

Socio-Economic/Demographic Overview

Introduction

This section provides an overview since 1970 of socio-economic and demographic information for Fayette County. The following information presents statistics for population trends, age characteristics, racial mix, households, income and poverty levels, educational levels, and employment trends.

Population Trends

In 1940, the population total of Fayette County peaked at over 200,000 citizens. This peak was followed by a population decline through 1990. From 1980 to 1990 alone, the County's population decreased from 159,417 to 145,351. The ten (10) percent decline in population over the decade was the highest among any of the seven (7) surrounding counties. However, according to recent population estimates prepared by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), it appears that the County's population has stabilized at approximately 145,628 persons. Table 1 lists population totals for the County and each municipality for the years 1970, 1980, 1990, and 1996. The percentage change in population from 1970 to 1990 for each municipality within the County is illustrated in Exhibit 1.

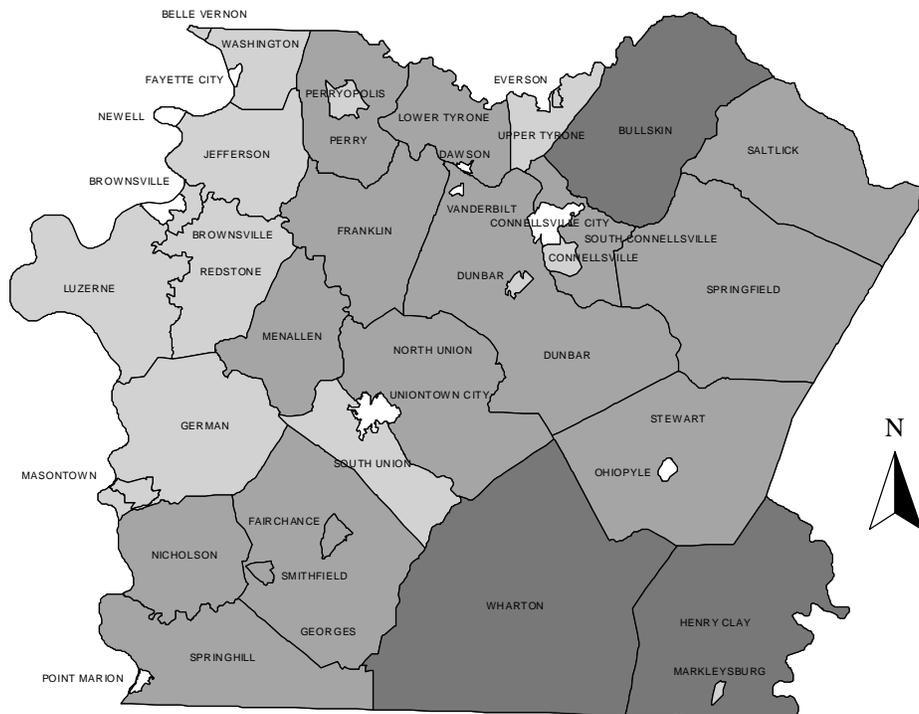
Municipalities in the northwest and north central portion of the County experienced the highest percentage decrease in population between 1970 and 1990. In particular, Brownsville Borough, Ohio Pyle Borough, Vanderbilt Borough, Fayette City, and the City of Uniontown have experienced a percentage decrease in population over twenty-five (25%) percent.

Table 1 Fayette County Population Totals 1970, 1980, 1990 and 1996					
	1970	1980	1990	% Change 1970-1990	1996*
Belle Vernon Borough	1,496	1,489	1,213	-19%	1,205
Brownsville Borough	4,856	4,043	3,164	-35%	3,129
Brownsville Township	875	936	847	-3%	855
Bullskin Township	4,923	7,008	7,323	49%	7,397
Connellsville City	11,643	10,319	9,229	-21%	8,895
Connellsville Township	2,554	2,761	2,553	0	2,535
Dawson Borough	676	661	535	-21%	532
Dunbar Borough	1,499	1,369	1,213	-19%	1,212
Dunbar Township	7,366	7,605	7,460	1%	7,535
Everson Borough	1,143	1,032	939	-18%	929
Fairchance Borough	1,906	2,106	1,918	1%	1,921
Fayette City Borough	968	788	713	-26%	703
Franklin Township	2,368	2,756	2,640	11%	2,667
Georges Township	6,224	7,138	6,525	5%	6,461
German Township	6,808	5,900	5,596	-18%	5,652
Henry Clay Township	1,420	1,663	1,860	31%	1,900
Jefferson Township	2,095	2,265	2,047	-2%	2,067
Lower Tyrone Borough	939	1,089	1,138	21%	1,149
Luzerne Township	5,689	5,549	4,904	-14%	4,959
Markleysburg Borough	367	356	320	-13%	321
Masontown Borough	4,426	4,909	3,759	-15%	3,754
Menallen Township	4,508	5,201	4,739	5%	4,887
Newell Borough	650	629	518	-20%	512
Nicholson Township	1,754	2,143	1,995	14%	2,015
North Union Township	13,561	15,340	13,910	3%	14,149
Ohiopyle Borough	140	124	81	-42%	78
Perry Township	2,651	3,119	2,817	6%	2,845
Perryopolis Borough	2,043	2,139	1,833	-10%	1,846
Point Marion Borough	1,750	1,642	1,344	-23%	1,327
Redstone Township	8,010	7,681	6,459	-19%	6,520
Saltlick Township	2,774	3,241	3,253	17%	3,486
Smithfield Borough	969	1,084	1,000	3%	1,005
South Connellsville Bor.	2,385	2,296	2,204	-8%	2,216
South Union Township	10,370	10,992	10,223	-1%	10,178
Springfield Township	2,465	2,865	2,968	20%	2,998
Springhill Township	2,629	2,906	2,800	7%	2,829
Stewart Township	704	787	734	4%	755
Uniontown City	16,282	14,510	12,034	-26%	11,538
Upper Tyrone Township	2,122	1,913	1,995	-6%	2,015
Vanderbilt Borough	755	689	545	-28%	542
Washington Township	5,535	5,069	4,613	-17%	4,583
Wharton Township	2,567	3,305	3,390	32%	3,526
Total:	154,865	159,417	145,351		145,628

Sources: U.S. Census; *Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

Exhibit 1

Percentage Population Change, 1970-1990



Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission; 1990 U.S. Census

Conversely, seventeen (17) of the County's forty-two (42) municipalities experienced a population increase from 1970 to 1990. The municipalities experiencing the highest percentage increases in population between 1970 and 1990 include Bullsken Township, Henry Clay Township, and Wharton Township. These municipalities experienced a percentage increase in population over twenty-five (25%) percent. Municipalities experiencing the highest percentage increase in population are generally located in the northeastern and southeastern portions of the County. It is also significant to note that ten (10) municipalities experienced a percentage increase in population less than five (5%) percent and are generally located in the central portion of the County.

Age Characteristics

As shown in Table 2, the percentage of the County population eighteen (18) years of age and under has decreased since 1970 and the percentage of population sixty-five (65) years of age and over has steadily increased. According to data obtained from SPC, these population trends are expected to continue and are reflective of regional trends.

Table 2 Population Trends, Selected Age Groups			
	1970	1980	1990
Persons 18 and Younger	51,105	44,636	30,524
Percent of Population	33%	28%	21%
Persons 65 and Older	18,583	22,318	26,284
Percent of Population	12%	14%	18%

Source: Pennsylvania State Data Center, 1998

In 1990, approximately twenty-one (21%) percent of the County's population was eighteen (18) years of age and under. Municipalities with a higher percentage of school age population than the County are generally located in the southeastern portion of the County as depicted in Exhibit 2. The segment of the population sixty-five (65) years of age and over represents approximately eighteen (18%) percent of the County's total population. Municipalities with higher percentages of citizens sixty-five (65) and older are scattered across the County with a cluster occurring in the western portion and in the vicinities of the City of Connellsville and the City of Uniontown as depicted in Exhibit 3. The following four (4) municipalities within the County have a senior citizen population of twenty-five (25%) percent or more: Fayette City, Belle Vernon Borough, Markleyburg Borough, and Ohiopyle Borough.

Exhibit 2

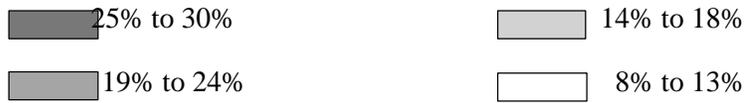
Percentage Population 17 Years and Under, 1990



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission; 1990 U.S. Census

Exhibit 3

Percentage Population 65 Years and Older, 1990



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission; 1990 U.S. Census

In 1990, the sixty-five (65) and over and eighteen (18) and under age groups made up thirty-nine (39%) percent of the County population. These two groups are the most dependent on alternative forms of transportation such as public transportation. It should be noted that improved access to pedestrian facilities and public transportation is an important consideration for this segment of the population.

Racial Mix

Fayette County has limited racial diversity with over ninety-six (96%) percent of the population being white. Of the remaining four (4%) percent of the population, the majority of citizens are black. Citizens of Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian ancestry account for less than one-half (1/2%) percent of the population. The only municipalities with a significant ethnic mix are Brownsville Township, Redstone Township, and the City of Uniontown. These three (3) municipalities have a black population representing over ten (10%) percent of the total population.

Households

The total number of households in Fayette County decreased less than one (1) percent from 1980 to 1990¹. In 1990, the County had a total of 56,111 households. The average number of persons per household was approximately two and one-half (2.5). Decreasing household size may be attributed to both a regional and national trend resulting from couples having fewer children, young adults postponing marriage, divorced or separated persons living alone, and increasing numbers of older persons living alone. A major implication of this trend is that a greater number of households are needed to support the same population. This helps to explain why the County's population declined ten (10%) percent from 1980 to 1990, however, the total number of households declined less than one (1%) percent.

Median Income and Poverty

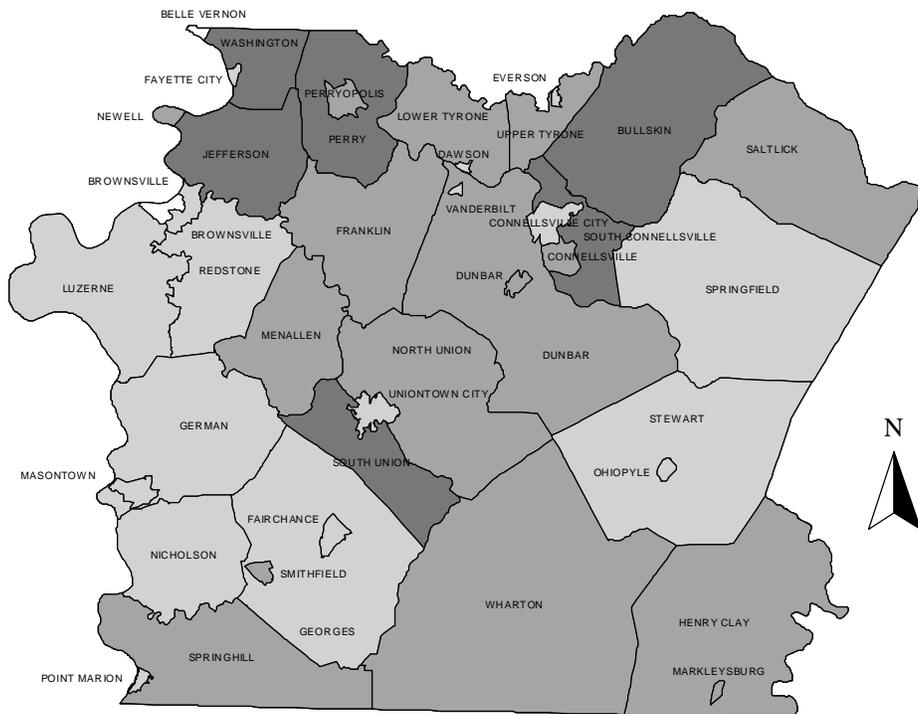
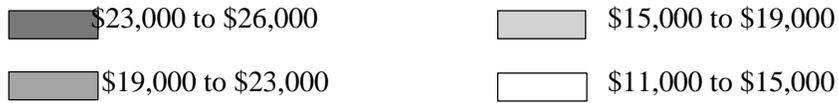
From 1979 through 1989, the median household income within the County increased from \$13,900 to \$19,195. When adjusted for inflation, the median household income actually decreased nearly twenty (20%) percent over the same decade. The 1996 estimated median household income was \$21,888². Exhibit 4 illustrates the 1990 average household income for each municipality in the County.

¹ A household includes all persons who occupy a housing unit.

² Estimate provided by Allegheny Power.

Exhibit 4

Average Household Income, 1990



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission; 1990 U.S. Census

Henry Clay Township, Markleysburg Borough, and Ohiopyle Borough were the only three (3) municipalities within the County to experience household income growth between 1979 and 1989³. The following five (5) municipalities saw household incomes decrease by thirty (30%) percent or more: Brownsville Township, Springfield Township, Dawson Borough, Springfield Borough, and Vanderbilt Borough.

As of 1990, approximately twenty (20%) percent of the County’s population was living in poverty with one out of every four families with children living below the poverty threshold⁴. Brownsville Township, Redstone Township, and Dawson Borough have the highest levels of poverty with thirty (30%) percent or more of the population living in poverty. In general, pockets of poverty are widespread, with clusters occurring in the southwest and southeast corners of the County. Exhibit 5 illustrates the overall percentage of population living below the poverty threshold for each municipality in the County.

Educational Levels and Public School Enrollment

Fayette County citizen educational levels have increased between 1980 to 1990 with the percentage of citizens with a high school diploma increasing by ten (10%) percent, totaling approximately sixty-eight (68%) percent of the population. In addition, the percentage of college graduates with a Bachelor’s Degree increased to approximately nine (9%) percent of the total population. However, these percentages are below the state averages of 75% and 18%, respectively. Exhibits 6 and 7 illustrate these issues.

Approximately 22,065 students were enrolled in County public schools for the 1997-1998 school year. Table 3 provides totals for public school enrollment by district and specialized schools for the 1992-1993 through 1997-1998 school years. Overall, it appears that enrollments have remained consistent over the past six years.

Table 3 Fayette County Public School Enrollment 1992-1993 through 1997-1998						
School District	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98
Albert Gallatin Area	4,353	4,294	4,504	4,347	4,380	4,456
Brownsville Area	2,441	2,392	2,358	2,353	2,305	2,236
Connellsville Area	6,187	6,158	6,041	6,138	5,981	6,044
Frazier Area	1,311	1,307	1,343	1,322	1,329	1,351
Laurel Highlands Area	3,619	3,782	3,907	3,953	3,933	3,829
Uniontown Area	3,748	3,693	3,700	3,724	3,701	3,743
Fayette Co AVTS	371	385	381	313	308	313
N. Fayette CO AVTS	437	456	424	397	434	441
Full-Time-Out-Special Ed	540	557	515	508	417	406
Total:	22,199	22,183	22,368	22,345	22,046	22,065

³ Adjusted for inflation

⁴ For the 1990 U.S. Census, the average poverty threshold for a family of four persons was a combined income of \$12,674.

Employment Trends

Unemployment levels in the County and State have generally decreased since the early 1980s. In 1997, the unemployment rate for the County was at 8.4% and the State unemployment rate was at 5.2%. The unemployment rate within the County has been higher than the state average over the time period. However, the difference between the two has closed since 1985 as depicted in Figure 1.

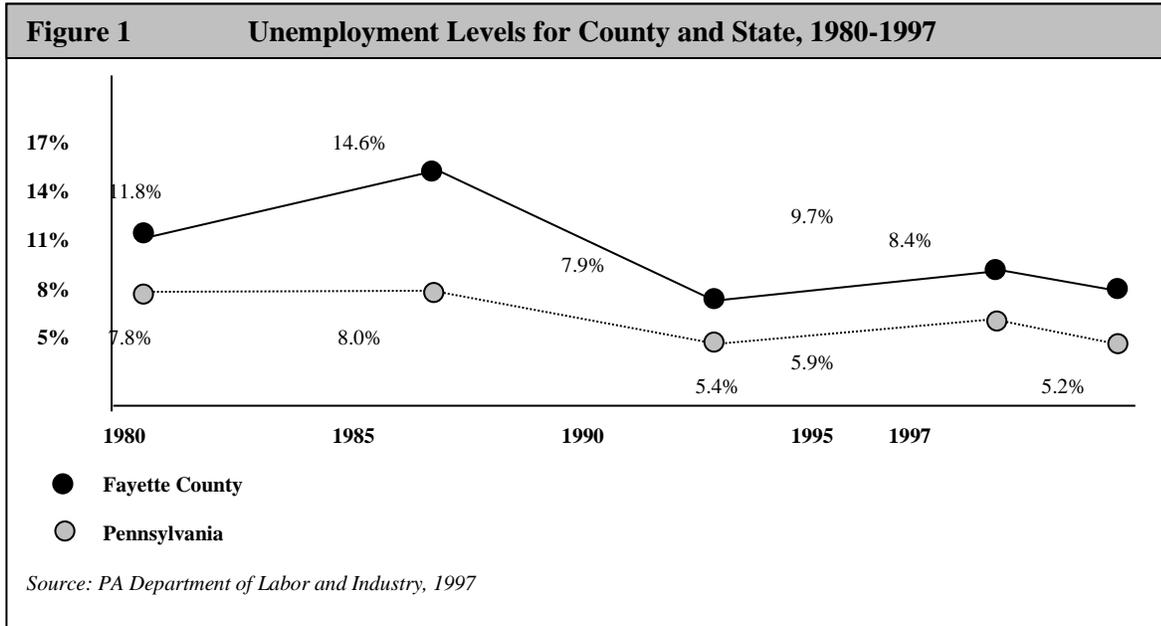


Exhibit 5

Percentage Population Living Below Poverty Level, 1990



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission; 1990 U.S. Census

Exhibit 6

Percentage of Population with High-School Diploma, 1990



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission; 1990 U.S. Census

Based on U.S. census data, Fayette County in 1990 had a total labor force of approximately 57,000 persons. Of this labor force, approximately sixty-one (61%) percent worked in the County; approximately twenty-three (23%) percent worked outside the County but within Pennsylvania; approximately four (4%) percent worked outside the state; and the remainder were unemployed.

Table 4 Number of Business Establishments By Sector, 1987 to 1995			
Sector	1987	1995	1987 - 1995 Change
Agriculture and Forestry	19	30	57%
Mining	39	30	-23%
Construction	262	319	22%
Manufacturing	128	146	14%
Transportation and Public Utilities	148	155	4%
Wholesale Trade	173	169	-2%
Retail Trade	876	922	5%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	173	198	14%
Services	912	1047	15%
Nonclassifiable	65	29	-55%
Total:	2795	3045	9%

Source: County Business Patterns, 1987 and 1995

As shown on Tables 4 and 5, the number of business establishments in Fayette County increased by nine (9%) percent and the number of jobs within the county increased by eighteen (18%) percent between 1987 and 1995. The sector categories of “retail trade” and “services” had the greatest number of employees in 1995. The retail trade sector includes general merchandise, stores, food stores, automobile sales, service stations, as well as other retail stores. The service sector includes personal, business, health, and legal services.

The service industry experienced the greatest increase in the number of establishments between 1987 and 1995, increasing by 135. This sector also had the greatest increase in the overall number of employees, an increase of 3,027. Types of establishments with the lowest or negative rates of growth include the manufacturing industry, the mining industry, and the wholesale trade industry. The wholesale trade industry lost 533 employees and the manufacturing industry lost 383 employees. As is the case in many counties, across the Country an interesting trend is seen in the manufacturing sector where a twelve (12%) percent increase in the number of manufacturing establishments was accompanied by an eight (8%) percent decrease in the number of employees. This decrease could be partially attributable to certain non-production jobs in the manufacturing sector, such as administrative or clerical positions, being contracted out to private consultants as well as increased automation and a trend toward smaller firms with fewer employees.

Table 5 Number of Employees By Sector, 1987 to 1995			
Sector	1987	1995	1987 - 1995 Change
Agriculture and Forestry	98	165	68%
Mining	422	499	18%
Construction	1,189	1,737	46%
Manufacturing	5,063	4,680	-8%
Transportation and Public Utilities	2,089	2,373	14%
Wholesale Trade	2,518	1,985	-21%
Retail Trade	9,175	11,410	24%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	1,173	1,188	1%
Services	7,973	11,000	38%
Nonclassifiable	63	51	-19%
Total:	29,763	35,088	18%

Source: County Business Patterns, 1987 and 1995

According to the Fayette County OCED, agricultural production plays an important role in the economy despite the loss of farms and farmland. As of 1995, the county had a total of 767 active farms that employed approximately 660 full-time employees. It should be noted that Tables 4 and 5 report “non-production” agricultural service employment. Dairy, field, and forage production are the main agricultural outputs.

The top non-agricultural employer in Fayette County for 1996 was the Uniontown Hospital followed by the Pennsylvania State Government, the Williamhouse Regency, the Connellsville Area School District, and the United States Government. Table 6 provides a listing of the top 50 employers in the County.

Projected Population Trends

In evaluating any projections for growth in Fayette County, it is necessary to examine the work of the Pennsylvania State Data Center, the actual events of current economic, housing and land development, and the activities of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.

**Table 6
Fayette County Top Employers, June 1998**

Rank	Employer	Rank	Employer
1	Uniontown Hospital & Williamhouse	26	Lowe's Home Centers, Inc.
2	Nemacolin Woodlands	27	Sears Roebuck & Company
3	Shade Allied, Inc.	28	Allegheny Power Service Corp.
4	Pennsylvania State Government	29	National City Corp.
5	Connellsville Area School District	30	Mount Macrina Manor Nursing Home
6	Sensus Technologies, Inc.	31	Frazier School District
7	United States Government	32	Fayette County Community Action
8	Albert Gallatin School District	33	Beverly Health & Rehab Services
9	Pechin Market	34	Eat 'n Park Restaurants, Inc.
10	Fayette County Government	35	Cherry Tree Health Care
11	K-Mart Corporation	36	PSU – Fayette Campus
12	Anchor Hocking Packaging Company	37	CRH Catering Company, Inc.
13	Laurel Highlands School District	38	Perma-Cote Industries, Inc.
14	McDonald's Restaurants of PA, Inc.	39	Bell Atlantic PA
15	Brownsville General Hospital	40	West Penn Foods, Inc.
16	Anchor Glass Containers Corp.	41	Fayette Resources, Inc.
17	Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.	42	Berkley Medical Resources, Inc.
18	Uniontown Newspapers, Inc.	43	Chestnut Ridge Counseling
19	Highland Hospital & Health Center	44	Nu-Kote International, Inc.
20	Intermediate Unit 1	45	Commercial Stone Co. Inc.
21	Uniontown Area School District	46	Stone and Company CBS
22	Brownsville Area School District	47	Pizza Hut of Uniontown, Inc.
23	Albert Gallatin Home Care, Inc.	48	JG Service Stations, Inc.
24	R. Bruce Fike & Sons Dairy, Inc.	49	Fayette Emergency Medical Services
25	Gabriel Brothers Discounts, Inc.	50	LaFayette Manor, Inc.

Source: Fayette Chamber of Commerce

The Pennsylvania State Data Center in August of 1998 published detailed County population projections from 1990 to 2020. "The method of projection was based on a cohort-component demographic project model. That is, the base population is survived 5 years in each iteration of the population cycle, and births are projected by applying fertility rates to survived females of childbearing age to determine the population due to natural increase. The survived population for each group is then adjusted for project net migration by age-sex-race. The adequacy of this model depends on the accuracy with which the assumptions about future fertility, mortality, and migration reflect future demographic reality."

In 1995, the birth rate in Fayette County was 11.8 per 1,000 total population and the death rate was 12.7 per 1,000 total population. Given those parameters plus a known continuing out-migration element throughout the Commonwealth, the obvious result of this demographic model is a perceived continuation of decline in population for the County. The projected totals may be approximately 142,010 persons in

2000; approximately 139,837 persons in 2005; approximately 137,761 persons in 2010; approximately 135,882 persons in 2015; and approximately 134,499 persons in 2020.

In contrast, the Fayette County OCED has attempted to consider and evaluate several factors which could have an impact on demographics and reverse the decline of the past several decades. They include the following actions:

- New businesses have located in the County in the past two years including C.F.R. Acquisitions, Inc., Columbia Gas, DiversaTech International, Inc., Fayette Building Trades Institute, Fayette Penn Fiber, and Kisiel, Grenell and Associates. These businesses are seen as major employers and have created or are in the process of creating approximately 1,570 jobs.
- Existing businesses have continued job growth to maintain stability and employment of 4,500 persons. These employment generators include Allegheny Power, Anchor Glass Corporation, Berkley Medical Resources, Cavert Wire Company, Inc., Commercial Stone, CSX Transportation, E.W. Bowman, Fikes Dairy, Oglevee Ltd., Sensus Technologies, Stone and Company, Uniontown Hospital, Uniontown Newspaper, Inc., and Williamhouse Regency.
- The County developed a biotechnology center at PSU-Fayette Campus which offers classes in the field of nursing. There will be job opportunities for those graduating in various area medical facilities including hospitals and nursing homes.
- The Connellsville Truck Drive Training and Safety Center will be another employment opportunity for maintaining residents in the County and attracting people into the County. The Center will be a high profile second-to-none facility dedicated to driver training and safety. This project will be the first in the County to benefit from the application of driving simulation technology to safely train the “truck pilots” for the future. The economic impact of the center will be an advantage to the County’s residents; therefore, stabilizing and/or increasing the population.
- The six public schools within the County envision a stable enrollment over the next five years. The Albert Gallatin Area and Frazier Area predict a slight increase in enrollment over the same timeframe. Representatives from each school district noted that economic expansion will lead directly to enrollment increases because of new people locating in the County for job opportunities.
- The construction of a State Correctional Facility in Fayette County (Luzerne Township) will bring economic growth, revitalization, and employment opportunities to the County.
- The construction of the Mon Fayette Expressway will have a positive effect on the population of the County. Attractions to the County include lower taxes and lower property values compared to neighboring counties; and the availability of sites within federal enterprise community zones, state enterprise zones, and Keystone opportunity zones.
- Numerous municipalities are in the process of design and construction of sewer and water projects offering great potential for growth based on availability of infrastructure.

In conclusion, it is important to note that projections are speculative and based on different variables expected to effect population over time. Calculating projected population can be a complex process built

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upon scientific methodologies or simple trend analysis; both can produce inaccurate results. For example, the 1968 Comprehensive Development Plan for Fayette County projected the County population to total 129,781 in 1980. The County's actual 1980 population was 159,417. Allowing for human and technological fallibility, we are seeking the best fit with existing conditions and the possible revisions of those conditions. According to a representative from BonData⁵ using the projections prepared by SPC would be a better fit in the current development of the comprehensive plan. SPC uses more variables related to the community such as those outlined by the Fayette County OCED. In contract with the state data center, SPC projects a County population increase of approximately 10% over the next 20 years. These baseline projections are shown on Table 7.

⁵ BonData is a Pennsylvania based firm specializing in Socio-Economic data aggregation and distribution.
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**Table 7
Fayette County Projected Population Trends**

Municipality	1990	1996	2000	2010	2020
Belle Vernon Borough	1213	1205	1227	1282	1340
Brownsville Borough	3164	3129	3185	3328	3460
Brownsville Township	847	855	845	835	825
Bullskin Township	7323	7397	7530	7868	8205
Connellsville City	9229	8895	9055	9462	10305
Connellsville Township	2553	2535	2580	2645	2745
Dawson Borough	535	532	525	520	520
Dunbar Borough	1213	1212	1210	1200	1200
Dunbar Township	7460	7535	7500	7475	7500
Everson Borough	939	929	946	975	1010
Fairchance Borough	1918	1921	1956	2044	2115
Fayette City Borough	713	703	716	748	800
Franklin Township	2640	2667	2660	2630	2625
Georges Township	6525	6461	6577	6872	7220
German Township	5596	5652	5754	5850	6050
Henry Clay Township	1860	1900	1895	1870	1865
Jefferson Township	2047	2067	2050	2000	1975
Lower Tyrone Borough	1138	1149	1148	1146	1150
Luzerne Township	4904	4959	4900	5635	6000
Markleysburg Borough	320	321	318	312	310
Masontown Borough	3759	3754	3821	3992	4110
Menallen Township	4739	4887	4975	5050	5220
Newell Borough	518	512	510	500	500
Nicholson Township	1995	2015	2051	2100	2160
North Union Township	13910	14149	14404	15052	15790
Ohiopyle Borough	81	78	78	78	80
Perry Township	2817	2845	2815	2750	2725
Perryopolis Borough	1833	1846	1879	1964	2180
Point Marion Borough	1344	1327	1350	1410	1485
Redstone Township	6459	6520	6637	6710	6915
Saltlick Township	3253	5486	3490	3505	3600
Smithfield Borough	1000	1005	1000	970	960
South Connellsville Borough	2204	2216	2255	2356	2600
South Union Township	10223	10178	10360	12115	13775
Springfield Township	2968	2998	3000	3050	3130
Springhill Township	2800	2829	2830	2832	2850
Stewart Township	734	755	750	715	710
Uniontown City	12034	11538	11745	12273	13220
Upper Tyrone Township	1995	2015	2000	1970	1960
Vanderbilt Borough	545	542	540	530	530
Washington Township	4613	4583	4665	4875	5650
Wharton Township	3390	3526	3589	3700	3830
Total:	145,351	145,628	147,321	153,194	161,200

Source: SPC and Consultant