

# EASTERN WASHINGTON COUNTY

Washington County, Pennsylvania



## Regional Profile

A Guide to  
Eastern Washington County  
for Residents and Investors

# On the Map

Eastern Washington County, PA Located Within the Mid Mon Valley Region



## Location

Eastern Washington County is home to more than 56,000 people and located just 45-minutes southeast of the City of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The region is part of the Middle-Monongahela Valley, better known as the Mid Mon Valley, which encompasses portions of Allegheny, Washington, Westmoreland, and Fayette Counties.

Eastern Washington County offers low cost living with access to big-city amenities. This portion of the county encompasses 27 municipalities wrapping along the banks of the scenic, economic powerhouse, the Monongahela River.

Boasting efficient road, rail, water, and air infrastructure, the region is strategically positioned to access industrial markets and people. The Mon-Fayette Expressway (PA Route 43) provides a much needed north-linkage to Pittsburgh supplementing rail and river links for the Mid-Mon Valley's industries, while Interstate-70 (I-70) offers a short connection west to the City of Washington. The Pittsburgh International Airport is easily accessible in less than one hour and Washington, D.C. is within a 3.5-hour drive.

## A Slice of the American Pie Found Here

Rooted in a deep industrial legacy, the region is focused on its second century of growth and is an important part of Southwestern Pennsylvania's economy and culture. . Offering the historic charm of traditional, main street communities as well as quiet rural countryside neighborhoods, Eastern Washington County is a collection of small towns where neighbors know each other and work together. Find YOUR slice of the American pie here in Eastern Washington County.

- Walkable communities like Monongahela and Charleroi with small shops and amenities close to home
- Newer suburban developments are found in Union Township and new residential developments are planned around the region
- Growing job opportunities with business and industrial parks are in place, active, and ready for more investment

Eastern Washington County continues to boast a strong industrial base, offering a range of job opportunities in the technical trades and bolstered by partnerships between businesses, workforce development organizations, and schools. The region is home to PennWest California, one of a network of Pennsylvania state universities. The City of Pittsburgh, a national academic, professional services, and health care hub is within a 45 minute drive.

On the following pages, learn more about the region's small-town living, opportunities to invest, and nature and history.



# Nature & History Found Here

Natural Resources that were a Catalyst for National Economic Growth



Photo credit: Washington County Tourism ([Visit Washington County, PA - Visit Washington County](http://VisitWashingtonCounty,PA-VisitWashingtonCounty.visitwashingtoncountypa.com)  
[visitwashingtoncountypa.com](http://visitwashingtoncountypa.com))

### Along the Banks of the Monongahela River

Eastern Washington County sits west of the Monongahela River, which is formed in Fairmont, West Virginia by the confluence of the West Fork River and the Tygart Valley River. The river extends north 128 miles where it joins the Allegheny River in Pittsburgh to form the Ohio River. This key geographic feature is the region's hallmark asset. The Monongahela River was the first river in the U.S. with complete navigable control through a system of locks and dams. Three U.S. Navy ships have even been named after the Monongahela River. The present-day communities in Eastern Washington County were primarily established with a reliance on both the river and the rich coal deposits in the surrounding landscape at the turn of the nineteenth century. Eastern Washington County also sits within the Pittsburgh Coal Seam, the thickest and most extensive coal bed in the Appalachian Basin. The region is known for rich Native American history and the Whiskey Rebellion, an uprising of farmers and distillers in western Pennsylvania in protest of a federal whiskey tax. The rebellion ended in the region with a speech delivered in Monongahela in 1794. Today, the Mid Mon Valley offers river-based recreation, hiking and biking trails, numerous antique shops, and community events.

### Industrial Roots

Eastern Washington County has a compelling and diverse history. Washington County was created in 1781 and named in honor of George Washington. It is home to many unique attractions including the Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, just west of Eastern Washington County, which archeologists discovered as

one of the oldest carbon-dated human settlements in North America. Washington County is also home to the National Road, the nation's first major improved highway built by the federal government.

In the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, the Monongahela River was heavily used in an industrial boom driven by several U.S. Steel plants, one is located in the region and is poised for redevelopment. Steel manufacturing was instrumental in World War II, with production peaking soon after the War. In turn, the American economy grew to become one of the largest in the world. Glass manufacturing in Charleroi and zinc production in Donora also contributed to the nation's economic growth during that time. Postwar, the steel and manufacturing industries restructured leading to a steep downturn in labor and production. Today, the Monongahela River regularly supports the transport of coal, fuel, petroleum, coke, and asphalt and the river continues to be a key regional transportation asset with significant investment in lock and dam infrastructure being completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Class 1 railways line both sides of the river to support multimodal freight transportation.

### Destination for River and Trail Recreation

Eastern Washington County offers a little bit of everything for those looking to relax and playaway from the hustle and bustle of Pittsburgh. Eastern Washington County's communities are nestled alongside the banks of the Monongahela River. In total, Washington County supports 5,500 acres of park land and trails. The nearby Mountain State rail-trails provide a serene escape through up to 84

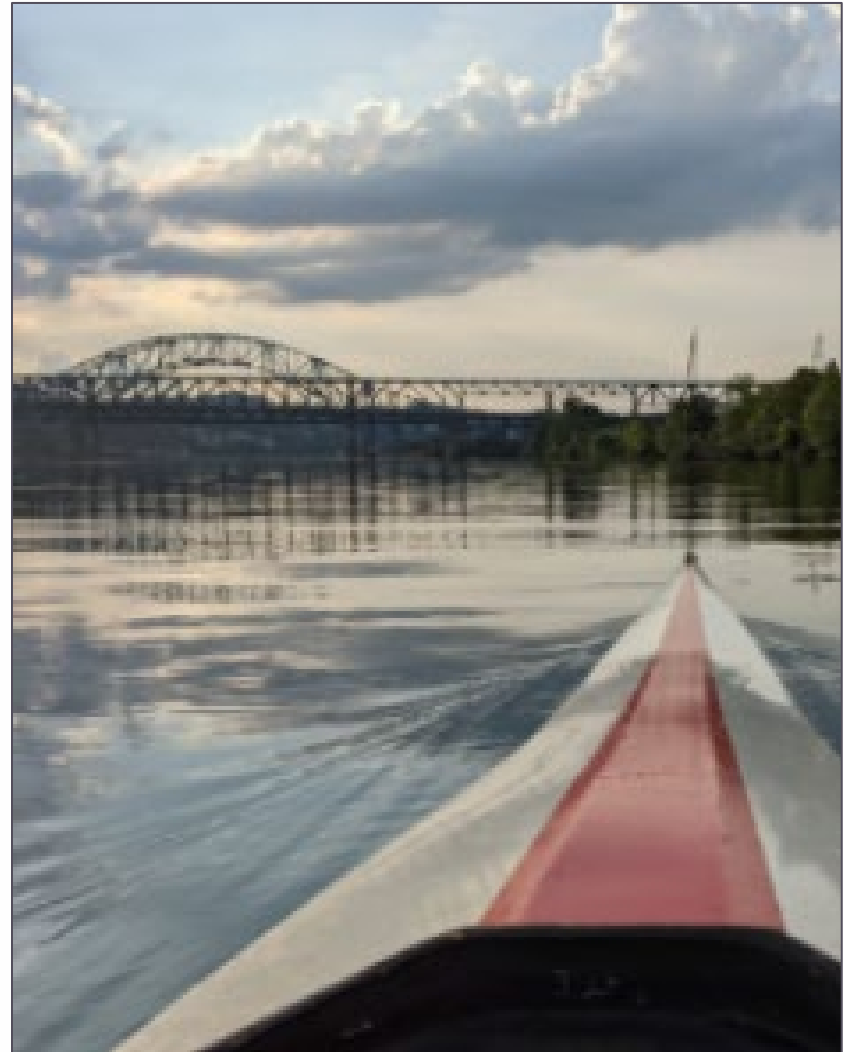
miles on four connected trails while parks such as Palmer Park in Donora are staples for community gatherings of all kinds. The Great Allegheny Passage, the iconic rail-trail that runs from Pittsburgh to Cumberland, MD is just east of Washington County. The stretch of the Monongahela River bordering Eastern Washington County is generally accessible year-round and provides an unparalleled journey through the rich natural resources and historic events that shaped American history. Many of the local communities offer exceptional resources in support of River-based recreation.

Eastern Washington County gives visitors and residents the opportunity to kayak, boat, or canoe on the scenic Monongahela River and enjoy the marinas and community parks along its banks.

- Allenport – Allenport Marina and Thomas J. Reid III Memorial Park
- California – River Fest, parades, Dowler the Wharf public boat launch
- Charleroi – Magic City Riverfront Park
- Coal Center – Dowler Park
- Monongahela – Monongahela Aquatorium, an outdoor auditorium located on the Monongahela River
- New Eagle – Beach Club Marina
- Speers – Waterfront shops and dining, pier, dock, paved boat ramp, and Smitty's Marina

A blend of comfortable and challenging rail-trails are located along the river bank, while a system of walking, running, and biking trails stretch throughout the region and beyond to the Caperton Trail in Morgantown, WV. The

region's partnership with [Mon River Towns](#) highlights the region's river recreation and trails.

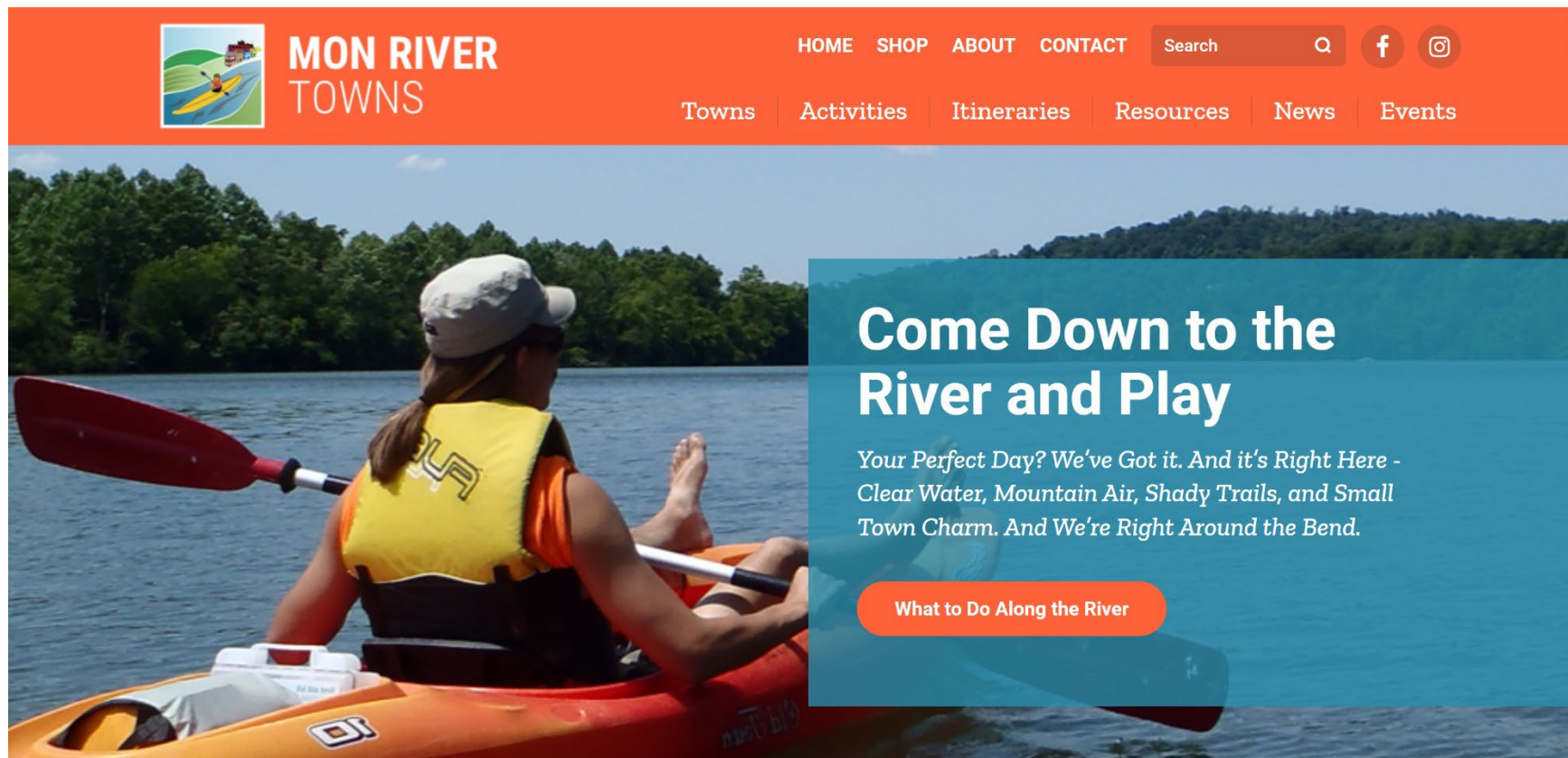


*Photo credit: Timothy Wolfgang, Mon Valley Rowing Club in Speers.*



Offering more than just scenic views, the Mon Valley is home [Monongahela Aquatorium](#), a super-sized outdoor auditorium that seats 3,700 along the Monongahela River. The venue is host to numerous summertime events, including a summer music series and the annual Riverfest, which draws a crowd from across the county. In the off season the region enjoys winter wine festivals, dance nights, and the annual Fleatique (Antique) sale.

Partnering with the Washington County Tourism Promotion agency, the region continues to collect and catalog its unique recreational assets such as several historic covered bridges, Mingo Creek Park and Observatory in Finleyville, and Chess Park in Monongahela. More details on the region's recreation can be found through the [Washington County Tourism Promotion Agency](#).



Source: Mon River Towns ( <https://monrivertowns.com/> )

# Small Town Living

Small Towns with Big Opportunities

## At a Glance

- The 27 Eastern Washington County municipalities that are the focus of this profile boast long-standing economies, a mix of downtown and suburban neighborhoods, and convenient transportation options. The close-knit communities enjoy honored traditions while embracing new opportunities. The population is just over 56,000 with Union Township having the most residents at 5,374 and Coal Center the fewest at 110. While the population is small it is part of the Pittsburgh metropolitan area with a population over 2 million people. With fewer people and more land, Eastern Washington County residents enjoy a quiet lifestyle, while staying connected to a broad job market, entertainment, and the amenities of a nationally renowned urban center.
- 25 community health and hospital systems in the Pittsburgh metro area, including UPMC Presbyterian Hospital, ranked 12<sup>th</sup> nationally among best hospitals
- Numerous shopping destinations, including malls and local favorites like the Strip District
- Extensive job opportunities spanning both goods-producing and services with an average commute time under 30 minutes

## Affordable Cost of Living with Access to Urban Amenities

One of the key attractions of Eastern Washington County is its high quality of life coupled with affordable living. Living just outside the Pittsburgh metropolitan area offers homeowners and renters a lower cost of living. Home values and monthly rents are more affordable in most of the region's seven most populated communities than in Washington County or the Pittsburgh.

	Population	Median Home Value (\$)	Median Monthly Rent (\$)
<b>Charleroi Borough</b>	4,234	39,500	688
<b>Monongahela City</b>	4,159	81,800	676
<b>Fallowfield Township</b>	4,099	98,600	546
<b>Donora Borough</b>	4,569	50,000	526
<b>Carroll Township</b>	5,390	164,900	822
<b>Union Township</b>	5,374	146,500	652
<b>California Borough</b>	5,362	111,600	461
<b>Washington County</b>	210,339	167,900	819
<b>Pittsburgh</b>	302,971	125,000	1,104



## Park, Trails, and River Recreation

As noted above, the region has tremendous recreation opportunities, especially along the Monongahela River. New riverfront parks and river access are planned in Coal Center, Charleroi, Speers, Dunlevy, and West Brownsville. New community parks are planned in California, Carrol, Dunlevy, Fallowfield, Nottingham, Speers, and Union.



*Photo credit: Holly April Harris, Waterfall in Mingo Creek Park in*

## Education

Eastern Washington County is perfectly situated to take advantage of the many well-regarded schools in the region. Not only is it near Pittsburgh, which is among the top cities for educated young people, behind only Washington D.C., Boston, and San Francisco, the region

itself hosts an impressive collection of higher education opportunities. WestPenn California is located in the heart of California Borough, supporting over 7,000 students. It is set along the Monongahela River with pristine lawns and classic red brick buildings. The Princeton Review consistently ranks the University among the Best Colleges in the Northeast. The education opportunities expand beyond traditional four-year degrees thanks to well-established partnerships in the region. The Mon Valley Career & Technology Center (MVCTC) offers 12 career majors to support training in occupational, vocational, and technical programs, and partners with local business on job training and workforce development. Additional career and technology centers are located in the greater Pittsburgh region.

The Pennsylvania CareerLink® Mon Valley in the Donora Industrial Park offers a range of services such as adult basic education, career counseling & resources, job search assistance, skill assessment & aptitude testing, veteran services, training programs & workshops, youth programs, disability employment services, and resume building & interview preparation. Services for employers include recruitment services, new & incumbent worker training, layoff aversion assistance, disability services for employers, veteran recruitment, and hiring tax credits.

Workforce development is supported by many programs from the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) including Industrial Resource Centers (IRC), Pennsylvania Industry Partnerships (IPS), and the Apprenticeship & Training Office (ATO). Each of these organizations partner with local businesses to meet the business community's needs.

# Invest with Confidence

Continual Investment in the Region's Infrastructure and Businesses

## At a Glance

Regionally, Eastern Washington County's economic profile is solid.

- The region is home to four industrial and business parks totaling 856 acres with additional locations for new business attraction and existing business retention being developed.
- Nearly 40% of the region's labor force is employed in the Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail, and Manufacturing sectors. Other top opportunities for employment span many industries, including Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, and Education.
- New economic opportunities continually emerge in the region, proving its repeated resilience and strength. Since 2008, nearly \$200 Million has been invested directly into the region's 27 municipalities for projects such as:
  - Land acquisition
  - Building construction and renovation
  - Community revitalization, planning, and marketing
  - Education
  - Infrastructure Construction & Rehabilitation
  - Job Training & Workforce Development

- Machinery & Equipment
- Remediation/Environmental Assessment
- Site Preparation & Demolition
- Transportation Infrastructure including Public Transit

## Business & Industrial Parks

The region is home to four industrial parks, three of which are overseen by the Mon Valley Alliance.

- The **Donora Industrial Park** is over 400 acres in the Borough of Donora and located along the western edge of the Monongahela River. The Park is located approximately 2 miles north of I-70 and 3 miles east of Route 88, which supports convenient and efficient transportation to the region by road and rail service. The Park currently hosts over 25 businesses supporting over 800 jobs. The real estate valuation is over \$35 million. About 20 acres of land is still available for development. The site is designated as an Enterprise Zone, which offers a full five-year tax abatement on new construction from Washington County, Donora Borough, and Ringgold School District.

- The **Speers Industrial Park** is an 80-acre park in the Borough of Speers. It is conveniently located along I-70 and Route 88 and is near the riverfront and rail lines. It is situated between the towns of Charleroi and Belle Vernon (Fayette County) The Park has a small amount of land and existing buildings for sale as well as building space available to lease. It is zoned for light industrial use.
- The **Alta Vista Business Park** is a 256-acre park in Fallowfield Township. It is located along I-70 north of Bentleyville and 10 miles from I-79. Alta Vista has a variety of shovel-ready lots that range from three to acres. The park has an established stormwater management system with detention ponds already incorporated. The Alliance holds an open NPDES permit, which builders are added to. This significantly reduces permitting time. The Park is a designated KOZ, which indicates that qualified companies will not be responsible for most local and state taxes until 2023. Alta Vista has a unique four-tiered elevation with panoramic views from every business site. Recently, Komatsu Mining Corp., which has operated in Washington County for more than 60 years, purchased a lot to develop a new distribution center at Alta Vista.
- The **California Technology Park** is a 138-acre site in the Borough of California. It is located directly off of State Route 43 and is also five miles from I-70. It currently has three development parcels available ranging from five to 16.5 acres. The site is designated as an Enterprise Zone, which offers a full five-year tax abatement on new construction from Washington County, California Borough, and California School District. Lower

financing rates are also available through the PIDA business loan programs. It is zoned for industrial and mixed-use development. Additionally, the Park has access to California University of Pennsylvania resources including business plan and job training grant preparation

The major industry clusters by employment in Washington County, PA are business services; distribution and electronic commerce; upstream metal manufacturing; oil and gas production and transportation; construction products and services; and hospitality and tourism.



*Photo credit: Mon-Valley Alliance, Donora Industrial Park*





*Photo credit: Mon Valley Alliance, Alta Vista Business Park in Fallowfield*

## Major Employers

Major employers located in Eastern Washington County include:

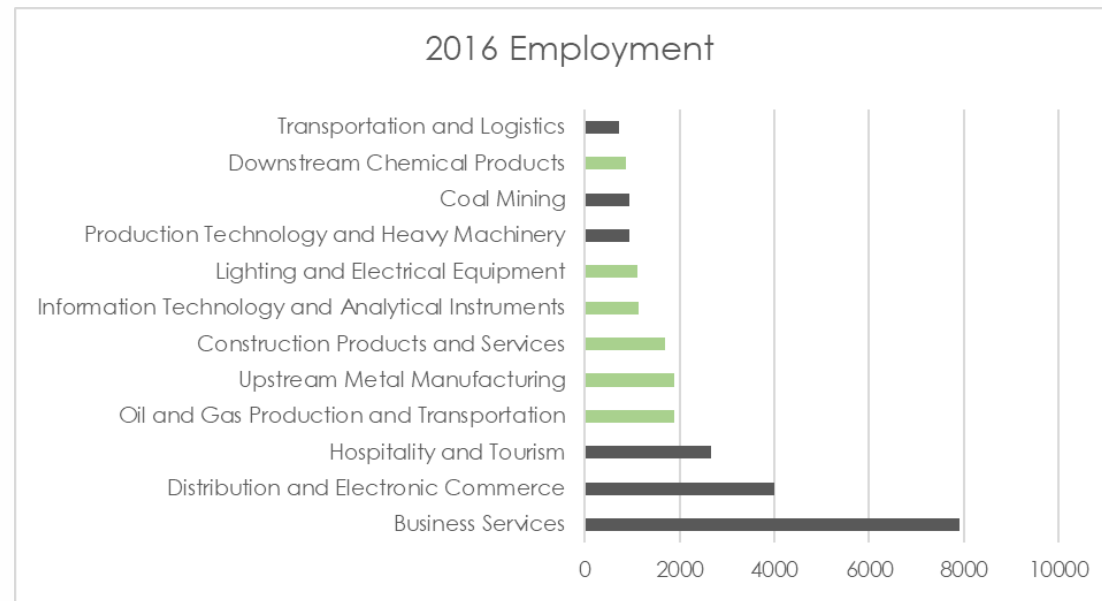
- GE Renewable Energy
- Komatsu Mining Corporation
- **Penn Highland Monongahela Valley Hospital**
- PennWest California
- Pyrex Corporation
- Rose Plastics
- UPMC Health Services

Penn Highland Monongahela Valley Hospital is the largest employer in the region with more than 1,200 employees, making it a critical piece of the region's economy.

## Industry & Workforce

The top industries in the Mon Valley Region are business services; distribution and electronic commerce; upstream metal manufacturing; oil and gas production and transportation; construction products and services; and hospitality and tourism.





Source: U.S. Cluster Mapping Project

The distinct regional economy of Washington County is primarily led by the Business Services sector. However, six industries in the top 11 industries found in Washington County are designated as a Strong Traded Cluster in the region. This designation by the U.S. Cluster Mapping Project indicates that the cluster has high employment specialization in a region. The employment rank of each cluster is noted next to each specialization below.

- Oil and Gas Production and Transportation (44th)
- Upstream Metal Manufacturing (36th)
- Construction Products and Services (106th)
- Information Technology and Analytical Instruments (168th)
- Lighting and Electrical Equipment (47th)
- Downstream Chemical Products (67th)

Eastern Washington County can capitalize on the large and highly specialized employment clusters to continue to propel its economy far into the future. While many of the specialized industries such as Upstream Metal Manufacturing are deeply rooted in its industrial legacy, additional industries have room for growth. The largest employment cluster, Business Services, is comprised of Corporate Headquarters, Computer Services, Engineering Services, Business support Services, and more. As shown in the table below, over 47% of Eastern Washington County is employed by the Services industry with the next largest sectors being Retail Trade (11.7%) and Manufacturing (10.4%).

**2021 Employed Population 16+ by Industry**

Total	26,117
Agriculture/Mining	2.0%
Construction	8.3%
Manufacturing	10.4%
Wholesale Trade	2.6%
Retail Trade	11.7%
Transportation/Utilities	7.8%
Information	1.0%
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate	5.7%
Services	47.6%
Public Administration	3.0%

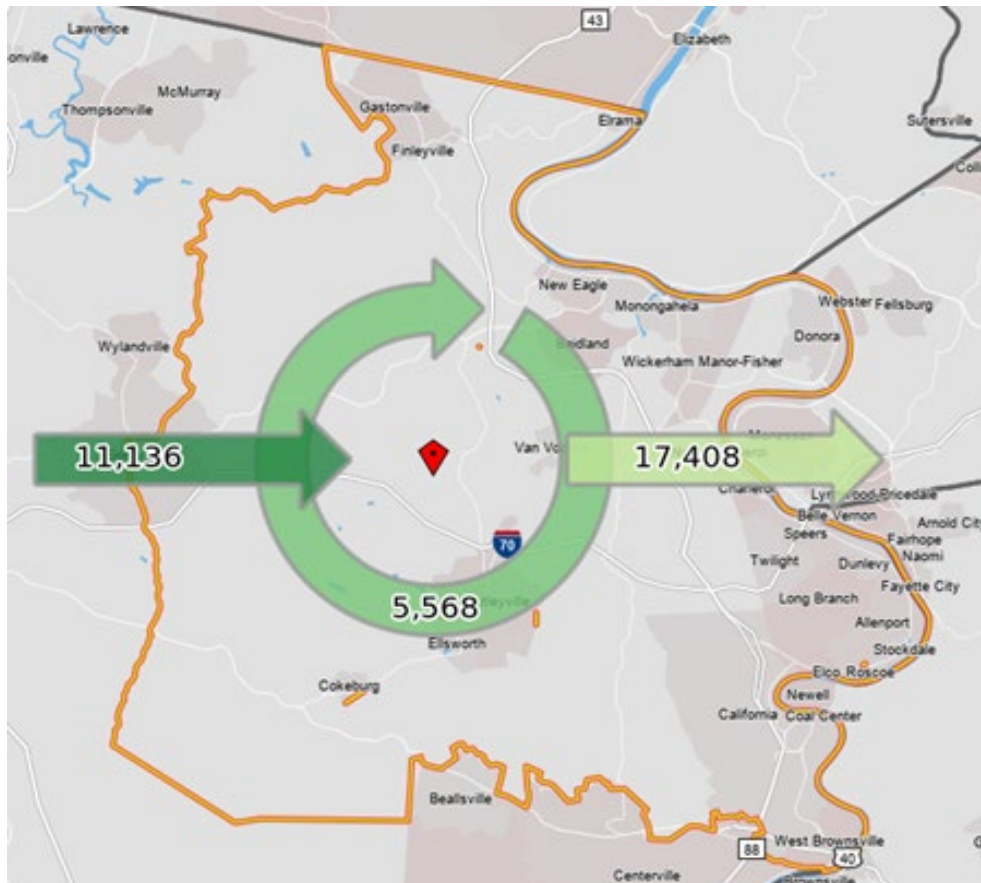
**2021 Employed Population 16+ by Occupation**

Total	26,119
White Collar	54.5%
Management/Business/Financial	13.5%
Professional	21.2%
Sales	8.6%
Administrative Support	11.1%
Services	17.1%
Blue Collar	28.5%
Farming/Forestry/Fishing	0.3%
Construction/Extraction	6.8%
Installation/Maintenance/Repair	4.8%
Production	7.0%
Transportation/Material Moving	9.7%

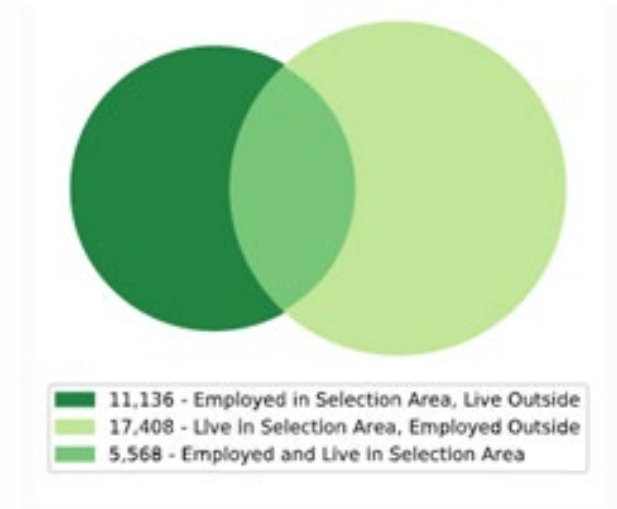
Source: U.S. Census

As shown on the following diagrams from the U.S. Census OnTheMap tool, a total of 16,704 workers were employed in Eastern Washington County as of 2019 (most recent data from the Census Bureau). Of that population, 67% (11,136) commute into the region and 33.3% (5,568) both live and work in the region. A total of 75.8% (17,408) of the

region's residents commute outside the region to work; notably traveling north to Pittsburgh. With a large portion of workers travelling outside the region to work, workforce is available for new business investment in the region.



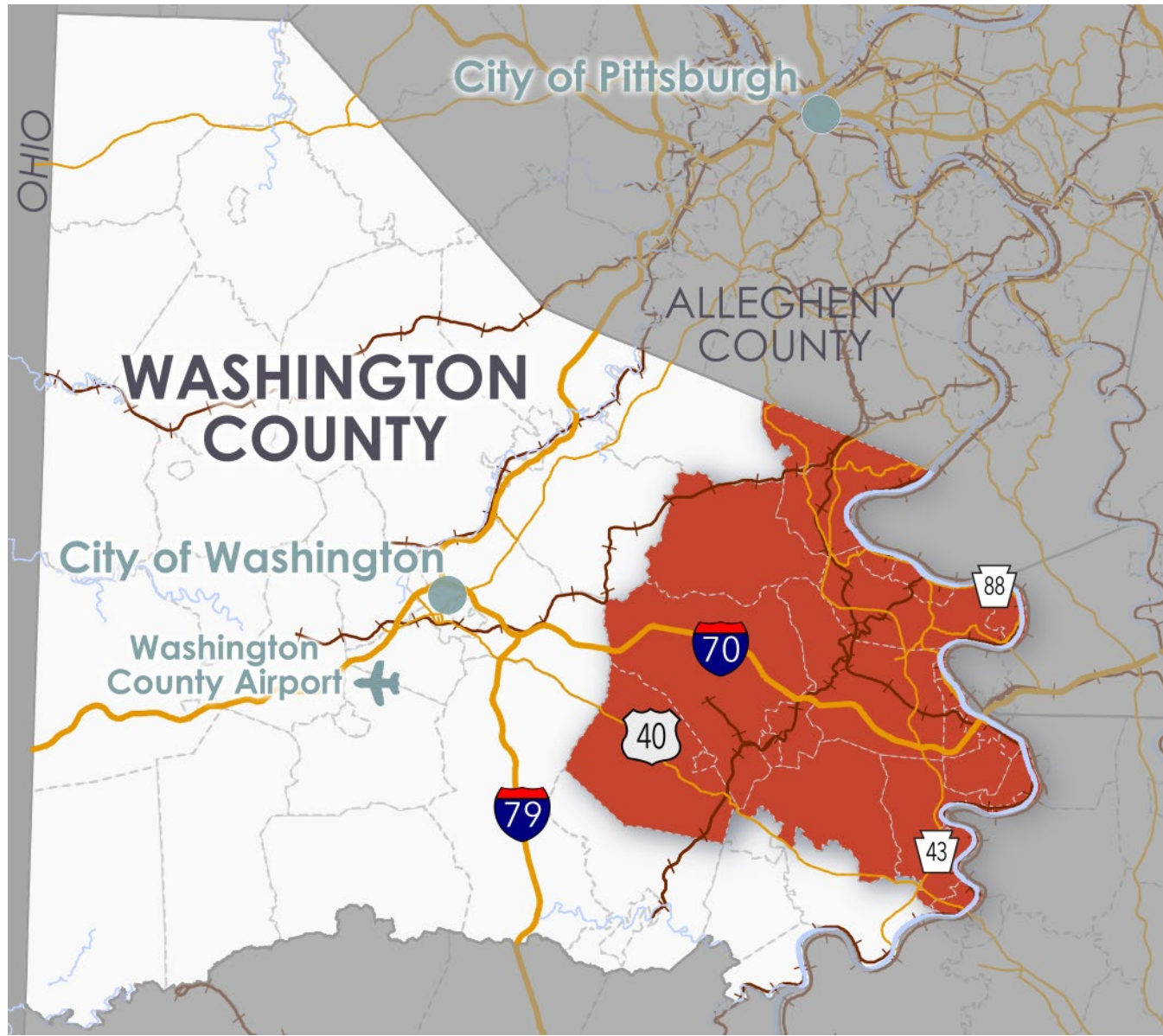
Source: U.S. Census



## Infrastructure & Utility Assets

Pennsylvania offers robust intermodal infrastructure connected by port, rail, air, and road. It provides six international airports, 64 operating railroads, three major ports, and over 120,000 miles of state and local highways.

Eastern Washington County is advantaged to have convenient access to each mode of transportation.



Source: Michael Baker International, Inc., ESRI, Inc.





*Photo credit: Mon Valley Alliance*





Photo credit: PA Turnpike Commission, Mon-Fayette Expressway

### Roadways

- I-70 traverses the region bringing providing access to the east via Pennsylvania Turnpike and access to western Washington County and beyond. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is investing \$750 million in roadway, bridge, interchange, and intelligent transportation improvements along I-70 in Washington and Westmoreland counties.
- The Mon-Fayette Expressway (PA-43 of the Pennsylvania Turnpike) also crosses the region, a \$250 million investment when complete.
- The region is located in proximity to the 13-mile Southern Beltway, linking U.S. Route-22 to I-79 along the border of Allegheny and Washington Counties providing a direct connection to the Pittsburgh International Airport. This opens more opportunities for people to live and work in Washington County and have easy access to the opportunities stemming from Pittsburgh.





*Photo credit: Michel Sauret, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Pittsburgh District, Charleroi Locks and Dam.*

### **Monongahela River**

- The Monongahela River joins the Allegheny River forming the Ohio River (Marine Highway M-70) in Pittsburgh. The M-70 Route includes the Ohio, Mississippi, and Missouri Rivers, and connecting commercial navigation channels, ports, and harbors, from Pittsburgh to Kansas City. It spans Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, connecting to the M-55 Route at St. Louis, MO.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is working on the lock and dam infrastructure improvements along the Monongahela River at Charleroi totaling over \$2.7 billion.
- The Port of Pittsburgh is just north of Eastern Washington County and moves more than 35 million tons of cargo annually along its three major waterways.
- Commodities such as coal, fuel, petroleum, coke, and asphalt are transported by barge on the river.

## Rail

- Class 1 Railroad operators Norfolk South and CSX maintain active rail lines and serve rail customers throughout the region and Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway provides additional rail freight access throughout the region.
- Norfolk Southern is working to attract investment at three targeted sites in the region along the Monongahela River.
- Commodities and opportunities for rail freight growth include fracking sand, municipal waste, scrap metal and plastics recycling, and the Shell Cracker Plant to the north in Beaver County.

## Air

- The region is a 1-hour drive from the Pittsburgh International Airport providing commercial passenger service and a full-service air cargo hub.

## Transit

- Public Transportation is provided by the Mid Mon Valley Transit Authority (MMVTA), which serves 22 communities within Washington, Westmoreland, and Fayette Counties. In addition to local service throughout the Mid Mon Valley, the transit agency provides three regular weekday commuter routes into downtown Pittsburgh as well as a shuttle service to West Penn California University in California Borough.
- With reliable and quality public transportation services, MMVTA is dedicated to the Mid Mon Valley region by continuing to increase its ridership and deploying

advanced technologies, such as real-time bus tracking.

## Broadband

- The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) in collaboration with Allies for Children and Carnegie Mellon University has developed a regional [Connectivity Improvement Plan](#). The initiative will improve high-speed internet access for people and businesses throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania. Most of Washington County is categorized as 'served,' indicating that the region can support streaming HD content, virtual education, teleworking, telemedicine, and online gaming. Areas in the region range from well served to unserved. Data in the recent Regional Broadband Connectivity Existing Conditions Analysis, shown below, is being used as the foundation to initiate high speed, low cost broadband access throughout Eastern Washington County.





## Economic Incentive Zones

The region offers local and state incentives to support existing regional businesses and attract new business investment from outside the region. Key economic incentive zones are highlighted below. The MVA Investment Portal (include) link provides the location of each zone within the region.

The Mon Valley Alliance works with businesses and regional partners to provide additional access to incentives and technical resources for economic development projects (see information about the Mon Valley Alliance in the next section).

### Mid Mon Valley Regional Enterprise Zone (MMVREZ)

The Mid Mon Valley Regional Enterprise Zone (MMVREZ) was created in July 2020 through the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development's Keystone Communities Program. This Program reaches across 14 municipalities that are offering incentives and advantages to the business community to create and retain family-sustaining jobs in the region. In 2020, the Alliance supported six applications for tax credits, which represents \$2.4 million with private investments of over \$21 million, supporting over 450 jobs in the region.

Participating Municipalities span three counties in the Region. However, only the areas that are zoned for industrial/commercial use in each are eligible. Municipalities within Eastern Washington County include:

Carroll Township, Charleroi Borough, Donora Borough, Dunlevy Borough, Fallowfield Township, Speers Borough, City of Monongahela, West Brownsville Borough, Allenport Borough

### Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ)

Keystone Opportunity Zones are designated by legislation and managed by DCED. Properties designated as a KOZ provide certain state and local tax benefits available to qualified businesses. These areas are marked by tremendous partnerships between state and local governments, school districts, economic development agencies, and community-based organizations. The region's KOZ's are found in Fallowfield, Allenport, and Stockdale.

### Qualified Opportunity Zone

In 2017, the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act created the Federal Qualified Opportunity Zone (QOZ) program to spark reinvestment in the nation's distressed communities by providing a series of tax benefits. Qualified investors can defer or eliminate federal taxes on capital gains, resulting in community investment. The zone encompasses all of Charleroi Borough.

### New Market Tax Credits (NMTCs)

The Federal New Markets Tax Credit Program (NMTc) program helps economically distressed communities attract private capital by providing investors with a Federal tax credit. Investments made in eligible census tracts through the NMTc Program are used to finance businesses, resulting in new community investment.

## HUBZone

Businesses in a qualified HUBZone are eligible to compete for set aside for federal government contracts. The program fuels small business growth in historically underutilized communities.

## Mon Valley Alliance – Economic Lead for the Region

The Mon Valley Alliance (MVA) is focused on building the future of Eastern Washington County by providing resources to improve the regional economy and promote more effective local government cooperation. MVA's mission is "To bridge our industrial foundation to a future of economic growth in the Mid-Mon Valley Region." With a strong understanding of the region's historic strengths, current assets, and future opportunities to strengthen the community, MVA is comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders including business owners, local and regional agencies, political offices, and educational partners to help its communities grow and prosper. By looking beyond its approach rooted in transportation and industrial development, MVA invests in the broader region to benefit all.

Find out more about the services provided by MVA and its partners at <https://www.monvalleyalliance.org/> or call (724) 565-5636.



[Mon Valley Alliance | MVA](https://www.monvalleyalliance.org/)