

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

### City of Connellsville, Fayette County

#### REGIONAL SETTING

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The City of Connellsville is located in the north central section of Fayette County and is approximately four square miles with thirty seven miles of road located within the city limits. The two primary roadways in the city's downtown area are Crawford Avenue and Pittsburgh Street. State Route 119 also runs through the city.

The city business district is located on the east side of Crawford Avenue and Pittsburgh Street.

The City of Connellsville has many landmarks including two beautiful parks. The Youghoigheny River and the Yough River Bike Hike Trail are located in the heart of downtown.

#### A BRIEF HISTORY

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##### Fayette County

*(Spotlight on Fayette County Web Site)*

Created in September 1783 from the southern portion of Westmoreland County, Fayette County was named for the Marquis de la Fayette, the young Frenchman who assisted General George Washington during several major battles of the American Revolution. Uniontown, originally established as Beeson's Town in 1776, was chosen as the county seat.

The county's first industrialization came as the 19th century loomed, with iron furnaces being built in the mountains to take advantage of the many deposits of iron ore and abundant forests which provided a source of wood for charcoal. The local glass industry, which later brought national recognition to the upper Monongahela River valley, was first established when Albert Gallatin opened his New Geneva glassworks in 1794. Within the next 20 years numerous glass factories were erected at various points along the river. The National Road, constructed through the heart of the county about 1815, brought large numbers of travelers on the way to the newly opened Northwest Territory and ensured the continued growth of Fayette County.

The largest boom to Fayette County's growth and economy, however, came from the discovery of the coke-making process. Vast deposits of bituminous coal underlying much of the county resulted in the development of an internationally renowned coal and coke industry around the turn of the 20th century. As the coal fields expanded, thousands of European immigrants came to Fayette County to work in the mines. New towns appeared seemingly overnight to accommodate the miners - small communities of "company houses" built by the coal companies to house the new laborers. Fortunes were made in

Fayette County coal and it became one of the essential ingredients upon which the Pittsburgh steel empire was built.

The coal and coke boom began to peter out as the effects of the Great Depression took hold. By 1950 most of the large Fayette County mines had been depleted and the county's economy took a major downward turn from which it is still recovering today. The future of Fayette County lies in tourism and industrialization based on the efficient network of roads and rivers crisscrossing the county. The lush mountain setting and abundant recreational opportunities are attracting new high-tech business to the area, with a young workforce looking to play as hard as they work.

### **Connellsville**

*(Fay-West website)*

Founded in 1806 by Zachariah Connell, Connellsville became a city with the unification of New Haven and Connellsville in 1909 to become the first city in Fayette County.

During the coke and coal days, Connellsville had at one time more millionaires per capita than any other place in the country and possibly the world. This was when Connellsville was king of coal and coke with beehive ovens lighting up the hillsides. Railroads crisscrossed the city and streetcars connected neighborhoods and other towns. When Connellsville became a city in 1909, estimates have the population at more than 22,000. However, the demand for coke around the turn of the century pushed other emerging industries out, making the city along with Fayette County almost entirely dependant on both coal and coke. When better heating processes were developed, Connellsville coke was no longer needed and the industry went bust — along with the economy of Fayette County.

Connellsville is certainly not a capital of industry anymore, however the city's once great legacy can still be seen in its beautiful churches, buildings, and houses. Connellsville has tried to capitalize on these assets and the recreational and tourism opportunities in the area in order to attract visitors and new residents. The city does not have a strategic plan or vision at this time. The last comprehensive plan for Connellsville was developed in the 1970's, but it is out of date and no longer viable.

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

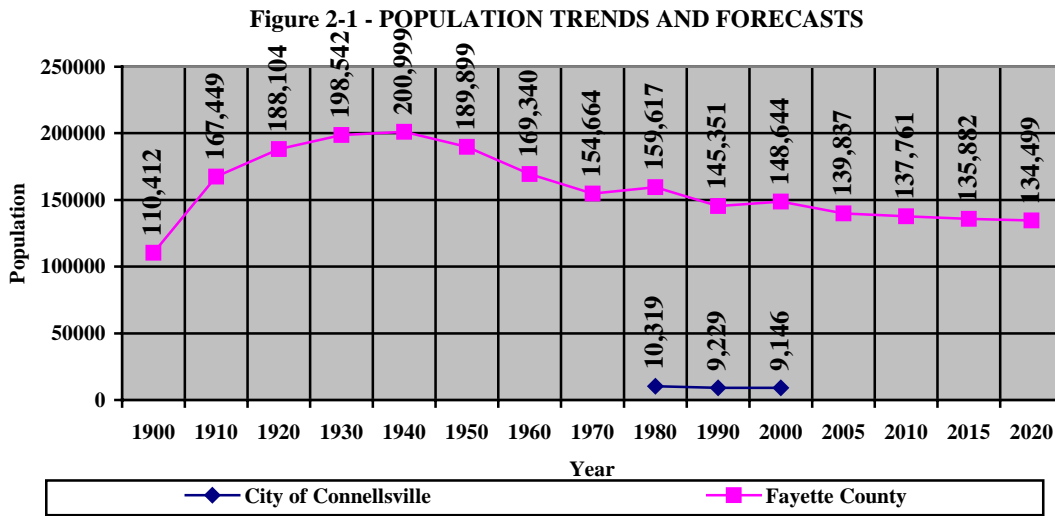
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In order to enable an assessment of the present and future needs of the city of Connellsville and its residents, a broad analysis of demographic factors is presented in this profile. Reviewing population trends and estimates, age distribution, and employment enables the City to better understand the needs and concerns of the 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 City's future position within the County. All following data used in the profile is extracted from 1980, 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 Fayette County and Connellsville has changed significantly. Fayette County's population grew steadily with a 45.1 percent increase in population from 1900 to 1940. Beginning in the 1940s to the 1970s, there was a population decrease of 30.0% in the County. This decline was due, in large part, to economic changes in the region and the outmigration from Southwestern Pennsylvania to other parts of the country. Currently, Fayette County's population is predicted to decrease by 10.5% from 2000 to 2020. Similarly, Connellsville's population has steadily fallen over the past twenty years. In 1980, the city had a population of 10,319 and by 2000, the population of Connellsville had declined to 9,146; a decrease of 11.4% (See figure 2-1 – Population Trends and Forecasts). Whether the future population trend of Connellsville will mirror that predicted for the County as a whole is unknown.



## Racial Composition

An analysis of the racial composition of Connellsville shows little change in racial composition over the past twenty years. There was a decrease of 1.1 percent of the White population of Connellsville from 1980 to 2000, while the Black population increased by 0.4 percent during the same time period. The Latino population of Connellsville remained the same during this twenty year period, while other racial populations of Connellsville increased slightly by 1.3 percent. An analysis of Fayette County also shows modest change. There was a 0.1 percent decrease in the White population of Fayette County, as well as a 0.3 percent decrease in the Black population of the County from 1980 to 2000. The Latino population remained stable, and other racial populations increased by 0.8 percent during this twenty year period.

**TABLE 2-1  
RACIAL COMPOSITION, 1980-2000**

	White	Black	Latino	Other
<b>City of Connellsville</b>				
1980%	95.6%	3.5%	0.5%	0.3%
1990%	95.1%	4.3%	0.3%	0.6%
2000%	94.5%	3.9%	0.5%	1.6%
Percent Change 1980-2000	-1.1%	0.4	0.0%	1.3%
<b>Fayette County</b>				
1980%	95.4%	3.8%	0.4%	0.4%
1990%	96.2%	3.5%	0.3%	0.3%
2000%	95.3%	3.5%	0.4%	1.2%
Percent Change 1980-2000	-0.1%	-0.3%	0.0%	0.8%

## 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 Connellsville and Fayette County between 1990 and 2000. Based upon the aggregate data, the age distribution of the population of Connellsville and Fayette County has remained fairly stable, with little evidence of any dramatic shifts from 1990 and 2000. Moreover, there is little difference between Connellsville and Fayette County in the percent of the population when various age groups such as those under the age of 25 and those 60 years of age or older are considered. However, what is missing is data relative to changes in the age distribution based upon race.

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

	City of Connellsville					Fayette 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	668	7.2	605	6.6	-0.6	8,812	6.1	8,454	5.7	-0.4
05-09	653	7.1	590	6.5	-0.6	9,638	6.6	9,384	6.3	-0.3
10-14	591	6.5	646	7.1	0.6	10,271	7.1	9,874	6.6	-0.5
15-19	653	7.1	599	6.5	-0.6	10,329	7.1	9,546	6.4	-1.4
20-24	605	6.6	528	5.8	-0.8	8,810	6.1	7,994	5.4	-0.7
25-34	1,300	14.1	1,250	13.6	-0.5	20,535	14.0	18,188	12.2	-1.8
35-44	1,176	12.7	1,275	13.9	1.2	20,887	14.0	22,237	15.0	1.0
45-54	782	8.5	1,126	12.3	3.8	14,580	10.0	21,401	14.4	4.4
55-59	435	4.7	420	4.6	-0.1	6,925	4.8	7,931	5.3	0.5
60-64	547	5.9	347	3.8	-2.1	8,488	5.8	6,705	4.5	-1.3
65-74	1,016	11.9	852	9.3	-2.6	15,521	11.0	13,441	9.0	-2.0
75-84	645	7.0	685	7.4	0.4	8,355	6.0	10,292	6.9	-0.9
85+	158	1.7	226	2.5	0.8	2,200	1.5	3,197	2.2	0.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,229</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>9,146</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>145,351</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>148,644</b>	<b>100</b>	

## **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 educational attainment in Connellsville increased in almost every category from 1980 to 2000. Compared to Fayette County, however, the percent of those in 2000 with 'some higher education or above' in Connellsville (35.7%) is somewhat lower than the County (44%).

Correspondingly, the median household income in Connellsville has increased over the past two decades, although at a percent rate lower than Fayette County. When the 2000 Connellsville median household income of \$21,070 is compared to Pennsylvania, the amount is almost half the state's median household income of \$40,106.

In terms of poverty, 22.4 percent of Connellsville's population fell below the poverty level in 2000, compared to 7.8 percent in Pennsylvania and 9.2 percent nationally.

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

<b>Income and Education</b>	<b>City of Connellsville</b>	<b>Fayette County</b>
<b>1980</b>		
Median Household Income	\$12,224	\$14,282
Median Family Income	\$15,988	\$17,282
NO DEGREE	36.4%	42.2%
High School Graduate	48.2%	43.5%
Some higher education	7.5%	7.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	7.9%	7.2%
Graduate or Professional Degree	n/a	n/a
<b>1990</b>		
Median Household Income	\$16,635	\$19,195
Median Family Income	\$21,965	\$23,578
NO DEGREE	32.1	41.4
High School Graduate	45.6	46.0
Some higher education	13.7	9.0
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	8.8	9.0
Graduate or Professional Degree	3.4	4.0
<b>2000</b>		
Median Household Income	\$21,070	\$27,451
Median Family Income	28,105	\$34,881
NO DEGREE	16.8	35.9
High School Graduate	43.6	47.9
Some higher education	19.8	28.2
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	12.8	11.5
Graduate or Professional Degree	3.1	4.3
<b>Percent Change from 1980-2000</b>		
Median Household Income	50.0%	37.0%
Median Family Income	43.1%	50.5%
NO DEGREE	-19.6%	-6.3%
High School Graduate	-4.6%	4.4%
Some higher education	12.3%	1.9%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	4.9%	4.3%
Graduate or Professional Degree	n/a	n/a

### **Employment**

Based upon the analysis of Table 2-4, several employment characteristics are evident. Connellsville's population in the labor force increased by 4.3 percent from 1980 to 2000, while the population of persons 16 years and older decreased by ten percent during these two decades. During this same time period, Fayette County's population of individuals

16 years and over also decreased by 9.2 percent, while the population in the labor force increased by 5.7 percent. In term of unemployment, during the past three decade, the rate in Connellsville has averaged 5.7, a percent comparable to Fayette County as a whole (5.5).

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

	Connellsville		Fayette County	
	No. of Persons	%	No. of Persons	%
<b>1980</b>				
Persons 16 years and Over	7,803	100.0%	129,853	100.0%
In labor Force	3,869	49.6%	58,649	48.5%
Civilian Labor Force	3,869	49.6%	58,613	48.5%
Employed	3,432	44.0%	52,120	43.1%
Unemployed	437	5.6%	6,493	5.4%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%	36	0.0%
Not in Labor Force	3,939	50.4%	62,204	51.5%
<b>1990</b>				
Persons 16 years and Over	7,187	100.0%	114,694	100.0%
In labor Force	3,507	48.8%	56,861	49.6%
Civilian Labor Force	3,488	48.5%	56,792	49.5%
Employed	2,944	41.0%	49,221	42.9%
Unemployed	544	7.6%	7,571	6.6%
Armed Forces	19	0.3%	69	0.1%
Not in Labor Force	3,697	51.4%	57,883	45.8%
<b>2000</b>				
Persons 16 years and Over	7,093	100.0%	118,862	100.0%
In labor Force	3,826	53.9%	64,371	54.2%
Civilian Labor Force	3,816	53.8%	64,335	54.1%
Employed	3,542	49.9%	59,017	49.7%
Unemployed	274	3.9%	5,318	4.5%
Armed Forces	10	0.1%	36	0.0%
Not in Labor Force	3,267	46.1%	54,491	45.8%
<b>Percent Change from 1980-2000</b>				
Persons 16 years and Over	-10.0%	n/a	-9.2%	n/a
In labor Force	4.3%	n/a	5.7%	n/a
Civilian Labor Force	4.2%	n/a	5.6%	n/a
Employed	5.9%	n/a	6.6%	n/a
Unemployed	-1.7%	n/a	-0.9%	n/a
Armed Forces	0.1%	n/a	0.0%	n/a
Not in Labor Force	-4.3%	n/a	-5.7%	n/a

## Housing and Real Estate

Not unlike many older urban areas, the proportion of housing 30 years or older (83.0%) in Connellsville is high, indicating that there has been relatively little new housing built in the last ten years. (See figure 2-2) In general, the housing stock of Connellsville has a relatively low property value, though the percent of houses valued at over \$100,000 has increased over the past decade by 9 percent. (See figure 2-3). While the exact level of affordability of rental housing cannot be fully determined, the data indicates that approximately 25.5% of Connellsville families spend 30% (the generally accepted threshold of affordability) or more of their household income for rent.

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

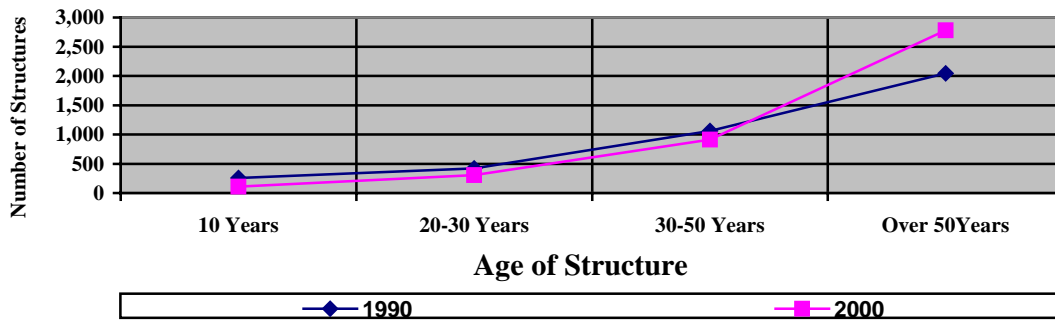


Figure 2-3 - VALUE OF STRUCTURE, 1990 AND 2000

