Baseline Survey Census Research
Greene County

The Federal population census is an important tool for understanding the history of a community and how that community has changed over time. The census provides data that can help us to better understand Pennsylvania's diverse racial and ethnic populations (referred to as underrepresented communities for purposes of this Baseline Survey effort), where these populations settled historically, and how they left their mark on the Commonwealth's landscape.

Pennsylvania has a history of being ethnically diverse in both the urban areas of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and in the commonwealth's smaller cities and rural areas. Native Americans have called Pennsylvania's lands home for centuries. Dutch, Swedish, and Finnish settlers moved to Pennsylvania in the late 17th century, and were quickly followed by English, German and other Europeans by the turn of the 18th century. Both enslaved and free Africans and African Americans lived in Pennsylvania as early as 1690 and the commonwealth's Black communities grew exponentially with the First Great Migration in the early 20th century. By the mid-20th century, people from almost all racial and ethnic groups had settled in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania's historical racial and ethnic diversity and the surviving older and historic places that embody that diversity is not well understood or well documented. By understanding what populations were present, when, and where they lived, the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO) can identify and document the older and historic places associated with these underrepresented communities through targeted survey work.

Once this information is collected and added to PA-SHARE, Pennsylvania's online database of older and historic places, this important information will be available to professionals and the public alike, providing everyone with data to support the need to tell broader and more inclusive stories.

It is important to note that census data is only one part of the extensive research that is necessary to understand Pennsylvania's varied and changing communities over the last four hundred years. The information collected, methods for collecting it, and categories and definitions changed from census taker to census taker and from year to year.

Historic Postcard of Waynesburg College in Greene County

Greene County is one of the fifty-two counties in Pennsylvania where PA SHPO and its contractors will be working over the next two years to collect information about historic places that are underrepresented in Pennsylvania's statewide historic inventory.

It is important that PA SHPO collects information about the older and historic places that Pennsylvanian's value in their communities. PA SHPO welcomes public recommendations for places that should be documented in this survey. If you would like to provide your feedback, please fill out this short survey form.

Learn More:
Historic Resources Survey in Pennsylvania
PA SHPO's Baseline Survey Project
PA-SHARE

Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION

Baseline Survey Census Research
Greene County

Greene County was founded on February 7, 1796. It is comprised of 26 municipalities and as of the 2020 federal census, the total population was 35,954. The population of Greene County was first recorded in 1800 with a total of 8,415 residents, 22 of whom were enslaved Black people and 58 of whom were "Other Free Persons" of non-White race. Total population growth in Greene County from the 19th to late 20th century has an upward trend. The total population peaked in 1950 with 45,394 residents.

The Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) population of Greene County have historically represented anywhere between 1% and 2% of the total population from 1790 to 1980. The total population of BIPOC in Greene County has generally stayed between 300 and 600 individuals from 1840 to 1980 without much variation. The BIPOC population in Greene County from 1790 to 1980 were predominantly Black. The Black population was at its largest in 1860, with 526 individuals.

Asians were documented as living in Greene County as early as 1890 and were predominantly of Chinese descent through 1980. Native Americans were recorded in Greene County in the 1960 and 1980 censuses. No people of Hispanic descent were recorded as living in Greene County in any census from 1800 to 1980. The "Other" category has been used to describe different groups through time. In 1800, "Other" specifically noted BIPOC people, predominantly Black Americans, who were not enslaved. In later decades, it is inconclusive whether "Other" includes only mixed-race people or people of Black, Native American, Asian, or Hispanic descent during any given decade.

	White	Black	Native American	Asian	Hispanic	Other
1790	0	0	0	0	0	0
1800	8335	22	0	0	0	58
1810	0	0	0	0	0	0
1820	7185	160	0	0	0	0
1830	0	2	0	0	0	0
1840	18672	412	0	0	0	0
1850	21660	476	0	0	0	0
1860	23817	526	0	0	0	0
1870	24107	399	0	0	0	0
1880	27770	503	0	0	0	0
1890	28489	445	0	1	0	0
1900	27966	313	0	2	0	0
1910	27591	380	0	2	0	0
1920	30502	300	0	2	0	0
1930	41249	516	0	0	0	2
1940	44253	417	0	0	0	1
1950	44935	450	0	0	0	9
1960	39046	360	2	11	0	4
1970	40102	338	0	0	0	27
1980	39920	420	59	70	0	2

Baseline Survey Census Research
Greene County

This graph shows the relationship between BIPOC populations (right side axis) and total population (left side axis) in Greene County from 1790 to 1980. Significant events that had a bearing on the population are included below the graph to show Greene County's total populations at these important points in time.

The 1810 federal census is not digitized and therefore there is no population data. The 1830 census only provided the total population, total number of free persons, and total number of enslaved persons. There were two enslaved people in Greene County in 1830 and no distinction of race among free people, therefore the BIPOC total for 1830 based on what is known is 2 persons. The 1950 census only distinguished between white and non-white residents.

Legend: ▮ Total BIPOC — Total

Events below graph:
- Greene County Founded — February 7, 1796
- Thirteenth Amendement Abolishes Slavery — January 31, 1865
- First Great Migration — 1910-1930
- Second Great Migration — 1941-1970