

Baseline Survey Census Research

Wayne 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.

Wayne 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](#).



Historic Postcard of Tuscarora Cottages in Beach Lake, Wayne County

Learn More:

[Historic Resources Survey in Pennsylvania](#)
[PA SHPO's Baseline Survey Project](#)
[PA-SHARE](#)

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Wayne County was established on March 21, 1798. There are 28 municipalities in Wayne County and as of the 2010 federal census, the total population was 52,822. The population of Wayne County was first counted during the 1800 census. A total of 2,562 inhabitants were recorded, 54 of whom were Black people and 1 of whom was an enslaved Black person living in Delaware Township (This Delaware Township no longer exists withing Wayne County). The total population of Wayne County experienced exponential growth from 1880 to 1860. From 1860 onward, the total population of Wayne County remained relatively steady with a slight decrease in the mid-20th century.

The Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) population of Wayne County has historically represented less than 1 percent of the total population. The total population of BIPOC in Wayne County had no more than 55 individuals and no less than 16 individuals from 1800 to 1920. In 1930, the BIPOC population doubled from the previous decade and brought on a trend of upward growth. The BIPOC population of Wayne County was at its highest in 1960 with 403 individuals, the majority of whom were Black. Today, the BIPOC population of Wayne County is predominantly Black.

Asians were documented living in Wayne County in 1890, 1900, 1920, 1930, and 1960. Asians were predominantly Chinese in all recorded censuses, except in 1960 where 1 Chinese person, 3 Japanese people, and 1 Filipino person were documented as residents of Wayne County. Though Wayne County is in the ancestral homeland boundaries of the Lenape people, Native Americans were only documented in Wayne County in the 1930 and 1960 censuses. Three people of Hispanic descent, then categorized as Mexican in the census reports, were recorded in the 1930 census. The “Other” category has been used to describe different groups through time. 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	2507	1	0	0	0	54
1810	0	0	0	0	0	0
1820	4111	16	0	0	0	0
1830	0	0	0	0	0	0
1840	11809	39	0	0	0	0
1850	21841	49	0	0	0	0
1860	32199	40	0	0	0	0
1870	33147	41	0	0	0	0
1880	33482	31	0	0	0	0
1890	30975	33	0	2	0	0
1900	30150	18	0	3	0	0
1910	29214	20	0	0	0	2
1920	27384	48	0	3	0	0
1930	28314	100	1	2	3	0
1940	29759	174	0	0	0	1
1950	28158	315	0	0	0	5
1960	27834	383	14	5	0	1

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This graph shows the relationship between BIPOC populations (right side axis) and total population (left side axis) in Wayne County from 1820 to 1960. Significant events that had a bearing on the population are included below the graph to show Wayne County's total populations at these important points in time.

No data is available for Wayne County prior to 1800 because the county was not formally established yet. The 1810 census is not publicly available and there is therefore no data for that decade. The 1830 census only provided the total population, total number of free persons, and total number of enslaved persons. There were no enslaved people in Wayne County in 1830 and no distinction of race among free people, therefore there are no BIPOC totals for that decade.

