



St. Albans

A Community Profile of Current Conditions and Capacity

**Prepared for the
West Virginia Blueprint Communities Initiative**

April 2007

St. Albans
A Community Profile of Current Conditions and Capacity

Prepared for the West Virginia Blueprint Communities Initiative
April 2007

The city of St. Albans is located in Kanawha County along the Kanawha River at the mouth of the Coal River in Southwestern part of West Virginia. The city was laid out in 1816 and was known by several different names. The city was incorporated in 1868 and was named St. Albans in 1871.

The latest population estimate available (2005) for the city of St. Albans reflects a population of 11,105 people. About nineteen percent (19.3%) of the population is under 18 years of age and about twenty-four percent (23.8%) is 65 years of age or older. There are 5,178 households in St. Albans and about 3,370 families.

Introduction:

This community profile is provided for use by the Blueprint Team in order to provide a general overview of some of the more relevant measures of local conditions and community capacity. It is one of many tools you may find useful. The profile should be reviewed and kept in your community toolbox for future reference. Local Blueprint Teams will undoubtedly wish to examine some of the areas addressed in the profile in more detail once specific priorities are established for local community development. The profile should initially be useful in identifying areas of concern that may require further study and assessment by local citizens and later on it may provide guidance about measures that can be used to monitor progress.

The St. Albans community profile is intended as a resource for community builders. It is a portrait of current conditions and local capacities. Information presented here can be useful to local Blueprint Community Team members and other community residents in considering where to invest time and energy and in establishing both short and long term priorities and goals for community improvements. However, the statistics and other information summarized here are no substitute for local initiative. Objective facts and individual perspectives must be considered in the context of local knowledge, opportunities and desires which can only be gleaned from community members. For example, if the general profile suggests recreational facilities as an area for development, local residents should be asked what types of recreational opportunities they would be most interested in and where any facilities should be located. It is important to know what types of facilities or programs would be used before making plans for development. If people are involved in the planning they will be more likely to be involved in the doing.

A Few Words about Community Capacity and Capital:

Community Capacity may be defined as the level of resources, assets, human capital, and social capital available to a group of people (a community) to achieve the results they want and care about. "Community capacity, in a general sense, is what makes communities work. It is what makes well-functioning communities function well." (Chaskin, et.al., 2001). Capacity may be found in local people, in the strength of the relationships among people, in civic enterprises, in local institutions, in the value of property and buildings, in financial investment, and in the quality of the environment.

"Community capacity is what makes well-functioning communities function well" – (Chaskin, 2001)

Sufficient levels of community capacity are necessary prerequisites for successful community development. Community capacity can be measured and it can be built. The Blueprint Communities Program is focused on increasing community capacity in order to build stronger and more prosperous communities.

The community profile is organized by capacity domains - important areas of influence defined by the *West Virginia Community Development Gathering*. A domain of capacity may be thought of as a significant area of influence that affects the ability of a community to get things done. If capacity is lacking in any particular area it should be built so that available resources and investments can be optimally utilized. Each of the seven domains (areas of influence) of capacity is discussed in the profile based on selected quantitative data and the opinions of Blueprint Team members reflected in their on-line survey responses.

"Capital" is another term that is helpful in organizing information within the profile. We are generally familiar with financial capital, the monetary investment that is made available to build something useful. Other forms of capital discussed in the profile are no less important. Human capital, social capital, cultural capital, and environmental capital are all local resources that can be drawn upon to improve community conditions.

Human Capital

Human Capital includes the health and well being of local residents as well as the knowledge skills and abilities of local people. There is considerable data available that can be used to measure health and well being. Much of the available data related to health and well being is accessible only at the county level. Thus, some of the measures of local health and well-being discussed here are reflective of Kanawha County while others describe the city of St. Albans when local level information is available.

Health and Well Being of Local People

Healthy People:

Three key measures of health were compiled for county residents. These measures include health insurance status, adult obesity, and low birth weight. Adult obesity which is defined as significantly exceeding recommended healthy weight is 27.3 % in Kanawha County. This is slightly below the average for West Virginia (27.7%) but above the average for the U. S. (22.8%). The number of adults without health insurance is lower than the state average (22.8%) and just over the national average (18.2%) at 18.8% of the adult population uninsured in Kanawha County. The percentage of low birth weight babies (10.7% in Kanawha County) is higher than both the national average of 7.8% and the WV statewide average of 9.3%.

Obesity and low birth weight are significant risk factors for major health problems. The above average rate of low birth weight babies in the county should be of concern. Local residents in St. Albans may wish to look closer at this issue by talking to local health care professionals to get a more localized picture of the health status of St. Albans residents. Adults without health care insurance is a measure of potential health problems since people with no third party payment source are likely to put off needed healthcare services. Again, local health care professionals would have a good sense of the extent of this problem for city residents and they should be consulted.

School Readiness:

Research studies over extended periods of time (including the Abecedarian, Perry Preschool, and Chicago Parent-Child Centers studies), have documented the link between early childhood development and future success in school and later life. Two key measures of school readiness – that is early childhood development that prepares children for school – were considered. The percentage of kindergarten children enrolled in public preschool programs is a good measure of school readiness as is the rate of retention in preschool and kindergarten programs. Preschool enrollment as a percentage of kindergarten enrollment in Kanawha County as a whole is lower than the statewide percentage. This ratio in Kanawha County is 34.3%. Statewide, the ratio of preschool enrollment to kindergarten enrollment averages 43.2%. Preschool enrollment at Lakewood Elementary School in St. Albans is quite high however – 82.3%. The high percentage of children enrolled in public preschool in the St. Albans should help prepare children for success.

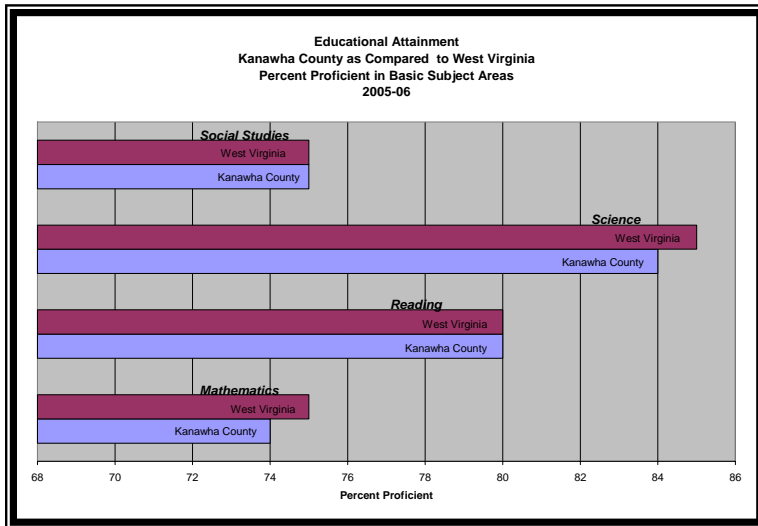
The percentage of pre-K and kindergarten students who are retained in Kanawha County (not promoted to the next grade) was 4.4% (2003-04 data). This is much lower than the state average of 12.2%. The low retention rate indicates a high degree of school readiness.

School readiness does not appear to be a major area of concern for St. Albans; however, if the Blueprint Team wishes to examine this area more closely, preschool and kindergarten teachers at local elementary schools would be the best source of information about how prepared children are when they enter school.

Educational Attainment and Access:

Success in school may be measured by looking at several key indicators of continued education and achievement in the public schools. Measures selected for the profile include education levels of the population, high school graduation rates, students going on to college, and test scores on standardized testing.

The census data from 2000 provides educational attainment information for the city of St. Albans. 15.1% of the residents of St. Albans did not complete high school. This is better than the statewide percentage (24.8%) and also better than the U. S. population as a whole (19.6%). 22.9% of St. Albans residents over the age of 25 years hold a college degree. This is a significantly higher percentage than the statewide average of 14.8% but less than the national percentage of 24.4%. The high school graduation rate in Kanawha County for 2006 was 81.1% but the rate at St. Albans High School was higher at 84.6% which is the state average.



For the 2005-06 school year, students in Kanawha County (all students tested) exceeded state averages for proficiency in science, were at the state average for social studies and reading and fell behind the state average in mathematics. See Chart.

Students at St. Albans High School scored higher than the state average in math and science but were a little lower in reading.

Young people in Kanawha County appear to be going on to college at about the same rate as the state average. One measure of the college going rate is the percentage of high school graduates who take college entrance exams. In 2006, 61.5% of Kanawha County high school graduates took the ACT college entrance exam; the percentage of students taking the ACT test statewide is just slightly higher at 64%. The composite ACT score for Kanawha County students at 21.1 exceeded the state average of 20.6.

Based on the measures considered for *Educational Attainment and Access*, St. Albans appears to have a more educated population than the state as a whole.

Community Safety:

The overall crime rate for West Virginia as a whole is one of the lowest in the nation at 28.98 crimes per 1,000 population. Crimes reported by the St. Albans Police Department are at a rate of 38.28 per thousand population which is higher than the state average (2005 Uniform Crime Report). The St Albans Police Department reported 0.54 drug and narcotics offenses per 1,000 population in 2005. Violent crimes are committed in St Albans at a rate of 1.79 per 1,000 which is less than the state average of 2.73. The national rate of violent crime is 4.69 per 1,000 pop.

There are 4 sex offenders with a St Albans address listed in the WV Sex Offender Registry. This is a rate of 0.36 per 1,000 population which is under the statewide rate of 1.39 per thousand.

St Albans seems to be a reasonably safe place to live as compared to state and national statistics; however, not all safety concerns are related to crime. Local residents are in the best position to assess any safety concerns community residents may have and discussions with local law enforcement officials serving St. Albans could better inform this issue.

Family Stability:

Two measures of family stability were researched for the community profile – domestic violence investigations and the ratio of marriages to divorces. Local statistics for St. Albans indicate a rate of 12.55 investigations related to domestic violence per 1,000 households. This is a lower rate than the statewide rate of 16.39 per thousand households. The ratio of marriages to divorces in Kanawha County is 1.82 marriages to every divorce. This is higher (higher is better in this case) than the statewide ratio of 1.49 marriages to each divorce.

A third measure of family stability that was selected for review is the rate of confirmed child abuse and neglect; however, reliable data at the county or local community level is not available. Local child protective services workers can provide considerable insight into this issue. If this is an area of concern for the local Blueprint Team it is recommended that local child protective service staff be consulted to obtain information about the extent of this problem in the community. In general, families in the St. Albans area appear to be relatively stable based on the limited measures available.

Economic Security:

Perhaps the most telling component of family and individual well being is economic security. Unemployment, poverty, and a general lack of financial resources places families under severe stress that often leads to other problems. This, in turn, results in lower levels of human capital within the community. Five measures of economic security are included in the profile.

The most recent (January 2007) unemployment rate for the area is 4.0%. This is lower than the state and federal rates of 4.8% and 5.0% respectively. Additional information about jobs and local industries will be discussed later in the profile in relation to financial and manufactured capital.

Poverty in Kanawha County is somewhat less than the state as a whole but higher than the national poverty estimates. In 2003, 15.2% of all families in the county were estimated to have household income below the federal poverty level. The poverty rate for all families in West Virginia is 18.5% and for the nation it is at 12.7%. The 2000 census data for families residing in St. Albans can be

used to get a more localized picture of the poverty situation. The 2000 census data is more accurate than the estimates for non-census years but it reflects the poverty situation in St. Albans in 1999. The poverty rate in the city for all families reflected by the 2000 census was 4.9% (nationally it was 9.2%). The rate in St. Albans for families with children was 8.4% in poverty and 12.6% of local families with children less than five years of age were below the poverty level in 1999. Nationally, 17% of families with children under age 5 yrs. were in poverty in 1999. The economic well being of families in St. Albans appears to be significantly better than the county, state, or national averages.

Per capita annual income in St Albans in 1999 was \$19,806. This is higher than the state average of \$16,477 but a little lower than the national average of \$21,587. These figures from the 2000 census are dated yet they provide a basis for comparison of average personal income per resident.

Data from 2000 also indicate that 15.4% of households in St. Albans have a severe burden related to housing costs as defined by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. A severe cost burden is defined as low income families who pay more than 50% of their income for housing. This is a lower rate than both the statewide percentage with severe housing cost burden (21.3%) and the national figure of 25.8% of households.

A further measure of economic security is the *Universal Living Wage*. This is the hourly wage necessary to afford housing based on Fair Market Rents in any particular area assuming that someone works 40 hours per week and 52 weeks per year. For Kanawha County this wage is \$8.31 per hour for a one bedroom apartment. The current federal minimum wage is \$5.15 per hour although the Congress appears ready to increase it to \$7.25 over a two year period.

Families in St Albans appear to be economically better than those in many parts of west Virginia based on the quantitative data.

Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Health and Well Being:

Responses to the on-line survey were received from five members of the Blueprint Community Team. Based on the perception of these five local team members, the average score for this domain was +0.48 for the statements related to community capacity in this domain. (See appendix A for an explanation of survey scoring and interpretation of this average score.) This average score would indicate that there is a moderate level of capacity present within this domain when the five components of health and well being discussed above are considered together; however the team's responses also indicate that the team sees the health and physical fitness of local people as a possible problem area. These perceptions are generally reflected in the quantitative data discussed above.

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities of Local People

Indicator areas related to using and enhancing skills knowledge and abilities of local people, citizen engagement, and data driven decision making are included in this domain of capacity. Some county-level information is available in existing data sets that can provide us with measures of

citizen engagement; however, measures relating to using and enhancing skills knowledge and abilities will, at least for the present, need to be identified locally. The perception of Blueprint Team members as reflected in the survey results is one measure of this domain and team members are encouraged to consider relevant local information and knowledge to identify other measures.

There are no current depositories of local information about how people use and enhance their skills. The Blueprint Communities Training Program is an example of local people (the Blueprint Team) enhancing their skills and the participation of team members in the program is a positive measure of local capacity in this area. The level of participation on local boards, task teams, work teams etc. is another such measure that can be assessed locally. Other useful measures of this domain where information may be known to the Blueprint Team or information could be collected locally might be participation of citizens in community meetings; training programs offered locally in areas of leadership development, group facilitation or planning; number of local community members who have participated in such training, or observations about how local government or town meetings are conducted. Are there local opportunities to gain leadership skills? Are citizens encouraged to participate in local town meetings? Are diverse parts of the community represented and are all opinions welcomed?

Citizen Engagement:

Measures of citizen engagement have been compiled for consideration by the Blueprint Team members. Some information is available in existing data sets related to participation in elections and volunteerism. Participation in elections is often used as a measure of citizen engagement. In 2004 (a Presidential election year), 67.4% of registered voters in Kanawha County cast a ballot. Voter turnout in the county was better than the statewide voter turnout of 65.9%. An additional measure of citizen participation is the percentage of the voting age population that actually registered and exercised their rights as a citizen to vote for their elected officials. In Kanawha County the percentage of the voting age population that voted in the 2004 election was higher than the state or national turnout. 56.9% of the voting age population voted in Kanawha County as contrasted to 54.7% in West Virginia and 55.5% across the nation.

Volunteerism is another measure of this domain for which we have some data. Kanawha County residents participate in the Adopt-A-Highway program at a lower rate than the state average – 8.6 volunteers per 1,000 population in Kanawha County and 13.2 per 1,000 statewide. Another measure of citizen involvement is the number of persons expressing interest in volunteering through the state registry maintained by the WV Commission on National and Community Service. This registry reflects 8.2 Kanawha County residents per 1,000 population and a state average of 9.1 per 1,000.

These available measures of citizen engagement for the county as a whole may have little relevance to the local St. Albans community. The Blueprint Team is encouraged to select and monitor local measures related to how St. Albans residents use and enhance their skills and knowledge in areas that contribute to local development.

Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Knowledge and Abilities of Local People:

The measures reported above related to voting and volunteerism drawn from available data provide some countywide context; however, we are forced for the most part to rely on the perceptions of Blueprint Team members about the level of capacity in this domain as reflected in their survey responses. Based on the limited survey responses of the team members, local capacity is lacking in this area that can contribute to local development. The average score for this domain was 0.00 indicating team members believe very little capacity is present that can be tapped. Team members do believe people in the community value learning and that community meetings are held when citizens can attend but the team sees little citizen involvement in issues and no opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge. If these perceptions are accurate, a focus on building capacity in this area should be productive. Workshops and training designed to build leadership and planning skills and community forums that engage local citizens in discussions about community issues should result in increased capacity in this domain.

Social Capital

“Although some...continue to believe that healthy economies create vibrant communities, in fact, the reverse is more often the case. A strong community is a prerequisite for creating a healthy economy because it alone produces social trust.”
(Jeremy Rifkin, 2000)

Two domains of community capacity make up social capital – ***Relationships and Interpersonal Communications*** and ***Community Initiative Responsibility and Adaptability***.

These domains address levels of shared values, trust, connectedness, participation, collective vision, leadership planning, and sense of hope in the community. There are currently few if any sources of local data that effectively measure these important components of community capacity. One measure that may be useful was secured from school survey data. Students at St. Albans High School and Hayes Middle School were asked if they participate in community activities such as scouts, sports teams, youth clubs, etc. Participation in such activities is one way social capital is built among young residents in the community. For 2004-05, 26.6% of Hayes Middle School students and 17.8% of St. Albans High School students reported participation in such activities. The statewide rate for all students is 26.7%.

With the exception of this one measure of relationship building in the community state and national data sets are of little use. We can gain some insight into this domain of local capacity through the perceptions of Blueprint Team members (survey data). However, the levels of social capital are best considered locally by observing local interactions among people, identifying local leaders, and encouraging a collective vision and plan for the community. Are public issues discussed in local newspapers or community forums? How many adults attend youth activities? Are community gatherings routine events and are new members of the community welcomed at community events? Are local organizations and local government connected to one another and engaged in joint planning to improve the community? Does the community work (and play) well with other communities in Kanawha County? Do community residents resolve disagreements amicably and trust one another? The Blueprint team can develop its own local measures of Social Capital by asking themselves these types of questions and then asking: how would we know?

Local information can also be gathered by talking to local government officials or agency directors about their vision for the community and how they plan for the future. Is there a collective vision for local development? How many citizens are engaged in discussions about the future? What is the level of resources dedicated to planning by local organizations and local government?

Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Relationships and Interpersonal Communications:

The responses of Blueprint Team members related to this domain of community capacity indicate a low level of existing capacity. The average score for this domain across the five variables is -0.16.

Team members' responses indicate concerns about levels of trust and connectedness among local residents. If the perception of the Blueprint Team members is accurate, this area of capacity will need to be built before local projects can be expected to receive substantial support in the community.

Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Community Initiative, Responsibility, and Adaptability:

Team members see this domain in much the same way as they see the other domain relating to social capital. On average, this domain also appears to hold very little existing capacity as is reflected in an overall average score for this domain is -0.20. Team members believe people look forward to the future in St. Albans but there seems to be a lack of collective vision and planning for the community that residents feel a part of.

Based on the Blueprint Team member responses to survey statements related to social capital, this is an area of capacity that should be further discussed with community members to determine how social capital can be built within the local community. Specific strategies to build relationships, engage people in establishing a community vision, and increasing the level of community involvement may be beneficial.

Cultural Capital

Cultural Diversity and Quality of Life

This is another domain where existing databases offer little useful information. The 2000 census data reflects little cultural diversity within the population of St. Albans. 95.4% of the population is White and 2.8% of the population report themselves as Black or African American. 2.8% of the population reported speaking a language other than English in the home (1.7% of the population speak Spanish at home).

Kanawha County has four museums or art galleries located in the county and twelve libraries. There are also seven performing arts centers. 2.07% of the work force of the county is employed in the Arts, Entertainment, or Recreation sector.

Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Cultural Diversity and Quality of Life:

Blueprint Team members believe the quality of life in St. Albans is fairly good. The average score for this domain is +0.38. This score indicates a low to moderate level of capacity related to cultural diversity and quality of life. Team members indicated that there is little opportunity for cultural enrichment in the local St Albans area. The team does seem to feel that local people have pride in local heritage and the community. Team members may wish to assess how other community members see these issues as plans are developed. Do community residents want more access to live music performances and the arts? How can the positive aspects of good quality of life issues be leveraged to assist with community development? What types of projects or activities could increase the quality of life and cultural diversity within the community?

Financial and Manufactured Capital

Investments in Community and Financial Resources

A significant number of measures have been identified from existing data sets to describe levels of community capacity and current conditions within this domain.

Financial Investments:

Data obtained from the WV Secretary of State Business Organization Information System indicates that nearly 2.66% of the for-profit businesses in St. Albans have been started within the past year. The statewide percentage of new business start ups is 4.18%. This is an area where local knowledge is necessary to interpret this measure in the context of local business activity.

Data from the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act database indicates 34 new home mortgages per 1,000 current housing units in St Albans during 2005. This is close to the state average of 32 per 1,000 units but below the national figure of 75 per 1,000.

Local Financial Resources:

One measure of local financial resources is deposits in local banks. Local information for St Albans residents is not easily available but this measure for Kanawha County was calculated from available 2004 data at \$16,098 in per capita deposits (average deposits per county resident). The state average per-capita deposit is significantly lower at \$12,472. Kanawha County has seventy banking locations in the county and a total of \$3.116 Billion dollars in total deposits (2004 data).

Another measure of local financial resources is the average wage per job. Kanawha County residents' earnings are, on average, higher than the state average at \$34,940 per job held. The state average is \$30,879 (2005 data).

Based on some of the income information available for the local area from the 2000 census, the local data for St. Albans for these measures might reasonably be expected to be at a little higher level of financial resources than the countywide statistics. These measures tend to indicate that the St. Albans area has more local financial resources available than the average community throughout the state.

Access to Outside Financial Resources:

Several measures of federal spending and investment of federal financial resources in the area have been identified. This data is most recently available for Kanawha County (2004). One measure of federal investment in the county is federal transfer receipts. These federal payments are made to individuals for unemployment benefits, retirement, social security, disability payments, and other forms of payment not attributable to earnings from work. The "federal personal transfer receipts" for 2004 averaged \$7,897 for each person in the county (per-capita receipts). Statewide this figure is \$6,929. Kanawha County residents in general are more dependent on federal programs than the state population as a whole.

Total federal per-capita spending in Kanawha County for salaries and benefits of federal employees, military personnel, procurement contracts, grants and other forms of investment was \$12,058 per person in 2004. This is more federal investment than the state per capita average of \$8,364.

Business Efficiency:

One measure of business efficiency is retail sales. The Economic Census of 2002 reported per capita retail sales in Kanawha County as \$13,504. Statewide retail sales were \$9,277 per capita. The higher per capita sales in Kanawha County reflect sales in the Charleston Area which is a regional center of retail trade.

Job creation and changes in net employment are other measures that can be used to assess business efficiency within the county. During 2005, Kanawha County had a net gain of 614 jobs. There were 5,826 new jobs created during that period. Average new hire earnings are reported at \$1,980 per month. Although there was some net job growth in the county during 2005, there was a loss of 4,694 jobs during the four year from 2000 through 2004. Thus, over 4,000 jobs appear to have been lost during the first half of the present decade.

Business Diversity:

Business diversity within the county is reflected in the number and types of business establishments and in the types of jobs available. Total non-farm business establishments in Kanawha County in 2004 were 5,850. The 2002 Survey of Business Owners conducted by the Census Bureau included 4,450 businesses with employees in the county.

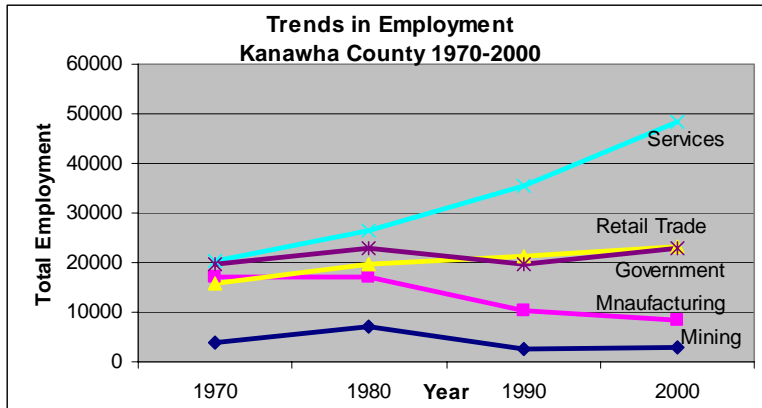
Within the city of St Albans, the WV Secretary of State Business Organization Data System lists 188 for profit businesses and 15 registered non-profit organizations operating within the city.

Employment in Kanawha County for 2004 (the most recent available data) reflects a total employment of 134,155 persons. 82.6% of the employment is in private sector jobs while government employment accounts for 17.3%. The remaining 0.1% is farm employment.

The 2000 Census data for the city of St. Albans provides a more localized view of the employment characteristics of city residents. 5,194 St. Albans residents (over age 16 yrs.) were employed when the census was taken. St Albans residents' occupations in 2000 were listed as:

- Management and Professional – 33.2%
- Service Occupations – 13.5%
- Sales and Office – 34.3%
- Farming, fishing & forestry – 0.5%
- Construction, Extraction, and Maintenance – 6.4%
- Production, Transportation – 12.1%

This data reflects how St. Albans residents were employed at the time (occupations of people living in St. Albans) not the types of jobs that were located in St Albans.



Trends in Employment 1970 to 2000:

If we look closer at selected industries over the past thirty years the total employment in Kanawha County within these particular industries shows an increase in the number of jobs within these sectors during the period (78,814 jobs in 1970 and 107,681 jobs in 2000). However, the shift in type of employment is of more interest.

Employment in service industries has increased steadily and the number of persons employed in manufacturing and mining has declined. Jobs in retail trade and government have also increased but not nearly at the rate of the service sector jobs. The rate of increase in service jobs is particularly notable as is the rate of decrease in manufacturing related jobs during the period. See chart showing trends in these selected industries over thirty years.

Cultivating Entrepreneurship:

Limited data is available in this area. Some measure of entrepreneurship within the city of St. Albans may be implied from the 5.4% of residents that owned their own business in 2000. If local centers or programs to promote entrepreneurship are available in the area these programs would likely be a good source of information that could be used to measure local entrepreneurial activity.

Community Resident Assets:

Resident assets may be measured to some extent by looking at the value of owner occupied housing. For most home owners their home is the greatest asset they have. In 2000, 75% of St Albans residents owned their homes. This rate of home ownership is at the state average of 75.2% and higher than the national home ownership rate of 66.2%. The average value of the homeowner’s property in St Albans was \$88,744 in 2000 while the average value of owner occupied housing statewide was \$86,995 and nationally it was \$158,934.

The average value of farm land and buildings in Kanawha County is also considerably less than state and national averages. The 2000 census of agriculture documents an average value for farm land and buildings in Kanawha County of \$142,053. The average value of farm land and buildings in West Virginia was \$231,999.

Community Infrastructure:

Community infrastructure is an area where local resident knowledge exceeds available statistics drawn from large data sets. Blueprint Team members can most likely assess infrastructure issues fairly accurately based on their own local knowledge of community services or by gathering local data related to public buildings, highway repairs, the age of water and sewer systems, new school facilities, etc.

Census data tells us that most of the housing in St Albans has been built since 1940. Only 11.8% of the housing units were built prior to 1940. A substantial portion of local housing was built between

1940 and 1960 (54.1%). Almost all occupied houses are heated with natural gas (76.9%) or electricity (22.2%). Seven occupied houses lacked complete plumbing facilities in 2000.

The percentage of workers in Kanawha County who commute outside the county to work is 7.4%. This is much less than the state average (20.2%). Average travel time to work is about five minutes less than the state average of 26.2 minutes. Net commutation (persons coming into the county to work minus those leaving to work) is +22,375. These figures tell us that significant numbers of people who work in Kanawha County live in neighboring counties. There is a public transit system that operates in the Kanawha Valley.

Other measures of local community infrastructure should be examined by the Blueprint Team. One measure of the increase in local assets is the number and type of building permits sought by local residents. This data should be locally available for St. Albans and it is good measure of investment being made to increase the value of homes or business property.

Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Investments in the Community and Financial Resources:

Survey responses of the Blueprint Team members reflect a perception of low overall capacity in this domain. The average score for this domain was +0.04. This score indicates little confidence on the part of team members in the level of financial resources that can be drawn upon in the community. Those team members who offered an opinion believed that good business ideas would be supported by local banks but there was a general sense among the team members that there was little opportunity for local residents to learn how to start a business.

Environmental Capital

Sustainable Healthy Ecosystems with Multiple Community Benefits

Local environmental issues are another area where existing data sets are not particularly useful. Information about the environment is available from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State Department of Environmental Protection as well as the State Department of Natural Resources.

Recent grant awards from the REAP Office of the State Department of Environmental Protection to address environmental issues is one possible measure of activity related to environmental issues. There were no grant awards for environmental projects in the St Albans area for 2007. This does not necessarily indicate a lack of concern about environmental issues it is just one of the few measures available that we can consider.

The percentage of surface waters with impaired or threatened uses is 10.44% in Kanawha County. The highest percentage of impaired or threatened surface waters for counties in West Virginia is 55.1% and the lowest is 5%.

Some information is available for Kanawha County from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency related to toxic releases into the environment. 8,041,486 pounds of toxic substances were released into the environment within the county in 2005. This was 8.25% of total releases in the state. There were no environmental clean up sites listed in the St. Albans area in state and federal databases.

Local environmental issues may be monitored and potential problems identified through local projects to monitor water quality and bio-diversity. Local schools might be encouraged to conduct tests on local streams or conduct wildlife counts as student science projects. Recycling is another area that can be considered to maintain a high quality environment. Any local environmental organizations should be included in visioning and planning for local development.

Survey Responses from Blueprint Team Members Related to Sustainable Healthy Ecosystems with Multiple Community Benefits:

This domain of community capacity is seen by the Blueprint Team members as another area of low to moderate capacity with an overall score of +0.29. Four of the five variables used to calculate the team perception about this domain were seen as quite positive. Team members seem to believe that people in St. Albans care about the environment and want to take environmental issues into consideration when planning for local development. Land use within the community is an area that was seen as a possible area of concern by team members. This may be an area the community wants to consider further if there are concerns about land use planning as community development projects are implemented.

Appendix A

Methodology and Technical Information

A Capacity Assessment Framework was used as the basis for constructing a community profile for each of the ten West Virginia Blueprint Communities. The framework is based on a community capitals model and it addresses levels of capacity - that is stores of capital- that might be drawn upon to improve local conditions. Seven domains or “areas of influence” effecting community capacity were defined by a group of stakeholders known as the “Community Development Gathering” in West Virginia during 2006. These domains were adapted from work done by the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development at Iowa State University. To the extent possible, measures for each domain were selected from relevant existing databases and these selected measures are discussed in the profile. The community profile discusses current conditions in the context of five capitals, seven domains and defined indicator areas that say something significant about each of the domains of interest. This framework is included as Appendix B.

Compiled and published information at the level useful for local assessment and planning is very limited for some areas of influence that determine local community capacity. Consequently, domains relating to social capital, cultural capital, and environmental capital are more difficult to measure using existing data sets. Given this lack of good information readily available for some of the defined domains, a survey was developed to assess the opinion of key informants about the levels of capacity within each of the Blueprint Communities. Blueprint Community team members were asked to complete the web-based survey in order to secure information about how the team members see their community and identify (from the perspective of the team members) areas where local capacity appears to be present. Because of the makeup of the Blueprint Teams, the Blueprint Community Team members are considered to be appropriate key informants knowledgeable about the local community.

The information discussed in the community profile was compiled from existing data sets and from analysis of survey results solicited from local Blueprint Team members. The profile is a portrait of current community conditions and existing areas of capacity with some historical trend information related to key indicators when such trends in the data appear helpful in understanding current community conditions.

Methodology for Analysis of Survey Responses:

Blueprint Team members were asked to complete a survey in order to measure beliefs held by each of the team members related to 35 measures of local capacity. The survey is composed of a series of 35 statements. Each of the seven domains of community capacity defined in the framework is measured by five statements contained in the survey. Survey respondents (Blueprint Community Team members) were asked to evaluate each statement based on their personal knowledge of the larger community (county or town designated as a Blueprint Community) and choose the degree to which they agree or disagree with the 35 statements using a five point Likert scale. Responses for each statement can range from “strongly disagree” to strongly agree”.

Individual survey responses were analyzed to produce a composite score for each of the thirty-five variables. For purposes of analysis individual responses were scored from -2 to +2. Responses were scored as follows: “a response of strongly disagree was assigned a value of -2, disagree was valued at -1, neither agree or disagree received 0 value, a response of agree was valued +1, and strongly agree was assigned a value of +2. The average of the assigned values for each team was then used as the team score for each individual statement (variable). Finally, a score was calculated for each of the seven domains by averaging the team scores of the five variables related to each domain. The score for each domain is based on a total of five variables multiplied by the number of team members responding. Thus, if eight team members completed the survey the score for the domain is based on a total of 40 responses (5 variables X 8 team members). Domain scores can range from minus two (-2.0) if all respondents strongly disagree to plus two (+2.0) if all respondents strongly agree. For any given statement it is highly unlikely that the average response will approach either -2 or +2. In general, positive domain scores indicate capacity is present and negative scores indicate the community lacks capacity in the area defined by the domain. Higher scores are interpreted as indicative of higher levels of capacity.

Since this “capacity score” was derived from the opinion of a small number of key informants, it is reflective only of the collective belief or opinion of the Blueprint Team members about the level of capacity that exists within the designated Blueprint Community. Survey results are used to supplement the more objective quantitative data related to community capacity when such data is available.

Appendix B - Framework for Assessing Community Capacity

| <i>Capacity Domains (Areas of Influence)</i> | <i>Indicator Areas</i> |
|--|--|
| <i>Human Capital</i> | |
| 1. Health and Well-Being of Local People | 1(a) Healthy People 1(b) School Readiness 1(c) Educational Attainment & Access 1(d) Community Safety 1(e) Family Stability 1(f) Economic Security |
| 2. Skills, Knowledge, and Ability of Local People | 2(a) Using Skills, Knowledge, Abilities 2(b) Enhancing Skills, Knowledge, Abilities 2(c) Citizen Engagement 2(d) Data-driven Decision Making |
| <i>Social Capital</i> | |
| 3. Relationships and Interpersonal Communication | 3(a) Shared Values 3(b) Participation 3(c) Internal Connectedness 3(d) External Connectedness 3(e) Trust 3(f) Ability to Solve Problems |
| 4. Community Initiative, Responsibility, and Adaptability | 4(a) Shared Vision 4(b) Leadership 4(c) Planning 4(d) Building on Local Resources 4(e) Seeking alternative ways to improve 4(f) Sense of Hope |
| <i>Cultural Capital</i> | |
| 5. Cultural Diversity and Quality of Life | 5(a) Heritage 5(b) Arts 5(c) Recreation 5(c) Spirituality |
| <i>Financial and Manufactured Capital</i> | |
| 6. Investments in Community and Financial Resources | 6(a) Financial Investments 6(b) Local Financial Resources 6(c) Access to Outside Financial Resources 6(d) Resource Mobilization 6(e) Business Efficiency 6(f) Business Diversity 6(g) Cultivating Entrepreneurship 6(h) Community Resident Assets 6(i) Community Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing - Facilities - Water/Sewer - Transportation - Communications |
| <i>Environmental (Natural) Capital</i> | |
| 7. Sustainable, Healthy Ecosystems with Multiple Community Benefits | 7(a) Air Quality 7(b) Water Resources 7(c) Biodiversity 7(d) Soil 7(e) Landscape (sense of place) 7(f) Ecosystem Knowledge and Appreciation |

Appendix C

Data Sources and References

Data and information used within the community profile has been drawn from a wide range of secondary data sources. For purposes of the Blueprint Community Profiles, secondary data is defined as information and statistics collected by government agencies or private organizations that are useful in describing and measuring the defined domains or areas of influence of local community capacity.

A great deal of data is readily available through internet based websites and documents that are related to the defined domains of community capacity. Some of this data is readily available at the local community (municipality) level, some is available at the county level, and some is only available for regional or statewide areas. Some of the information referenced within the community profile is reported at the county level since that is the geographic unit of analysis that is generally available to the public. Local communities also operate within the larger context of the county in which they are located. Thus, county level data is often useful in providing measures of local capacity and community conditions. In cases where the designated Blueprint Community is a town or city, information is reported for that smaller geographic area when the specific small area measure could be obtained.

Over fifty data sets were reviewed in order to identify relevant measures that would provide local Blueprint Teams with meaningful information about their community. The information compiled within the profile paints a portrait of current community conditions and provides guidance for planning and priority setting. Since the data profile is organized under seven areas of influence (or domains) that collectively define community capacity, the profile also provides some level of insight into specific areas (domains) where local capacity may need to be built.

Much of the information reported in the community profile is drawn from publicly available data sets published on the Internet by federal and state agencies. Local Blueprint Teams may wish to access one or more of these sites for further information or more detailed information about specific local issues determined to be an area of concern or identified as a priority for local planning. The community profile provided for use by the Blueprint Team is designed to provide a general overview of some of the more relevant measures of local conditions and community capacity. Once the Blueprint Team begins to focus on specific areas for community development, additional or more detailed information about that area may be useful. Therefore, the most useful and comprehensive data sites reviewed in developing these profiles are listed on the following pages with web addresses.

Federal Data Sites:

- United States Bureau of the Census <http://www.census.gov>
 - USA Counties – Provides many data sets from decennial census and annual estimates organized by county
Web address: <http://censtats.census.gov/usa/usa.shtml>
 - American Communities Survey – Provides data from the annual American Communities Survey for larger geographic areas. Data is generally not available from the ACS for rural counties and towns in West Virginia.
Web address:
http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/DatasetMainPageServlet?_program=ACS&_submenuId=&_lang=en&_ts=
 - Consolidated Federal Funds Report – Provides information about a wide range of federal expenditures at state and county levels.
Web address: <http://harvester.census.gov/cffr/>
 - Quarterly Workforce Indicators – Provides current and recent information about economic indicators and employment by quarter (every three months).
Web Address: <http://lehd.dsd.census.gov/led/datatools/qwiapp.html>

- United States Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis – Provides detailed information about economic conditions, jobs, employment, labor markets, industry types, etc.
Web Address: <http://www.bea.gov/>

- United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics – Provides information about labor markets, employment, occupations, economic conditions, etc.
Web Address: <http://www.bls.gov/>

- United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Toxic Release Inventory – Provides detailed information about reported releases of toxic chemicals into the environment.
Web Address: <http://www.epa.gov/triexplorer/>

- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Call Reports and Thrift Financial Reports – Database of information about all FDIC insured Banks and Savings and Loans that contains detailed financial status reports by quarter.
Web address: http://www2.fdic.gov/call_tfr_rpts/search.asp

- United States Department of Agriculture National Agricultural Statistics Service – Data by county about farms and farm products.
Web address: http://www.nass.usda.gov/Census/Create_Census_US_CNTY.jsp#top

- Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reporting System – Local, state, and national statistics of crime.
Web address: <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/05cius/>

State Data Sites:

- WV Department of Health and Human Resources - Bureau for Public Health; Health Statistics Center – Statistics related to births, deaths, marriages, divorces, etc.
Web Address: <http://www.wvdhhr.org/bph/oehp/vital04/index.htm>
- WV Department of Health and Human Resources – Office of Accountability and Management Reporting – Information related to recipients and expenditures for major social welfare programs.
Web address: <http://www.wvdhhr.org/oamr/DAMRreports.htm>
- WV Department of Health and Human Resources - Bureau for Public Health; Behavioral Risk Factors Survey Reporting – Results of the Behavioral Risk Factors Survey addressing wide range of health status and health behavior indicators.
Web address: http://www.wvdhhr.org/bph/oehp/BRFSS_2003/default.htm
- WV Coalition Against Domestic Violence – Statistics on prevalence of domestic violence in West Virginia.
Web Address: <http://www.wvcadv.org/>
- WV State Police Uniform Crime Reports – Statistics on crime in West Virginia.
Web address: <http://www.wvstatepolice.com/ucr/ucr.htm>
- Sex Offender Registry – Locations of known sex offenders in West Virginia.
Web address: <http://www.wvstatepolice.com/sexoff/websearchform.cfm>
- WV Department of Education – Wide range of information about educational facilities, performance, accountability, enrollment, expenditures, personnel, etc.
 - Report Card Data – Accountability indicators, testing data, graduation rates, etc. for every school in West Virginia.
Web address: <http://wveis.k12.wv.us/nclb/pub/rpt0506/pickreportcard.cfm>
 - West Virginia Education Information System – Detailed statistics for every school and county school district related to personnel, expenditures, facilities, enrollment, needy students, etc.
Web address: <http://wveis.k12.wv.us/>
- West Virginia Secretary of State Business Organization Information System – Searchable database containing information about types and numbers of businesses registered in West Virginia.
Web address: <http://www.wvsos.com/wvcorporations/>
- WV Department of Environmental Protection – Information about the environment including air quality, watersheds, waste sites, permits, etc. Information is provided on a regional basis.
Web address: http://www2.fdic.gov/call_tfr_rpts/search.asp

- WVDEP Enviromap Explorer – Interactive geographic information system containing environmental information for West Virginia regions and local areas including aerial maps (large files).
Web address: <http://gis.wvdep.org/>
- WorkForce West Virginia Labor Market Information – Information drawn from federal and state data sets related to workforce, employment, and economic conditions in West Virginia.
Web address: <http://www.wvbep.org/bep/LMI/default.htm>

Private Organization Data Sites:

- Universal Living Wage – Information about Fair Market Rents and household income levels necessary to afford housing.
Web address: <http://www.universallivingwage.org/>
- Scorecard – This website compiles a wide range of information related to environmental pollution, air and water quality, and other environmental information about counties and local communities in the U.S.
Web address: <http://www.scorecard.org/>

Compiled Data Sets and Profiles for Counties and/or Local Municipalities:

Local Area Data Sets:

- DataPlace - <http://www.dataplace.org/>
- EPodunk - <http://epodunk.com/>
- West Virginia Development Office State Data Center Profiles of WV places from 2000 Census - <http://www.wvdo.org/business/2000CensusProfiles.html>

West Virginia County Data Sets and Profiles:

- WorkForce West Virginia County Profiles - <http://www.wvbep.org/bep/LMI/CNTYPROF/DEFAULT.HTM>
- West Virginia Development Office State Data Center Profiles of WV counties from 2000 Census - <http://www.wvdo.org/business/2000CensusProfiles.html>
- West Virginia University Bureau for Business and Economic Research – County profiles of business and economic conditions. http://www.be.wvu.edu/bber/data_profiles.htm