

EMPOWER ERIE

ERIE COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE FEASIBILITY REPORT

MAY 8, 2017

Empower Erie Community College Feasibility Study

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Executive Summary

Erie County is at a definitive crossroads in its economic development. The community clearly faces many real and significant challenges. Yet, also emerging is something inspirational: A growing sense of possibility backed by action-oriented leadership.

Erie views itself proudly as a maker city—its people define themselves as hard working and steadfast in the face of adversity. Erieites are undeniably resilient, and now their grit is being tested during this period of renewal as they retool, retrain, and band together behind strategies that support a brighter future. Erie residents are proud of their affordable quality of life close to Presque Isle, geographic proximity to their larger, neighboring markets in Cleveland, Buffalo, and Pittsburgh, as well as an impressive host of cultural amenities not typically found in a county of Erie's size.

Anchored by a wave of energetic, committed leaders, Erie is seeing light on the horizon through strategic investments from businesses and foundations into key sectors as well as a renewed commitment to revitalization and growth in key industry segments such as healthcare (hospital and education), insurance, stabilization of the manufacturing industry, and tourism.

A collective vision of a better future is gaining traction within key sectors and demographics of the community. This feasibility study contains research that affirms that a stand-alone community college is an essential component of that future. A community college would serve as a catalyst to enhance affordable educational opportunities, spark sustained economic growth, and put Erie on equal footing with many communities throughout the commonwealth and nation that already benefit from a local community college.

Although a nearly decade-old effort to generate the necessary political support for a community college fell short, the political will and community support to establish a community college in Erie now exists. Driving that cooperation is a shared understanding of the growing need for a community college as one of the essential pillars of a broader effort to address the range of challenges facing Erie.

High poverty rates, unemployment, low educational attainment, a greying workforce, and population loss pose real threats to the economic, educational, and cultural stability of the community. The gravity of these challenges and clear need to take decisive action to address them have precipitated a pivot toward collaboration, empathy, and coalescing the political will to lead Erie to a more promising future.

The previous feasibility study asserted that a community college was needed then and current research shows that it is needed now. It is impossible to quantify how it might have helped Erie navigate the waters through the great recession, through major layoffs at some of Erie's largest

employers, or respond to businesses demanding skilled and trained workforce, but Erie’s current economic, education and employment climate would be well-served by local a community college.

A strong economy relies on a multitude of industry sectors working in partnership with a highly-trained and educated workforce. The people of Erie County have seen what the economy looks like without a community college, and they are eager to set a course toward an economic and education future supported by a vibrant community that will link all these pieces together.

Throughout this feasibility study, Parker Philips examined the positives and negatives of the research findings. All aspects of establishing a community college were evaluated utilizing a multitude of methods including both primary and secondary data. It is our opinion that there is market demand and capacity to support a community college in Erie County. The addition of a community college to the market will assist with countywide and regional transformation. The intent of this research is not to paint the community college as Erie County’s lifeline, but to help define the essential role it could play in its transformation. With positive momentum building to overcome recent setbacks, the community college will be another important tool to help redefine Erie County’s future and put more of the region’s citizens on a path toward educational attainment and employability.

The basis of the community college’s feasibility stems from support from area businesses who will one day employ graduates of the community college, overall positive community opinion, socio-economic and educational demographics, an innovative curriculum, the identification and availability of sites and facilities to serve the entire county, and a significant commitment by foundations and economic development groups to transform Erie County. Based on the aforementioned criteria coupled with the Pennsylvania Department of Education feasibility requirements, Parker Philips supports the development of a community plan in support of the establishment of a community college.

Headlines



The Erie County community strongly supports the establishment of a community college and highly values the introduction of a more affordable post-secondary option into the market.



There is a strong demand for education and training that leads directly to available employment. In the absence of a community college, local groups, such as the Erie Regional Manufacturing Partnership, are trying to fill the gap however, none can address the existing community needs, at scale. Groups like these would-be partners with a community college.



The need is too large for a patchwork approach, and the scale is growing. Relatively large layoffs by a major employer coupled with a high percentage of local manufacturing workforce nearing retirement requires sustainable and scalable retraining and new employee opportunities, which increase the urgent need for a community college.



The community college model supports the needs of Erie County. The proposed curriculum is unique to Erie and meets the current needs; the model is nimble and can pivot if those needs shift. The kinds of students that typically enroll in community colleges require a level of advising and guidance that is not possible via distance learning. Existing programs would be supported by and complimentary to a community college.



Erie County is missing out on massive federal investments specifically designed to address the challenges Erie currently faces. Two years ago, Northeastern Pennsylvania community colleges received a four-year \$10 million federal grant to develop new degree, certificate, and diploma programs in high priority career fields. The funding is part of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) competitive grant program, and Erie could be accessing that if it established a community college.



Unprecedented corporate and philanthropic investments are on the table right now. The half-billion-dollar investment underway in Erie's downtown creates opportunity and will generate new programming and collaboration opportunities for an Erie County community college. The philanthropic community has committed \$4 million to support the establishment of the community college, lessening the public contribution.



A shifting higher education market supports the introduction of a community college. Costly, for-profit institutions have received increasing scrutiny based on new data collected by the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard, leading to closures across the country. At the same time, local colleges and universities are working hard to help Erie by providing associate's degrees and shorter-term certificates at reduced tuition rates. However, they are not designed to provide the kind of highly vocational training, developmental education support, and strong ties to the labor market that community colleges typically offer.

Introduction

In January 2017, Parker Philips was retained by Empower Erie to conduct a feasibility study to determine the need and viability of a community college in Erie County, Pennsylvania. The primary and secondary data contained within the report seek to fulfill the requirements put forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The format and data reported in this document adhere to those guidelines. The research presented within this report was conducted from January 2017 to April 2017 and represents a current snapshot of primary and secondary data.

The economic and educational future of Erie County, Pennsylvania, is at a delicate turning point, which could shape outcomes for the next generation. For decades, the county has faced significant challenges with respect to its changing economy. The transition from manufacturing to a diverse, service based-economy – including higher education, healthcare, insurance, and tourism – has taken slow and wide turns and not yet reached its destination.

There are challenges within the county that cannot be easily dismissed or addressed; persistent post-recession unemployment levels, lagging wages, high-poverty levels, a city school system crippled by a diminished local tax base and persistent underfunding at the state level, a county school system challenged by inequitable funding, and lower than state average levels of educational attainment. These issues have been featured on the national stage zeroing in on how the “Rust Belt” city is falling behind and that its best days are behind it; a moniker many Erie residents reject and have revolted against with the hashtag **#MyErie** and release of a locally produced short film **#OurErie**, touting the region’s many desirable features. In fact, the film attracted national news crews to return and reexamine Erie.

A bright future appears to be glowing ahead as industry, citizens, executives, and thought leaders lay out a path charting the city and county’s growth. Erie Refocused and Emerge 2040 are proving to be a guiding light toward putting the city and county on a path to recovery. Erie’s history as a maker city remains a point of generational pride, and innovative plans to market the region’s workforce are taking shape. In the meantime, Erie Insurance Group just surpassed General Electric Company as the county’s largest employer, which is creating a new set of educational needs and a transformational identity shift.

The county, located in the most Northwestern corner of Pennsylvania, is now making its move to transform affordable post-secondary educational offerings for Erie County residents. Despite being home to 14 community colleges, Pennsylvania’s fourth most populous city represents the largest metropolitan area in the state without a community college. A community college operating in concert with economic development efforts, a resurgence of private investment into the county, and a countywide commitment to growth could be the key to emerging from the recession in a responsive and proactive manner.

The goal of this study is to assess the feasibility of a community college in Erie County. The study seeks to provide Empower Erie and the Pennsylvania Department of Education and Board of Education with sufficient data to move forward with the creation of a community college in Erie County.

What did the research show?

Recognizing Opportunities

- **Socio-economic and educational attainment data illustrate that the Erie County residents are lagging with respect to educational attainment and wealth creation.** College is financially out of reach for a majority of Erie County residents. Even with significant financial aid, students are lacking the financial means to pursue higher education. Erie County has low educational attainment, a soft base of high-paying jobs, and significant poverty. A community college would be a lynchpin in increasing the educational attainment of the region; a key factor to attracting business and industry with decent paying jobs, which could lead to a reduction in poverty.
- **Affordable educational options and training are needed in the area.** Poverty levels are high and educational attainment needs to improve – a community college with a connected business community could benefit the residents of Erie County. People need an affordable option to pursue their post-secondary education. Analysis of student and community data show that college affordability is the number one driver of support for the initiative. The data also show that colleges and universities in the area are generous with financial aid, grants, and scholarships, but the need is too great and college for most residents is still out of reach. Nationally, community colleges educate students at a much lower cost than four-year institutions, attract a diverse set of students, and have a higher persistence rate for lower income students than for-profit institutions. Higher education via community college is a much less risky endeavor, particularly for those with lower incomes.
- **Replace a retiring workforce and quickly respond to economic shifts and training needs.** The greying demographics of Erie County will necessitate replacement of many highly-trained employees in the manufacturing sector. More people need the necessary training and certifications. Erie County would benefit if a coordinated workforce and economic development system that can nimbly assess and respond to education and business needs is established. A community college could be the center of this integrated system, serving as a centralized resource where employees are prepared for and connected with employment. A community college could also help foster the growth of existing companies and attract new jobs to the area.

- **Serve as a feeder to the already strong four-year university system.** Erie County has access to four high-quality universities. Each university has its own assets, unique course offerings, and strengths within the community. A community college should not be viewed as a competitor for these schools but a potential partner. Many of the universities already offer community college-like offerings to students – from Edinboro University’s Porreco Center and Mercyhurst University’s operations at Mercyhurst Northeast and the Booker T. Washington Center. Centralized collaboration and partnership through a community college could create a more cohesive and responsive system and free up resources for four-year universities responding to the local need for a community college.
- **Get Erie County to parity with the rest of the state and bring it to the funding table.** Erie County is the largest population center in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania without a community college. Taxpayers in Erie County are currently paying to support community colleges in other areas of the state but not receiving any of the benefits. In a county that is struggling with poverty and population retention, a community college could help to stem the tide of brain drain and give students a chance to obtain training that matches locally available jobs.
- **Strong support from a broad base of constituencies.** Since the last effort to establish a community college buckled under the pressure of divergent political priorities, there appears to be a clear shift among Erie’s leadership to build consensus toward a sustainable post-secondary environment to support the local needs. Business leaders and workforce development experts have been active in the Empower Erie process. They understand that many of their workforce needs could be filled through coursework and training at the community college. While community colleges fulfill multiple missions, their role in anticipating and responding to changing economic needs of the community served is a resource unique to the model, and pays dividends particularly in economies like Erie County.
- **Serve as a convener in the market to avoid duplication and promote collaboration.** As Pennsylvania’s 14th largest county, Erie must continue down a path of recovery in order to make a turn toward growth and revitalization. In the current climate, resources are limited, and a community college could serve to actively manage collaboration among workforce and economic development efforts, while at the same time partnering with existing educational organizations to connect the entire education ecosystem.
- **Partner not competitor.** College and university leaders throughout Erie County would benefit by a community college as a vehicle to increase the market of college bound students. Local colleges and universities partner with the community college, in communities where one exists, to help carve out a niche in the market. Community colleges in other markets have established strong partnerships with existing post-secondary institutions, which have

proven to effectively increase enrollment and diverse coursework offerings, while increasing post-secondary attainment levels.

Overcoming Challenges

- **Getting stuck in the scarcity mentality.** There is no denying that Erie’s socio-economic demographics, unemployment, and workforce climate are challenging and have been for decades. The Erie School District’s financial collapse is real and requires continued vigilance and advocacy. A community college does not contribute to the decline, rather it is a part of the solution to resurgence. Recent private investments in a broad array of industry segments from healthcare, professional services (insurance), tourism, and building expansion throughout the county are giving Erie and its residents hope. A half-billion-dollars of new private investment into the community show that Erie’s best days are not behind her.

Support for the community college does not mean that high schools should not be supported, indeed it shows leaders in Harrisburg that Erie is taking low education attainment levels seriously, and that its leaders understand how the pre-k through 16 education system works. Community colleges can strengthen access to high quality education in the k-12 sector by offering dual enrollment. Viewing these multiple investments and new initiatives through a lens of “if we do this, then we can’t do that,” can stunt progress and doom a good project unnecessarily. On its merits, the community college makes sense and Erie residents should not be forced to choose it over solving persistent educational funding needs.

- **Higher education market shifts throughout Erie County, the state, and the nation.** Across the country, enrollments at colleges and universities are declining while leaders from both political parties are exploring and even implementing tuition-free community college programs. Former President Barack Obama touted the value of two free years of community college and in Tennessee, Oregon and most recently New York that vision is becoming a reality. As Americans increasingly recognize that a high school diploma often does not suffice, in community’s fortunate enough to house a community college, extending public education to 14 years is becoming helping to a bridge to either a college or university or family sustaining job.

The timing of this study also coincides with a changing post-secondary marketplace in Erie County, creating an opportunity for a community college to fill in the gaps. Edinboro University is managing financial and enrollment challenges; University of Pittsburgh and Penn State University are evaluating the closure of local campuses; an effort at the federal level to restrict immigration is underway discouraging international student attraction and retention, and the advent of the Rural Regional College all represent market uncertainty, but should not be viewed as mitigating need.

- **Financial realities and financial support.** The financials for the proposed community college need to take a robust and comprehensive view of the costs of operating a thriving and sustainable community college in the short- and long-term. It would be recommended that a community college foundation, endowment, and scholarship fund be developed.
- **Become a strong partner in workforce and economic development.** A community college in Erie County needs to create meaningful relationships with employers, and the people of Erie County need to have access to training that translates into employment. If the community college forges these vital partnerships and seek to be an engine of economic growth and workforce development it will achieve its goals.
- **Learning approaches that help students be successful.** Distance learning can be an attractive and important option for areas of the country that lack access to brick-and-mortar postsecondary options. However, this option is available to those with computers and access to the internet or in isolated classrooms. Research shows that distance and on-line learning is not the best option for the kinds of students that typically enroll in community colleges. Columbia University’s Community College Research Center found that students with lower incomes and weaker academic preparation perform more poorly in distance and on-line learning courses than did similar students enrolled in face-to-face courses¹.

In addition, we know that community college students require a level of advising and guidance that is not possible via distance learning. For example, a rigorously-researched model of college advising that has a strong positive impact on community college student retention and graduation includes active face-to-face advising designed to create strong relationships between students and advisors. This “intrusive” model, known as Integrated Planning and Advising for Student Success (iPASS), has been adopted as one part of large-scale reform efforts across both the Tennessee and North Carolina community college systems, and has expanded into a national network of community colleges as part of a Gates Foundation initiative².

Taken in totality with the extensive research and analysis completed for this study, there is a clear demand for a community college in Erie County. The level of educational attainment, lack of affordability in the market, and clear need to have a responsive mechanism to industry and workforce development all point to the urgent need for a community college.

¹ Jagers, Shanna Smith (2014). Democratization of Education for Whom? Online Learning and Educational Equity. *Diversity & Democracy*, Winter 2014, Vol. 17, No. 1.

² Stratford, Michael (2015). A Tougher Test for Colleges. *Inside Higher Education*, September 23.

Section One: Erie County Secondary Data Profile

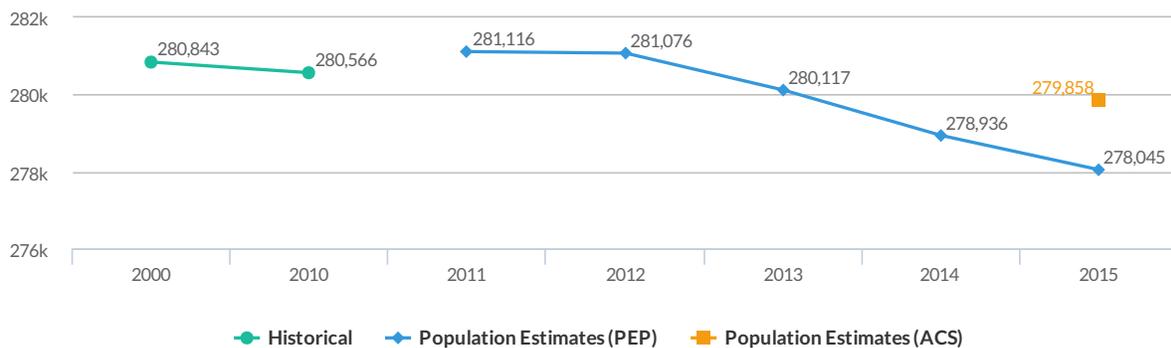
Section One seeks to provide an overview of Erie County’s demographics, economy, secondary, and post-secondary education market.

Population Data and Trends

According to U.S. Census statistics, the estimated population of Erie County in 2015 was 278,045, which represents a decline of nearly one percent (1 percent) from population estimates in 2010³. Erie County is the 14th largest county in terms of population within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania⁴. Analysis of population projections produced by the Pennsylvania State Data Center show that population is expected to be 275,355 in 2020 and 267,538 by 2030. Population will decrease in the region at a modest rate until 2030. Erie’s population has been in decline since 2011, a troubling trend for the county. This trend is, in part being stemmed with the addition of new American immigrants. However, Erie County will need to strategize to retain and attract its population.

Population demographics show that 49.3 percent of the population is female and 50.7 percent of the population is male.

POPULATION



In addition to experiencing population decline, Erie County’s population is greying. American Community Survey data from 2015 shows that 21.5 percent of the population are age 60 or older. Nearly 15 percent are aged 50-59, while 25.5 percent of the population is 19 or under.

³ Source: <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/POP060210/42049,4224000,42>

⁴ United States Census Bureau / American FactFinder. "Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2015". 2015 Population Estimates Program. Web. March 2016. <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

Age Breakdown of Erie County

	Number	Percentage
0 to 9 years	33,621	12.0%
10 to 19 years	37,876	13.5%
20 to 29 years	39,951	14.3%
30 to 39 years	31,687	11.3%
40 to 49 years	35,132	12.6%
50 to 59 years	41,430	14.8%
60 to 69 years	30,354	10.8%
70+ years	29,807	10.7%
Total Population	279,858	

Source: American Community Survey, 2015

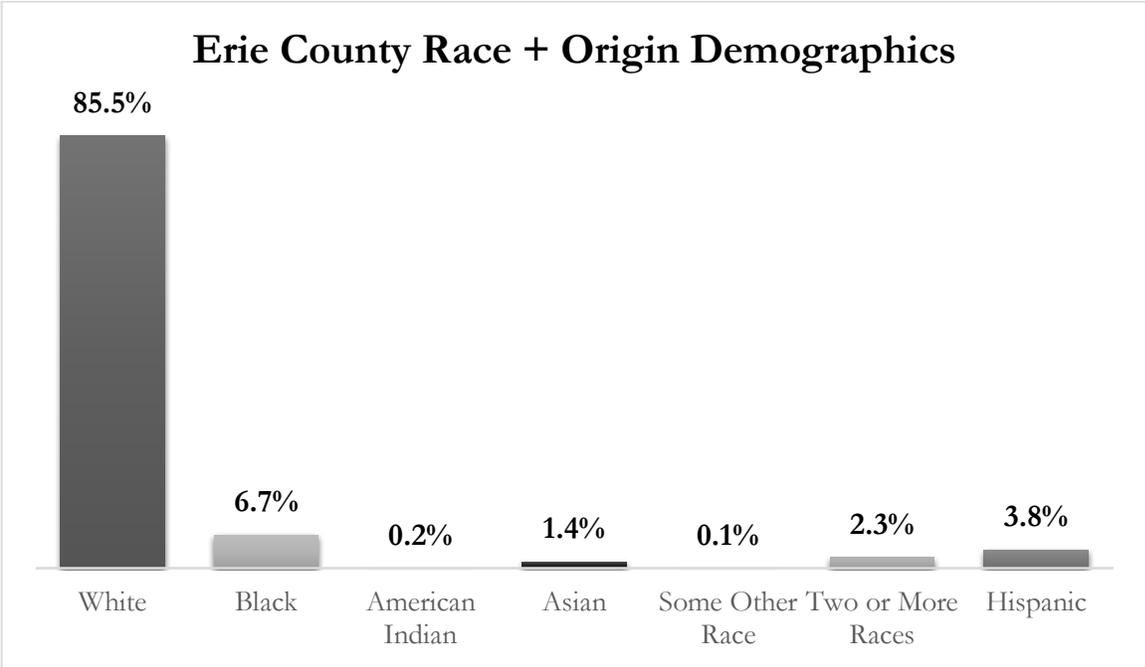
Erie County has 109,934 households, 63.6 percent of which are family households. Twenty-six percent (26 percent) of households in Erie County have children under 18 years of age and, of these households, 13.2 percent have a female head of household.

Household Types in Erie County

	Number	Percentage
Family households (families)	69,932	63.6%
With own children under 18 years	28,633	26.0%
Married couple family	50,701	46.1%
<i>With own children under 18 years</i>	<i>17,400</i>	<i>15.8%</i>
Male householder, no wife present	4,669	4.2%
<i>With own children under 18 years</i>	<i>2,422</i>	<i>2.2%</i>
Female householder, no husband present	14,562	13.2%
<i>With own children under 18 years</i>	<i>8,811</i>	<i>8.0%</i>
Non-family households	40,002	36.4%
Householder living alone	32,958	30.0%
<i>65 years and over</i>	<i>12,508</i>	<i>11.4%</i>
Total Households	109,934	

Source: American Community Survey, 2015

The race and origin of Erie County is largely white/Caucasian and non-Hispanic (85.5 percent). Black/African American individuals make up 6.7 percent of the county. People reporting Hispanic origin totaled 3.8 percent.



Employment and Workforce Profile

Erie County is known as a maker city. Its workforce is highly skilled and known for its productivity. Erie’s labor pool is one of its strongest attributes – Erie County markets itself as a place where you can get access to generational, skilled, and well-trained/trainable workers.

According to Moody’s Analytics January 2017 report, Erie’s economic, employment, and workforce

metrics show that Erie County is still in a mild recession, with higher than usual unemployment and job losses in key industry segments that are difficult to replace with similar high-paying jobs. The current unemployment rate is 6.3 percent for the county. Forty-three percent of unemployment compensation exhaustees fall into the manufacturing sector, followed by 13 percent in trade, transportation, and utilities, and 13 percent in education services. Erie’s economic strengths include manufacturing, healthcare, and tourism.

Unemployment Compensation Exhaustees				
Jan 2016 to December 2016	Volume		Percent of Total	
	County	PA	County	PA
Pre-UC Industry				
Natural Resources & Mining	20	3,960	0.5%	3.5%
Construction	230	12,130	7.0%	10.5%
Manufacturing	1,370	17,440	43.0%	15.5%
Trade Transportation + Utilities	410	21,630	13.0%	19.0%
Information	30	1,800	1.0%	1.5%
Financial Activities	80	5,730	2.5%	5.0%
Professional + Business Services	320	20,240	10.0%	18.0%
Education + Health Services	420	17,250	13.0%	15.0%
Leisure + Hospitality	170	7,510	5.5%	6.5%
Other Services	70	2,900	2.0%	2.5%
Government	30	1,100	1.0%	1.0%
Info Not Available	30	2,310	1.0%	2.0%
Total	3,180	114,000	100%	100%

Source: PA Unemployment statistics

The economic performance and situation of Erie County is one of the weakest in the Northeast corridor of the U.S.; the economy is in bad shape but is expected to move out of its current slump. The region's largest employer, General Electric Transportation, laid off 1,500 employees over the past 18 months; and recent announcements about corporate cutbacks once again bring Erie's dependence on this company to the forefront. A well-educated workforce which can adapt to changing employer needs, and who can update their skills and training quickly and inexpensively helps to insulate Erie against the inevitable ups and downs of any economy. Because Erie County has not fully rebounded from the recession, these layoffs have had highly negative economic and community repercussions.

Payroll employment was strong at the start of the decade and stabilized between 2011 and 2015 before dropping sharply in early 2016. Meanwhile, a slowdown in industrial production has capped factory employment, weighing on income growth and consumer spending. The jobless rate has risen significantly, from five percent to near seven percent, which is not only among the highest in the state but the eighth highest in the Northeast U.S. Housing is predictably sluggish, prices are rising slowly, and very little homebuilding is taking place.

Manufacturing: Erie's economy is still strongly rooted in the manufacturing sector with 16 percent of the local workforce employed in the sector. While Erie County's recession is starting to moderate, its continued rebound is dependent upon a stabilization of the manufacturing sector. Manufacturing remains an important and vital part of the economy. Job losses in this sector are particularly painful for residents of Erie County and the local economy because it is difficult to replace these jobs, salaries, and benefits. For example, jobs in the manufacturing sector pay about two-thirds more than the jobs in other nonfarm industries, making the jobs difficult to replace.

Erie manufacturing is highly concentrated in plastics and rubber, fabricated metal, and transportation equipment. These industries employ two-thirds of factory workers, and the latter two industries have cut back their workforce. GE Transportation, one of Erie's largest employers, is planning for weaker orders – a signal that future factory production will drop, signaling potentially more layoffs. Recent news reports about GE shareholders' desire to continue cutting costs to improve overall profits could also be viewed as a notice to Erie County that further migration out of Lawrence Park Township may be on the horizon. Increasingly, manufacturing companies require higher levels of education and training than they once did. Hence, high school graduates are less likely to be successful in the manufacturing sector than might have been the case a generation ago.

Analysis of Erie County data in 2015 showed there are 22,230 total manufacturing jobs in Erie County⁵ (17.8 percent of the total workforce in Erie County which is 7.8 percent higher than Pennsylvania – 10 percent). When you combine the strength of this sector in the Erie County economy with aging demographics, the demand for a skilled, trained workforce will increase. According to a study conducted by the NW Commission in 2014, 33,093 individuals in the

⁵ Please note, these numbers may not include the layoffs from GE, which started in early 2016.

workforce were 55 years of age and above – constituting roughly 23 percent of the total workforce. Utilizing this study as a proxy and basis for assuming workforce demand in Erie County’s manufacturing sector, if 23 percent of the 33,093 individuals 55 or older working in manufacturing retired, there would be 5,890 individuals set to retire in the next 10 years.

Healthcare. The growth of Erie County’s healthcare industry has helped to stabilize the economy as it endures losses in the manufacturing sector. Erie County hosts two major health systems and the largest osteopathic school in the country; their continued expansion and success in the Erie market will help grow and stabilize the employment market. UMPC Hamot recently announced the largest project in the hospital’s 135-year history, a \$111 million facility in Erie. Officials project growth in its services and patient volumes that support the investment.

It is noteworthy, however, that the age demographics of the region will affect the healthcare sector when Erie County begins to depend upon nursing and residential care facilities more than hospitals and private physicians for their medical care. This dependence upon nursing and residential care facilities is, and will be, higher than the region and state. Looming efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act’s Medicaid expansion creates market instability for healthcare providers in the region, because average incomes are so low that the loss of coverage for lower-income residents would reduce the demand for healthcare while simultaneously increasing costs for uncompensated care at hospitals.

Housing. A booming housing market relies upon in-migration, new housing start-ups, and demand for existing housing stock. Projections for the housing market in Erie County according to Moody’s are not favorable due to low demand for existing housing stock and low demand for new start homes. Further exacerbating the state of the housing market, foreclosure inventories in Erie County have increased since 2015 and residential vacancy rates are higher than average. Efforts to revitalize the blighted housing stock are underway as recommend in Erie Refocused.

Erie County should begin to feel some economic relief this year as the residual effects from General Electric’s layoffs subside. However, as already noted, these job losses are more significant in that they are high wage jobs that are not easily replaced. The table below shows that, for the most part, Erie County jobs pay lower than Pennsylvania and the U.S.

Comparative Employment and Income						
Sector	% of Total Employment			Average Annual Earnings		
	ERI	PA	U.S.	ERI	PA	U.S.
Mining	0.1%	0.6%	0.5%	\$24,530	\$82,854	\$110,528
Construction	3.1%	4.0%	4.5%	\$53,088	\$67,819	\$64,354
Manufacturing	17.1%	9.7%	8.7%	\$74,177	\$74,927	\$80,667
<i>Durable</i>	<i>67.5%</i>	<i>61.1%</i>	<i>63.0%</i>	<i>nd</i>	<i>\$74,078</i>	<i>\$82,450</i>
<i>Nondurable</i>	<i>32.5%</i>	<i>38.9%</i>	<i>37.0%</i>	<i>nd</i>	<i>\$76,250</i>	<i>\$77,689</i>
Transportation/Utilities	2.5%	4.5%	3.8%	\$55,706	\$68,786	\$67,456
Wholesale Trade	3.0%	3.9%	4.1%	\$60,100	\$85,184	\$82,548
Retail Trade	11.6%	10.9%	11.0%	\$28,231	\$31,445	\$34,289
Information	0.9%	1.5%	1.9%	\$52,654	\$22,603	\$110,216

Comparative Employment and Income

Sector	% of Total Employment			Average Annual Earnings		
	ERI	PA	U.S.	ERI	PA	U.S.
Financial Activities	4.7%	5.4%	5.7%	\$49,136	\$50,924	\$54,785
Prof. + Business Services	7.9%	13.3%	13.9%	\$36,778	\$73,123	\$67,615
Educ. + Health Services	21.5%	20.4%	15.5%	\$49,463	\$56,127	\$53,853
Leisure + Hosp. Services	10.8%	9.4%	10.7%	\$20,407	\$24,670	\$27,201
Other Services	4.6%	4.4%	4.0%	\$35,280	\$37,435	\$36,830
Government	12.1%	12.1%	15.5%	\$70,021	\$77,738	\$75,980

Sources: Percent of total employment – BLS, Moody’s Analytics, 2015. Average annual earnings - -BEA, Moody’s Analytics, 2014.

Since 2010, the unemployment rate in Erie, Pennsylvania, has ranged from 9.2 percent to an average of 6.5 percent in 2016. The current unemployment rate for Erie is 6.3 percent. Erie County’s unemployment rate is above the Pennsylvania (5.2 percent) and national average (4.7 percent) (See table below for a summary of economic indicator and employment data for Erie County)⁶

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Indicators	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
12.1	12.4	12.2	12.4	12.5	12.5	Gross Metro product (CO9\$ bil)	12.5	12.7	13.1	13.3	13.4	13.5
3.1	2.9	-1.6	1.6	0.2	0.2	% change	0.3	1.7	2.5	1.7	0.7	1.1
127.1	130.1	130.0	129.1	129.5	130.5	Total employment	129.0	129.9	131.2	132.4	132.8	132.7
-0.0	2.4	-0.1	-0.7	0.3	0.8	% change	-1.1	0.7	1.0	0.9	0.3	-0.1
9.2	8.1	7.7	7.2	6.1	5.2	Unemployment rate (%)	6.5	6.3	5.2	4.6	4.7	5.1
3.1	7.0	3.2	-1.0	2.6	3.8	Personal income growth (%)	2.5	4.5	4.9	4.9	4.4	3.6
42.6	43.7	44.2	45.4	46.1	47.4	Median household income (\$ ths)	49.7	51.4	53.4	55.3	57.3	59.1
280.8	281.1	281.1	280.1	278.9	277.8	Population (ths)	276.7	275.1	274.4	273.6	272.6	271.6
0.3	0.1	-0.0	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4	% change	-0.4	-0.6	-0.3	-0.3	-0.4	-0.4
0.4	0.0	-0.4	-1.2	-1.5	-1.4	Net migration (ths)	-1.5	-1.9	-1.0	-1.2	-1.3	-1.3
369	140	216	258	166	192	Single-family permits (#)	193	278	414	455	430	446
217	171	272	209	155	75	Multifamily permits (#)	86	37	75	80	65	77
148.5	148.5	150.0	153.3	151.6	158.1	FHFA house price (1995Q1=100)	162.5	170.6	174.9	176.2	177.3	180.3

Source: Moody’s Analytics, 2017

⁶ Source. Moody’s Analytics, 2017.

As of Q3 2016, the top employers are in the manufacturing, education, health services, government, and services sectors.

Top 25 Employers Erie County (Q3 2016)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. General Electric Company | 14. Lord Corporation |
| 2. Erie Indemnity CO | 15. City of Erie |
| 3. UPMC Hamot | 16. Country Fair, Inc. |
| 4. State Government | 17. PA State System of Higher Education |
| 5. Wal-Mart Associates, Inc. | 18. Regional Health Services Inc. |
| 6. Saint Vincent Health Center | 19. Pennsylvania State University |
| 7. School District of the City of Erie | 20. Plastek Industries, Inc. |
| 8. Federal Government | 21. Mercyhurst University |
| 9. Erie County | 22. Millcreek Community Hospital |
| 10. Dr. Gertrude A Barber Center Inc. | 23. The Tamarkin Company |
| 11. Presque Isle Downs, Inc. | 24. YMCA of Greater Erie |
| 12. Gannon University | 25. Saint Vincent Med Ed & Research Institute |
| 13. Millcreek Township School District | |

The data table below profiles the Erie County economy and is sorted by employment (full-time and part-time jobs). The data is sourced from the 2015 IMPLAN data set and examines total output by sector (GDP and value-add), employee compensation, proprietor income (\$), other property type income, and tax on production imports. This is a consolidated profile of Erie County's economy.

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
* Employment and payroll of local gov't, education	6,100	\$532,898,200	\$466,800,000	\$0	\$66,098,280	\$0
Hospitals	5,389	\$733,565,100	\$314,028,500	\$27,206,550	\$33,047,460	\$3,762,720
Full-service restaurants	4,726	\$202,336,100	\$81,369,340	\$2,969,612	-\$18,504	\$12,532,610
Railroad rolling stock manufacturing	4,650	\$3,908,057,000	\$527,237,700	\$0	\$125,267,300	\$18,581,820
Individual and family services	4,490	\$166,031,000	\$101,074,100	\$23,518,340	-\$8,605,104	\$858,498
Limited-service restaurants	4,479	\$332,697,700	\$64,962,920	\$5,141,831	\$89,240,520	\$20,732,630
Wholesale trade	4,083	\$921,841,200	\$274,079,000	\$8,765,195	\$137,640,600	\$126,738,800
Religious organizations	3,642	\$611,333,500	\$174,110,400	\$249,885	\$143,058	\$0
Retail - General merchandise stores	3,498	\$212,945,700	\$84,163,220	\$180,168	\$12,466,900	\$26,932,180
* Employment and payroll of state gov't, non-education	3,408	\$298,883,900	\$261,691,100	\$0	\$37,192,780	\$0
Real estate	3,298	\$550,800,100	\$26,458,210	\$6,596,409	\$296,368,300	\$52,085,780

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Nursing and community care facilities	3,196	\$209,384,800	\$117,605,600	\$1,582,948	\$3,518,625	\$3,986,093
Other plastics product manufacturing	3,036	\$804,238,600	\$163,182,000	\$427,938	\$51,769,540	\$4,408,012
* Employment and payroll of local gov't, non-education	3,014	\$218,378,200	\$191,059,200	\$0	\$27,319,020	\$0
All other food and drinking places	2,998	\$105,726,200	\$59,285,890	\$6,250,614	-\$15,058,020	\$6,070,400
Offices of physicians	2,988	\$490,616,500	\$362,810,400	\$8,473,074	-\$22,264,320	\$2,302,463
Insurance carriers	2,945	\$1,242,080,000	\$292,243,300	\$155,184	\$252,746,800	\$65,543,190
Employment services	2,814	\$144,059,500	\$71,248,420	\$448,018	\$27,610,740	\$1,123,962
Residential intellectual disabilities, mental health, substance abuse and other facilities	2,477	\$113,420,100	\$87,525,990	\$2,437,569	-\$10,821,000	\$809,357
Retail - Food and beverage stores	2,431	\$161,914,200	\$78,557,740	\$3,435,206	\$16,573,810	\$9,850,191
Junior colleges, colleges, universities, and professional schools	2,251	\$214,569,000	\$103,623,800	\$160,898	\$9,129,844	\$4,407,042
Labor and civic organizations	1,579	\$107,374,400	\$26,075,170	\$1,070,148	\$20,499,660	\$7,491,338
Retail – Non-store retailers	1,572	\$125,571,600	\$12,555,740	\$5,238,947	\$20,236,240	\$13,523,890
Retail - Gasoline stores	1,561	\$78,492,390	\$35,023,950	\$4,617,215	-\$4,186,284	\$7,232,893
Retail - Motor vehicle and parts dealers	1,542	\$151,892,400	\$75,144,360	\$5,566,757	\$12,813,390	\$18,703,350
* Employment and payroll of state gov't, education	1,528	\$74,196,060	\$65,077,430	\$0	\$9,118,625	\$0
Retail - Miscellaneous store retailers	1,519	\$48,743,530	\$19,802,970	\$5,069,866	-\$1,972,127	\$4,180,942
Other financial investment activities	1,517	\$194,451,900	\$16,878,120	\$3,525,026	\$1,946,368	\$2,322,724
Services to buildings	1,484	\$47,110,510	\$17,234,640	\$5,077,330	\$2,244,568	\$975,838
Offices of other health practitioners	1,464	\$118,935,700	\$50,386,100	\$15,935,980	\$14,221,900	\$1,155,847
Truck transportation	1,426	\$228,734,200	\$73,267,390	\$2,244,301	\$11,983,740	\$1,876,962
Elementary and secondary schools	1,396	\$61,820,630	\$41,296,000	\$366,651	-\$6,523,352	\$2,074,133
Monetary authorities and depository credit intermediation	1,331	\$247,905,700	\$81,929,040	\$197,215	\$37,157,570	\$16,780,910
Automotive repair and maintenance, except car washes	1,322	\$128,667,400	\$57,511,050	\$19,624,040	-\$1,789,210	\$10,213,370
Retail - Clothing and clothing accessories stores	1,204	\$77,424,080	\$21,182,770	\$2,237,387	\$11,107,550	\$6,503,494

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Retail - Building material and garden equipment and supplies stores	1,184	\$101,094,300	\$39,210,680	\$3,361,889	\$8,615,208	\$8,020,896
Insurance agencies, brokerages, and related activities	1,155	\$196,033,300	\$50,213,920	\$14,525,600	\$20,284,610	\$1,302,690
Personal care services	1,137	\$43,278,900	\$16,991,580	\$21,468,340	-\$16,227,470	\$1,177,878
Gambling industries (except casino hotels)	1,135	\$181,248,200	\$34,433,390	\$1,307,914	\$47,575,320	\$18,308,690
Machine shops	1,133	\$160,651,700	\$60,323,300	\$1,735,154	\$8,172,214	\$633,486
Scientific research and development services	1,129	\$242,021,800	\$65,033,710	\$902,845	\$21,255,010	\$1,906,120
Construction of other new nonresidential structures	1,118	\$136,788,300	\$36,462,020	\$10,368,240	\$11,206,600	\$880,648
Outpatient care centers	1,103	\$163,654,000	\$54,022,890	\$1,702,348	\$25,226,920	\$783,082
Home health care services	1,082	\$43,787,870	\$32,417,260	\$9,479,893	-\$9,573,845	\$242,135
Retail - Health and personal care stores	1,080	\$86,811,390	\$40,524,540	\$3,672,236	\$3,141,185	\$6,317,085
Landscape and horticultural services	1,037	\$58,745,600	\$27,077,270	\$3,611,728	\$5,962,629	\$962,112
* Employment and payroll of federal gov't, non-military	983	\$149,405,800	\$100,225,100	\$0	\$49,180,680	\$0
Maintenance and repair construction of nonresidential structures	974	\$133,650,400	\$29,375,360	\$10,788,320	\$9,996,268	\$655,429
Hotels and motels, including casino hotels	887	\$76,210,390	\$20,136,860	\$1,324,151	\$11,065,070	\$8,845,356
Construction of new single-family residential structures	876	\$113,913,400	\$27,498,250	\$7,031,672	\$17,448,380	\$1,924,884
Offices of dentists	863	\$92,867,020	\$39,416,230	\$3,110,311	\$16,320,870	\$787,167
Retail - Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument and book stores	859	\$40,616,690	\$15,402,310	\$2,191,054	\$2,721,055	\$3,269,782
Legal services	845	\$131,036,900	\$43,656,870	\$6,290,104	\$26,164,580	\$12,624,740
Business support services	834	\$31,830,220	\$13,571,230	\$1,831,777	-\$1,287,585	\$586,547
Child day care services	817	\$36,718,980	\$16,893,800	\$5,027,045	\$3,832,281	\$129,174
* Employment and payroll of federal gov't, military	806	\$81,961,910	\$27,796,670	\$0	\$54,165,240	\$0
Construction of other new residential structures	803	\$215,426,500	\$2,807,108	\$22,840,310	\$11,151,530	\$493,565
Marketing research and all other miscellaneous professional, scientific, and technical services	765	\$43,245,660	\$12,267,080	\$14,667,170	-\$4,134,353	\$367,778
Transit and ground passenger transportation	734	\$39,324,990	\$13,402,990	\$202,423	\$4,297,133	\$577,106

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping, and payroll services	732	\$51,093,100	\$20,934,030	\$9,620,010	\$4,366,327	\$586,920
Valve and fittings, other than plumbing, manufacturing	728	\$240,539,800	\$54,543,770	\$344,552	\$30,251,660	\$2,151,055
Other educational services	704	\$19,186,320	\$7,949,843	\$825,681	-\$556,144	\$197,159
Investigation and security services	695	\$29,504,870	\$17,902,610	\$528,999	\$801,655	\$645,030
Management of companies and enterprises	660	\$115,135,800	\$43,974,940	-\$7,557	\$6,964,467	\$4,989,152
Architectural, engineering, and related services	656	\$97,630,010	\$43,420,770	\$3,736,610	-\$561,770	\$633,144
Other amusement and recreation industries	655	\$33,623,780	\$11,550,130	\$16,957	\$2,062,424	\$2,636,650
Management consulting services	631	\$55,239,410	\$19,097,470	\$7,455,054	-\$1,083,853	\$510,238
Construction of new commercial structures, including farm structures	583	\$66,855,900	\$21,819,810	\$3,026,944	\$5,074,925	\$674,288
Printing	567	\$90,114,050	\$24,701,550	\$562,949	\$13,090,000	\$689,790
Fruit farming	553	\$24,366,670	\$4,979,759	\$3,166,906	\$12,562,550	-\$23,952
All other crop farming	543	\$9,841,786	\$3,095,712	\$690,417	\$1,865,653	-\$9,112
Other rubber product manufacturing	527	\$206,001,600	\$53,423,390	\$84,055	\$36,928,130	\$1,766,589
Other state government enterprises	524	\$72,955,120	\$33,486,140	\$0	\$1,441,771	-\$5,589,443
Advertising, public relations, and related services	515	\$77,227,470	\$10,736,120	\$5,574,526	\$9,287,350	\$1,860,325
Construction of new power and communication structures	501	\$55,340,650	\$13,299,770	\$6,777,334	\$8,449,732	\$669,409
Frozen specialties manufacturing	493	\$185,175,300	\$31,660,420	\$30,687	\$6,153,353	\$329,692
Postal service	491	\$53,171,010	\$44,703,370	\$0	\$177,891	\$0
Community food, housing, and other relief services, including rehabilitation services	491	\$40,318,170	\$15,243,110	\$775,538	\$5,085,641	\$143,999
Mayonnaise, dressing, and sauce manufacturing	490	\$289,366,400	\$26,159,240	\$9,820	\$21,010,690	\$778,682
Sheet metal work manufacturing	484	\$94,109,740	\$22,691,120	\$433,534	\$2,449,193	\$713,748
Medical and diagnostic laboratories	480	\$48,472,120	\$26,961,080	\$1,177,873	\$144,416	\$246,624
Other ambulatory health care services	475	\$39,617,480	\$17,702,050	\$999,591	\$1,597,028	\$111,392

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment repair and maintenance	464	\$78,950,130	\$36,731,840	\$5,314,076	\$9,171,234	\$7,501,799
Couriers and messengers	459	\$43,756,350	\$14,315,970	\$130,435	\$7,057,429	\$214,393
Commercial Sports Except Racing	434	\$30,985,550	\$2,790,165	\$5,117,490	\$364,904	\$12,306,930
Industrial mold manufacturing	427	\$76,449,490	\$33,841,220	\$0	\$5,637,736	\$269,566
Custom computer programming services	427	\$61,218,000	\$20,704,520	\$2,490,122	\$4,644,221	\$1,727,659
Nonferrous metal foundries	427	\$98,744,370	\$24,369,590	-\$160,079	\$7,701,108	\$584,929
Fitness and recreational sports centers	424	\$16,540,220	\$6,170,347	\$11,368	\$1,208,733	\$1,255,032
Bread and bakery product, except frozen, manufacturing	419	\$49,256,110	\$13,944,490	\$291,347	\$2,442,358	\$1,467,580
Retail - Electronics and appliance stores	418	\$22,504,350	\$15,438,740	\$1,989,852	-\$6,782,968	\$1,862,514
Securities and commodity contracts intermediation and brokerage	405	\$32,456,060	\$13,522,240	\$1,051,575	-\$7,807,531	\$647,143
Maintenance and repair construction of residential structures	385	\$57,350,340	\$12,374,660	\$3,780,619	\$3,853,810	\$100,934
Warehousing and storage	382	\$33,162,620	\$14,044,270	\$53,214	\$2,549,697	\$203,439
Retail - Furniture and home furnishings stores	364	\$31,104,430	\$10,967,550	\$865,322	\$2,805,647	\$2,594,723
Construction of new manufacturing structures	363	\$40,512,990	\$15,679,530	\$1,266,178	\$3,345,397	\$145,041
Construction of new highways and streets	360	\$55,703,490	\$12,135,840	\$3,165,294	\$3,525,871	\$228,005
Other support services	351	\$20,971,970	\$5,653,898	\$1,169,733	\$8,548	\$461,973
Ferrous metal foundries	347	\$115,307,500	\$28,718,830	-\$166,581	\$13,771,600	\$549,112
Other personal services	342	\$17,508,180	\$3,676,213	\$13,201,540	-\$5,003,679	\$386,168
Maintenance and repair construction of highways, streets, bridges, and tunnels	328	\$45,058,010	\$9,903,412	\$3,637,102	\$3,370,075	\$220,967
Private households	327	\$3,730,352	\$3,730,352	\$0	\$0	\$0
Extraction of natural gas and crude petroleum	316	\$33,320,840	\$1,682,063	\$6,519,870	\$820,205	\$4,357,189
Construction of new educational and vocational structures	313	\$51,535,970	\$8,050,364	\$4,230,014	\$3,320,334	\$199,896
Grantmaking, giving, and social advocacy organizations	302	\$45,918,800	\$11,059,410	\$716,050	\$10,293,400	\$790,658
Electroplating, anodizing, and coloring metal	299	\$40,368,320	\$14,904,200	\$436,494	\$1,074,006	\$432,741

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Rubber and plastics hoses and belting manufacturing	293	\$87,240,140	\$22,104,750	\$6,841	\$13,867,490	\$132,604
Personal and household goods repair and maintenance	292	\$39,481,720	\$7,701,159	\$21,450,310	\$1,240,514	\$1,624,096
Scales, balances, and miscellaneous general purpose machinery manufacturing	288	\$91,953,790	\$24,382,290	\$0	\$5,460,913	\$526,170
Radio and television broadcasting	287	\$66,909,040	\$15,200,030	\$12,422,600	-\$3,304,556	\$1,414,394
Veterinary services	283	\$28,001,810	\$10,799,630	\$953,378	\$1,246,359	\$381,826
Natural gas distribution	281	\$203,781,000	\$26,087,890	\$1,408,293	\$8,169,927	\$16,423,490
Showcase, partition, shelving, and locker manufacturing	277	\$68,242,000	\$24,232,960	\$0	\$5,545,775	\$166,253
Totalizing fluid meter and counting device manufacturing	271	\$115,682,600	\$26,544,860	\$0	\$19,729,500	\$955,805
Computer systems design services	269	\$29,040,970	\$17,448,840	\$1,492,655	-\$3,093,972	\$362,793
Fabricated structural metal manufacturing	263	\$81,501,000	\$15,266,250	\$162,341	\$6,015,462	\$701,299
Scenic and sightseeing transportation and support activities for transportation	263	\$34,820,880	\$10,512,480	\$280,310	\$2,515,679	\$303,295
Newspaper publishers	262	\$37,319,480	\$14,825,610	\$56,660	\$8,825,868	\$760,011
Other motor vehicle parts manufacturing	261	\$144,693,200	\$19,482,330	\$0	\$19,953,570	\$591,371
Local government passenger transit	257	\$12,177,640	\$13,829,900	\$0	-\$16,721,450	-\$13,978
Other local government enterprises	253	\$81,795,290	\$28,721,730	\$0	\$23,671,630	-\$7,964,155
Death care services	250	\$24,780,750	\$8,776,814	\$935,547	\$1,022,086	\$1,557,610
Other electronic component manufacturing	250	\$57,543,440	\$13,813,220	\$0	\$7,458,121	\$713,672
Amusement parks and arcades	247	\$13,570,390	\$3,477,504	\$288	\$589,661	\$4,345,761
General and consumer goods rental except video tapes and discs	247	\$22,533,850	\$6,099,193	\$7,253,022	\$654,521	\$1,534,519
Plastics pipe and pipe fitting manufacturing	246	\$146,858,800	\$19,930,560	\$47,577	\$35,428,990	\$180,092
Turned product and screw, nut, and bolt manufacturing	236	\$54,900,130	\$12,402,390	\$229,351	\$6,877,696	\$187,121
Waste management and remediation services	231	\$46,655,410	\$14,361,090	\$126,626	\$6,052,198	\$917,580
Dry-cleaning and laundry services	226	\$15,111,130	\$7,122,100	\$889,293	\$178,804	\$639,716

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Photographic services	222	\$9,235,518	\$2,005,117	\$4,303,153	-\$3,815,897	\$345,945
Plumbing fixture fitting and trim manufacturing	217	\$117,546,300	\$14,000,770	\$19,469	\$22,289,830	\$226,716
Iron and steel forging	217	\$94,409,060	\$15,266,590	\$137,645	\$11,143,940	\$458,385
Printed circuit assembly (electronic assembly) manufacturing	217	\$59,231,940	\$9,366,719	\$0	\$3,761,814	\$433,907
Non-depository credit intermediation and related activities	212	\$28,908,210	\$8,394,557	\$549,437	\$82,538	\$2,124,590
Wired telecommunications carriers	207	\$102,279,400	\$15,789,330	\$807	\$33,455,220	\$6,572,361
Construction of new multifamily residential structures	203	\$29,886,810	\$6,407,793	\$2,063,100	\$2,044,857	\$41,794
Ship building and repairing	193	\$47,227,530	\$15,850,570	\$0	\$1,321,527	\$566,732
Performing arts companies	192	\$23,971,390	\$1,895,086	\$1,210,128	\$1,993,404	\$6,288,769
Spring and wire product manufacturing	190	\$52,143,030	\$15,437,550	\$122,424	\$6,392,766	\$249,901
All other industrial machinery manufacturing	183	\$47,915,060	\$11,912,160	\$0	\$1,893,114	\$332,011
Wiring device manufacturing	174	\$53,425,280	\$10,878,160	\$0	\$4,570,271	\$273,747
Funds, trusts, and other financial vehicles	167	\$52,771,530	\$11,940,020	\$0	\$7,584,573	\$180,856
Construction of new health care structures	158	\$22,433,940	\$5,214,634	\$1,470,270	\$1,566,538	\$109,696
Other accommodations	157	\$6,616,326	\$2,397,463	\$928,866	-\$219,933	\$722,500
Electronic and precision equipment repair and maintenance	157	\$24,111,180	\$10,351,510	\$2,778,704	\$79,217	\$1,838,173
Motion picture and video industries	156	\$31,918,070	\$4,219,693	\$33,776	\$6,911,036	\$7,172,025
Electric power transmission and distribution	156	\$220,844,900	\$21,124,760	\$0	\$38,773,840	\$21,487,360
Metal coating and nonprecious engraving	155	\$35,295,780	\$5,769,686	\$381,215	\$3,730,935	\$439,650
Wood container and pallet manufacturing	154	\$19,637,610	\$4,479,628	\$337,093	\$513,841	\$41,271
Facilities support services	153	\$20,171,450	\$4,532,660	\$222,157	\$2,957,966	\$222,254
Specialized design services	153	\$11,857,280	\$3,417,447	\$2,522,781	\$706,646	\$326,605
Museums, historical sites, zoos, and parks	152	\$11,336,950	\$3,915,877	\$12,463	-\$311,641	\$1,134,502
Bottled and canned soft drinks & water	147	\$111,824,400	\$10,361,790	\$0	\$7,300,435	\$683,857

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Beef cattle ranching and farming, including feedlots and dual-purpose ranching and farming	142	\$5,689,380	\$166,561	\$316,305	\$1,566,823	-\$80,207
Truck trailer manufacturing	137	\$44,613,840	\$8,372,061	\$0	\$3,423,534	\$154,041
Car washes	134	\$8,712,171	\$4,817,775	\$2,013,799	-\$2,138,074	\$708,120
Plate work manufacturing	132	\$29,403,110	\$9,959,883	\$85,707	\$514,286	\$228,166
Other fabricated metal manufacturing	131	\$28,651,390	\$7,967,330	\$324,272	\$1,784,936	\$282,575
Metal window and door manufacturing	127	\$27,294,720	\$5,943,181	\$72,183	\$1,374,674	\$217,211
Wireless telecommunications carriers (except satellite)	126	\$274,748,100	\$5,868,435	\$460	\$98,284,130	\$17,412,780
Sand and gravel mining	125	\$22,003,410	\$2,205,119	\$2,196,074	\$3,837,235	\$134,533
Independent artists, writers, and performers	124	\$3,658,116	\$145,893	\$1,374,003	\$8,106	\$145,668
Office administrative services	119	\$7,044,990	\$3,982,314	\$914,872	\$111,929	\$95,786
Sign manufacturing	118	\$14,536,720	\$7,018,826	\$683,038	-\$1,011,780	\$531,881
Special tool, die, jig, and fixture manufacturing	112	\$17,984,150	\$6,670,336	\$0	\$743,271	\$85,402
Dairy cattle and milk production	108	\$20,533,320	\$1,490,852	\$1,325,481	\$5,857,696	\$395,989
Frozen cakes and other pastries manufacturing	107	\$19,222,020	\$5,423,652	\$25,685	\$1,918,734	\$483,299
Automotive equipment rental and leasing	107	\$24,256,150	\$3,129,170	\$2,330,074	\$6,367,698	\$2,136,341
All other petroleum and coal products manufacturing	105	\$92,562,090	\$8,489,364	\$7,552	\$25,621,290	\$1,021,850
Wineries	105	\$27,437,950	\$2,966,283	\$0	\$944,641	\$323,735
Support activities for agriculture and forestry	101	\$2,586,190	\$288,256	\$714,154	\$181,946	\$77,937
Laminated plastics plate, sheet (except packaging), and shape manufacturing	100	\$43,417,800	\$9,096,249	\$101,701	\$12,635,130	\$58,213
Grain farming	100	\$11,170,570	\$240,203	\$315,206	\$2,227,711	\$44,630
Other basic inorganic chemical manufacturing	99	\$90,311,870	\$9,176,832	\$58,812	\$13,219,880	\$1,725,950
Custom architectural woodwork and millwork	99	\$17,344,400	\$7,334,758	\$0	\$1,039,230	\$57,516
Turbine and turbine generator set units manufacturing	97	\$46,400,440	\$9,499,703	\$0	\$3,113,006	\$23,323
Other computer related services, including facilities management	97	\$11,071,170	\$3,822,338	\$1,078,627	\$547,437	\$171,466

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Handtool manufacturing	96	\$25,699,440	\$8,836,313	\$92,187	\$3,999,132	\$87,478
Greenhouse, nursery, and floriculture production	95	\$7,986,016	\$2,394,048	\$910,025	\$2,294,405	-\$3,828
Bowling centers	95	\$3,802,931	\$1,108,955	\$2,218	\$313,728	\$293,970
Environmental and other technical consulting services	93	\$5,978,398	\$2,185,292	\$1,716,022	-\$1,096,128	\$50,594
Motor vehicle transmission and power train parts manufacturing	92	\$57,653,030	\$6,007,984	\$0	\$6,377,581	\$129,793
Pipeline transportation	90	\$67,808,940	\$8,523,786	\$43,224,200	-\$4,466,367	\$3,613,283
Directory, mailing list, and other publishers	83	\$28,140,400	\$5,379,405	\$55,431	\$12,937,240	\$319,667
Racing and Track Operation	83	\$2,989,895	\$179,044	\$1,468,702	\$6,522	\$729,984
Data processing, hosting, and related services	79	\$16,556,280	\$1,700,807	\$345,730	\$150,449	\$108,235
Confectionery manufacturing from purchased chocolate	77	\$22,409,000	\$2,009,037	\$44,925	\$1,257,250	\$42,106
Business and professional associations	77	\$15,597,720	\$4,279,126	\$154,811	\$3,801,365	\$999,922
Periodical publishers	76	\$22,493,050	\$5,085,294	\$96,934	\$5,611,016	\$286,017
Iron and steel mills and ferroalloy manufacturing	76	\$78,219,990	\$5,931,000	-\$42,573	\$4,483,628	\$701,074
Rail transportation	76	\$24,514,990	\$7,957,410	\$0	\$3,358,739	-\$974,233
Mechanical power transmission equipment manufacturing	73	\$18,109,530	\$3,375,021	\$0	\$1,178,486	\$59,797
Animal production, except cattle and poultry and eggs	70	\$2,179,498	\$278,885	\$251,614	\$872,645	\$60,807
Other concrete product manufacturing	69	\$14,325,790	\$3,290,463	\$0	\$1,236,923	\$95,701
Support activities for oil and gas operations	69	\$7,586,494	\$2,466,127	\$233,256	\$875,847	\$250,638
Iron, steel pipe, and tube manufacturing from purchased steel	69	\$35,232,060	\$4,074,558	-\$34,066	\$2,045,843	\$133,744
Travel arrangement and reservation services	67	\$11,786,840	\$2,989,116	\$179,071	\$1,581,812	\$101,697
Fluid milk manufacturing	64	\$53,720,620	\$4,454,724	\$11,142	\$2,588,551	\$82,681
Ready-mix concrete manufacturing	64	\$21,377,400	\$3,440,912	\$0	\$1,124,986	\$149,332
Conveyor and conveying equipment manufacturing	62	\$17,490,390	\$5,245,404	\$0	\$940,474	\$122,317
Polystyrene foam product manufacturing	61	\$24,681,430	\$4,224,135	\$12,312	\$4,178,063	\$258,410
Air and gas compressor manufacturing	61	\$32,866,930	\$5,112,071	\$0	\$3,189,936	\$90,475

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Video tape and disc rental	60	\$11,229,580	\$819,435	\$1,416,965	\$3,121,376	\$988,884
Air transportation	60	\$18,800,720	\$1,545,960	\$14,069	\$632,813	\$2,693,397
Pump and pumping equipment manufacturing	57	\$25,292,760	\$4,247,655	\$0	\$2,756,887	\$53,753
Construction machinery manufacturing	55	\$39,366,000	\$3,557,207	\$0	\$2,251,603	\$300,662
Bare printed circuit board manufacturing	54	\$10,064,080	\$1,934,805	\$0	\$1,013,304	\$144,637
Musical instrument manufacturing	53	\$6,576,095	\$2,327,627	\$157,368	-\$177,985	\$50,731
Plastics bottle manufacturing	49	\$23,303,000	\$3,457,670	\$18,418	\$4,125,388	\$32,898
Machine tool manufacturing	49	\$13,674,260	\$3,517,056	\$0	\$1,521,913	\$50,036
Copper rolling, drawing, extruding, and alloying	47	\$44,784,050	\$3,072,186	-\$50,836	\$2,359,699	\$215,446
Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment rental and leasing	47	\$12,176,560	\$1,884,999	\$1,698,577	\$4,161,530	\$551,163
Drilling oil and gas wells	46	\$6,603,429	\$278,740	\$832,825	\$455,065	\$515,092
Aircraft engine and engine parts manufacturing	46	\$26,722,570	\$5,758,453	\$0	\$2,004,343	\$102,054
Commercial fishing	46	\$1,037,418	\$6,206	\$868,954	-\$62,002	\$215,141
Software publishers	46	\$13,810,050	\$3,912,179	\$78,645	\$4,328,396	\$602,034
Rolling mill and other metalworking machinery manufacturing	46	\$10,887,420	\$3,493,908	\$0	\$589,558	\$32,725
Other basic organic chemical manufacturing	45	\$85,851,160	\$3,909,635	\$57,024	\$2,407,013	\$1,330,203
Electromedical and electrotherapeutic apparatus manufacturing	44	\$21,370,990	\$3,923,180	\$0	\$4,990,647	\$188,902
Sawmills	44	\$11,370,500	\$1,078,976	\$560,058	\$136,558	\$35,296
Unlaminated plastics profile shape manufacturing	43	\$16,107,790	\$2,872,332	\$15,501	\$2,649,919	\$18,928
Plastics material and resin manufacturing	42	\$66,349,090	\$2,176,466	\$326,755	\$2,187,101	\$2,378,215
Brick, tile, and other structural clay product manufacturing	41	\$11,443,150	\$2,833,101	\$0	\$2,211,082	\$80,099
Vegetable and melon farming	41	\$4,729,233	\$947,529	\$644,696	\$2,492,209	-\$2,195
All other miscellaneous manufacturing	39	\$6,549,217	\$592,174	\$1,456,928	\$34,683	\$49,922
Paint and coating manufacturing	38	\$26,474,160	\$1,361,964	\$621,008	\$1,733,113	\$166,847
Photographic film and chemical manufacturing	38	\$24,352,660	\$2,376,536	\$124,715	\$2,416,996	\$257,807

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Ornamental and architectural metal work manufacturing	38	\$7,375,425	\$1,961,339	\$128,031	\$186,383	\$52,059
Meat processed from carcasses	37	\$19,855,330	\$1,955,990	\$23,419	\$622,108	\$83,242
Satellite, telecommunications resellers, and all other telecommunications	36	\$2,765,384	\$942,656	\$557	-\$30,659	\$172,429
Urethane and other foam product (except polystyrene) manufacturing	34	\$14,094,570	\$2,710,290	\$26,332	\$2,246,640	\$20,433
Other animal food manufacturing	34	\$46,735,860	\$2,686,618	\$5,547	\$2,702,626	\$44,420
Forestry, forest products, and timber tract production	34	\$2,136,149	\$26,267	\$724,342	-\$2,250	\$63,993
Manufactured home (mobile home) manufacturing	33	\$6,012,813	\$1,204,849	\$115,911	\$275,398	\$13,622
Gasket, packing, and sealing device manufacturing	30	\$6,515,677	\$1,383,480	\$161,847	\$264,577	\$51,194
Dental laboratories	29	\$2,800,805	\$1,522,413	\$92,207	\$11,547	\$27,311
News syndicates, libraries, archives, and all other information services	28	\$20,739,270	\$369,583	\$82,134	\$311,123	\$188,194
Stationery product manufacturing	27	\$9,086,130	\$819,261	\$0	\$506,163	\$41,459
Concrete block and brick manufacturing	27	\$7,461,881	\$1,575,330	\$0	\$1,140,904	\$113,928
Electronic connector manufacturing	26	\$8,072,824	\$1,816,971	\$0	\$1,610,930	\$87,778
Lessors of nonfinancial intangible assets	26	\$23,448,970	\$173,028	\$232,152	\$4,115,841	\$692,091
Artificial and synthetic fibers and filaments manufacturing	25	\$20,594,500	\$1,143,192	\$168,659	\$467,459	\$315,857
Surgical and medical instrument manufacturing	24	\$9,202,895	\$1,526,540	\$36,205	\$1,023,713	\$100,560
Relay and industrial control manufacturing	24	\$6,797,334	\$1,318,238	\$0	\$329,893	\$20,296
Crown and closure manufacturing and metal stamping	24	\$4,646,664	\$825,812	\$70,402	\$209,831	\$27,888
Paper bag and coated and treated paper manufacturing	24	\$10,889,430	\$1,208,320	\$0	\$864,414	\$46,731
Metal tank (heavy gauge) manufacturing	24	\$6,390,930	\$1,546,092	\$63,335	\$545,316	\$10,890

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Power boiler and heat exchanger manufacturing	22	\$6,830,132	\$1,469,509	\$29,109	\$685,207	\$13,022
Power-driven handtool manufacturing	22	\$12,478,180	\$2,222,514	\$0	\$2,854,599	\$20,829
Fabricated pipe and pipe fitting manufacturing	22	\$5,893,849	\$1,433,340	\$38,625	\$609,686	\$17,165
Internet publishing and broadcasting and web search portals	22	\$9,709,220	\$1,463,727	\$13,212	\$165,528	\$48,273
Broadwoven fabric mills	21	\$5,254,797	\$793,260	\$181	\$261,004	\$30,233
Wood kitchen cabinet and countertop manufacturing	21	\$2,777,002	\$923,283	\$0	\$82,178	\$8,868
Custom roll forming	21	\$11,860,730	\$752,233	\$24,386	\$520,281	\$29,663
Metal barrels, drums, and pails manufacturing	21	\$6,615,505	\$1,053,606	\$35,570	\$217,667	\$27,732
Power, distribution, and specialty transformer manufacturing	20	\$6,833,267	\$1,425,062	\$0	\$298,875	\$23,523
Oilseed farming	20	\$4,517,504	\$27,189	\$452,530	\$1,551,001	\$4,673
Cut stone and stone product manufacturing	19	\$2,581,358	\$891,003	\$0	\$216,161	\$19,057
Canned fruits and vegetables manufacturing	18	\$8,523,574	\$572,435	\$35,794	\$154,495	\$19,764
Water, sewage, and other systems	18	\$4,837,712	\$1,447,383	\$55,753	\$809,297	\$399,943
Air purification and ventilation equipment manufacturing	17	\$4,811,466	\$1,273,426	\$0	\$530,919	\$18,987
Prefabricated wood building manufacturing	16	\$2,721,697	\$486,598	\$59,676	\$128,258	\$5,958
Wood windows and door manufacturing	16	\$3,017,645	\$549,352	\$34,053	\$98,828	\$17,474
Promoters of performing arts and sports and agents for public figures	15	\$1,778,806	\$109,807	\$159,515	\$52,191	\$376,008
Plastics packaging materials and unlaminated film and sheet manufacturing	15	\$7,331,704	\$1,176,937	\$8,276	\$1,146,012	\$11,591
Audio and video equipment manufacturing	15	\$7,644,134	\$1,933,646	\$0	\$1,492,260	\$74,163
Automatic environmental control manufacturing	15	\$3,556,365	\$1,070,233	\$0	\$555,784	\$28,708
Animal, except poultry, slaughtering	15	\$10,685,030	\$726,659	\$6,276	\$588,001	\$49,703
Poultry and egg production	14	\$3,267,678	\$301,424	\$94,981	\$398,880	\$20,686
Asphalt shingle and coating materials manufacturing	13	\$9,150,224	\$706,736	\$30,892	\$1,363,592	\$66,118

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Paperboard container manufacturing	12	\$5,259,509	\$559,262	\$0	\$182,398	\$56,509
Hardware manufacturing	12	\$4,149,630	\$866,549	\$34,362	\$507,861	\$13,897
Commercial logging	11	\$561,954	\$5,670	\$164,636	-\$319	\$17,762
Sporting and athletic goods manufacturing	11	\$2,431,604	\$209,440	\$250,393	\$85,993	\$89,123
Switchgear and switchboard apparatus manufacturing	10	\$3,515,548	\$796,667	\$0	\$166,118	\$13,410
Metal heat treating	10	\$2,824,922	\$430,851	\$25,714	\$279,146	\$36,523
Nonupholstered wood household furniture manufacturing	10	\$1,222,082	\$385,869	\$0	\$107,805	\$4,455
Other textile product mills	9	\$1,294,006	\$316,943	\$0	\$55,229	\$9,681
Capacitor, resistor, coil, transformer, and other inductor manufacturing	9	\$1,715,001	\$383,939	\$0	\$197,188	\$22,058
Other millwork, including flooring	9	\$1,534,326	\$128,462	\$85,143	\$36,321	\$9,504
Other snack food manufacturing	9	\$4,742,407	\$114,820	\$38,102	\$211,418	\$11,576
Breweries	8	\$6,466,162	\$476,578	\$0	\$755,101	\$341,907
Jewelry and silverware manufacturing	8	\$1,687,969	\$28,142	\$326,375	\$6,302	\$76,215
Cookie and cracker manufacturing	8	\$2,506,806	\$243,968	\$14,746	\$160,063	\$8,484
Institutional furniture manufacturing	7	\$1,348,877	\$396,581	\$0	\$62,411	\$3,216
Curtain and linen mills	7	\$1,211,814	\$215,493	\$0	\$76,093	\$27,627
Glass container manufacturing	7	\$2,553,093	\$594,108	\$0	\$288,286	\$14,884
Reconstituted wood product manufacturing	6	\$2,628,241	\$168,705	\$74,424	\$52,385	\$37,500
Cable and other subscription programming	6	\$5,763,701	\$50,866	\$1,532,304	\$283,098	\$54,107
Packaging machinery manufacturing	5	\$1,545,026	\$457,282	\$0	\$116,103	\$4,572
Surgical appliance and supplies manufacturing	5	\$1,595,551	\$218,680	\$55,638	\$132,488	\$17,340
Prefabricated metal buildings and components manufacturing	5	\$1,409,480	\$283,965	\$67,140	\$84,189	\$12,129
All other miscellaneous electrical equipment and component manufacturing	4	\$1,105,914	\$281,703	\$0	\$36,321	\$4,799
Other leather and allied product manufacturing	4	\$363,512	\$0	\$42	\$0	\$1,425
All other miscellaneous wood product manufacturing	3	\$471,547	\$34,373	\$38,528	\$8,928	\$1,144

Description	Employment (jobs)	Output (\$)	Employee Compensation (\$)	Proprietor Income (\$)	Other Property Type Income (\$)	Tax on Production and Imports (\$)
Water transportation	3	\$1,948,639	\$0	\$22,076	\$0	\$19,692
Textile bag and canvas mills	3	\$500,540	\$123,753	\$0	\$24,782	\$3,645
Air conditioning, refrigeration, and warm air heating equipment manufacturing	3	\$1,245,055	\$207,379	\$0	\$98,639	\$3,630
Other commercial service industry machinery manufacturing	3	\$1,006,762	\$210,392	\$0	\$90,199	\$11,546
Other federal government enterprises	3	\$551,852	\$283,239	\$0	-\$83,633	-\$199,910
Motor vehicle electrical and electronic equipment manufacturing	3	\$1,052,991	\$135,893	\$0	\$104,235	\$7,020
Pottery, ceramics, and plumbing fixture manufacturing	2	\$335,251	\$102,142	\$0	\$44,355	\$2,300
Miscellaneous nonmetallic mineral products manufacturing	2	\$706,106	\$97,005	\$0	\$109,395	\$3,988
Lighting fixture manufacturing	1	\$251,268	\$47,122	\$0	\$12,458	\$2,183
Tree nut farming	0	\$24,630	\$8,153	\$3,577	\$8,925	-\$27
Other nonmetallic minerals services	0	\$16,948	\$0	\$4,016	\$0	\$754
Metal mining services	0	\$20,373	\$0	\$2,638	\$0	\$2,998
Owner-occupied dwellings	-	\$1,102,220,000	\$0	\$0	\$619,937,900	\$118,129,800
Total	159,357	25,901,192,309	7,143,020,938	559,212,300	3,071,609,283	824,155,037

In examining the economic data, the top economic sectors in the economy are currently manufacturing, health care, and tourism. Most of these industries require some form of postsecondary education and training, but at the sub-baccalaureate level.

- Specific gaps in employment demand and occupations for the *manufacturing sector* include, machinists, industrial maintenance, service technicians, control technicians, welders, electronic technicians, and CNC programmers. In demand skills and attributes include, soft skills, clean drug screen, general math, and clear criminal background record. Erie's Project Jobs keeps an up-to-date accounting of jobs in this sector that need to be filled. The community college has already forged strong partnerships with area employers and should set up a clear communication path and mechanism to ensure ongoing dialogue and communication between business and the college.

- **Health care market demands** – According to the 2016 High Priority Occupations for the Northwest Workforce Development Area, there is a demand for employees with associate’s degrees for work as: diagnostic medical sonographers, emergency medical technicians and paramedics, occupational and physical therapy assistants, nursing assistants, and medical secretaries.
- **Business demands** – According to the 2016 High Priority Occupations for the Northwest Workforce Development Area, office clerks, secretaries, and customer service representatives are high priority jobs in the regional market.
- **Entrepreneurship/small business development and growth** – Nearly 100% of net new jobs in the last 30 years have come from companies five years old or younger. Encouraging and developing programs to educate first-time entrepreneurs and investors about how to support student entrepreneurship and business growth in this sector would be a strong economic development strategy.

High School and Career/Technology Center Statistics

The school systems within Erie County, Pennsylvania, are reflective of each community’s socio-economic demographics. Some districts are flourishing while others are floundering financially due to a funding system that relies heavily on local property taxes, diminished tax bases, and funding deficits, which have persisted for years. Erie City Schools are struggling due to lack of funds and are currently making plans to restructure the school district through school closures at the middle and high school levels. Some schools in outlying areas of the county are also facing difficult financial realities and declining enrollments, which may or may not necessitate further collaboration down the road. There are two charter schools in the market.

Total enrollment in both public and private schools in Erie County is 14,179. Projections for high school enrollment in Erie County show that while city schools are declining there is growth in schools and districts throughout the county. Analysis of national data by the U.S. Department of Education⁷ released in 2016 shows that enrollment in the Northeast region for public elementary and secondary education is projected to be about the same number in 2012 and 2024.

The examination of data produced by the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the State of Pennsylvania show that statewide enrollments have declined since 2007 in which total statewide enrollment was 2,054,815 for all grades and 666,435 for grades 9-12.

⁷ Source: Projections of Education Statistics to 2020. Institute of Education Sciences. National Center for Education Statistics. Forty-third edition. U.S. Department of Education. September 2016.

PA Enrollment Statistics (Public and Private)

Year	Category	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Total Enrollment All Grades	Total Enrollment 9-12
2012-2013	Total	163,998	162,511	166,850	164,408	2,025,620	657,767
2013-2014	Total	165,176	164,578	158,148	163,895	2,020,913	651,797
2014-2015	Total	166,250	165,776	160,158	155,346	2,013,788	647,530
2015-2016	Total	165,093	166,866	161,323	157,331	2,012,208	650,613
2016-2017	Total	161,919	165,718	162,383	158,480	2,008,435	648,500
2017-2018	Total	164,275	162,560	161,265	159,525	2,002,178	647,625

Source: PA Department of Education

Erie County is facing a decline in population; thereby it can be anticipated that school enrollments will decline in proportion to the population decline. High school graduation rate data analyzed for Pennsylvania⁸ by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education shows that statewide graduation rates stay relatively constant for the next ten years.

⁸ School Year refers to the K-12 calendar running fall to spring and may include graduates from any point in that school year, including the summer after the year end. The Grand Total is the sum of the Private Schools and Public Schools totals. The Private Schools Total includes schools not supported primarily by public funds, religious and nonsectarian, but not including homeschool students. Private Schools projections begin in school year 2011-12. The Public Schools Total will not exactly equal the sum of the races/ethnicities columns, which are projected separately. Prior to 2010-11, data was not available separately for Asian and Pacific Islander students, and Two or More Races students. *Source:* Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, *Knocking at the College Door: Projections of High School Graduates*, 2016.

PENNSYLVANIA

		GRAND TOTAL	PRIVATE SCHOOLS TOTAL	PUBLIC SCHOOLS TOTAL	Non-Hispanic				
					Hispanic	Non-Hispanic			
School Year					Alone, or Any Race	White	Black	American Indian/Alaska Native	Asian/Pacific Islander <i>(Combined)</i>
Reported Counts of High School Graduates	2000-01	132,528	18,092	114,436	2,961	96,931	11,915	62	2,567
	2001-02	133,673	18,730	114,943	3,093	97,397	11,655	102	2,696
	2002-03	139,300	19,367	119,933	3,566	100,330	13,143	105	2,789
	2003-04	142,195	18,721	123,474	4,134	101,989	14,303	100	2,952
	2004-05	142,738	17,980	124,758	4,610	101,285	15,610	114	3,139
	2005-06	144,657	17,976	126,681	5,088	102,751	15,563	123	3,156
	2006-07	146,080	17,477	128,603	5,566	104,217	15,515	132	3,173
	2007-08	148,125	17,827	130,298	5,978	104,355	16,111	146	3,439
	2008-09	149,321	18,663	130,658	6,509	103,712	16,424	169	3,428
	2009-10	150,365	19,183	131,182	7,055	102,057	17,753	198	3,530
	2010-11	146,650	16,366	130,284	7,682	100,734	17,880	176	3,811
Projections of High School Graduates	2011-12	148,098	16,365	131,733	8,403	100,524	18,475	203	4,128
	2012-13	145,762	15,985	129,777	8,706	98,436	17,989	165	4,480
	2013-14	143,382	15,344	128,038	9,002	96,779	17,550	160	4,506
	2014-15	139,458	14,788	124,669	9,234	93,061	17,536	154	4,672
	2015-16	137,546	13,788	123,758	9,533	92,455	16,882	143	4,849
	2016-17	137,536	13,437	124,099	9,951	92,195	17,050	159	4,885
	2017-18	139,054	13,090	125,963	10,257	93,165	17,440	142	5,333
	2018-19	137,709	12,520	125,189	11,136	91,723	17,153	151	5,553
	2019-20	134,456	11,918	122,538	11,204	89,099	17,082	161	5,660
	2020-21	135,550	11,553	123,997	11,695	90,210	16,914	151	5,974
	2021-22	136,427	11,289	125,138	12,661	90,477	16,819	143	6,298
	2022-23	134,601	10,735	123,866	13,080	88,809	16,991	170	6,221
	2023-24	137,455	11,747	125,708	14,152	89,440	17,299	136	6,430
	2024-25	139,680	11,863	127,817	15,148	89,919	18,130	145	6,691
	2025-26	138,615	11,637	126,978	15,163	88,417	18,646	150	6,705
	2026-27	136,040	11,361	124,679	15,285	86,224	18,359	141	6,870
	2027-28	132,871	11,097	121,774	14,850	84,262	17,909	128	6,789
	2028-29	132,696	11,158	121,539	15,341	83,494	17,178	124	6,714
	2029-30	132,174	11,105	121,068	15,249	82,482	17,372	116	7,468
2030-31	130,733	10,964	119,768	15,347	81,846	16,916	134	7,072	
2031-32	131,973	11,062	120,911	15,700	82,313	16,534	112	7,426	

Public School Districts

School District/Name	School Type and Grades	Free & Reduced Lunch Total/ % of Total Students	Student Teacher Ratio	Full Time Equivalent Teachers	Charter School or Shared Time School	Total Students
Robert Benjamin Wiley Community Charter School	Regular school (PK-12)	355/99.2%	11.2	32	Charter	358
Perseus House Charter School of Excellence	Regular school (7-12)	432/78.5%	15.2	36.17	Charter	550
Corry Area School District						
Corry Area High School	Regular school (9-12)	316/42.9%	14.2	52	No	736
Eric City School District						
Central High School	Regular school (9-12)	1,086/99.7%	14.4	75.5	No	1,089
Northwest Pa Collegiate Academy	Regular school (9-12)		17.5	46	No	803
East Senior High School	Regular school (9-12)	987/99.7%	16.4	60.5	No	990
Strong Vincent High School	Regular school (9-12)	716/99.6%	14.9	48.34	No	719
Fairview School District						
Fairview High School	Regular school (9-12)	109/20.9%	14.6	35.74	No	522
Fort Leboeuf School District						
Fort Leboeuf Senior High School	Regular school (9-12)	226/32.2%	14.3	49	No	701
General Mclane School District						
General Mclane High School	Regular school (9-12)	180/24.0%	15.8	47.37	No	750
Girard School District						
Girard High School	Regular school (9-12)	220/37.3%	15.6	37.68	No	589
Harbor Creek School District						
Harbor Creek Senior High School	Regular school (9-12)	129/20.4%	14	45.25	No	633
Iroquois School District						
Iroquois Junior Senior High School	Regular school (7-12)	266/48.6%	13.7	39.86	No	547
Millcreek Township School District						
Mcdowell High School	Regular school (9-12)	684/28.9%	15.3	154.99	No	2,368
North East School District						
North East High School	Regular school (9-12)	178/35.3%	14.4	34.93	No	504
Northwestern School District						
Northwestern Senior High School	Regular school (9-12)	246/46%	16.1	33.29	No	535
Union City Area School District						
Union City High School	Regular school (9-12)	169/49.8%	13.4	25.33	No	339

Wattsburg Area School District						
Seneca High School	Regular school (9-12)	192/36.9%	15.4	34.21	No	527
Erie County Technical School District						
Erie County Technical School	Vocational school (10-12)			25.49	Shared Time	

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

There are 19 public high schools in Erie County, Pennsylvania, serving 13,116 students.

Private High Schools								
School Level	School Name	Grade	Total Students (9-12)	FTE Teachers	Student Teacher Ratio	Coed	School Type	Religious Affiliation
Combined	Community Country Day School	Grade 1-12	32	6	11	Coed	Regular	Other religious
Combined	Bethel Christian School	K-12	20	7	7	Coed	Regular	Other religious
Combined	Breezeway Amish School	Grade 1-9	3	1	27	Coed	Regular	Other religious
Combined	Cherry Hill Amish School	Grade 1-9	2	1	31	Coed	Regular	Other religious
Combined	Erie First Christian Academy	PK - 12	96	17	11	Coed	Regular	Other religious
Secondary	Cathedral Preparatory School (Prep-Villa)	Grade 9-12	549	32	16	All-Male	Regular	Catholic
Secondary	Villa Maria Academy (Prep-Villa)	Grade 9-12	301	27	11	Coed	Regular	Catholic
Secondary	Mercyhurst Preparatory School	Grade 9-12	611	43	14	Coed	Regular	Catholic
Secondary	Abraxas Learning Center	Grade 8-12	25	8	3	All-Male	Alternative	Non-sectarian

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

There are nine private schools serving Erie County, Pennsylvania, educating 1,639 students from 9-12 grade.

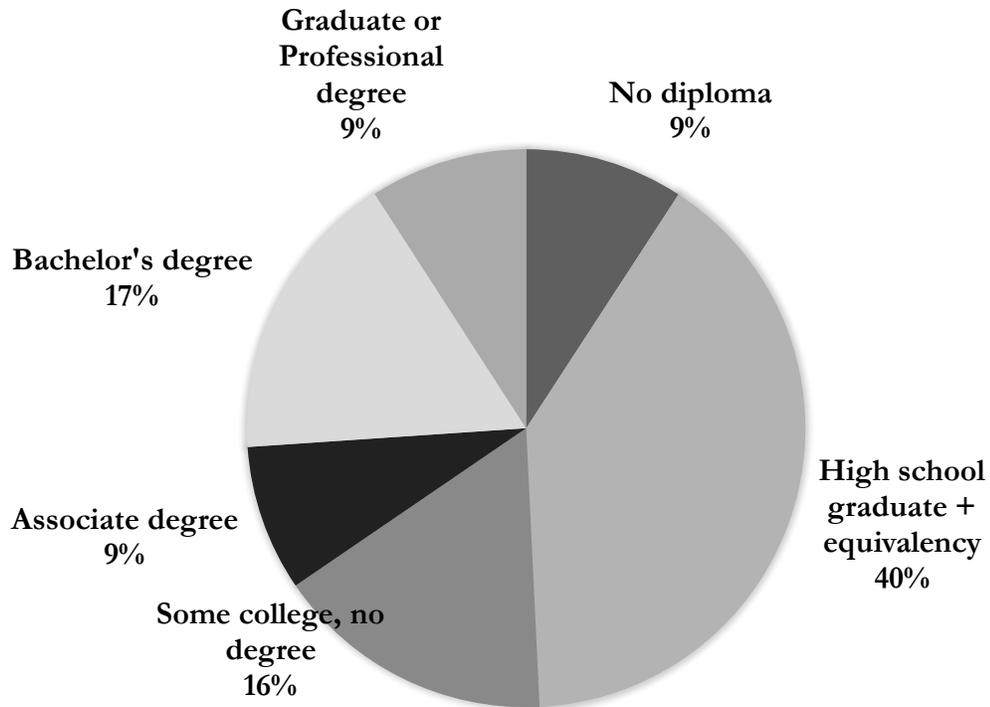
Socio-Economic Analysis of Erie County

Data from the American Community Survey in 2015 shows Erie County's educational attainment levels lag Pennsylvania when comparing the number of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher – 28.6 percent for Pennsylvania versus 26 percent for Erie County. Residents in the Erie County region reporting that they do not have a high school diploma total 9.2 percent, high school graduates and equivalency totaled 40 percent, associate's degree and some college, no degree totaled 24.7 percent, and 26 percent of the population holds a bachelor's degree or higher. Fifty-four percent of the 2015 graduating class in Erie County went on to enroll in college.

Educational Attainment (population 25 years and over)

	Erie County #	Erie County (%)	PA #	PA (%)
No diploma	17,188	9.2%	950,001	10.8%
High school graduate + equivalency	74,931	40.0%	3,207,989	36.4%
Some college, no degree	30,362	16.2%	1,435,688	16.3%
Associate's degree	15,839	8.5%	698,397	7.9%
Bachelor's degree	31,707	16.9%	1,535,222	17.4%
Graduate or professional degree	17,078	9.1%	986,815	11.2%

Source: American Community Survey, 2015



Poverty is a serious issue throughout Erie County. Nearly 17 percent (16.7 percent) of Erie County’s residents are living below the poverty level, and that percentage increases to 26.6 percent in the City of Erie. Poverty is not pervasive throughout the county, but is concentrated in urban centers and some rural areas. Median household income according to the American Community Survey (ACS) 2015 was \$45,971.

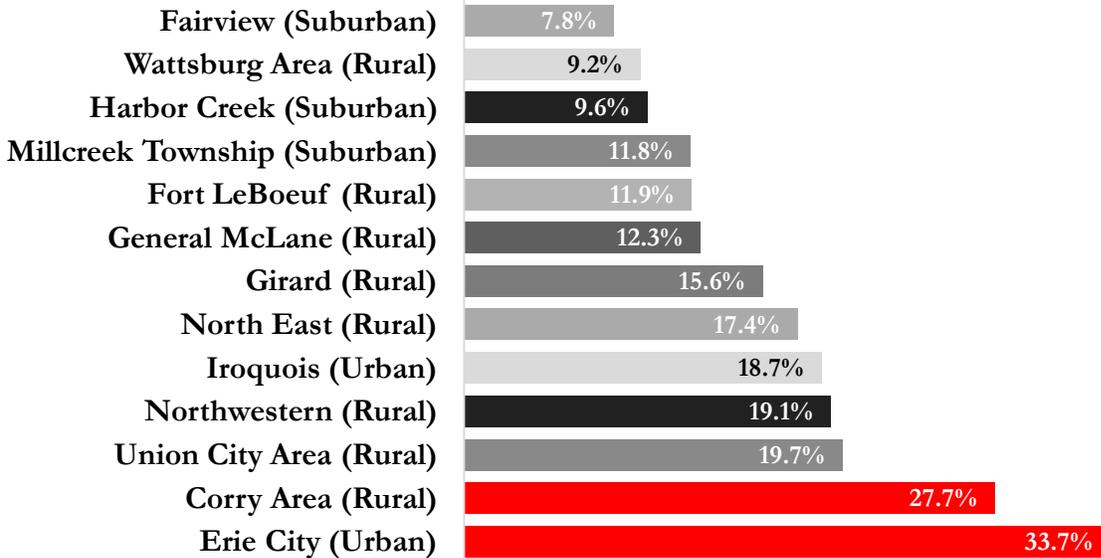
Household Income Distribution (income in thousands)		
	Number of Households	Percentage
Less than \$10	9,227	8.4%
\$10-\$14.9	6,905	6.3%
\$15-\$24.9	13,211	12.0%
\$25-\$34.9	12,700	11.6%
\$35-\$49.9	16,744	15.2%
\$50-\$74.9	20,674	18.8%
\$75-\$99.9	13,039	11.9%
\$100-\$149.9	11,613	10.6%
\$150-\$199.9	3,097	2.8%
\$200K+	2,724	2.5%
Total Households	109,934	

Source: American Community Survey 2015

Forty-six percent of high school students receive free or reduced lunch within Erie County. The poverty of the county is further illustrated in the chart below, which details the percentage of students under 100 percent of poverty level from Erie Public Schools according to Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) data. SAIPE data and analyses are produced for school districts, counties, and states by the U.S. Census Bureau.⁹ Data (2015) shows that the City of Erie School District (33.7 percent) and the Corry Area School District (27.7 percent) are the highest poverty schools in the county. Five other schools in the county are above 15 percent.

⁹ The main objective of this program is to provide updated estimates of income and poverty statistics for the administration of federal programs and the allocation of federal funds to local jurisdictions.

**ESTIMATED % OF RELEVANT POPULATION (AGE 5-17)
UNDER 100% POVERTY BY SCHOOL DISTRICT USING
SAIPE Erie County Public School Districts**



Economic Development Activities in the Region

Erie County has no shortage of efforts or groups working to spur economic growth in the county and region. Erie County has invested significant hours of planning and community time in seeking to solve its declining economic conditions. Numerous reports and consultants have strongly asserted the urgent need for Erie to take action to resurrect its economy. The Northwest Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Area, which includes Erie County, partners with many local organizations on workforce development including: Ben Franklin Technology Partners, Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership, Pennsylvania CareerLink, Small Business Development Center – Gannon University, Northwest Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NWIRC), Pennsylvania Department of Economic Development, Northwest Commission, Erie County Redevelopment Authority, and Northwest PA Incubator Association.

Organizations such as the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership have provided proactive outreach in the area for businesses in the area and initiative efforts to identify job openings and projected job growth (Project Jobs, Erie Works). Other groups such as the Erie Community Foundation, United Way of Erie County, Susan Hirt Hagen Fund for Transformational Philanthropy, and Erie’s gaming revenue distribution arm and strategic investor ECGRA as well as key corporations, investors, elected officials, and thought leaders are of one mind: community plans cannot be commissioned and left on the shelf to gather dust – they must be implemented.

Change is happening within the county – existing companies are investing in the region because they believe that Erie’s best days are ahead. The projected investment dollars expected to be made over the next 18 months exceed \$500 million.

- ✓ Erie Insurance campus expansion (\$135 million)
- ✓ UPMC – Hamot expansion of new patient tower (\$111 million)
- ✓ Scott Enterprises Bayfront (\$150 million)
- ✓ Our Bayfront West revitalization funding (\$1.6 million)
- ✓ Saint Vincent/Allegheny Health improvements (\$115 million)

Three most recent examples include:

Erie Refocused, created by Alexandria, Virginia-based consulting firm CZB, addresses the City of Erie’s needs over the next ten years and beyond in several areas, including housing, transportation, land use, and economic development.¹⁰

Emerge 2040, a countywide visioning project strives to create a thriving, educated, livable, green, and connected Erie County by guiding the implementation of the region’s 25-year plan for sustainability through collaborative and inclusive leadership. The effort aims to increase awareness and understanding of Erie County’s goals, as identified in the Destination Erie plan, among the citizens and organizations of Erie County.¹¹

Innovation District – With funding from local foundations, Mercyhurst University is the lead partner in a three-year initiative to create an Innovation District focused on safety and cyber security in downtown Erie. Corporate partners include Erie Insurance, Velocity Network, McManus, Monsalve Associates, and UPMC. Innovation districts integrate academia with industry partners, to transform cities into innovation hubs, attract new business, and, in turn, transform cities' economies.

Erie County will always take pride in being a maker city. The county has a proud tradition of production and innovation. As it enters the next phase of economic development, Erie County has steep challenges to overcome but a history of resilience and economic strengths to build upon.

Strengths of the Erie Economy

- National leading hospital systems
- Tourism amenities and entertainment venues
- Major new investments by Fortune 500 company
- Skilled, productive workforce
- Attraction of immigrants to the region

¹⁰ <https://www.scribd.com/doc/307463563/Erie-Refocused-development-plan-for-the-city-of-Erie-P>

¹¹ <http://emerge2040.org/resources/destination-erie-plan/>

Weaknesses of the Erie Economy

- Weak and worsening migration trends
- Below average educational attainment
- Overreliance on manufacturing sectors in decline
- Below-average per capita income and share of jobs in high-wage industries

Current Post-Secondary and Higher Education Landscape

The post-secondary landscape in Erie County is served by both non-profit and for profit schools. Erie County hosts a campus of land grant university – Penn State Behrend; Edinboro University, part of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), and two private universities: Gannon University, and Mercyhurst University. The region is also host to the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, the largest osteopathic medical school in the country. The for-profit, post-secondary market, which includes four institutions, also works to meet demand for associate’s degrees and diplomas in the market. The educational landscape is reflective of the national trend of schools experiencing declines in enrollment and seeking out new ways to create revenue to support their institutional missions.

Mercyhurst University and Gannon University have worked to provide courses in the community and partner with organizations to deliver associate’s level degrees, diplomas, and certificates. Mercyhurst University offers programs at the Booker T. Washington Center at significantly reduced costs to residents. Programs such as Tech After Hours, have also been established to fill the gap. Community colleges are designed and positioned to attract and serve these non-traditional students, especially adults and displaced workers.

Edinboro University is experiencing declines in enrollment and recently completed a comprehensive review of its curriculum, degree offerings, and overall operations to revamp the school. Based on the research and analysis completed, it is anticipated that Edinboro will be raising enrollment standards to drive demand, cutting back program/degree offerings, and potentially eliminating offerings at the Porecco Center. This is one of many moving pieces in the higher educational puzzle of Erie County. According to the Porecco Center website, a comparative analysis for an affordability in business administration associate’s degree was completed. It is noteworthy that these types of comparisons are challenging given that aspects such as student grants, aid, and scholarship programs are often not factored into the equation. However, considering that affordability is the number one driver of the general consumer in Erie County wanting a community college, these numbers are important to consider for those who do not believe that college is within their financial or social reach. Currently, Edinboro University is offering some two-year courses and technical skills training at the Porrecco College, an off-campus site in Millcreek Township.

Compare Affordability Sample Cost Comparison: Associate's Degree in Business

(Source: Edinboro University Porreco College)

	Total tuition and fees (four semesters)
Porreco College	\$14,389.20 ¹²
Fortis Institute	\$27,600.00 ¹³
Penn State Behrend	\$29,220.00 ¹⁴
Mercyhurst North East	\$35,000.00 ¹⁵
Gannon University	\$58,516.00 ¹⁶

Name of Institution	Type of Institution	Total Student Body Size	Student Body Profile	Tuition and Fees (no aid)	Financial Aid Granted
Edinboro University/ Edinboro University Porecco College	Public, degree-granting, primarily baccalaureate or above Porecco College: Less than one year certificate Associate's degree Bachelor's degree Post baccalaureate certificate Master's degree Post-master's certificate	6,548 students (5,300 full-time and 1,248 part-time)	83% white, 8% African American, and 2% Hispanic	\$9,536 tuition and fees) \$22,852 for living on campus Financial aid is based on full-time on campus students Cost Per Credit Hour \$294 Cost Per Class (3 credit hour) \$882 Tuition at the Porecco College is reduced	Average Grant Aid per student \$6,104 (71% receive aid) Pell Grant Aid per student \$4,108 (48% receive aid) Average annual Federal Student Loan per student \$6,886 (77% receive aid)

¹² Based on Published Tuition and Fees for the 2015-16 academic year. Cost includes a first-year grant for students with need, up to \$1,000 and a second-year grant for students with need, up to \$2,000, per qualified full-time Erie County student with a completed FAFSA and after all other gift aid is applied. Pro-rated grant funding available for part-time students based on credit hours. Cost as of October 2015. <http://www.edinboro.edu/porreco-college/tuition.html>

¹³ http://www.fortis.edu/portals/0/compliancefiles/netprice-calc/npcalc-fortis_erie.htm

¹⁴ http://tuition.psu.edu/tuitiondynamic/rates.aspx?location=aa_bk_bd_cl <http://collegecostestimate.ais.psu.edu/cgi-bin/CollegeCostEstimate.exe/launch/CollegeCC/fullcalc>

¹⁵ <http://northeast.mercyhurst.edu/admissions-aid/financial-aid/cost-summary>

¹⁶ <http://gannon.edu/Financial-Aid/Tuition-and-Fees/>

Edinboro University of Pennsylvania					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Average debt of graduates 2015 – \$35,140 ✓ Proportion of graduates w/any debt 2015 -- 89% ✓ Proportion of graduates w/private loan debt 2015 -- 22% ✓ Nonfederal debt, % of total debt of graduates 2015 -- 16% ✓ Bachelor's degree recipients 2015 -- 1,031 					
Gannon University	Private non-profit, Roman Catholic college offering undergrad and graduate programs	4,416 total students (3,283 full-time and 1,133 part-time) 3,115 undergraduate	71% white, 4% African American, 3% Asian, and 2% Hispanic 17% are non-resident aliens	\$29,258 tuition and fees)	Average Grant Aid per student \$19,414 (79% receive aid) Pell Grant Aid per student \$4,030 (26% receive aid) Average annual Federal Student Loan per student \$7,505 (61% receive aid)
Gannon University Bachelor's degree recipients 2015 – 580					
Mercyhurst University	Private non-profit, Roman Catholic college offering undergrad and graduate programs	2,828 (2,571 full-time and 257 part-time)	69% white, 5% African American, 3% Asian, and 2% Hispanic 12% are non-resident aliens	\$33,314 (tuition and fees) Annual net price for students receiving grants or scholarship aid was \$21,577	Average Grant Aid per student \$21,619 (96% receive aid) Pell Grant Aid per student \$4,293 (30% receive aid) Average annual Federal Student Loan per student \$7,007 (71% receive aid)
Mercyhurst University					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Average debt of graduates 2015 – \$24,739 ✓ Proportion of graduates w/any debt 2015 – 73% ✓ Proportion of graduates w/private loan debt 2015 -- 17% ✓ Nonfederal debt, % of total debt of graduates 2015 -- 16% ✓ Bachelor's degree recipients 2015 – 588 					
Mercyhurst University – Northeast Campus	Less than one year certificate One but less than two year certificates and Associate's degree	916 students (529 full-time and 377 part-time)	78% white, 11% African American, and 4% Hispanic	\$17,500 (tuition and fees)	Average Grant Aid per student \$5,462 (86% receive aid) Pell Grant Aid per student \$4,427 (66% receive aid) Average annual Federal

					Student Loan per student \$8,534 (95% receive aid)
Penn State Erie—Behrend College	Mid-size four-year public college offering both undergraduate and graduate programs	4,327 students (3,986 full-time and 341 part-time)	79% white, 4% African American, 3% Asian, and 2% Hispanic 8% are non-resident aliens (54% are aged 25 and over)	\$14,610 (in-state tuition and fees) per year Cost Per Credit Hour \$262 Cost Per Class (3 credit hour) \$786	Average Grant Aid per student \$5,683 (82% receive aid) Pell Grant Aid per student \$4,046 (30% receive aid) Average annual Federal Student Loan per student \$6,851 (67% receive aid)
Penn State Erie – Behrend College					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Average debt of graduates 2015 -- \$39,346 ✓ Proportion of graduates w/any debt 2015 -- 81% ✓ Proportion of graduates w/private loan debt 2015 -- 26% ✓ Proportion of graduates w/state loan debt 2015 -- 0% ✓ Proportion of graduates w/institutional loan debt 2015 -- 3% ✓ Nonfederal debt, % of total debt of graduates 2015 – 31% ✓ Bachelor's degree recipients 2015 – 689 					
Erie Institute of Technology	Small, for-profit, two-year private college offering undergraduate programs	259 full-time students	87% white, 8% African American, and 5% Hispanic (54% are aged 25 and over)	\$13,770 (in-state tuition and fees)	Average Grant Aid per student \$6,434 (88% receive aid) Pell Grant Aid per student \$3,432 (71% receive aid) Average annual Federal Student Loan per student \$6,748 (78% receive aid)
Fortis Institute Erie	Private, for-profit, two-year college offering associates degrees, diplomas, and certificates	548 students (346 full-time and 202 part-time)	69% white, 13% African American, and Hispanic 5%	\$13,062 (in-state tuition + fees) per year	Average Grant Aid per student \$6,254 (88% receive aid) Pell Grant Aid per student \$4,381 (82% receive aid) Average annual Federal

			57% of students are 25 and over		Student Loan per student \$7,459 (74% receive aid)
Great Lakes Institute of Technology	Two-year private, for-profit career college dedicated to offering a practical education for students located in and around Erie Special focus: Health professions Cosmetology	677 students (78% full-time)	77% white, 10% African-American, 3% Hispanic 29% are 25 and over	\$15,936 (in-state tuition + fees) per year	Average Grant Aid per student \$4,181 (80% receive aid) Pell Grant Aid per student \$3,565 (75% receive aid) Average annual Federal Student Loan per student \$7,341 (79% receive aid)
Institute of Medical & Business Careers	Private for-profit 2-year technical college and career college	168 students (Pittsburgh statistics, Erie statistics not published separately)	63% African-American, 28% White, and 8% Hispanic	\$18,750 (tuition + fees per year)	
Triangle Tech	A small, 2-year, for-profit technical college and career college	30 Students	83% white, 7% Hispanic, 3% African-American, 3% Asian, and 3% American Indian or Alaskan Native 23% of students are 25 and over	\$16,383 (in-state tuition + fees) per year	Average Grant Aid per student \$8,552 (93% receive aid) Pell Grant Aid per student \$4,592 (72% receive aid) Average annual Federal Student Loan per student \$7,506 (89% receive aid)

According to research completed by the Institute for College Access & Success (2015), on average 71 percent of graduates from all four-year institutions in Pennsylvania had student loan debt (ranked #3 in the country). On average, these graduates graduated with \$34,798 in federal and private loan debt (ranked #2 in the country). The issue of student debt is a national dilemma, and because the issue of educational affordability was a top issue for why a community college was needed in Erie County, Pennsylvania needs more affordable educational options.

The data presented below about each school is a review of existing post-secondary and higher education institutions currently serving the region highlighting their associate’s degrees, diplomas, and certificates. The non-profit four year institutions in the market are well respected in the market. Full profiles of each school pulled from iPEDS (<https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/>) are in Appendix A.

Not-For-Profit Schools (Associate’s Degrees and Certificates Offered)

Edinboro University/Edinboro University Porecco College		
Program	Degree	Location
2+3 Pharmacy (with LECOM)	Associate of Science	Main Campus
Applied Technology	Associate of Applied Science	Porecco College
Applied Technology	Associate of Applied Science	Main Campus
Applied Technology - Aeronautical Science	Associate of Applied Science	Porecco College
Applied Technology - Electric Utilities Technology	Associate of Applied Science	Porecco College
Business Administration	Associate of Science	Main Campus
Business Administration	Associate of Science	Porecco College
Computer Science	Associate of Science	Main Campus
Criminal Justice	Associate of Arts	Porecco College
Criminal Justice	Associate of Arts	Main Campus
Human Services - Developmental Disabilities Specialist	Associate of Arts	Main Campus
Human Services - Social Services	Associate of Arts	Main Campus
Human Services - Social Services	Associate of Science	Porecco College
Liberal Studies	Associate of Arts	Main Campus
Liberal Studies	Associate of Arts	Porecco College
Manufacturing Engineering Technology	Associate of Engineering Technology	Main Campus
Pre-Pharmacy	Associate of Science	Main Campus
Preschool Education	Associate of Science	Porecco College
Preschool Education	Associate of Science	Main Campus
Quality Assurance Technician Certificate	Certificate	Main Campus

Gannon University	
Program	Degree
Business Administration	Associate of Science
Early Childhood Education and Early Intervention	Associate of Science

Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine
No associate's degrees offered

Mercyhurst University/Mercyhurst Northeast	
Program	Location
Business Administration	Mercyhurst Corry
Biology	Mercyhurst Northeast
Business Administration – Accounting	Mercyhurst Northeast
Business Administration – Management	Mercyhurst Northeast
Business Administration -- Social Media Marketing	Mercyhurst Northeast
Business Administration -- Sport Management	Mercyhurst Northeast
Computer Systems Support	Mercyhurst Northeast
Criminal Justice	Mercyhurst Northeast
Culinary Arts	Mercyhurst Northeast
Hospitality Management	Mercyhurst Northeast
Liberal Arts	Mercyhurst Northeast
Medical Laboratory Technician	Mercyhurst Northeast
Nursing	Mercyhurst Northeast
Nursing - LPN to RN Bridge	Mercyhurst Northeast
Occupational Therapy Assistant	Mercyhurst Northeast
Physical Therapist Assistant	Mercyhurst Northeast
Respiratory Therapist	Mercyhurst Northeast
Culinary Arts Certificate	Mercyhurst Northeast
Information Technology Certificate	Mercyhurst Northeast
Police Academy	Mercyhurst Northeast
Practical Nursing LPN-Certificate	Mercyhurst Northeast
Associate's Degree in Business Management	Booker T. Washington Center
Associate's Degree in Criminal Justice	Booker T. Washington Center
Associate's Degree in Liberal Arts	Booker T. Washington Center
Early Childhood Education Program	Booker T. Washington Center
Medical Assistant Certificate (9-month program)	Booker T. Washington Center
Retail Management Certificate (9-month program)	Booker T. Washington Center

Penn State Behrend (online courses)	
Program	Degree
Business Administration	Associate in Science
Human Development and Family Studies	Associate in Science
Information Sciences and Technology	Associate in Science
Labor and Employment Relations	Associate in Science
Letters, Arts, and Sciences	Associate in Arts in Letters, Arts, and Sciences
Turfgrass Science and Management	Associate in Science

The Rural Regional College of Northern Pennsylvania

The Rural Regional College of Northern Pennsylvania, approved by the state legislature in 2014, will begin to offer Summer classes in May 2017 to Erie, Crawford, Warren, Venango, Cameron, Elk, Forest, McKean and Potter counties, and will officially begin its operations in the fall. Nine evening courses will be offered initially at the Erie County Technical School in Summit Township, at Gannon University in Erie and at the Corry School District. Classes will also be offered in Crawford County — at Meadville Public Library and Benson Library in Titusville — and at other locations across counties served by the community college. Courses will be offered live online which means that instructors and students will interact via web cameras. In addition, some in-person classes may be offered from time to time in selected settings throughout the nine-county footprint of the Rural Regional College. Students can attend class at any of the community college’s satellite locations.

Cost per credit is \$180/\$540 per course and eligible high school juniors and seniors pay \$99. Gannon University is providing the curriculum for the college until its administrators are in place.

The Rural Regional College of Northern Pennsylvania (Initial Offerings)	
Program	Degree
Business Administration	Associate in Science
Interdisciplinary Studies	Associate of Arts

For-Profit Schools

Erie Institute of Technology	
Program	Degree
Business and Information Management	9 Month Diploma
Multimedia Graphic Design	18 Months- Associate of Specialized Technology Degree
Network and Database Professional	21 Months- Associate of Specialized Technology Degree
Medical Equipment Technician	18 Months – Associate of Specialized Technology Degree
Electronics Technician	24 Months – Associate of Specialized Technology Degree
Electronics Engineering Technology	24 Months – Associate of Specialized Technology Degree

Erie Institute of Technology	
Program	Degree
CNC/Machinist Technician	12 Months – Diploma
Industrial Maintenance & Mechatronics	9 Months – Diploma
Auto Body Technician	12 Months – Diploma
Electrician	15 Months- Diploma
HVAC/R Technology	12 Months – Diploma
Welding Technology	12 Months – Diploma

Fortis Institute	
Program	Degree
PN Program	Associate in Specialized Technology
Medical Assisting Program	Certificate/Diploma, Associate in Specialized Technology
Dental Assisting Program	Certificate/Diploma
Dental Hygiene	Associate in Specialized Technology
HVAC & Refrigeration	Certificate/Diploma, Associate in Specialized Technology
Welding	Certificate/Diploma Associate in Specialized Technology
Construction Management	Associate in Specialized Technology
Computer Information Systems -- Networking	Associate in Specialized Technology
Criminal Justice	Associate in Specialized Technology
Business Administration / Marketing and Management	Associates in Business Administration

Great Lakes Institute of Technology	
Program	Degree
Accounting Clerk	10 Months – Diploma
Administrative Office Professional	10 Months- Diploma
Dental Assistant	10 Months – Diploma
Diagnostic Medical Sonographer	19 Months – Associate of Specialized Technology Degree
Health Information Technology	16 Months – Associate of Specialized Technology Degree
Massage Therapist	10 Months – Diploma
Medical Assistant	10 Months – Diploma
Practical Nursing	14 Months – Diploma
Surgical Technologist	17 Months – Associate of Specialized Technology Degree
Veterinary Assistant	8 Months – Diploma
Cosmetology Operator Toni & Guy Hairdressing Academy	36 weeks, 1,250 Clock Hours
Cosmetology Teacher Toni & Guy Hairdressing Academy	

Institute of Medical & Business Centers	
Program	Degree
Medical Assisting Technician	Associate of Specialized Technology Degree
Medical Assisting	Diploma
Medical Records Technician	Associate of Specialized Technology Degree
Medical Billing and Coding	Diploma
Phlebotomy	Diploma
HVAC -R	Diploma
Welding Technology	Diploma

Triangle Tech	
Program	Degree
Computer-Aided Drafting & Design Technology	Associate of Specialized Technology Degree
Maintenance Electricity & Construction Technology	Associate of Specialized Technology Degree

Section Two: Proposed Community College Analysis

The Pennsylvania Department of Higher Education requires that each community college applicant determine community perception, potential student demand, provide a proposed curriculum, identify potential sites that a community college could be located, and evaluate the availability of qualified faculty. The data presented in this section of the report¹⁷ is based on primary research and data specific to the development of a proposed community college.

Community Survey Findings

As a part of gauging community support and demand for a community college in Erie County, Parker Philips designed a survey to gather opinions from the general public, parents, adult learners, educators, students, non-profit, community, government, and business leaders. Residents throughout Erie County were surveyed via telephone. Full results of the findings are presented in Appendix C including cross tabulation analysis, topline, and Power Point summary. The survey and research was designed to obtain a statistically valid sample.

Key Takeaways

- Strong support for and belief that Erie County would benefit from a community college –few lack an opinion on the topic. Seventy-two percent of residents believe that having a community college is “important” or “very important”.
- Of those stating that they support a community college (72 percent), the top reason to support is the high cost of four-year institutions (40 percent).
- Of those stating they did not think a community college was necessary (28 percent), the top reason to oppose was abundance of colleges in the area (54 percent).
- People highly value higher education that connects people to jobs.
- A community college is seen as benefiting both traditional students and adults.
- A range of programs is desired – but programs that connect people to jobs are most valued.
- On-the job training is seen as the top teaching method followed by a mix of online and traditional approaches.
- Local educators are particularly likely to believe in the benefits of a community college. Again, affordability is the top reason.

Community College Community Survey Overview

- 12-minute phone survey of adult residents ages 18 and older, residing in Erie County, PA
- Random sample (RDD and proprietary sample)
- Includes calls to cell phones (20%)
- Quotas and weighting used to ensure proportional results
- 503 responses, margin of error is +/-4.4 at 95% confidence level
- Results for select survey questions (general questions, parents, educators) are reported here. Additional reporting provided in the survey topline in Appendix C.

¹⁷ Note: Sections on Sites and Facilities, Community College Programmatic Need, and Community College Enrollment Numbers narrative and information were provided by the Empower Erie Working Groups.

Other Findings

- Eighty-two percent of respondents between the ages of 18 and 34 said it is either "important" or "very important" for the Erie region to have a community college.
- Seventy-eight percent of women surveyed said having a community college is "important" or "very important" to the region.
- Seventy-five percent said they believe there are enough potential students in Erie County to support a community college.
- Seventy-seven percent of respondents believe it is "important" or "very important" for a community college to be involved with local economic development efforts.

Educators

Forty-five educators were surveyed in the telephone survey with 62 percent being either K-12 faculty or administrators and 39 percent being post-secondary faculty or administrators. Local educators are particularly likely to believe in the benefits of a community college. Again, affordability is the top reason.

Parents

Eighty-four percent of parents surveyed (98 people interviewed) as a part of this study would consider a community college for their child. Forty-nine percent of parents had children in high school, and 59 percent had children in the K-8 demographic.

Adult Learners/Displaced Workers

Adult learners were surveyed via telephone and surveyed separately through intercept surveys to ascertain their opinions on a community college in Erie County (96 respondents interviewed – 65 through telephone and 31 through intercept). This adult learner group interviewed via telephone was statistically consistent with the overall telephone sample. However, a statistically higher percentage of respondents (19.2 percent) stated that they would consider a community college for their continued job training and education.

The surveys collected through the intercept methodology show the following:

- A strong majority (93 percent) value more affordable access to higher education.
- A strong majority (87 percent) think it's important for Erie to have a community college.
- An overwhelming majority (90.3 percent) would use a community college for their education.
- A range of programs are desired – but programs that connect people to jobs are most valued.
- Thirty percent are unsure if they would consider a community college for their education.

High School Students

To gather input from high school students regarding their perceptions of a community college, Parker Philips partnered with the City of Erie School District, Corry Area School District, and Iroquois School District, to allow students to complete an online survey. The total sample size was 601 surveys. A separate breakout survey was designed in conjunction with the City of Erie School District for implementation. Results of the survey can be found in Appendix D.

Community College High School Student Survey Overview

- 7-minute online survey of students ages 15 and older, attending high school in Erie County, PA
- 601 responses were received from students at three school districts – Corry School District, Erie School District, and Iroquois School District

Key Takeaways

- A strong majority (74 percent) value more affordable access to higher education.
- Half of students surveyed (60.4 percent) think it's important for Erie to have a community college.
- Overall, 3 out of 4 students surveyed are planning on attending college after graduation.
- One-quarter of students (25.2 percent) are unsure of what they will do after high school or plan on pursuing another path.
 - Of these students, 29.5 percent are planning on getting a job that doesn't require a college degree.
- Top reasons for support: providing opportunity for lower income residents in Erie County and affordability.
- Top reasons to oppose: abundance of colleges in the area and struggling public schools.
- Seventeen percent (17 percent) of students are unsure if they are attending college after graduation.
- Thirty percent (30 percent) are unsure if they would consider a community college for their education.

Community Leaders, Business, and Industry Interviews

Erie County has a clear sense of what jobs need to be filled, the skill gaps that exist in the market, and the skills that are transferrable from industry to industry. Erie County and the City of Erie have gone to great lengths to address the educational and training needs, but scalability remains a persistent challenge. The goal of these interviews was to discuss the concept of the community college and to understand why the college was or was not necessary in the market. Direct interviews were completed with business leaders and secondary data was compiled from recent, existing industry studies on the region. Interviews (lasting on average 45-60 minutes) were conducted with key community leaders and business leaders (43 people interviewed) to get their opinions on a community college (see Appendix E for interview guide).

Overall in the interviews there was a sense of optimism from respondents that Erie was making a turn toward a brighter future. Interviewees were quick to point out that because of the natural beauty of the area coupled with a low-cost of living, Erie was a desirable place to live and raise a family. Respondents were realistic that Erie County faced challenges with respect to its economic conditions lagging the state

and the nation, the state of the Erie School District, and the declining tax base within the city. However, many participants felt that for the first time in a long-time there was an opportunity for real change in the community.

Community Leaders Interview Summary

The participants proudly described Erie as being a place where people could affordably raise a family and have access to amenities not usually found in a market of Erie County's size. Many participants stated that the recent economic declines were having an impact, but they remain optimistic and many assert that they see bright lights on the horizon for Erie. While manufacturing is still a leading sector, other areas of the economy are beginning to grow. There was a belief among many that Erie was starting to turn a corner and the economy is on the upswing.

In general, participants worried that the K-12 sector was struggling in the City of Erie and a few respondents stated that some school districts in the county would need to reassess operations because of declining budgets and enrollment. With respect to the post-secondary market, respondents were quick to point out how fortunate Erie County was to host four respected universities in the market. Respondents felt that these colleges and universities were doing a very good job educating students in the community. There is a territorial protection and reverence for existing institutions, but most agreed that a community college should not be viewed as a competitor to them.

Key Findings

- Twenty-one people were interviewed from organizations in the economic development, local and state government, social services, corporate, and non-profit sectors.
- Results from the interviews show that support of the college was strong among most participants.
- Reasons driving support were economic development opportunities, an affordable education for Erie County residents, and a chance to respond to market needs quickly to develop programs.
- Reasons driving dissent were the abundance of universities in the market providing education and two-year programs to Erie County residents (Porecco Center, Mercyhurst Northeast, and soon to be introduced Rural Regional College courses).
- Some participants felt that the addition of the Rural Regional College into the market created a threat to demand for the proposed community college.
- Concerns were also raised about the local match dollars/tax commitment from the county when the county needs to channel its resources towards other efforts.
- A clear message from many interviews was the need for true collaboration and partnerships between universities, industry, and workforce development agencies. Erie's reputation as a "go it alone" county would need to be replaced with a spirit of cooperation.
- Duplication of efforts and replication of existing programs was also a concern for those interviewed. The community college must represent a new and unique effort.

Workforce, Business, and Educator Interview Summary

As a part of this process, twenty-two workforce development individuals, business leaders, labor leaders and educators were interviewed. The same interview guide was utilized with this group as the community stakeholders. The participants in these interviews provided their candid thoughts about Erie County's need for a community college.

Key Findings

- Support of the community college was driven by the need for a school that was responsive to market and business demand, was affordable, and could be a high-quality and low-cost option in the county.
- Abundance and duplication drives dissent. For those that stated they did not support the community college, the logic was based on a belief that programs already exist and that Erie County getting a community college would not add anything new to the market.
- Concerns by some about the necessary local tax commitment in the home county of a community college were raised. According to respondents, the issue of financial commitments of starting a new program/school in the market where other institutions were under financial pressures and “community college-like” offerings were already available was confusing/concerning. Those with concerns felt that the financials were needed to demonstrate the viability of the school and a full understanding of the needed staff, faculty, and operational costs needed to run a school should be provided.
- For those that supported the concept, the community college represents something that could help Erie raise its educational attainment levels and provide students with the necessary skill sets to get a job and be successful. The lack of job readiness for many workers in the market was repeatedly noted.

Community College Programmatic Need

The opportunity that exists for the proposed Erie County community college is to offer associate's degree and technical skills certificate programs that provide education and training at an affordable price for available and emerging jobs that do not require a baccalaureate degree. In addition, the community college will also provide the remedial education many students need to succeed in a four-year degree program. It will also provide an affordable first two years of college to those seeking a bachelor's degree.

The Empower Erie Board assembled a diverse working group comprised of leaders from key stakeholders in Erie representing the corporate community, organized labor, manufacturing, health care, secondary education, higher education, and not-for-profit organizations. The mission of the Curriculum Working Group (CWG) is to craft a set of program recommendations that inspire residents and employers to recognize and pursue a brighter future through expanded higher education. The CWG convened for an intensive three-day work session in which they addressed the following. The CWG was

charged with recommending the critical program offerings for the new community college and updating the applicable sections of the 2010 Application to the Pennsylvania Department of Education to authorize the college. As a part of their process, CWG:

- Reviewed Chapters three and four of the 2010 Application to the Pennsylvania Department of Education which delineated the 2010 Feasibility Study and Program Offerings Recommendations.
- Reviewed the initial data from the updated feasibility study and provided feedback to the researcher conducting the feasibility study and clarified their understanding of the current state of needs.
- Brought their own expertise and brainstormed a listing of proposed program offerings, as well as follow-up research and data gathering tasks.

Recommended Program Offerings – Ten Pathways



Abbreviations

OYC—One Year Certificate
AS—Associate’s of Science
STC—Short Term Certificate
AAB—Associate’s of Applied Business
AA—Associate’s of Arts
AAS—Associate’s of Applied Science

I. **Baccalaureate Transfer Pathway**

Programs in this pathway give students access to junior status in a wide range of four-year degree programs through the Statewide Program to Program (P2P) articulation agreements. They will be designed to provide a liberal arts foundation that encompasses the PA TRAC 30-Credit Transfer Framework that is guaranteed to count toward graduation.

- A. **Associate's of Arts—AA**
- B. **Associate's of Science—AS**

II. **Engineering and Manufacturing Pathway**

Programs and majors in this pathway lead to careers in electrical and mechanical engineering; mechatronics or MEMS, welding, computer engineering, and engineering and manufacturing transfer programs.

- A. **Automation Engineering Technologies**
 - 1. Applied Electronics—OYC; AAS
 - 2. Maintenance/Repair—OYC; AAS
- B. **Computer-Aided Design/Computer-Aided Manufacturing—OYC; AAS**
- C. **Computer Numerical Control**
 - 1. Machining—STC; AAS
 - 2. Programmer—STC; AAS
- D. **Electrical Engineering Technologies**
 - 1. Applied Electronics—OYC; AAS
- F. **Mechatronics Engineering Technology—AAS**
- G. **Quality Assurance Specialist—AAS**
- H. **Welding—STC; OYC; AAS**

III. **Computer and Information Technology Pathway**

Programs and majors in this pathway lead to careers in network systems, mobile device application and development, software development, web design and development, computer gaming, hardware maintenance, computer security, computer forensics, IT for healthcare, and computer and information technologies transfer programs.

- A. **Computer Science, Engineering, and Technologies**
 - 1. Computer Engineering Technology—Computer Application Integration Specialist—STC; AS
 - 2. Electronic Engineering Technologies—Applied Electronics—STC; AAS

B. Computer Security

1. Computer Information Systems—STC; AA; AS; AAS
 - a.) *Information Security for Business*
 - b.) *Network Security Foundations*
2. Computer Engineering Technology—OYC; AS; AAS
 - a.) *Computer and Digital Forensics*
 - b.) *Business Forensics Investigations*

C. Hardware Maintenance and Information Systems

1. A+ Certification—STC
2. Computer Maintenance and Networking—STC

D. Interactive Digital Media

1. Computer Animation—OYC
2. Web Design—OYC
3. Graphic Design—OYC
4. Computer Games and Simulation Design—AAS

E. Management Information Services

1. Business Intelligence and Analytics—STC
2. Enterprise Security Certificate—STC
3. Management Information Systems—AAS

F. Network Systems

1. Computer Information Systems—STC
 - a.) *Network Administration*
 - b.) *Network Infrastructure Technologies*
2. Network Communications Technology—AAS

G. Software and Mobile Application Development

1. Mobile Device Application Development—STC; OYC; AAB
2. Software Development—AAB
3. Computer Games and Simulation Design—AAS

H. Web Development—STC; AAB

IV. Business and Entrepreneurship Pathway

Programs and majors in this pathway lead to careers in accounting, management, marketing, human resources, entrepreneurship (owning your own business), customer service, and business transfer programs.

A. Accounting

1. Bookkeeper —STC
2. Payroll Clerk—STC
3. Accounting—AAB

- B. Customer Service—STC**
- C. Human Resources—OYC; AAB**
- D. Logistics**
 - 1. Supply Chain and Logistics—STC; AS
 - 2. Transportation and Logistics—AS
- E. Management and Entrepreneurship**
 - 1. General Business Administration—STC; OYC; AAB
 - 2. Entrepreneurship—OYC; AAB
- F. Marketing**
 - 1. Business Administration—Marketing—AAB

V. Liberal and Creative Arts Pathway

Programs and majors in this pathway lead to careers in journalism, digital arts, and associated transfer programs.

- A. Digital Arts**
 - 1. Computer Animation—OYC
 - 2. Graphic Design—OYC
 - 3. Web Design—OYC
- B. Journalism and Communication**
 - 1. Journalism and Communication Studies—OYC
 - 2. Public Relations and Advertising—OYC

VI. Health and Wellness Pathway

Programs and majors in this pathway lead to careers in nursing, health related occupations that work in a hospital or health care setting, exercise and fitness, and health and wellness transfer programs.

- A. Diagnostic Medical Sonography—AAS**
- B. Exercise, Fitness, Rehabilitation**
 - 1. Group Exercise Instructor—STC
 - 2. Personal Trainer—OYC
 - 3. Sports and Fitness Management—AAS
- C. Medical Assisting—OYC; AAS**
- D. Medical Coding (Physician Office)—STC**
- E. Medical Technology**
 - 1. MRI Technologists—OYC; AAS
 - 2. Cardiovascular Technologist—AAS

- F. Nursing (Long Term, Home Care)**
 - 1. State Tested Nurse Assisting—STC
 - 2. Home Health Aide—STC
 - 3. Nursing (RN)—AAS (Partnership Opportunity, i.e. with Mercyhurst University)
- G. Phlebotomy—STC**
- H. Surgical Technology—AAS**

VII. Tourism and Hospitality

Programs and majors in this pathway lead to careers in tourism and transfer programs in this field.

- A. Tourism and Hospitality**
 - 1. Hospitality Operations—OYC
 - 2. Hospitality and Tourism Management—AAB

VIII. Math and Science Pathway

Programs and majors in this pathway lead to careers in mathematics, biology, chemistry, physics, sustainable agriculture, environmental, and associated transfer programs.

- A. Environmental Technology—STC**
- B. Sustainable Agriculture—OYC; AS**

IX. Human/Social Services/Public Service Pathway

Programs and majors in this pathway lead to careers in social work, counseling, public administration, and safety forces along with associated transfer programs.

- A. Counseling**
 - 1. Success Coaching and Mentoring—STC
 - 2. Addiction Counselor Assisting—STC
- B. Human Services**
 - 1. Human Services—AS
 - 2. Social Work—AS
- C. Public Administration—OYC; AAS**
- D. Public Safety**
 - 1. Emergency Medical Services—EMT/Paramedic—STC; OYC
 - 2. Digital Forensics for Law Enforcement—STC
 - 3. Fire Science—AAS
 - 4. Justice Systems—AAS
 - a.) *Corrections*
 - b.) *Police Science*

X. Continuing Education Pathway

Students do not have to be pursuing a degree to benefit from education and training. They can use this pathway to improve their job skills, become certified in a specialty or just enjoy the experience of learning something new.

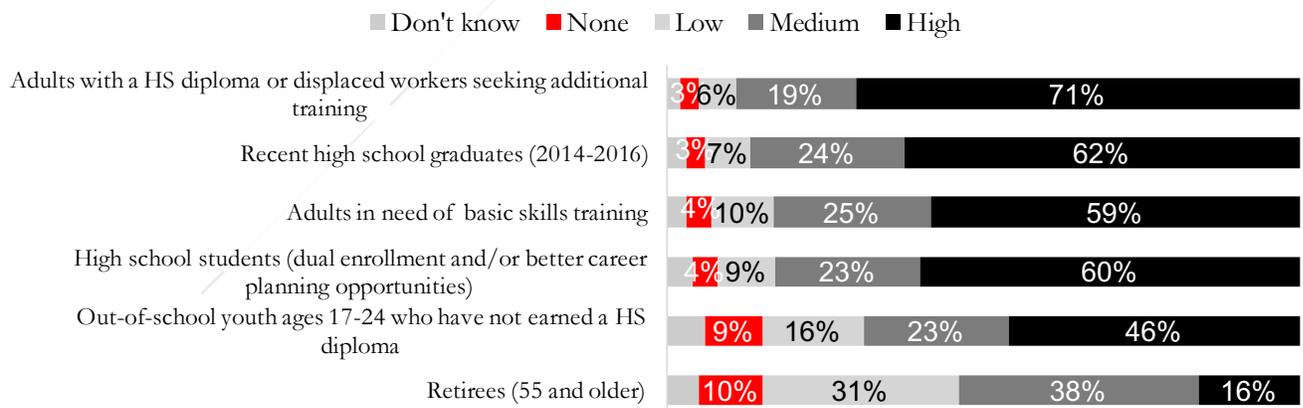
- A. Business and Information Technology
- B. Center for Lifelong Learning (Adults 50+)
- C. Customized Education/Training
- D. Personal Enrichment

Survey Results Related to Curriculum

Results from the telephone survey with general consumers regarding programming showed the following:

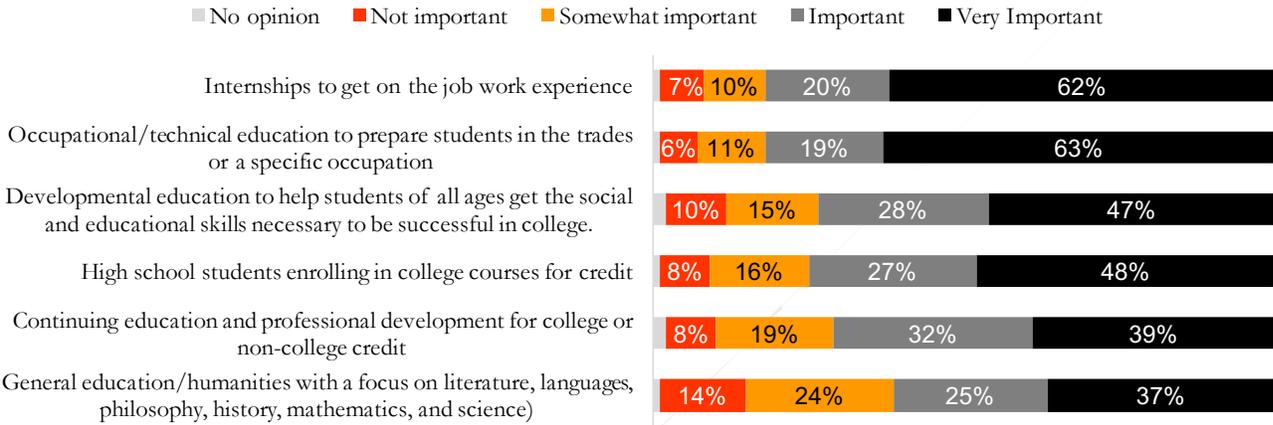
A community college is seen as benefiting a variety of groups, especially adults with a high school diploma or displaced workers seeking additional training (90 percent of respondents), recent high school graduates (86 percent of respondents) and adults in need of basic skills training (84 percent of respondents in this category).

Q13. From your perspective, what level of benefit do you believe the following groups would receive from a community college in Erie County?



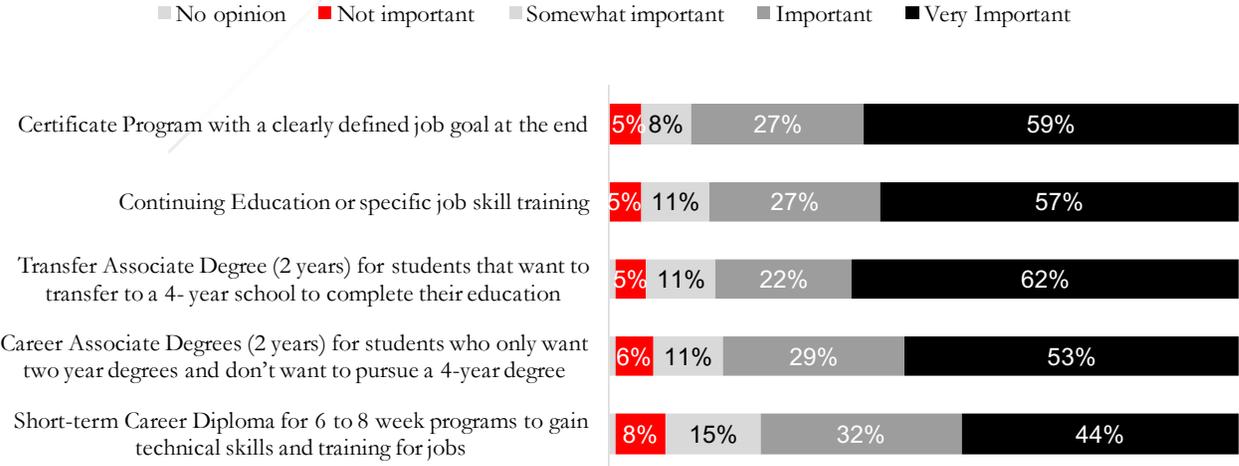
Residents of Erie County felt that it was “very important” or “important” that the proposed community college should offer internships to get on the job work experience (82 percent of respondents) and occupational/ technical education to prepare students in the trades or a specific occupation (82 percent of respondents). The lowest rated option for programming was general education/humanities, where 62 percent of respondents stated “very important” or “important”.

Q14. How important do you think it would be for a community college in Erie County to offer these types of programs?



Consumers stated that there was a strong desire for a range of degrees and certificate programs and an intensity around the ability to transfer to a four-year school. However, 62 percent of respondents stated that offering a transfer associate’s degree was very important.

Q15. A community college can offer many different degrees and certificates to educate people of all ages and backgrounds. How important it would be to offer the following:



Community College Enrollment Projections

Student enrollment is based on a review of Erie high school graduates and the population of Erie County residents between the ages of 25 to 64. High school graduates are projected to have a post-secondary attainment rate of 50%, with 22% of those attending a community college. It is also anticipated that two percent of the Erie County residents age 25-64 will attend a community college. The enrollment projections are also based on the American Community College Survey for Educational Attainment Rate and Pennsylvania Department of Education graduation rate for public schools 2014-2015.

Based on the analysis, it is projected that in the first year of operation a total of 1,525 students will utilize the school for education and training. The community college is projected to have 226 full-time students, 700 part-time students, 200 summer students, and 400 students for specific job training enrolled.

Facilities and Site Selection

Facilities selection is a critical component in the creation of a community college and is driven by a range of factors including curriculum demands, class size/headcount, and campus amenity and accessibility needs. State guidelines require the identification of potential spaces for consideration throughout Erie County that meet specific criteria and requirements to open a community college. At this point in the community college development process, it is not required to select the final location. The real estate market and properties available, both those that are taxable and tax exempt, will likely change between the study period and initial enrollment. For example, there are currently considerable changes and reorganizations underway in the Erie School District as well as the Erie Catholic Diocese. As the process for both institutions evolves, it seems probable that additional tax-exempt properties will become available for consideration in the time frame during which the community college's board will be evaluating both short and long term alternatives.

Respondents being interviewed as a part of the research process were asked what amenities should be included in the new community college. Many of those respondents envisioned a school that provided common space, collaboration space, quiet space, and a food court or some place to grab a snack for students. Other high-priority amenities included easy access and proximity to public transportation, a library, and child care facilities.

Criteria

Using the information from the study, the working group on facilities and site selection developed specific criteria for site suitability evaluation and final site selection. When determining the evaluation criteria, the working group focused on two overarching factors:

- Compliance with Pennsylvania Department of Education Guidelines for establishing a community college.
- Assuring that potential locations offered reasonable accessibility and amenities to all residents of Erie County.

More than twenty-five sites throughout Erie County were identified as potential locations of a new community college. The fluid nature of Erie County’s real estate market led the group to focus on criteria adherence and square footage requirements as opposed to specific recommendations or ranking of potential site(s) for the community college. With nearly 800 square miles of land, the site selection working group took into consideration that all residents of Erie County – rural, urban, and suburban — will need to have easy access to the school.

As previously referenced, another critical site evaluation criteria recommended by the Working Group is each alternative’s taxability status (taxable or exempt.) The Working Group strongly recommends prioritizing tax-exempt properties as the potential location for the community college to avoid any reduction to the real estate tax base. While it is recommended that a tax-exempt site be selected as the permanent home for the community college’s main campus, it is important to note that the community college will likely lease its first site(s). Under a leasing arrangement, rental income would be taxable for the property’s owner, regardless of the property’s underlying tax status. *The full criteria to be used in evaluating sites is shown below:*

Empower Erie Site Selection Criteria		
Location		
	Criteria	Measurement
1	Access to public transportation	Proximity to bus stops and bus lines
2	Erie County geographic coverage	Adjacent towns and areas of Erie County with easy access
3	Safety of Neighborhood	Crime statistics
4	Parking (cost and availability)	Availability of parking in a lot, street and cost
5	Access to retail/ restaurants	Inventory of retail and restaurants
Facility Characteristics		
	Criteria	Measurement
1	Lot size	Acres
2	Building size	Gross & Net sq. ft.
3	Overall condition assessment	Qualitative description (i.e. ready for use, needs work, etc.)
4	Availability of administrative and common space	Brief description of existing space for offices and student space
5	Availability of specialized space	Brief description of specialized spaces (shops, wet lab/dry lab, simulation lab, etc.)
6	Potential for expansion	Brief description of feasible expandability
7	Access to high speed internet service	Brief description of installation and/or proximity to high speed service
8	Handicapped Accessible/ ADA Compliant	Brief description of facilities and compliance

Financial		
Criteria	Measurement	
1	Cost to acquire or lease	Estimated purchase or lease cost
2	Cost to address condition issues	Estimated cost to prepare for use
3	Cost of operation	Estimated annual cost to operate (utilities, maintenance, and misc.)
4	Cost of FF&E	Estimated cost of furniture, fixtures, and equipment
Miscellaneous		
Criteria	Measurement	
1	Fit to enrollment projections	Facility meets or does not meet current and projected enrollment
2	Tax classification	Site is currently classified Taxable or Tax Exempt

After reviewing all available information, potential sites were then divided into three categories: 1) main campus, 2) satellite campus, and 3) special training facility alternatives. The main campus sites are located in or close to the centrally located and high-population density downtown area of the city of Erie. Due to the reorganization of the Erie City School District and the closing of some schools, it is possible that one or more of the district building might also become available.

The possible main campus alternatives identified include:

Sites	Tax Exempt	Lot size (ac)	Building size (sq. ft.)	Potential for expansion (Lot Coverage sq. ft.)
Robinson-Connor Building - 155 W 8th Street	N	0.6642	79,329	20,048
Emerson Gridley Elementary - Erie School District	Y	1.25	86,600	202,651
Erie Plaza - 824 E 6th Street	N	3.193	49,790	89,296
AMSafe Building - 1305 W 12th Street	N	5.2317	40,130	187,762

The following existing educational/business facilities across Erie County have expressed an interest in potentially serving as:

1. **Satellite sites for the community college** – Girard High School (Girard School District), Corry Higher Education Council, Edinboro University Main Campus and Porreco College Campus, and Mercyhurst North East.
2. **Special training center sites** – Central Career Tech School (Erie School District), Regional Career & Technical Center and Erie Insurance Technical Center.

While there would be operating and programming details to work out, these sites represent a geographic spread that would provide access for all of Erie County.

Availability of Qualified Faculty

The need to have a qualified and respected faculty in place is mission critical. Depending upon the curriculum, Erie’s community college will be tasked with hiring instructors to train and educate the student body. According to analysis completed by U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics¹⁸, the average salary is \$63,539 for a full-time faculty member on a 9/10-month contract at a two-year public institution in Pennsylvania. This dollar amount could rise or fall depending on faculty subject matter demand and need to recruit into the Erie County area from the broader state or region. Adjunct faculty are paid an average salary of between \$2,000 and \$4,000 per course.

The community college will need to maintain a highly-qualified faculty to effectively deliver its curriculum. While it is understood that many faculty at a community college are not tenure track, but adjunct professors or instructors, it is vital that sufficient salaries and benefits be included in the budget. With a competitive post-secondary education market in Erie County, attracting faculty will require paying competitive wages to secure a high-quality teaching staff. While prevailing wages are lower in Erie County, it should not be assumed that full-time or adjunct faculty will be paid at lower rates.

Community college faculty generally hold master’s or doctoral degrees in relevant fields. Technical fields require certified experts to provide instruction. Moreover, the potential closure and restructuring of Erie City schools will make available faculty that could have the credentials and be effective as faculty in the community college. The potential layoffs due to the restructuring of Edinboro University could be a source of qualified faculty for the college and Erie’s geographic location could present an opportunity to attract faculty from neighboring states

Conclusion

In the opening paragraph of this feasibility study we noted a “growing sense of possibility backed by action-oriented leadership” that is emerging in Erie County. The analysis, research, and information contained in the ensuing pages clearly affirm that a community college should serve as a key catalyst to turn that possibility into reality.

Our comprehensive assessment of all aspects of establishing a community college using primary and secondary research demonstrates that there is market demand and capacity to support a viable community college in Erie County.

¹⁸ Source: Miller, Abby and Amelia Marcetti Topper. **Trends in Faculty Salaries: 1995–96 to 2014–15**. Coffey analysis of U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, *Salary Survey*, 1995–96 and 2014–15.