rose as a residential complex funded by private investors aiming to host middle-class people. Banca Nazionale del Lavoro owns a significant amount of property and several of its employees live here. In the same few blocks is the Pfizer headquarters. The prices are high but affordable compared to more central areas, encouraging a meaningful number of young couples to purchase flats here. Commuting is by now a problem in Rome, and the infrastructural frame no longer can bear such an intense traffic load. Labaro still needs a proper layout restyling to adjust its flawed structure. It has been procrastinated for years but it is evidently not likely to happen soon. Projects exist for a civic center, a theater, and a commercial street, but unfortunately the current municipal administration is not politically inclined in this direction.

# Conclusion

## Methodological Drawbacks

There were various problems that we encountered while conducting fieldwork and research, and these problems may have affected the way our data was collected and interpreted.

The main problem was the narrow time frame in which we conducted our fieldwork each week. Our fieldwork was usually conducted Monday during the day between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Occasionally we would visit Labaro on Thursday at the same hours. This led to the following problems:

- We were exposed to only a certain strata of the population – primarily the elderly. At this hour, children were at school and many residents had travelled out of Labaro for work. Those that remained either worked within Labaro (at the pharmacy, bars or local stores) or were the elderly who had no need to travel outside of Labaro. The elderly may have lived in Labaro for extended periods of time, and hence their maps and answers to interview questions would be altered and affected by their memories of Labaro across the years.

- Assuming that the elderly do not need to leave Labaro as much (for work or school), which they would identify with more landmarks and nodes within the neighborhood.

Additionally, it must be noted that we only really investigated 15 census tracts, which covered a total population of 4,700 people. These 15 census tracts were selected out of almost 40 census tracts in Labaro and were selected with the intention of highlighting some of the initial perceived problems. Although census tracts were originally selected so



**Figure 40:**  
A gated driveway.  
*Credit: Angela.*

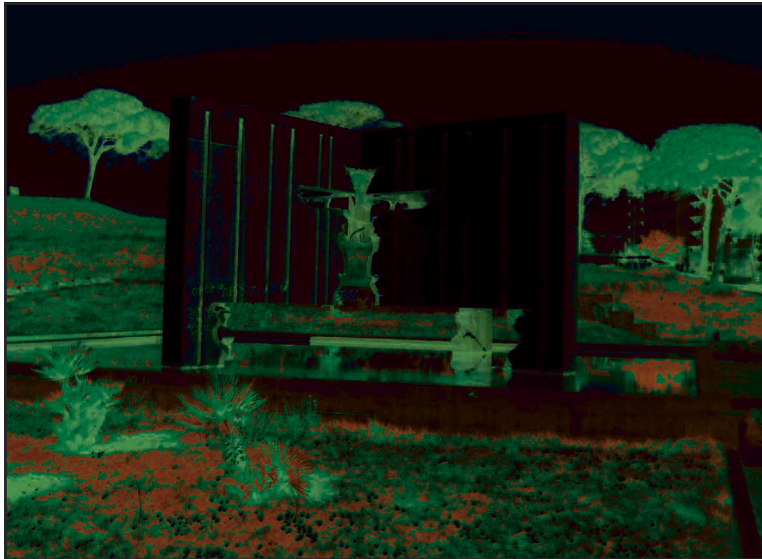


**Figure 41:**  
A dead-end street and driveway.  
*Credit: Angela.*



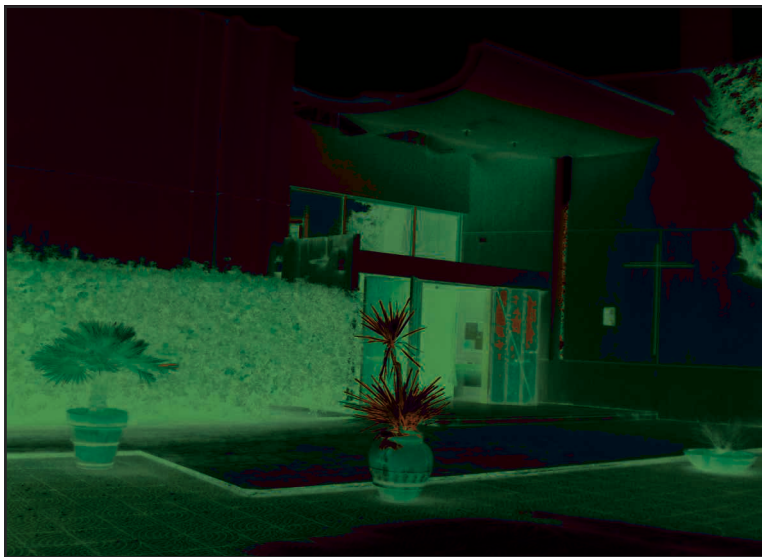
**Figure 42:**

Fountain within the public space between the high-rise and center districts. *Credit: Jackson.*



**Figure 43:**

An entrance to the landmark church visible from the GRA. *Credit: Angela.*



that we could heighten the contrasts between the two areas of the neighborhood, different issues emerged later. If we had known about the latter issues to start with (on public space, recreational space and sense of community), then we may have started with a different array of census tracts to include more public space.

In conclusion, we note that our research only encompasses a small section of the population and the area, and had we by chance selected different census tracts or interviewed different residents, we may have come across some different final issues.

Ultimately we learned the importance of doing a case study with both qualitative and quantitative research in order to support our identifying of issues in Labaro. By looking at the statistics, we can gage how little of Labaro we were able to see during our visits. For example, according to the statistics, Labaro has the same average age as the center of Rome, but from our observations during fieldwork, we were under the impression that Labaro had a much older population. Alternatively, walking around the streets of Labaro and interacting with local citizens gave us a deeper insight into the workings of the neighborhood than pure statistics ever could.

## **Final Issues**

After further qualitative and quantitative research, we discovered some additional issues that exist in Labaro. These differ from our initial impressions and issues, as we were able to talk to citizens and learn from them what they thought some of the neighborhood's pressing problems were.

### **Inefficient Use of Public Space:**

Throughout the course of our fieldwork, one of the main concerns that we have identified in Labaro is the efficient use of public space. Public space exists in Labaro – there are obvious forms such as the open recreational space with the sculpture and playground along Via Gemona del Friuti, and less obvious forms, such as sidewalks.

This problem was apparent to us within our first few excursions to Labaro. We discovered that although there was a large area between the public housing/ high-rise developments and the mixed-use central area, there were few people making use of the area. The large playground was usually deserted. There were occasionally some elderly catching up and talking with their friends on the steps in front of the sculpture. Occasionally, we would see residents walking dogs or jogging along Via Gemona del Friuti, but not using the space directly. We noted that although the space seemed to be centrally located in the greater scheme of Labaro, it was not physically welcoming, as one would have to cross a multi-lane street with fast cars and buses in order to access it. We found out later in our research that this public space was built in conjunction with the public housing units along with some other public amenities in the neighborhood, yet its integration into the larger spatial framework was not successful.

As we completed our citizen interviews, we realized that the lack of public space in Labaro was a problem that was not only apparent to us, but also a common complaint amongst the residents. The residents complained about the lack of space for people of ages to congregate or organize

community activities. This has led to other issues discussed next. We could see from their Lynch maps, that this space by Via Gemona del Friuti was not effective public space because it did not appear on anyone's maps.

### **No Recreation Space:**

There was no evidence of any other type of public building, space or facility that welcomed all the residents of Labaro. Through interviews, this was confirmed. Many of the people that we had interviewed complained about the lack of communal space, cultural centers and general recreational space.

From our interviews, we gathered that although Labaro had everything that one would need – banks, libraries, grocery stores etc., it did not meet the recreational needs of the residents. Those whom we interviewed told us that they needed to travel outside of Labaro and into the center of Rome, or to other peripheral neighborhoods, if they wanted to go shopping or see a show.

We also tried to find out what was available for the younger generation in Labaro (we did not manage to interview any), and we found out that there was nothing to do for them. Most of them travel to Rome for nightlife or to see their friends. There was also mention of a strip mall that featured a large cinema and shopping mall, which seemed to be a closer alternative for youth.

The fact that so many residents felt the need to travel out of Labaro for recreational purposes also brings in the question of accessibility and transportation. There is a train running from Labaro to Piazza del Popolo, which seems to be the cheapest and easiest mode of transport. However, seemingly

**Figure 44:**

Public apartment buildings in the high-rise area. *Credit: Jackson.*



**Figure 45:**

Parking in the center district. *Credit: Angela.*



high car ownership and our interview with D'Amico, we find that most residents still prefer to drive. High automobile usage only encourages residents to leave Labaro to fulfill their residential needs and reinforces Labaro's image as a suburban bedroom community.

**Divide between Public & Private Space:**

During our initial street survey and our census tract survey, we noticed the differences between public and private space. During our street survey, we could see the disparity between the quality and management of public versus private spaces. Private spaces were well maintained by their owners. These normally consisted of fenced off gardens or backyards/front yards with potted plants and trees. From what we could see, these areas were clean and aesthetically pleasing. On the other hand, public spaces were largely unmaintained. Sidewalk quality was generally poor throughout the neighborhood, with quality increasing as you moved more towards the planned public housing district. It seemed that residents cared little for public space, as there was occasionally litter on the streets (especially as you moved closer to the commercial/ mixed-use area).

On one of our earlier fieldwork days, we came across several abandoned construction sites – perhaps the neighborhood had decided that reconstruction and renewal of public spaces were no longer necessary? Furthermore, many walls and public surfaces had graffiti and no signs of an effort in cleaning them up.

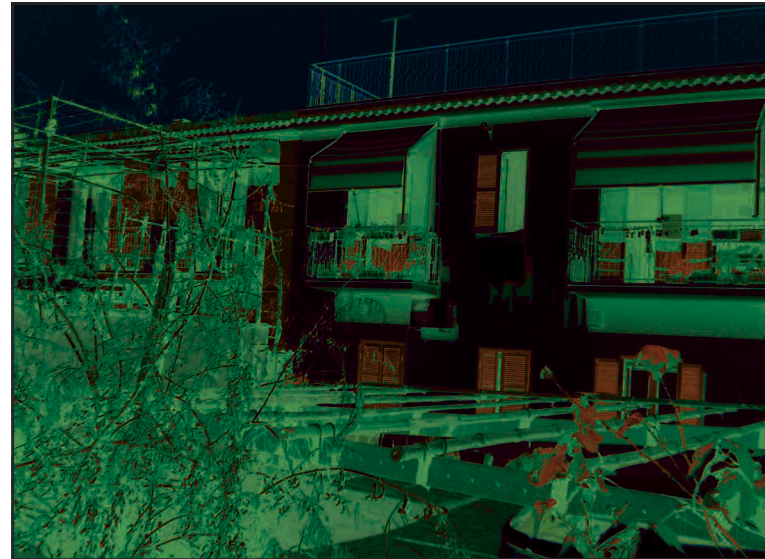
The poor maintenance and quality of public space may have led to a slower development of community, as residents keep to their own private spaces.



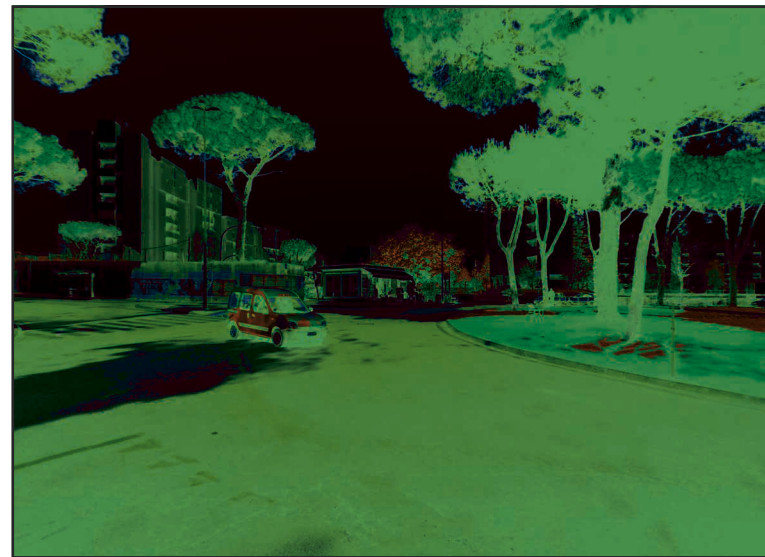
**Few Communal Activities, Organized Locally & Participated by Locals:**

With both lack of efficiently utilized public space, recreational space and bad maintenance of both, it is not a surprise that there is a lack of communal activities organized by locals and participated by locals. A couple of residents that we spoke to told us that although there was no social tension between different groups of residents, there was also no cohesion. It seemed that everyone got along and went about their own business, but did not identify much with each other as a neighborhood community. With an increasing need to travel out of Labaro (shopping etc.) this lack of community is only reinforced. Perhaps the only signs of community that we have seen are elderly friends taking walks or grabbing an espresso together in the morning. It seems that the younger generations have moved away from this sense of community that maybe Labaro once had.

Although there are physical structures that are symbols for public space and communal accessibility (for example the church, the two schools, the park and the library), these do not function efficiently as nodes that bring members of the community together. Even the center mixed-use/ commercial area (Via dei Monti della Valchatta, Via Constatinia and Via Vincenzo Comparini) does not evoke this feeling. Although there are a good number of people around in the morning, residents do not stop to chat or mingle. As we moved into more residential areas, there were few people on the streets. It seemed that many residents preferred to stay confined to their own private spaces. With so few resources encouraging public participation and engagement, can this be expected?



**Figure 46:**  
House/private residence  
in the central district.  
*Credit: Angela.*



**Figure 47:**  
Round-about and apart-  
ment buildings in the  
high-rise area. *Credit:  
Jackson.*



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In some of the brief conversations that Jackson and Marc had with some elderly citizens in the public housing told us that Labaro was in fact much different 15 years ago. They expressed that there was much more community organization and sense of a neighborhood. More people cared about the identity of Labaro and their relationships with their neighbors. More people stayed within Labaro for various activities and found satisfaction within the neighborhood. In our translation of D'Amico's book, we note that there were also higher crime rates 10-20 years ago. This shows that there were more people and activities on the streets of Labaro whereas now there has been an obvious decline. As a new generation takes over Labaro, their lifestyle and preferences have defined these new issues that we have identified.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Throughout the course of our case study, our perceptions and views on Labaro have changed. Our initial impressions were derived from our first qualitative fieldwork (grid work, census tract selection and street surveying). We saw Labaro as an economically mixed commuter suburban-like space. We supposed there to be tensions between the public and private housing residents. Through further research both quantitative and qualitatively, we found there to be a different private-public tension: in spaces. Private spaces were well maintained, while public spaces were dirty and falling apart. The lack of public space and cultural, community space, upset residents and encouraged them to leave Labaro for leisure activities. These factors together contributed to a lack of neighborhood pride or identity.

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“Vittorio D’Amico - Spina.” Personal Interview. 1 Apr 2011.

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# Appendix A

## Questions for Citizen Lynch Maps:

- What is your name?
- Where are you from? / Where do you live?
- What do you do? (If applicable)
  - general description -
- Where do you go every day in Labaro?
- Where do you go every week in Labaro?
- Where do you go once in a while in Labaro?
- Where do you travel outside of Labaro? How often?
- How do you get to these places?
- What sticks out when you think of Labaro?
- Is there any place or building you think is particularly ugly?
- What is the most important place in Labaro?
- Are there any major issues in Labaro? Any issues between public housing and private housing residents?
- Draw a map.

## Questions for Citizen Issues Interviews:

- What is your name?
- Where are you from / where do you live? (e.g. in Labaro or not?)
- What is your job? (student, employed, retired)
- What place do you think of, when you think of Labaro?
- What is Labaro missing?
- Where should that service be located?

- What public spaces are there in Labaro?
  - Do you use them? How?
- Where do residents hang out in Labaro?

# Appendix B

	Highrise	Central	Labaro Total	Rome	
Population, Age and Education	University Educ. Rate Masc	8.00%	5.52%	6.66%	14.00%
	Secondary Educ. Rate Masc	30.57%	26.58%	28.40%	32.00%
	Proportion of Pop. <15	18.40%	14.65%	16.36%	12.46%
	Proportion of Pop. 15-29	13.92%	18.83%	16.59%	
	Proportion of Pop. 30-64	54.40%	50.45%	52.25%	
	Proportion of Pop. >65	13.28%	16.08%	14.80%	19.00%
Immigration	Immigrant Population	1.52%	7.28%	4.65%	3.75%
	Family Size	2.67	2.68	2.68	2.59

**Figure A1:**  
Population data.

	1951	1971	1981
Number of Residents	2364	8582	12586
Density	1.86	6.75	14

**Figures A2 & A3:**  
Number of residents and density data.

	1951	1971	1981	2001
less than 15	29.74%	30.70%	25.78%	16.36%
16 to 64	67.39%	64.38%	68.23%	68.84%
65 and older	2.88%	4.92%	5.99%	14.80%

**Figure A4:**  
Age of residents data.

**Figure A5:**  
Education levels data.

1951	pop available for educaiton	illiterate	Scula Elementare	Scuola Media inferiere	Scuola Media Superiore	University
Labaro	2002	186	1342	88	29	6
		211.36%	1525.00%	100.00%	32.95%	6.82%
1981	pop available for educaiton	illiterate	elementary	secondary	highschool	univerity
labaro	11,579	291	4,879	3,069	1,068	163
		100.00%	2993.25%	1882.82%	655.21%	100.00%
roma	2,661,349	26,696	882,718	740,041	509,746	172,520
		100.00%	511.66%	428.96%	295.47%	100.00%



**Figure A6:**  
Occupational data.

		Highrise	Central	Labaro Total	Rome
Occupational	<b>Bus. Owners and Professionals</b>	7.07%	6.10%	6.55%	9.10%
	<b>Self-Employed</b>	10.20%	14.84%	12.67%	11.14%
	<b>Assistants</b>	0.35%	2.44%	1.46%	1.40%
	<b>Dependents</b>	80.19%	74.70%	77.26%	76.80%
	<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	15.39%	13.00%	14.13%	11.08%

**Figure A6:**  
Unemployment data.

		1951	1981	2001
Unemployment	Labaro	17.61%	24.88%	14.13%
	Rome		16.63%	11.08%

1981	Entepreneurs and Professionals	self-employed	assistants	managers and employees	Dependent laborers
Labaro	93 2.18%	416 9.73%	66 1.54%	964 22.55%	2,735 63.99%
Roma	41,281 4.15%	88,640 8.91%	19,431 1.95%	475,221 47.78%	370,102 37.21%

**Figure A7:**  
Occupational data.

**Figure A8:**  
Occupational data.

		1951	1971
Occupation	Agriculture and Fishing	17.22%	2.94%
	Industry and Manufacturing	36.67%	21.50%
	Construction	22.88%	22.75%
	Energy, water, gas	1.77%	1.79%
	Transpo and comm	3.07%	6.13%
	Commer and Services	7.31%	34.22%
	Credit and Banking	0.35%	1.04%
	Public Admin.	10.73%	9.64%

1951	pop available for educaiton	Illiterate	Scula Elementare	Scuola Media inferiere	Scuola Media Superiore	University
Labaro	2002	186	1342	88	29	6
		211.36%	1525.00%	100.00%	32.95%	6.82%

1981	pop available for educaiton	illiterate	elementary	secondary	highschool	univerity
labaro	11,579	291	4,879	3,069	1,068	163
		100.00%	2993.25%	1882.82%	655.21%	100.00%
roma	2,661,349	26,696	882,718	740,041	509,746	172,520
		100.00%	511.66%	428.96%	295.47%	100.00%

**Figure A9:**  
Education data.

	Highrise	Central	Labaro Total	Rome	
Housing	Occupancy Rate	94.32%	93.24%	93.73%	90.45%
	Property Ownership	15.87%	69.12%	42.50%	63.10%
	Property Rental	81.67%	18.65%	47.47%	36.90%

**Figure A10:**  
Housing data.

		1951	1981	2001
Labaro	Rental	39.95%	46.57%	47.47%
	Ownership	31.31%	47.29%	44.77%
Rome	Rental		48.56%	36.90%
	Ownership		46.71%	63.10%

**Figure A11:**  
Historical housing data.

		Highrise	Central
Building Age (as compared to area)	Buildings built	15.38%	25.37%
	Buildings built	0.00%	56.62%
	Buildings built	0.00%	16.54%
	Buildings built	84.62%	1.47%

**Figure A12:**  
Building age data.

