

Pittsburgh's Gateway Communities

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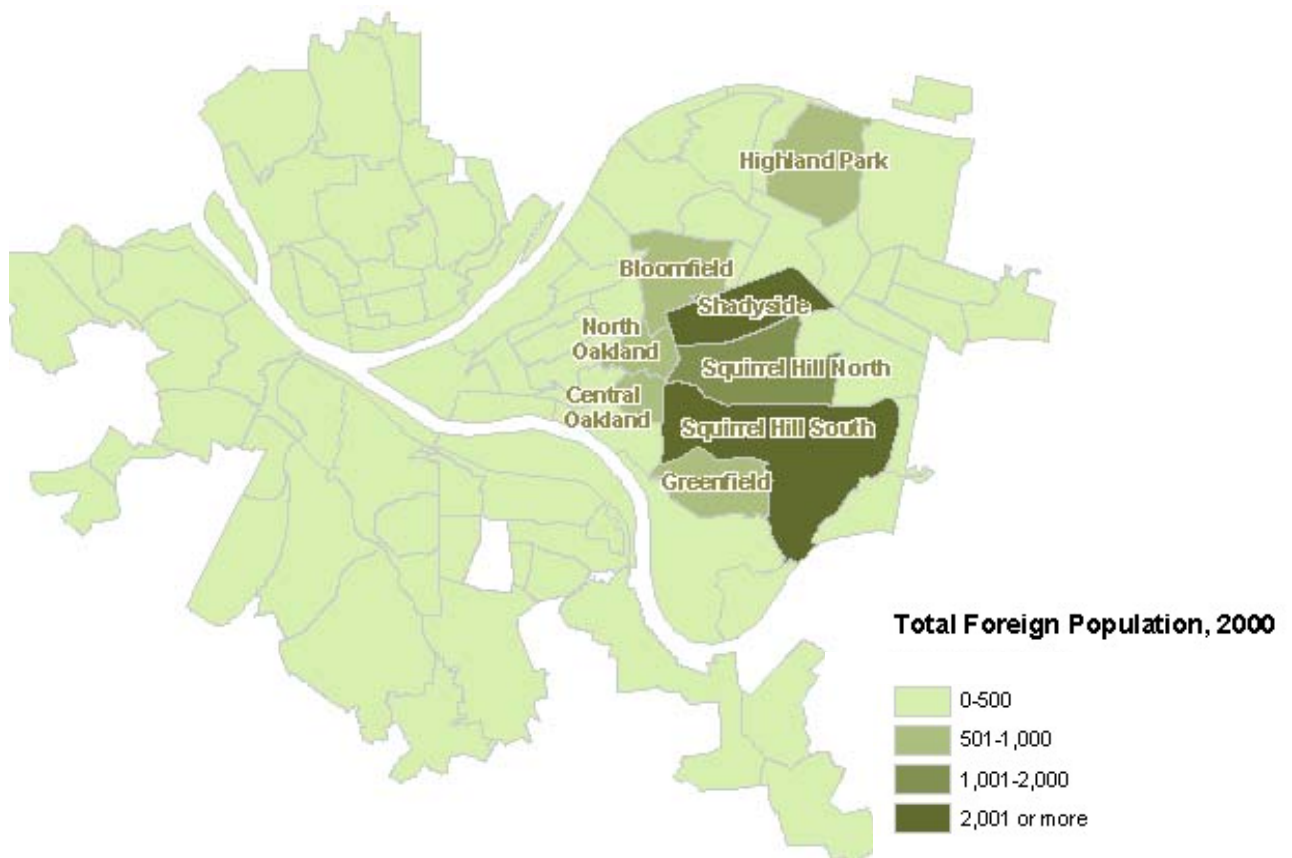
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Pittsburgh's Gateway Communities

by Lena Andrews

Pittsburgh has not been a destination for international immigration into the United States. Out of the 50 largest metropolitan areas, Pittsburgh has a lower share of foreign residents than all cities except for Cincinnati. For a region that is losing people, in a time when much population growth is fueled by international immigration, we must make Pittsburgh a destination. It is possible for Midwestern cities to attract foreign immigration; Cleveland, Minneapolis, and St. Louis are similar to Pittsburgh in many ways but they have larger foreign communities.

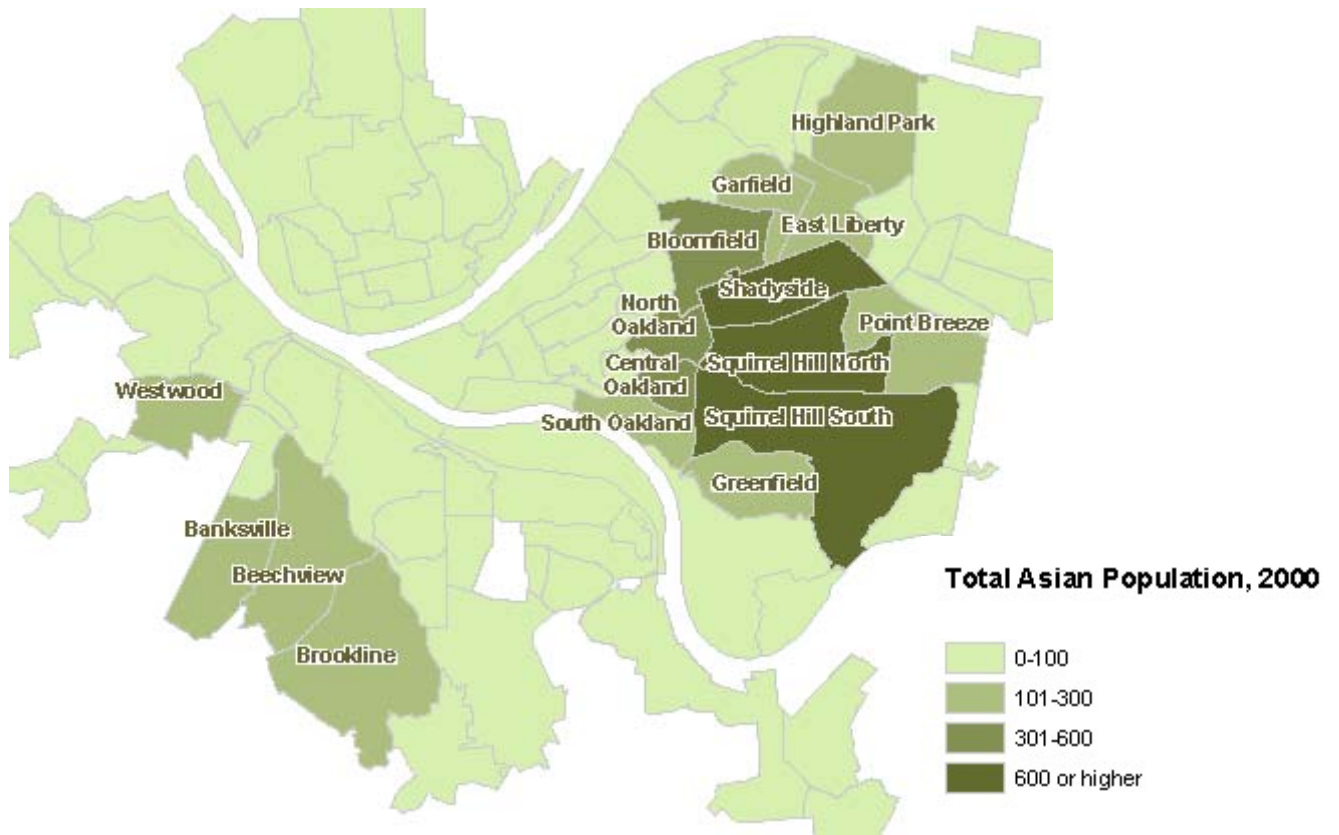
The dominant pattern of foreign immigration is the clustering of ethnic groups around certain neighborhoods. People tend to move to places where they feel comfortable. Certain communities serve as gateways, welcoming new migrants into a city. The existence and operation of these gateway communities can be a critical factor in making the city a destination for immigration. This report identifies Pittsburgh's gateway communities for several groups of immigrants.¹



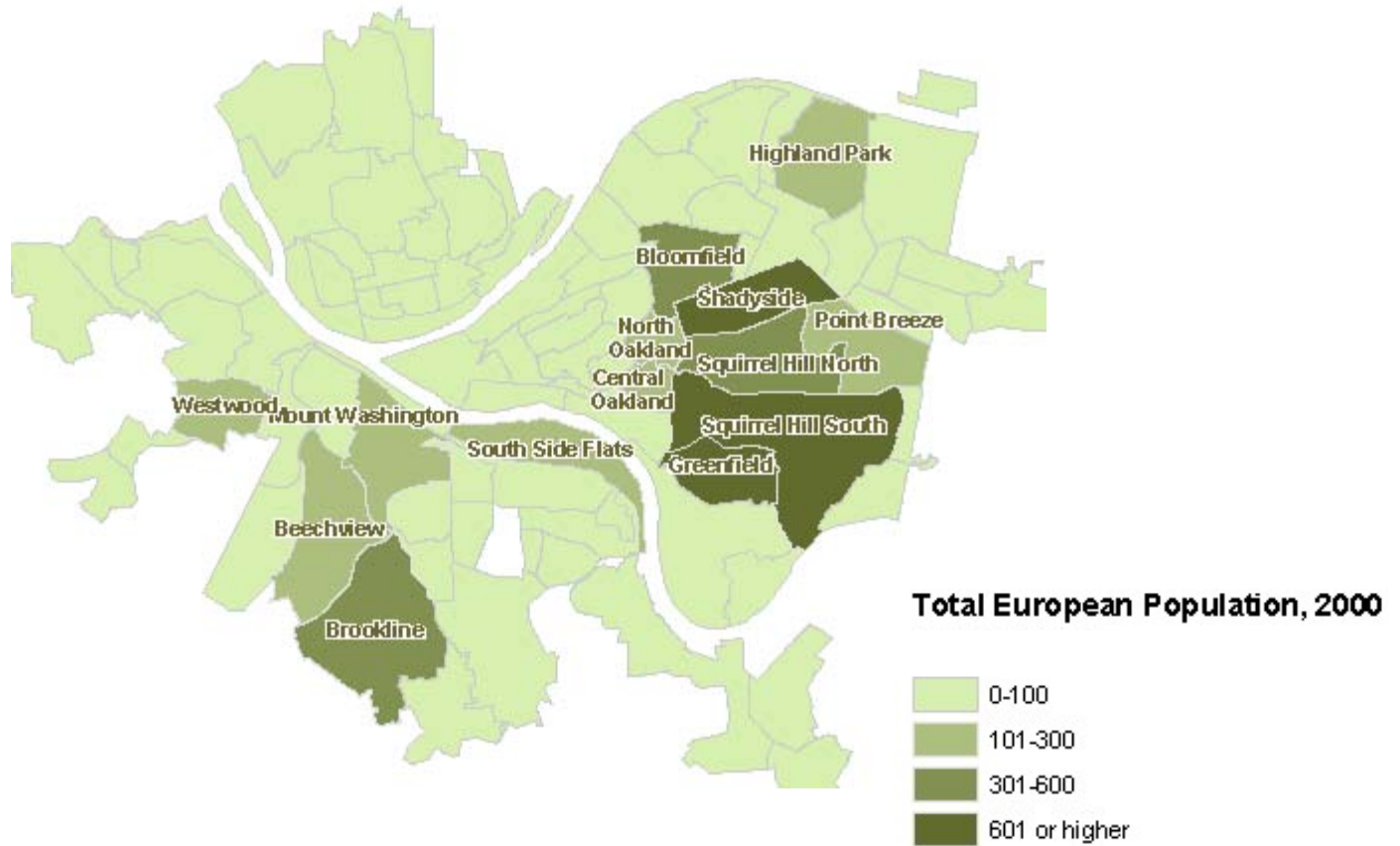
¹ This report focuses on the city of Pittsburgh because it accounts for 30% of the region's foreign population compared to 14% of the total regional population. Nine of the ten census tracts in the metropolitan area with the largest foreign populations are located in the city of Pittsburgh. Future reports will examine foreign communities throughout the metropolitan area.

According to 2000 census data on residential patterns, all neighborhoods with more than 500 foreign residents are located in Pittsburgh's East End. Only two neighborhoods, Squirrel Hill South and Shadyside, have more than 2,000 foreign residents. Part of the reason for this is the East End's proximity to local universities, magnets for foreign immigration, but other neighborhoods that also have university proximity lack a foreign residential community.

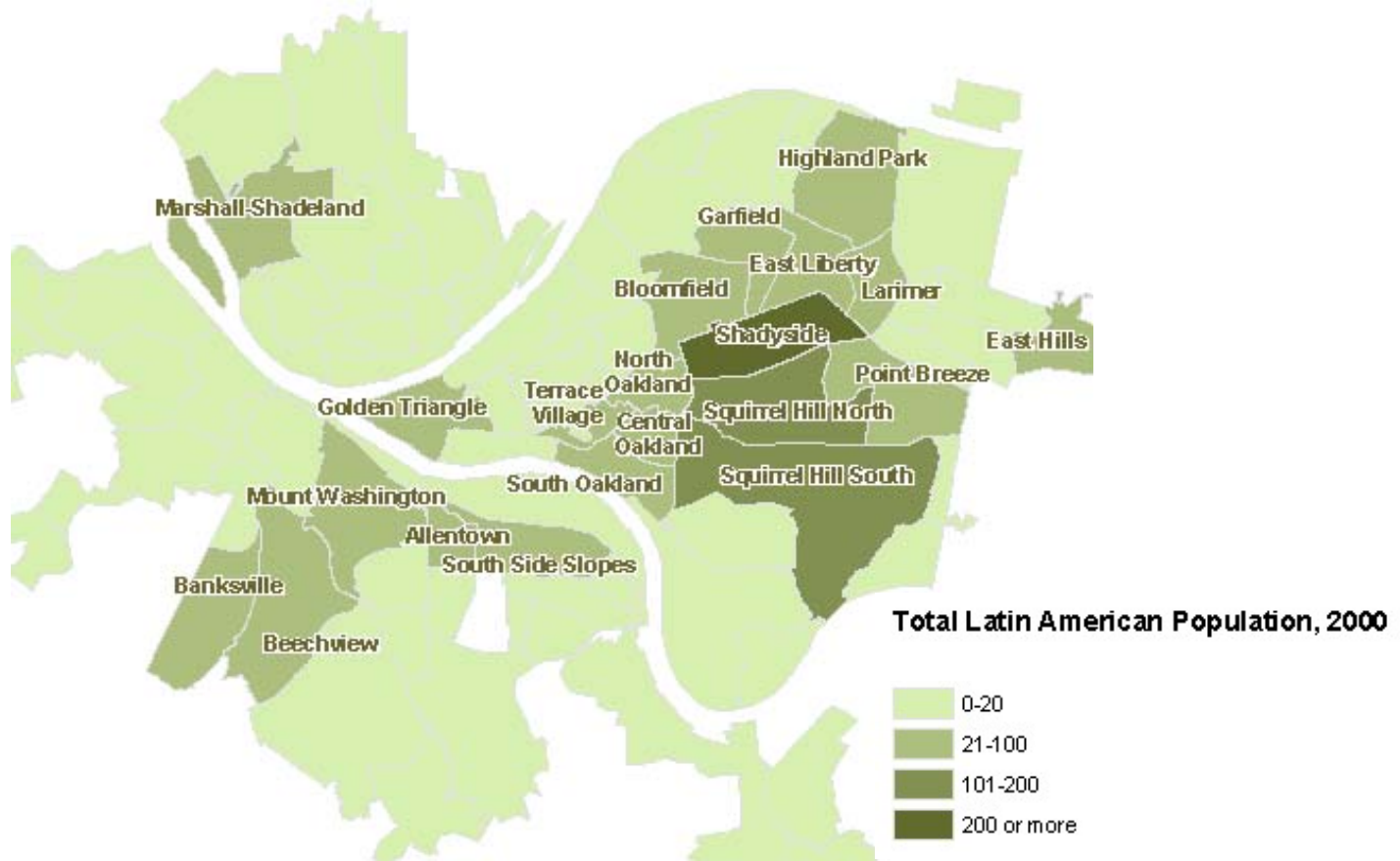
The largest foreign community in Pittsburgh is the Asian community; there are 7,938 Asians living in Pittsburgh, primarily in the East End. Squirrel Hill North, Squirrel Hill South, and Shadyside all have more than 600 Asian residents, while Central Oakland, North Oakland, and Bloomfield have between 300 and 600 residents. It is interesting to note that Banksville, Beechview, Brookline, and Westwood, all not typically thought of as destinations for foreigners, all have over 100 Asian residents.



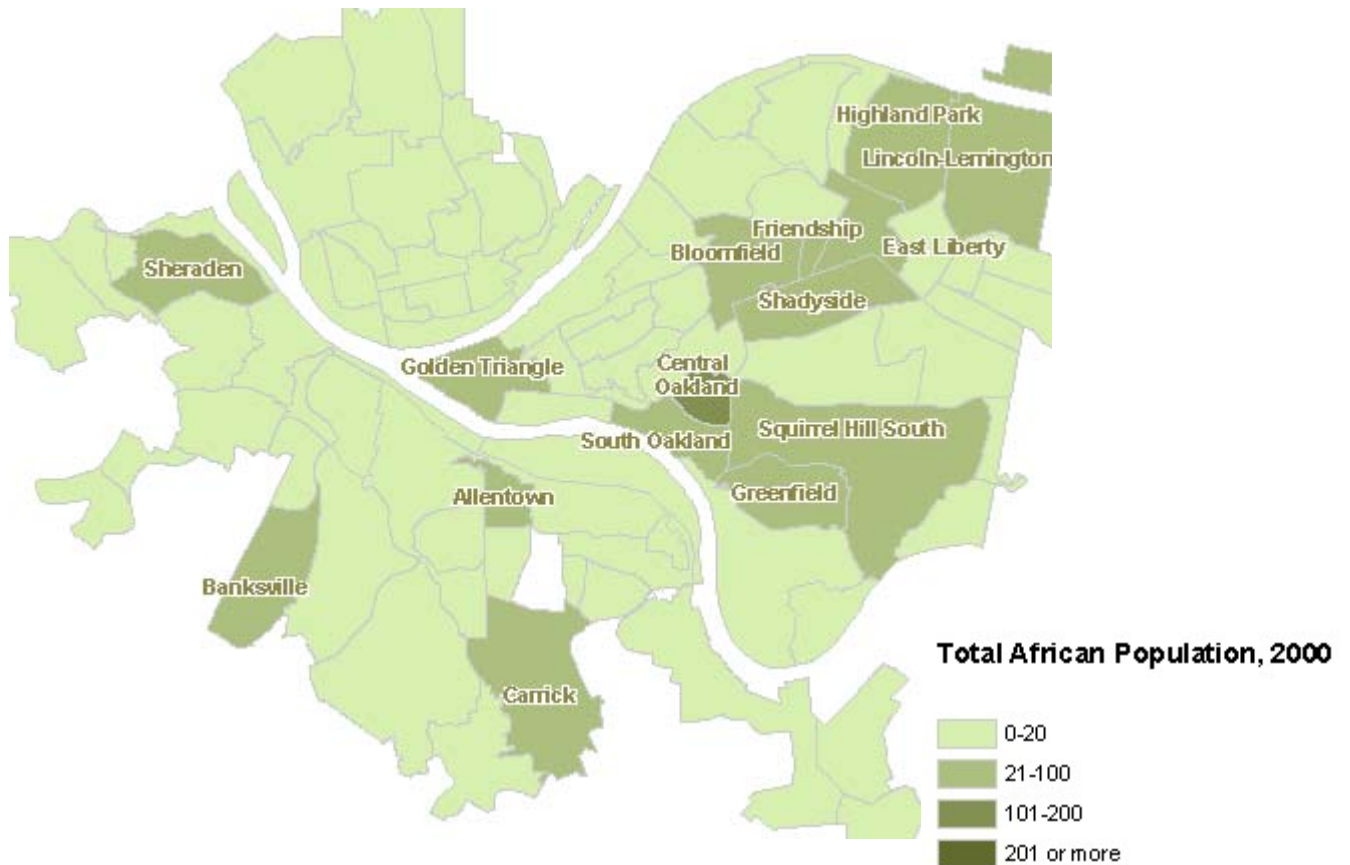
The second largest foreign community in Pittsburgh is the European community; there are currently 7,413 Europeans living in Pittsburgh. Residence patterns of Europeans are similar to those of Asians, with heavy concentrations in Squirrel Hill South and Shadyside. There are also substantial European communities in Greenfield, Brookline, and Bloomfield, which has historically been a destination for Italian immigrants to the region.



Pittsburgh has not been very successful in attracting Latin American immigrants to the region. Total Latin American population in Pittsburgh in 2000 was only 1,893. The neighborhood with the highest Latin American population is Shadyside; Squirrel Hill South and Squirrel Hill North also have more than 100 Latin American residents. Almost all neighborhoods bordering Squirrel Hill and Shadyside have between 20 and 100 Latin American residents. It is important to note that because of the small total Latin American population, the scale of the legend is smaller than in previous maps. This is also the case for the African population map.



Pittsburgh also has not attracted many African residents. There are currently 905 Africans living in Pittsburgh. Only Central Oakland has more than 100 African residents; no neighborhood has more than 200. Squirrel Hill North, which has high concentrations of every other immigrant group, has less than 20 African residents. However, there are small African populations in Carrick, Sheraden, and Lincoln-Lemington, areas not populated by other immigrant groups.



Conclusion

Overall, foreigners who do come to Pittsburgh settle in the East End. The East End is more affluent than other parts of the city, and has proximity to universities; both of these factors play a role in the decisions of immigrants to locate there and indicates the types of immigrants that the city attracts.

If the city is going to attract more immigrants, we need to sustain these communities so that they can become more effective gateways; we also need more communities that can function as gateways. The next step is to examine the factors that make these communities attractive to foreigners, so that we can nurture and emulate those factors in neighborhoods lacking in foreign population hoping to grow and diversify their populations.