

COMMUNITY PROFILE
City of Aliquippa, Beaver County
With Specific Focus on BCI Target Neighborhoods

REGIONAL SETTING

Aliquippa is a city in Beaver County in Southwestern Pennsylvania, and is geographically northwest of Pittsburgh. The City of Aliquippa is bordered by Point Hopewell on the South, Raccoon on the East, and Center on the North. The City of Aliquippa has a population of approximately 11,734.

The specific neighborhoods in Aliquippa targeted in the Blueprint Community Initiative are Plan 6, Plan 11, Plan 11 Extension, Plan 12, Linmar/Sheffield, and McDonald Heights. This area consists of contiguous Census Tracts 6043 and 6045 and Census Block Group 6046-1, which is bounded on the north by Penn Avenue and on the south by Baker Street. This area also includes the Franklin Avenue business district and the Ohio River riverfront. The population of the target area is 7,344.

A BRIEF HISTORY

Beaver County

(Beaver County Web Site)

Beaver County, situated in the southwest part of the state, was carved out of Washington and Allegheny Counties in 1800. The county borders Mercer County on the north, Butler County on the east, Allegheny County on the southeast, Washington County on the south, and the states of Ohio and West Virginia on the west.

Located within the boundaries of the future Beaver County was Logstown, situated on the Ohio River and a busy center of the Indian trade with the French and English in the mid - 1700's. Logstown was also the original site of the Harmony Society's village of Economy. George Washington visited this area at various times to survey the French forts and the general Ohio River area.

The townships and boroughs in Beaver County have changed frequently in the county's early years. Beaver County originally had six townships, split by the Ohio River. These townships were Sewickley, South Beaver and North Beaver Townships in the north half of the county, and Hanover, First Moon and Second Moon Townships south of the Ohio River. In 1814 the southern townships were reorganized into four approximately equal quarters and given the names Hopewell, Moon, Green and Hanover Townships. The northern townships had a much more complicated history of division. Sewickley Township divided in 1801 (only one year after the establishment of Beaver County) into North Sewickley and New Sewickley Townships. South Beaver Township experienced several divisions to satisfy residents' complaints that the township was too large. South

Beaver Township was first divided in 1802 into three townships: Little Beaver, Big Beaver, and South Beaver Townships. In 1804, the small area in the southeast corner of South Beaver Township, known as Beaver Borough, broke off and became Borough Township. It retained this name until 1970, when it was renamed Vanport Township. In 1805, what was left of South Beaver Township split into Ohio and South Beaver Townships. In 1816, the townships of Ohio and South Beaver were reorganized into four equivalent quarters: Ohio and Brighton Townships just north of the Ohio River, and South Beaver and Chippewa Townships further north.

The town of Beaver is the County Seat and was chosen because it had been laid out by surveyor Daniel Leet eight years before the establishment of the county.

In its early history, the entire area was considered desirable for farming, and the rivers supplied a source of transportation. As water transportation methods improved, small towns began to spring up along the county's many rivers and creeks. Several natural rapids and falls along the waterways proved useful as waterpower for mills and factories. During the 1830's the area became distinguished for the quality and quantity of its natural resources including limestone, fire clay, sandstone, and coal. Beaver County had a considerable supply of cannel coal, a bituminous coal popular for its light compactness and its clean bright flame that lit "as easily as wood."

Despite a steady increase in commercial industry, the county's population was slow to grow for its first fifty years. The sluggish growth rate stemmed from the large number of lawsuits over land titles between settlers claiming title under purchase from the State, and those claiming title under the 1792 clause of "settlement and improvement." Further confusion and lawsuits arose over the Depreciation Lands, land north of the Ohio River. These lands were given as grants to veterans of the American Revolution to compensate for the devaluation of currency used to pay soldiers during the war. Some veterans sold their shares to land companies such as the Pennsylvania Population Company, which had many legal battles with squatters. Also contributing to the slow growth of the county were an adverse series of events in the 1840s, beginning with a general depression partially because of a bank failure at New Brighton, Pennsylvania, the banking center for the county. Other businesses suffered after Pittsburgh's great fire of 1845 since Pittsburgh served as Beaver County's main economic link to other markets. In 1849, an Act of the Legislature took part of Beaver County to form Lawrence County, resulting in a shift of over 9,000 residents to Lawrence County. With the advent of the railroad in Beaver County population and business grew rapidly in the 1850s.

Beaver County was the home of many notable citizens, whose names include James Allison, called "*the honest lawyer*", and who served a term in the United States Congress, and who was one of the original trustees and first President of Beaver Academy, Thomas Henry, publisher of the county's first newspaper, the Argus, Brothers Evan and John Pugh owners of a variety of businesses, including grist and linseed oil mills, a carding and cloth-dressing factory, and a grocery store, James Lyon who served as a county sheriff from 1818-1821, and Daniel Agnew was another noted lawyer who eventually rose to Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.

In the 1820s, the Harmony Society built the community of Economy along the banks of the Ohio River to serve as their religious commune. This development brought a sizable increase in the population and business to the county.

Aliquippa

(From the Community's own profile)

In the early 20th century, a steel mill established itself along the banks of the Ohio River, 22 miles northwest of Pittsburgh, and, in effect, creating the City of Aliquippa. Aliquippa flourished through the first half of the century, swelling to a population of 30,000—almost half of whom were employed by the mill. By 1984, the steel mill had closed, eliminating 13,000 jobs— and resulted in a local economy which was left devastated and economic hardship for Aliquippa's residents.

Concerned citizens and community leaders have been working together since 1984 to provide assistance to area residents and heal the racial and ethnic tensions exacerbated by segregated housing plans that the steel company had created. Some results have come from these efforts.

In recent years significant community developments include the “Main Street” program, Franklin Avenue, the historic Central Business District which received new street scaping and a building façade improvement program for local businesses. Franklin Ave has also been entirely resurfaced for the first times in years and a considerable number of community streets are scheduled to be resurfaced in 2005. The proposed “Elm Street” program will work to improve the residential areas feeding into Franklin Avenue from Engle Street to Kennedy Boulevard and Sheffield Avenue from Engle Street to Monaca Road.

While these developments have resulted in some improvements, Aliquippa does not currently have a definitive and focused comprehensive plan for community development and economic revitalization. On the other hand, despite the less than optimal economic and social conditions as evidenced by its current status as a “distressed community” under Pennsylvania Act 47, Aliquippa still has several assets which attract and hold residents. These include distinct and friendly neighborhoods, a riverfront, scenic hilltop views, and close proximity to the Pittsburgh International Airport.

DEMOGRAPHICS

In order to enable an assessment of the present and future needs of Aliquippa and the residents of the target area, a broad analysis of demographic factors is presented in this profile. Reviewing population trends and estimates, age distribution, and employment enables the City to better understand the needs and concerns of the target community. This examination also helps to enable planning to occur relative to, for example, the amount and type of services that may be required. The data also provides an understanding of the target area's future position within the city and the County. In some cases, Census data for 1980 were not available, therefore some of the following data used in the profile is extracted from only the 1990 and 2000 Census. (U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau).

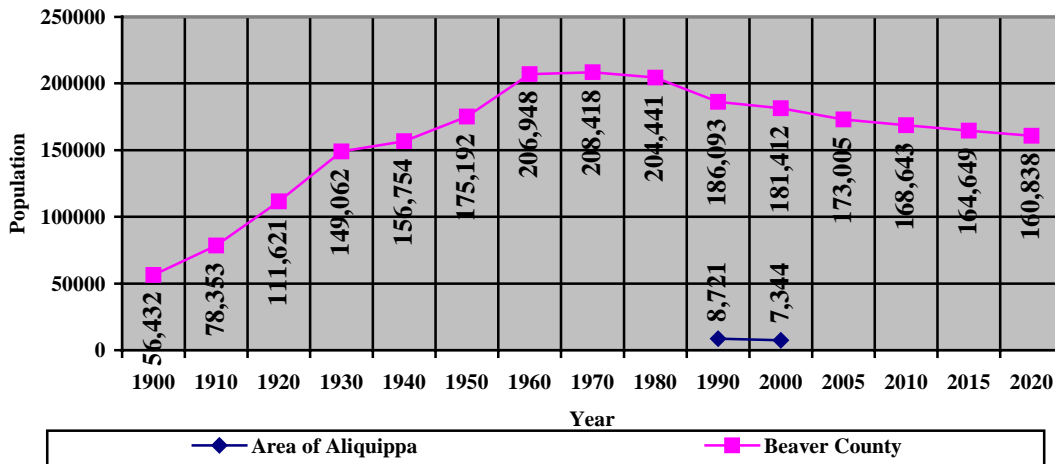
Population

Trends and Forecasts

Over the past hundred years, the population of Beaver County and Aliquippa has changed significantly. These changes have followed the same pattern as other counties and regions of the United States. Beaver County's population grew steadily, peaking in the 1970s. From 1900 to 1970, Beaver County's population increased 72.4 percent. Starting in the 1980's, Beaver County's population began to decline due to outmigration and urban sprawl past the county borders. From 1970 to 2000, there was a population decrease of 14.9% in Beaver County's population. Currently Beaver County's population is predicted to decrease another 12.8% from 2000 to 2020.

In Aliquippa, the population in 1980 was 17,094, and by 2000 it had declined to 11,734; a 31.4 percent decrease. The population of the Blueprint Community target area of Aliquippa has also declined over the past ten years – from 8,721 in 1990 to 7,293 in 2000; a decrease of 18.8% (See figure 2-1 – Population Trends and Forecasts). Whether Aliquippa or the target area will experience the same, a higher, or even lower level of the predicted decline of Beaver County over the next twenty years is unknown.

Figure 2-1 - POPULATION TRENDS AND FORECASTS



Racial Composition

An analysis of the racial composition of the target area of Aliquippa shows a trend of becoming more Black populated over the past ten years. In the absence of any growth in net population, this change is the result of a decrease of 9.3 percent in the White population of the target area since 1990 and an increase of 7.4 percent in the Black population. There was also a 1.8 percent increase in the Other populations. By contrast, the racial composition of Beaver County has remained fairly constant over the past twenty years, with only a 0.4 percent increase in the Black population from 1980 to 2000, a 0.2 percent increase in the Latino population, and a 0.9 percent increase in the Other populations. During the same period, the White population of Beaver County declined only 1.5 percent.

TABLE 2-1
RACIAL COMPOSITION, 1980-2000

	White	Black	Latino	Other
Area of Aliquippa				
1990%	51.1%	47.9%	0.8%	0.3%
2000%	41.8%	55.3%	0.7%	2.1%
Percent Change 1990-2000	-9.3%	7.4%	-0.1%	1.8%
Beaver County				
1980%	93.6%	5.5%	0.5%	0.4%
1990%	93.4%	5.6%	0.6%	0.3%
2000%	92.1%	5.9%	0.7%	1.3%
Percent Change 1980-2000	-1.5%	0.4%	0.2%	0.9%

Age Distribution

The age distribution of a community can suggest the levels of service and infrastructure necessary to meet the future needs of the various age groups. It can help to forecast future educational, recreational, and elderly facilities that may be needed. Table 2-2 compares the age distribution of the target area of Aliquippa and Beaver County between 1990 and 2000. Based upon the aggregate data, the age distribution of the population of this area of Aliquippa and Beaver County has remained fairly stable, with little evidence of any dramatic shifts from 1990 and 2000. However, when the population of those under the age of 25 is considered, the percent in this grouping in the target area (36.1) is somewhat higher than Beaver County as a whole (30.1%). It should be noted, however, what is missing is data relative to changes in the age distribution based upon race.

**TABLE 2-2
AGE DISTRIBUTION, 1990 AND 2000**

	Area of Aliquippa					Beaver County				
	1990 Pop.	Percent of Pop.	2000 Pop.	Percent of Pop.	Percent Change	1990 Pop.	Percent of Pop.	2000 Pop.	Percent of Pop.	Percent Change
00-04	777	8.9	554	7.5	-1.4	11,728	6.3	9,860	5.4	-0.9
05-09	694	8.0	559	7.6	-0.4	12,467	6.7	11,596	6.4	-0.3
10-14	621	7.1	651	8.9	1.8	12,179	6.5	12,311	6.8	0.3
15-19	586	6.7	453	6.2	-0.5	12,122	6.5	11,888	6.6	0.1
20-24	547	6.3	436	5.9	-0.4	10,785	5.8	8,921	4.9	-0.9
25-34	1,262	14.5	948	12.9	-1.6	28,087	15	20,098	11.1	-3.9
35-44	979	11.2	943	12.8	1.6	26,446	14	29,419	16.2	2.2
45-54	772	8.9	882	12.0	3.1	19,528	11	25,905	14.3	3.3
55-59	423	4.9	292	4.0	0.9	9,805	5.3	9,481	5.2	-0.1
60-64	535	6.1	269	3.7	-2.4	11,426	6.1	8,509	4.7	-1.4
65-74	935	10.7	760	10.3	-0.4	19,613	11	17,422	9.6	-1.4
75-84	465	5.3	499	6.8	1.5	9,541	5	12,503	6.9	1.9
85+	125	1.4	98	1.3	-0.1	2,366	1.3	3,499	1.9	0.6
Total	8,721	100	7,344	100		186,093	100	181,412	100	

Economics

Income and Education

The U.S. Census Bureau records income in two categories. Household income is defined as the yearly earnings of a group of unrelated people or one person living alone. Family income comprises a group of two or more people residing together and who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. As more residents obtain diplomas and degrees, their income earning potential improves, creating a direct positive correlation between the two. Table 2-3 shows that since 1990 educational attainment in the target area of Aliquippa increased in almost every category. However, significant educational attainment disparities exist when the target area is compared to Beaver County as a whole. For example, the percent of those in year 2000 with 'some higher education or above' is considered, the percent in the target area is 34.2, almost half the percent of the same category in Beaver County (61.7%).

While the median household income in the target area increased 34 percent over the past ten years, it increased by 45.9 percent in Beaver County. When the target area is compared to the Pennsylvania year 2000 median family income which was \$40,106, the difference is significant, with the median family income in the target area at almost less than half (\$21,724).

In the target area, the percent of families below the poverty level is 25.6; a level which is considerably higher than the Pennsylvania percent of 7.8 and the national rate of 9.2 percent.

**TABLE 2-3
INCOME AND EDUCATION, 1980-2000**

Income and Education	Area of Aliquippa	Beaver County
1980		
Median Household Income	n/a	\$20,031
Median Family Income	n/a	\$22,239
NO DEGREE	n/a	35.2%
High School Graduate	n/a	44.8%
Some higher education	n/a	10.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	n/a	9.4%
Graduate or Professional Degree	n/a	n/a
1990		
Median Household Income	\$14,337	\$24,276
Median Family Income	\$19,054	\$29,455
NO DEGREE	35.8%	39.1%
High School Graduate	38.8%	42.0%
Some higher education	18.9%	14.0%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	4.9%	12.0%
Graduate or Professional Degree	1.6%	4.0%
2000		
Median Household Income	\$21,724	\$36,995
Median Family Income	\$29,553	\$45,495
NO DEGREE	23.6%	33.7%
High School Graduate	44.5%	42.4%
Some higher education	25.3%	41.2%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	6.6%	15.8%
Graduate or Professional Degree	2.3%	4.7%
	Percent Change from 1990-2000	Percent Change from 1980-2000
Median Household Income	34.0%	45.9%
Median Family Income	35.5%	51.1%
NO DEGREE	-12.2%	-1.5%
High School Graduate	5.7%	-2.4%
Some higher education	6.4%	30.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	1.7%	6.4%
Graduate or Professional Degree	0.7%	n/a

Employment

Based upon the analysis of Table 2-4, several employment characteristics are evident. First, in 2000, the percent of the target area of Aliquippa that is in the labor force increased by 6.9% from 1990, despite a 19.5% decrease in the population of persons 16 years old and over. Second, the percent of unemployment in the target area in 1990 was

7.9 percent and in 2000, 5.6 percent; an average of 6.7 percent. In Beaver County, the 1990-2000 average unemployment (3.8%) was approximately half of that of the target area. It should be noted that in periods of relative economic prosperity, an unemployment rate of more than 5 percent is considered evidence of economic stress.

**TABLE 2-4
EMPLOYMENT, 1980-2000**

	Area of Aliquippa		Beaver County	
	No. of Persons	%	No. of Persons	%
1980				
Persons 16 years and Over	n/a	n/a	157,659	100.0%
In labor Force	n/a	n/a	88,229	56.0%
Civilian Labor Force	n/a	n/a	88,172	55.9%
Employed	n/a	n/a	81,073	51.4%
Unemployed	n/a	n/a	7,099	4.5%
Armed Forces	n/a	n/a	57	0.0%
Not in Labor Force	n/a	n/a	69,430	44.0%
1990				
Persons 16 years and Over	6,524	100.0%	147,368	100.0%
In labor Force	2,851	43.7%	82,722	56.1%
Civilian Labor Force	2,843	43.6%	82,544	56.0%
Employed	2,328	35.7%	75,901	51.5%
Unemployed	515	7.9%	6,643	4.5%
Armed Forces	8	0.1%	178	0.1%
Not in Labor Force	3,673	56.3%	64,646	43.9%
2000				
Persons 16 years and Over	5,459	100.0%	145,097	100.0%
In labor Force	2,762	50.6%	87,264	60.1%
Civilian Labor Force	2,762	50.6%	87,160	60.1%
Employed	2,459	45.0%	82,493	56.9%
Unemployed	303	5.6%	4,667	3.2%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%	104	0.1%
Not in Labor Force	2,697	49.4%	57,833	39.9%
Percent Change from 1980-2000				
Persons 16 years and Over	-19.5%	n/a	-9.7%	n/a
In labor Force	6.9%	n/a	4.2%	n/a
Civilian Labor Force	7.0%	n/a	4.2%	n/a
Employed	9.3%	n/a	5.5%	n/a
Unemployed	-2.3%	n/a	-1.3%	n/a
Armed Forces	-0.1%	n/a	0.1%	n/a
Not in Labor Force	-6.9%	n/a	-4.1%	n/a

Housing and Real Estate

Not unlike many older urban areas in Beaver County, the proportion of housing 30 years or older (89.2%) in the target area of Aliquippa is high, indicating that there has been relatively little new housing built in the last ten years. (See figure 2-2) The data further suggests that the level of occupancy of existing housing has decreased 3.8% over the past decade. What is not known, however, is the quality of the occupied housing units. What is significant is that over the past decade, the number of units in the target area valued at over \$100,000 has increased by 0.8%; a characteristic that might reflect the general increasing value of housing in Beaver County. (See figure 2-3). On the other hand, the housing market analysis of the target area as whole suggests that real estate values may be more depressed than in the County as a whole. While the exact level of affordability of rental housing cannot be fully determined, the data indicates that approximately 26.6 percent of the target area families spend 30% (the generally accepted threshold of affordability) or more of their household income for rent. However, the problem of housing affordability in the target area is somewhat offset by the availability of rental housing operated by the Housing Authority of Beaver County.

Figure 2-2 - AGE OF STRUCTURE, 1990 AND 2000

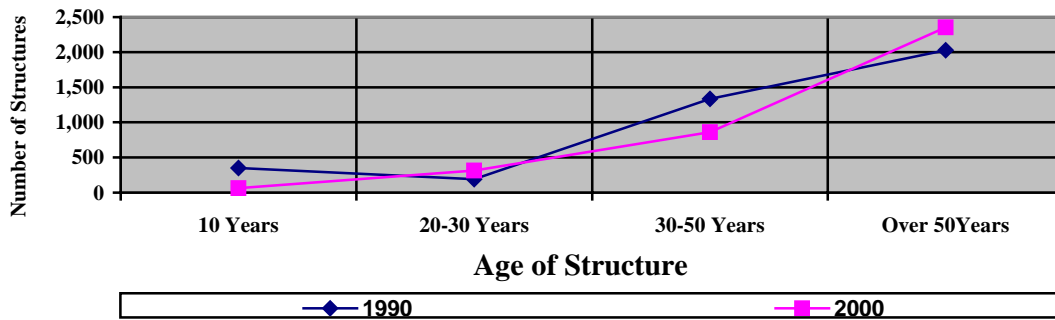


Figure 2-3 - VALUE OF STRUCTURE, 1990 AND 2000

