

## POPULATION, HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT

Plans are made for people. A comprehensive plan attempts to foresee the growth that will occur in an area and to provide guidance in accommodating the future population in an orderly manner.

This chapter looks at the way past and present population trends affect the boroughs of Bally and Bechtelsville. Housing and employment trends are also studied to illustrate how an area's residents, housing stock and economy are changing over time. Selected comparative data about Berks County is included to better define the position of the two Borough's in regional affairs.

This information helps determine planning and zoning policies such as how much land to set aside for commerce, industry and different types of residential uses. Population, housing and employment trends in the Bally-Bechtelsville area between 1980 and 1990 are summarized below from U.S. Census data, State employment statistics, building permits and other information.

### A REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Bally and Bechtelsville Boroughs are situated two and a half miles apart within Washington Township, Berks County. Colebrookdale Township forms the southern boundary of Bechtelsville while Bally is encompassed solely by Washington Township.

The six Townships surrounding Washington Township are overwhelmingly rural; the region's hillsides are scattered with small villages and farms. Although both Bally and Bechtelsville Boroughs have less than a thousand residents, they provide a density and setting unique from their surroundings.



*The Bally Hotel.*



*A Bechtelsville Residence*

GROWTH TRENDS

The following tables illustrate the growth patterns of Bally and Bechtelsville Boroughs, as well as the surrounding region. These tables will help identify how fast the boroughs are growing, and how the area's demographic characteristics changed over the last several decades.

**Total Population**

The most recent census shows that 884 persons lived in Bechtelsville Borough and 973 persons lived in the Borough of Bally. This is a 6 percent growth for Bechtelsville and a 7 percent decrease in population for Bally since 1980. The Berks County Planning Commission has projected an increase for both communities by the year 2,000. According to County projections, Bally Borough will have 1,009 residents by the year 2,000 and Bechtelsville Borough will increase to 906 persons.

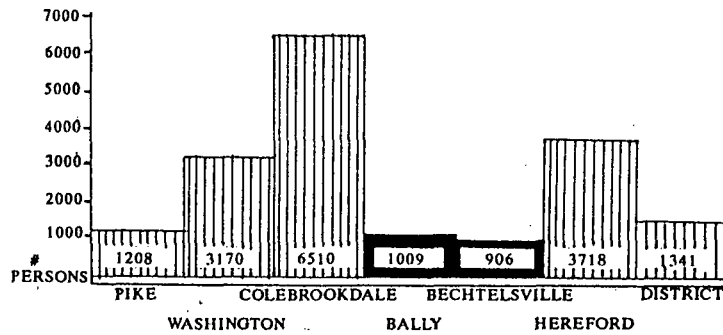
Table V-1 shows how the two boroughs, Washington Township and the surrounding six municipalities relate with each other and Berks County in attracting new people between 1970 and 1990. The Chart V-1 shows the potential growth of these areas for the year 2,000 based upon the population projections of the Berks County Planning Commission. The projections indicate an increase in population for Bally, Bechtelsville and the surrounding townships indicating strong regional growth.

TABLE V-1  
TOTAL POPULATION 1970-1990  
Bechtelsville Borough - Bally Borough - Berks County  
and surrounding municipalities

	1970	1980	1990
<b>BERKS COUNTY</b>	296,382	312,509	336,523
Washington Twp.	2,273	2,568	2,799
Hereford Twp.	1,641	2,837	3,026
District Twp.	752	1,094	1,211
Pike Twp.	867	1,056	1,359
Colebrookdale Twp.	3,034	4,748	5,469
Douglass Twp.	4,177	5,833	7,048
Upper Hanover Twp.	2,721	3,870	4,604
<b>BALLY BOROUGH</b>	1,197	1,051	973
<b>BECHTELSTVILLE BOROUGH</b>	728	832	884

Source: U.S. Census of Population

CHART V-1  
POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2000  
Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough - and Surroundings



Source: Berks County Planning Commission

Population Density

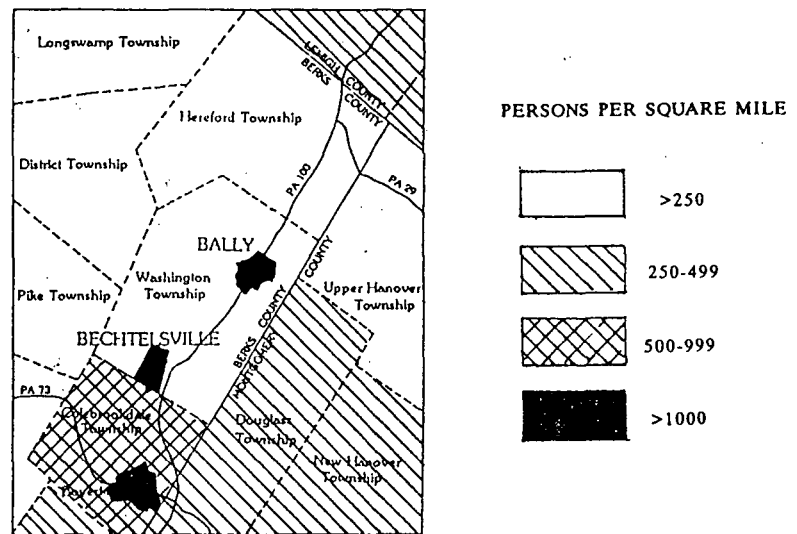
Bechtelsville Borough has approximately .5 square miles of land. The 1990 population density for Bechtelsville is 1,768 persons per square mile. While Bally Borough has an identical land mass of .5 square miles, it has a slightly higher density with 1,946 persons per square mile.

Both Bechtelsville and Bally Borough have considerably higher densities than Washington Township or the surrounding municipalities. Washington Township's density in 1990 was 200 persons per square mile while neighboring Colebrookdale

Township was 651 persons. Berks County as a whole had a 1990 population density of 392 persons per square mile.

The accompanying chart identifies the 1990 population density of the seven municipalities surrounding Bechtelsville Borough and Bally Borough. Five of the seven Townships; District, Hereford, Pike, Upper Hanover and Washington Township have fewer than 250 persons per square mile. Only Douglas and Colebrookdale Townships have a density greater than 250 persons per square mile. The majority of municipalities surrounding the Boroughs of Bechtelsville and Bally have between 100 and 250 persons per square mile.

CHART V-2  
POPULATION DENSITY 1990  
Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough - and Surroundings



Source: U.S. Census of Population

### Age and Gender

Age groups in a community create various needs for schools, recreation programs and facilities, housing types and other services. Table V-2 shows Bally and Bechtelsville's population by five-year age groups. This is helpful in identifying several of the Borough's major population trends.

Bally Borough lost 7 percent of its residents between 1980 and 1990. Table V-2 clearly shows the loss of young adults within the Borough at this time, possibly reflecting limited employment and housing opportunities in Bally for this age group. For example, Bally Borough had 108 persons ages 15-19 in 1980. Ten years later, there were only 81 persons in the same group of persons (then ages 25-29). Therefore, 27 residents from this age group left Bally Borough during the 1980's (assuming no deaths among the group). This scenario is not mirrored in Bechtelsville Borough, however, where a 6 percent increase in the population is noted.

Additional distinctions are found between the two Boroughs as well. Although Bally displays a decrease in growth overall, the number of residents over the age of 65 increases dramatically between the 1980 and 1990 decade. This increase could be caused by a variety of reasons. The attractive Senior Citizen Programs in Bally and additional services for the elderly may be attributes for this age group. Unlike Bally, Bechtelsville actually loses 11 persons in this age bracket. Both Boroughs show a higher-than-average percent of elderly.

Although Table V-2 shows fewer people in many age groups in 1990 than in 1980, certain age groups experienced an increase in the number of persons. In many cases, this increase is caused by migration into the two boroughs. Bechtelsville Borough shows a significant increase in the 25-29 age group. This addition may be due to the quality of life within Bechtelsville, as well as the Borough's proximity to more urbanized areas and job opportunities in neighboring Colebrookdale Township and Boyertown.

As shown on Table V-2, Bally and Bechtelsville illustrate a fairly even distribution of persons throughout the age categories in 1990. Both Boroughs show a large population of children, as well as adults. This distribution requires a wide variety of services and facilities in order to accommodate all of their needs.

There are no special considerations in either Borough that have altered the traditional 50-50 balance between total females and total males in the last decade. This trend can be expected to continue through the population projections of the year 2000.

**TABLE V-2**  
AGE SPECIFIC POPULATION AND NET COHORT CHANGE 1980-1990  
Bechtelsville Borough - Bally Borough

AGE GROUP	BALLY BOROUGH				BECHTELSTVILLE BOROUGH			
	1980	1990	% of 1990 POPULATION	NET COHORT *	1980	1990	% of 1990 POPULATION	NET COHORT *
0-4	68	65	6.7	--	82	61	6.9	--
5-9	81	59	6.1	--	54	74	8.4	--
10-14	75	54	5.6	(-14)	78	83	9.4	1
15-19	108	61	6.3	(-20)	72	45	5.1	(-9)
20-24	97	71	7.3	(-4)	89	63	7.1	(-15)
25-29	75	81	8.3	(-27)	76	100	11.3	(-28)
30-34	80	78	8.0	(-19)	64	84	9.5	(-5)
35-44	113	124	12.7	(-31)	87	132	14.9	(-8)
45-54	104	113	11.6	(0)	79	86	9.8	-1
55-59	68	49	5.0	-	30	36	4.0	-
60-64	50	47	4.8	-	29	39	4.4	-
65-74	83	108	11.1	(+10)	68	52	5.9	(-7)
75+	49	63	6.5	-	24	29	3.3	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,051</b>	<b>973</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>--</b>

Source: U.S. Census of Population

**NOTE:** The Net Cohort Change figures in the last two columns represent the net change in the County's population through death, out-migration and in-migration between 1980 and 1990. They are computed by subtracting the 1980 population from the cohort (i.e., the same group ten years older in 1990).

### Household Size and Characteristics

The 1990 U.S. Census reports the number of families in Bally Borough (281) and Bechtelsville Borough (243), and an average family size of 3.12 in Bally and 3.23 in Bechtelsville. Average size for "households" (a term which includes all people in separate household units, whether these people represent families or whether these people are unrelated individuals such as three single persons living together) are computed and shown in Table V-3 for both communities.

TABLE V-3  
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE  
Bechtelsville Borough - Bally Borough

	1980	1990
BERKS COUNTY	2.66	2.56
Washington Township	3.19	2.97
<b>BALLY BOROUGH</b>	3.11	2.51
<b>BECHTELSTVILLE BOROUGH</b>	2.99	2.85

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Society at large seems to favor smaller families (fewer children) than in the past, while unmarried youths and the elderly are now more apt to live alone. Housing units also affect the average household size today because apartments, mobile homes and single-family homes are designed with fewer rooms.

Bally and Bechtelsville, as well as Berks County, reflected the national trend with a decrease in the household size between 1980 and 1990. The typical Bally Borough household had 2.51 persons in 1990. This was slightly lower than the average household size of 2.85 persons in Bechtelsville Borough and the 2.56 average household size of Berks County in 1990.

Other household characteristics include ancestry and race, as shown in Table V-4. In 1980, Bally Borough had a non-white population of 1.1 percent while Bechtelsville Borough had less than one percent. While the non-white population in both boroughs was 0 percent in 1990, Berks County identified a 6.5 percent non-white population. This is an increase of almost 2 percent since 1980. The predominant ancestry recorded in 1990 for residents of Bally and Bechtelsville is German. English was the second most popular ancestry recorded by the U.S. Census of Population while Irish was third.

The average household size has become smaller during the last few decades (Table V-3). Various factors are responsible for this national trend.

**TABLE V-4**  
**HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS 1980-1990**  
 Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough - Washington Township  
 - Berks County

AREA	1980		1990		1990 Predominant Ancestry
	All persons	Non- white	All persons	Non- white	
BERKS COUNTY	312,509	14,872	336,523	21,962	German
<b>BALLY</b>	1,051	12	973	0	German
<b>BECHTELSTVILLE</b>	832	2	884	0	German
Washington Twp.	2,568	12	2,799	33	German

Source: U.S. Census of Population

**Income and Poverty**

Table V-5 shows the median annual household income for Bally and Bechtelsville, as well as surrounding Township and County. A median income is the income where half of the families earn less and half earn more. It is important to note that the percentage of change over the last decade nearly doubled for both Bechtelsville Borough and Berks County. Although Bally Borough did not reflect a change as significant as its counterpart, it still represented a substantial increase between 1980 and 1990.

Family size also affects the adequacy of income. Beginning in 1964, the federal government has computed the annual measures of the income level that represent the threshold of poverty. These figures are adjusted to account for family size, age, gender of family-head, farm or non-farm residence and other considerations. The poverty threshold is intended to measure the minimum income necessary to maintain healthful living conditions.

**TABLE V-5**  
**INCOME AND POVERTY CHARACTERISTICS**  
 Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough - Washington Township  
 - Berks County

AREA	MEDIAN ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME		% of PERSONS IN POVERTY	
	1979	1989	1979	1989
BERKS COUNTY	17,530	32,048	8.0	7.8
<b>BALLY</b>	19,952	32,297	1.1	2.5
<b>BECHTELSTVILLE</b>	19,722	37,009	6.7	4.1
Washington Twp.	20,578	35,585	3.6	3.2

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Table V-5 shows the extent to which people in Bally and Bechtelsville, as well as the surrounding community and County, fall below the poverty level. The table indicates that Bechtelsville has considerably lowered the percent of persons in poverty over the last decade - from almost 7 percent to 4 percent. Meanwhile, the percent of persons in poverty has increased in the Borough of Bally between 1980 and 1990 - from 1.1 percent to 2.5 percent. This increase may be due to the large number of persons over 65 in the Borough or due to the employment structure. Berks County had the highest percent of persons in poverty in 1990. The County's 7.8 percent poverty level was slightly less than the 8 percent poverty level in 1980.

Poverty conditions exist all around us; it is expensive for both the poor and the non-poor. The poor are most directly affected by the social costs and consequences of poverty, such as inadequate housing, malnutrition, emotional and physical ill health, marital problems and alcoholism. In hard dollar terms, however, the entire community also suffers the costs of lost economic opportunity.

### Education

Education is related closely to the ability to get and maintain a job. A skilled hand and a strong back have been the requirements for many jobs important in both of the Borough's economy -- farming, service and manufacturing. These occupations are becoming increasingly mechanized, however.

Maintaining an occupation with the growing technology and specialized skill requirements makes education more necessary than it ever has been in the past. Whether obtained in the classroom or on the job, education is essential. Future growth and economic vitality within both of the Boroughs may well be determined by the residents' willingness and ability to further their education.

TABLE V-6  
FORMAL EDUCATION LEVEL OF RESIDENTS 1980-1990  
Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough - Washington Township  
Berks County

AREA	% High School Graduates		% College Graduates	
	1980	1990	1980	1990
BERKS COUNTY	58.5	70.0	11.3	15.1
<b>BALLY</b>	46.5	58.3	7.7	9.6
<b>BECHTELSTVILLE</b>	52.7	66.7	7.6	9.9
Washington Twp.	57.8	69.1	9.9	14.8

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

The U.S. Census of Population indicates that 58 percent of Bally's residents were high school graduates in 1990. This is higher than the 47 percent in 1980, as shown in Table V-6.



Similarly, 67 percent of Bechtelsville's residents have a high school diploma - an increase since the 52 percent in 1980. Overall, these figures are slightly lower than the County's 70 percent high school graduation rate.

A bigger difference is seen in the percent of college graduates between the two Boroughs and the County. In 1990, both Borough's had a 10 percent college graduation rate while the County boasted a 15 percent rate.

The level of education is an indicator of both the level of affluence and the type of employment opportunities in an area. The highest education levels today are found in suburban communities where professional centers and office parks tend to locate. Rural agricultural areas and areas with established industrial and manufacturing centers tend to have residents with less formal education. As shown in the table, the education levels of both Boroughs are comparative to that of the surrounding community in Washington Township.

## HOUSING

The age, income, household size and other characteristics of Bally and Bechtelsville's residents can influence the demand for housing and the supply of homes. These and other factors are described here to help understand the housing strengths and weaknesses of both Borough's.

The majority of information in this section is derived from the 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing. More recent data has been used wherever possible, however, in an attempt to accurately account for changes within the two Boroughs.

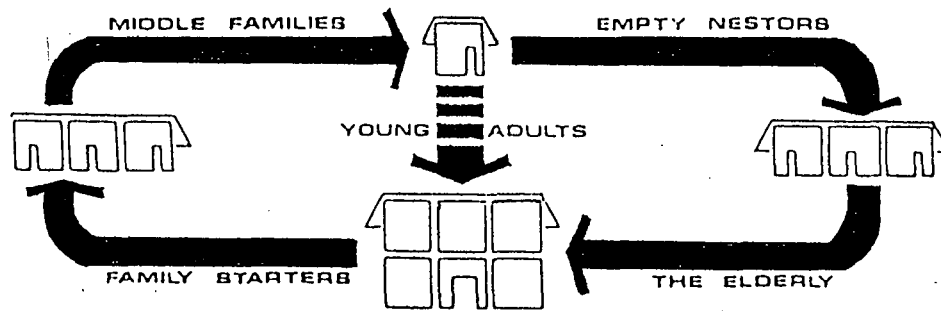
### **Housing Demand**

In 1990, 973 people lived in Bally while 884 people resided in Bechtelsville. While Bally showed a downward trend during the last decade, Bechtelsville grew with 52 new residents.

As a household matures, it tends to demand various kinds of housing. Chart V-3 depicts this typical housing progression. The cycle begins with young adults' and family starters' preference and need for apartments, townhouses and other small, relatively inexpensive housing. Households with children tend to prefer larger, single-family homes. However, as the household grows older and divides, housing preferences and needs often return full-circle to apartments and townhouses. other small units, such as mobile homes, often fall into this category. Both Bally and Bechtelsville may need to look more closely at the underlying theme of the "housing progression cycle," and encourage more housing diversity as the age structure of the two Borough's continue to mature. It is expected that individual family preferences and a wide variety of other personal circumstances will create variations from this cycle.

Please see the housing progression illustration on the following page.

CHART V-3  
HOUSEHOLD/HOUSING PROGRESSION  
Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough



Housing preferences vary among age groups, indicating the influence of the age-population distribution on the types of homes in both Borough's. Table V-7 identifies age groups and characteristics associated with them. The substantial school-age population correlates with the earlier observation about large families; families with children have a particularly strong preference for single-family homes.

The baby boomer generation also affects the housing demand within each Borough. The baby boom generation (ages 40-49) has moved through the apartment market, purchased their first homes, and now, in many cases readied themselves to purchase larger move-up houses. As the baby boomers enter the 45-54 age group, second homes and recreational properties will be a housing market need through the 1990's.

The elderly (65 and over) make up approximately 14 percent of Bechtelsville's population and 22 percent of the residents in Bally. Many of these people require small, reasonably-priced housing because of their fixed incomes and size. There were 39 more elderly persons in 1990 than in 1980 in Bally and 11 less in Bechtelsville. This indicates a growing impact of this age group in Bally. Because the baby boom generation is too young to retire before the year 2005, the demand for retirement housing may slow temporarily. However, the increasing percent of elderly over the age of 75 continues to build a demand for congregate housing with health and dining services.

A family's income also influences the type and size of a home it lives in. Ideally, a family should spend no more than 30 percent of its gross income on housing costs, including mortgage payments, taxes, utilities, insurance and maintenance. Half of the residents from Bally had annual gross incomes below \$32,000 while half of Bechtelsville's residents had annual gross incomes below \$37,000. An 8 percent, 30-year mortgage, with 20 percent down would provide an opportunity for a family with a \$37,000 annual income to purchase a \$95,000 home; a family with a \$32,000 income could buy a \$92,900 home.

Many elderly and unskilled or semi-skilled workers account for most of the percentage of families with low incomes. Many of the households in both Borough's are unable to buy or rent affordable housing in the private market if income levels are used as an index.

**TABLE V-7**  
**AGE GROUPS AND HOUSING NEEDS 1990**  
 Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough

AGE GROUPS	# BALLY RESIDENTS 1990	% POPULATION 1990	# BECHTELSTVILLE RESIDENTS 1990	% POPULATION 1990	CHARACTERISTICS OF AGE GROUPS	HOUSING NEEDS AND DEMANDS
20-24	71	7.3	63	7.5	Young adults, some with families	Seek own apartments - often live with parents due to high housing costs
25-44	283	29.1	361	40.8	Family starters and middle families, divorced persons and their children	Apartments until they can afford to purchase - townhouses and twins before and just after first child - seek affordable single family detached house when children 3+
45-59	162	16.7	122	13.8	Children maturing and beginning higher education and moving away	Many sell larger houses and buy townhouses or condominium apartments
60+	218	22.4	120	13.6	Older persons begin to retire - some on fixed incomes	may seek condominium apartments that require less maintenance and lower costs - eventually may need personal care centers and then nursing homes

Source: U.S. Census of Population

## Housing Supply

Bally Borough had 370 housing units in 1990, 11 more housing units than in 1980 despite a decrease in population growth. Bechtelsville Borough constructed 33 new houses over the last decade making a 1990 total of 318 houses. The majority of construction that occurred in the two Boroughs between 1980 and 1990 was in the form of single-family attached housing units.

In 1980, single-family detached homes made up 49 percent of Bechtelsville Borough's total housing supply. In 1990, this number increased slightly to 50 percent. Similarly, Bally maintained the number of single-family detached homes over the last decade, comprising 73 percent of all housing units.

While single-family detached housing units remained the most popular form of housing throughout the 80's, other forms of housing are on the rise. The second most popular form of housing in both Boroughs is single-family attached units. Twins, townhouses and condominiums are usually considered in this category. Also on the rise during the 1980 period was the construction of mobile home units and trailers, even though they make up a mere 2 percent of the Boroughs' housing units.

Overall, a greater diversity is seen in the types of housing units being constructed within the Boroughs of Bally and Bechtelsville. This new diversity can easily be attributed to the distribution of persons in varying age groups. As noted, different age groups have different needs and require different services.

**TABLE V-8**  
HOUSING TYPE, TENURE, VACANCY AND VALUE 1990  
Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough - Berks County

TYPE	BALLY		BECHTELSTVILLE		BERKS COUNTY	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Single Family Detached	270	73.0	159	50.0	68,688	51.1
Single Family Attached	51	13.8	102	32.1	33,036	24.6
2-4 Unit Structure	35	9.5	28	8.8	13,594	10.1
5+ Structure	6	1.6	24	7.5	12,282	9.1
Mobile Homes, Trailers..	8	2.2	5	1.6	6,882	5.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>134,482</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>TENURE</b>						
Owner-occupied	288	81.1	236	76.1	94,336	73.9
Renter-occupied	67	18.9	74	23.9	33,313	26.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>127,649</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>HOUSING VACANCY</b>						
For Rent or For Sale	2	13.3	2	25.0	3,484	51.0
Rented/Sold, not occupied	0	0.0	1	12.5	1,100	16.1
Seasonal, Recreational..	0	0.0	0	0.0	438	6.4
Other Vacancy	13	86.7	5	62.5	1,811	26.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6,833</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>MEDIAN VALUE (in dollars)</b>						
Owner-Occupied	\$95,000		\$92,900		\$81,800	
Renter-Occupied	\$390		\$365		\$342	

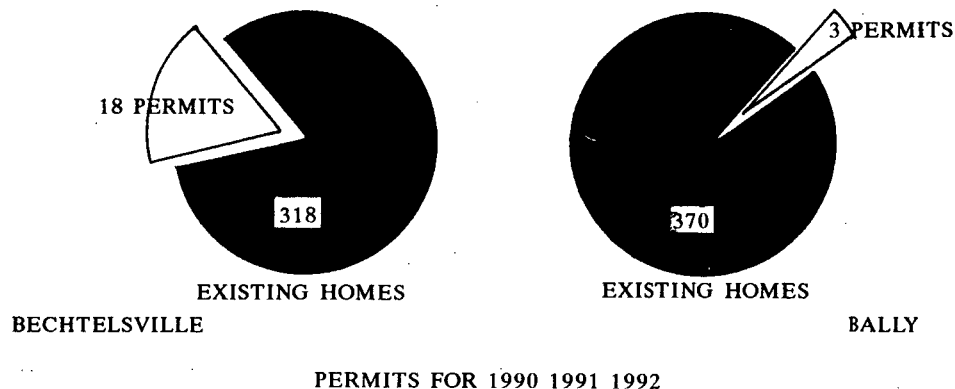
SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population

New Construction

In 1990, building permits for 11 single-family houses and 1 two-unit detached dwelling were obtained in Bechtelsville. 4 additional permits were given out in 1991 for single-family houses, while two more were issued in 1992. Bally did not grant any building permits for new housing units in 1990 or 1991. However, in 1992, 3 permits were granted for the construction of new homes.

these housing units were owner-occupied in both Boroughs (see Table V-8). The remaining 67 houses in Bally (19 percent) and the 74 houses in Bechtelsville (24 percent) were renter-occupied in 1990. While 80 percent of the homes in both boroughs are owned, 70 percent of the homes throughout Berks County are owner-occupied.

**CHART V-4**  
BUILDING PERMITS GRANTED FOR NEW HOUSING 1990  
Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough



SOURCE: Borough of Bally and Borough of Bechtelsville

Ownership

In 1990, 370 housing units were occupied in Bally while 318 were occupied in Bechtelsville. Approximately 80 percent of

Vacancy

Vacant housing units comprised 4 percent of Bally's total housing stock and nearly 3 percent of the houses in Bechtelsville in 1990 according to the U.S. Census of Population and Housing. Berks County had the highest vacancy rate at 5 percent. Table 8 on the previous page further defines the types of vacancy found within these three areas. The majority of vacant housing in both Boroughs is listed under the title "other vacancy." This includes housing units that do not fall into any of the other classifications. Housing units in this category include units held for occupancy by a caretaker, and units held for personal reasons by the owner.

Housing Costs

The U.S. Census of Population and Housing indicates that the median value of owner-occupied housing in Bally Borough was \$95,000 in 1990. The median housing value in Bechtelsville was \$92,900. Both boroughs had higher median housing values than Berks County which was listed as \$81,800 in 1990.

Similarly, the median value for renter-occupied units is lower for the County (\$342) than either Bally (\$390) or Bechtelsville (\$365). See Table V-8.

Tables V-9 and V-10 present a further analysis of housing costs in Bally and Bechtelsville, as well as a comparison to Berks County. Based on the 259 total owner-occupied units in Bally, almost 60 percent were under \$100,000. Similarly, approximately 63 percent of the 213 owner-occupied units in Bechtelsville were under \$100,000.

**TABLE V-9**  
HOUSING VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS 1990  
Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough - Berks County

VALUE	BALLY		BECHTELSTVILLE		BERKS COUNTY	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
< 50,000	18	6.9	6	2.8	17,034	9.1
50-99,000	132	51.0	129	60.6	34,943	6.4
100-149,000	87	26.6	69	32.4	17,499	9.7
150-199,000	18	6.9	8	3.8	5,277	6.8
> 200,000	4	1.5	1	0.5	2,833	3.7
TOTAL	259	100.0	213	100.0	77,586	100.0
MEDIAN	\$95,000		\$92,900		\$81,800	

SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population

**TABLE V-10**  
MONTHLY CONTRACT RENT/RENTER-OCCUPIED UNITS 1990  
Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough - Berks County

VALUE \$	BALLY		BECHTELSTVILLE		BERKS COUNTY	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<250	10	16.1	3	4.4	7,435	24.3
250-499	47	75.8	57	83.8	18,747	61.3
>500	5	8.1	8	11.8	4,402	14.4
TOTAL	62	100.0	68	100.0	30,584	100.0
MEDIAN	\$390		\$365		\$342	

SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population

The majority of the 62 renter-occupied housing units in Bally and the 68 units in Bechtelsville were indicated between \$250 and \$500; this was also true for Berks County.

Housing Conditions

Table V-11, Characteristics of Housing Units, identifies the proportion of the Borough's year-round occupied housing that is considered sub-standard by the 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing. In 1990, 1.1 percent of all housing units lacked complete plumbing facilities in Bally; no houses lacked plumbing facilities in Bechtelsville. the term "lacked complete plumbing facilities" includes units that lack hot water

**TABLE V-11**  
**CHARACTERISTICS OF HOUSING UNITS 1990**  
 Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough - Berks County

Characteristic	BALLY	BECHTELSTVILLE	BERKS COUNTY
lack complete plumbing	1.1	0	.7
lack kitchen facilities	1.4	0	.7
crowded units	2	5	2,238
<b>TOTAL Housing Units</b>	355	310	127,649

SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population and Housing

or indoor toilet and bathing facilities for exclusive use by the occupants of the unit. It is the most common way of identifying "substandard housing units." The percentage of units lacking complete plumbing in Berks County is slightly lower than Bally with less than 1 percent. A similar classification of housing conditions are units that lack complete kitchen facilities. Again, less than 1.5 percent of Bally's housing units and none of the houses in Bechtelsville lacks this facility. The County was lower than Bally Borough's percentage with less than 1 percent.

The 1990 Census of Population and Housing also identifies housing units that are crowded. "Crowding" exists when a household has more than one person per room. These conditions are caused mainly by the lack of income to buy or rent a larger home. The percentage of crowded housing units in Bally was slightly less than 1 percent. One and a half percent of

Bechtelsville was also considered "crowded" in 1990. Berks County had the highest number of crowded housing units with 1.8 percent.

## EMPLOYMENT

Typically, the economic characteristics of Berks County reflects its historical development. The importance of industries and their location along waterways and railroad lines can still be found today.

Recent economic development within Bally and Bechtelsville has also mirrored its history. Manufacturing has continued to dominate the character of Bally while service and commerce has defined the Borough of Bechtelsville. The following charts and information details non-agricultural employment in the County, as well as unemployment statistics.

### **Labor Force**

Many of the new residents in Bally and Bechtelsville work outside of the immediate area; new employment opportunities are scarce within both boroughs. Reading Metropolitan Area statistics show jobs are growing at a faster rate in the government sector than any other area. Construction /mining is the region's slowest growing sector. These trends are shown on the following tables.

**TABLE V-12**  
NON-AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT 1991-1993  
Berks County (Reading MSA)

Economic Sector	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT			Percent Change 92-93
	7-91	5-92	5-93	
Construction/Mining	7,200	6,900	6,200	-11.3
Durable Goods Manufacturing	25,900	27,000	26,500	1.9
Non-durable Goods Manufacturing	16,800	16,800	16,000	-5.0
Transportation	3,200	3,200	3,300	3.0
Communications/Utilities	3,200	3,100	3,100	0.0
Wholesale Trade	7,100	6,500	6,700	3.0
Retail Trade	26,900	26,400	27,900	5.4
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	8,800	9,100	9,000	-1.1
Services	33,300	33,300	34,900	4.6
Government	15,200	15,200	19,000	20.0
<b>Total Non-Agricultural Employment</b>	<b>147,900</b>	<b>147,500</b>	<b>152,600</b>	<b>3.3</b>

SOURCE: PA Department of Labor and Industry

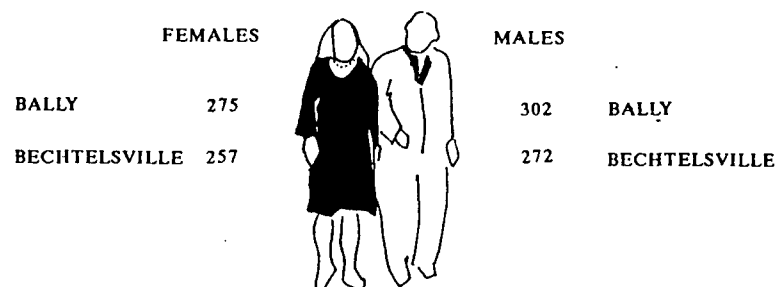
Total non-agricultural employment in Berks County grew by nearly 5,000 jobs (3.3 percent) between May 1992 and May 1993. The Government sector gained the most jobs (+20 percent) while retail trade was second (+5.4 percent). Construction/mining (-11.3 percent) and non-durable goods (-5 percent) lost the most jobs in 1993.

Unemployment

The Berks County unemployment rate for May 1993 was 5.4 percent. This was much lower than Pennsylvania's 7.1 percent unemployment and the nation's 6.9 percent unemployment rate in May. Table V-13 offers additional information on surrounding areas as well.

The civilian labor force in Bally Borough had an unemployment rate of 1.8 percent in 1990. The unemployment rate in Bechtelsville Borough was slightly higher with a 2.2 percent rate. Both boroughs were lower than the 3.6 percent unemployment rate in surrounding Washington Township and the 4.5 percent rate in Berks County in 1990.

**CHART V-5**  
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE 1990  
Bally Borough - Bechtelsville Borough



SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population



**TABLE V-13**  
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE 1992-93  
Pennsylvania Major Labor Market Areas - USA

AREA	% 1992	% 1993
Allentown-Bethlehem MSA	8.2	6.4
Altoona MSA	8.9	7.0
Beaver County PMSA	11.2	10.1
Erie MSA	7.9	6.7
Harrisburg, Lebanon, Carlisle MSA	5.5	4.8
Johnstown MSA	10.0	10.6
Lancaster MSA	5.7	4.8
Philadelphia PMSA	7.7	6.9
Pittsburgh PMSA	7.0	6.7
<b>Reading (Berks County) MSA</b>	<b>7.3</b>	<b>5.9</b>
Scranton-Wilkes-Barre MSA	10.0	8.7
Sharon MSA	8.2	11.3
State College MSA	6.2	6.0
Williamsport MSA	8.2	7.8
York MSA	6.8	5.6
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>7.1</b>
USA	7.7	6.9

SOURCE: PA Department of Labor and Industry

### Major Employers

The term "major employers" typically includes those businesses that employ more than 50 persons. Bechtelsville has one major employer - Campell Manufacturing Inc. This plumbing fixtures business employs approximately 50 persons and is planning to expand in the near future. Bally, being a manufacturing center, has four major employers:

- *Bally Ribbon Mills* employed 257 persons in 1993 - an increase of 7 persons during the last year.
- *The Great American Knitting Mills Inc.* employed 300 persons - they lost 285 people between 1992 and 1993.
- *Bally Engineering Structures Inc.* also employed 300 persons - the company lost 110 persons during the last decade.
- *Bally Block Company* employed 78 people in 1993 - 8 more people than in 1992.

### Other Employers

Bally and Bechtelsville also employ a number of people through smaller businesses and corporations. Bally Borough has a variety of businesses along Route 100. These businesses include:

- Alfredo's Restaurant
- Bally Hotel
- Bertoia Studio Ltd.
- Dave's Kettle
- Fritch's Barber Shop
- Bally Building and Loan
- Bally Video
- Century 21 Realty
- Eddinger Hardware
- Gehman's Store

- Longacre's Electric
- Post Office
- Sherman's Pro-Shop
- Joan Nichol's Doll Restoration
- National Bank of Boyertown
- Longacre Farm Store
- Sobjak's Market
- The Blue Onion
- Quigly Chevrolet

A variety of smaller shops and businesses also provide employment opportunities within Bechtelsville Borough. Agway, located on the corner of East Chestnut Street and Railroad Street, provides agricultural services, as well as hardware and lawn/garden sales. The new deli, barber shop and hair salon have also been created within this borough on South Main Street while the Bechtelsville Hotel and the general store have been in business for over 100 years. Kehl's Garage and Geringer Plumbing are also located within Bechtelsville. Employment opportunities in Bechtelsville continue to remain very limited, however.