



## ABOUT US

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**We help create  
strong communities,  
impactful organizations,  
and thriving economies**



Economic  
Development  
Planning



Emerging  
Industries



Housing



Business  
Districts



Outdoor  
Recreation  
Economies



Quality of Life  
and Place

# Our Team

The Fourth Economy team uses experience in economic development to frame environmental, social, and cultural issues in a context that resonates with investors, community, and public policy leaders.



**Nicole Muise-Kielkucki**  
Project Director



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Project Manager



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Analysis Lead



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Engagement Lead

# Similar & Complementary Projects



**North Central PA Pressed  
Materials Tech Hub Strategy**



**York County  
Economic Action Plan**



**Allegheny Together – Main  
Street Revitalization**



**Pennsylvania Statewide  
Outdoor Business Alliance**



**10-Year Strategic Plan for  
Pennsylvania's Food and  
Agriculture Industry**



**PA Statewide 10-Year  
Housing Action Plan**

## About this project



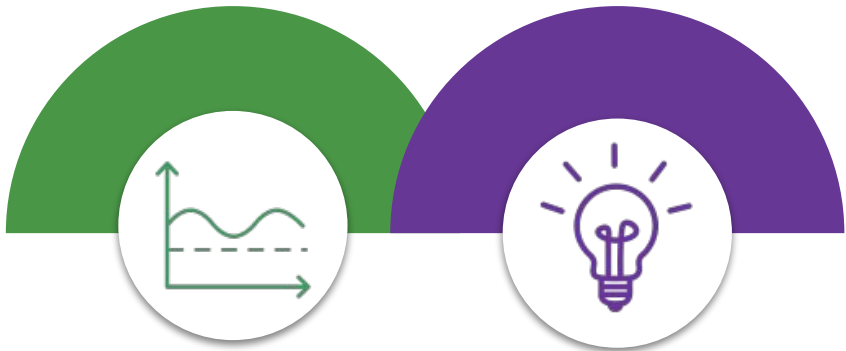
***This plan is funded by a grant specifically designed to assist rural communities.***

## Goals and Objectives

- Characterize strengths and opportunities to grow.
- Incorporating input from community members to define what we want to be and be known for in the future.
- Defining a path to economic prosperity for Fayette County.
- Decide how we market ourselves and our assets to realize this vision.

# Workplan

## Phase 1



### Engaging the Community

- Steering Committee
- Engagement & Communications Plan
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Town Hall

### Baseline Situational Assessment

- Existing Plan Review and Ecosystem Scan
- Baseline Data Memo
- SOAR Analysis
- Draft Vision and Goals

## Phase 2



### Priorities & Sector-based Strategies

- Economic Diagnosis
- Public Survey
- Engagement Around Prioritized Strategy Areas

### Action and Implementation Plan

- Build Sessions & Strategy Refinement
- Final Vision and Goals
- Action & Implementation Plan

# Establishing a Baseline

*What are Current Conditions?*

## Key analysis tasks:

- Review prior plans, reports, and data analysis
- Analyze a mix of publicly available data
- Conduct targeted analyses related to specific project goals



# Engaging the Community

*Ensure a diversity of voices inform the plan and future vision.*

## Key questions will focus on:

- What strengths, opportunities, and trends should the county invest in?
- What challenges should the plan address?
- What should the county's economic development priorities be?



# Interviews and Group Conversations



## Local Municipalities

- Connellsville Redevelopment Authority
- City of Connellsville
- City of Uniontown
- Brownsville Borough
- Point Marion Borough



## Community Groups & Outdoor Recreation

### Community Groups

- Brownsville Area School District - Brownsville Students in Action
- Masontown Matters

### Outdoor Recreation

- National Road Heritage Corridor
- Fayette County Parks and Rec



## Key Stakeholders

- Developers
- Business Owners
- Residents

# **Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results**

# Strengths

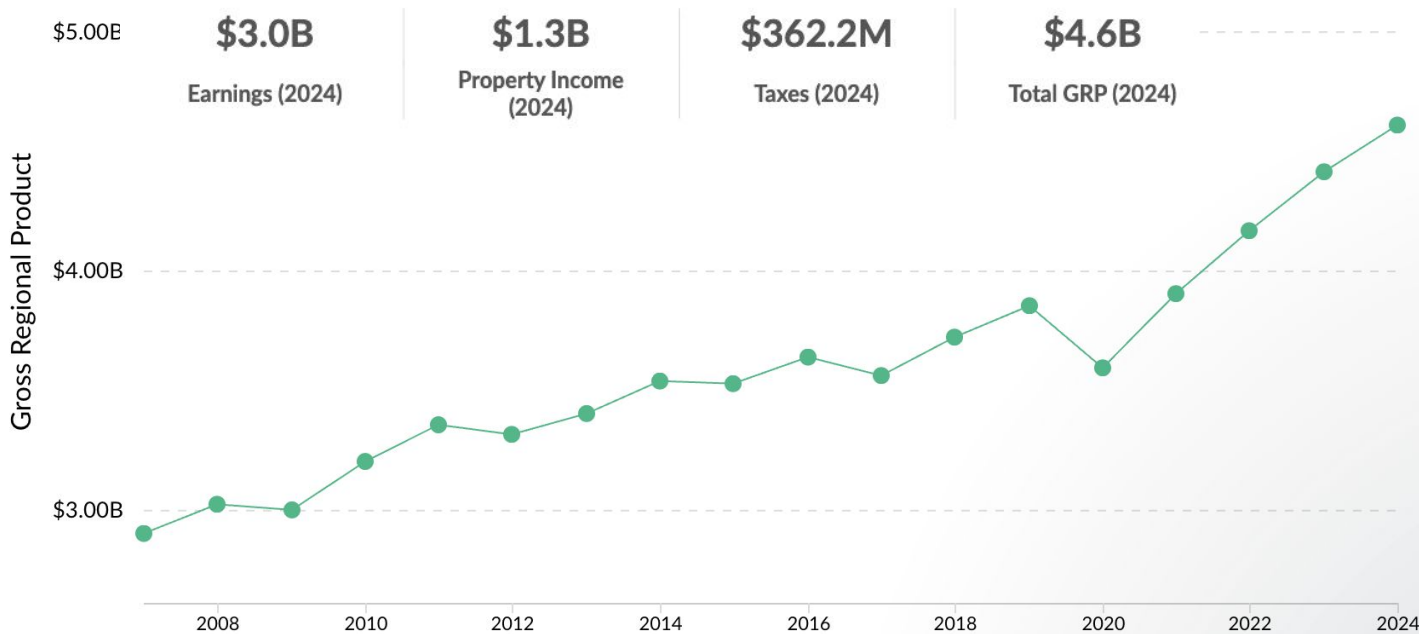
- Industrial heritage and natural resources
- Natural beauty, outdoor recreation, and heritage tourism
- Fayette County is a representation of counties all over PA



# Historically, the local economy is growing

Gross regional product (GRP) is growing.

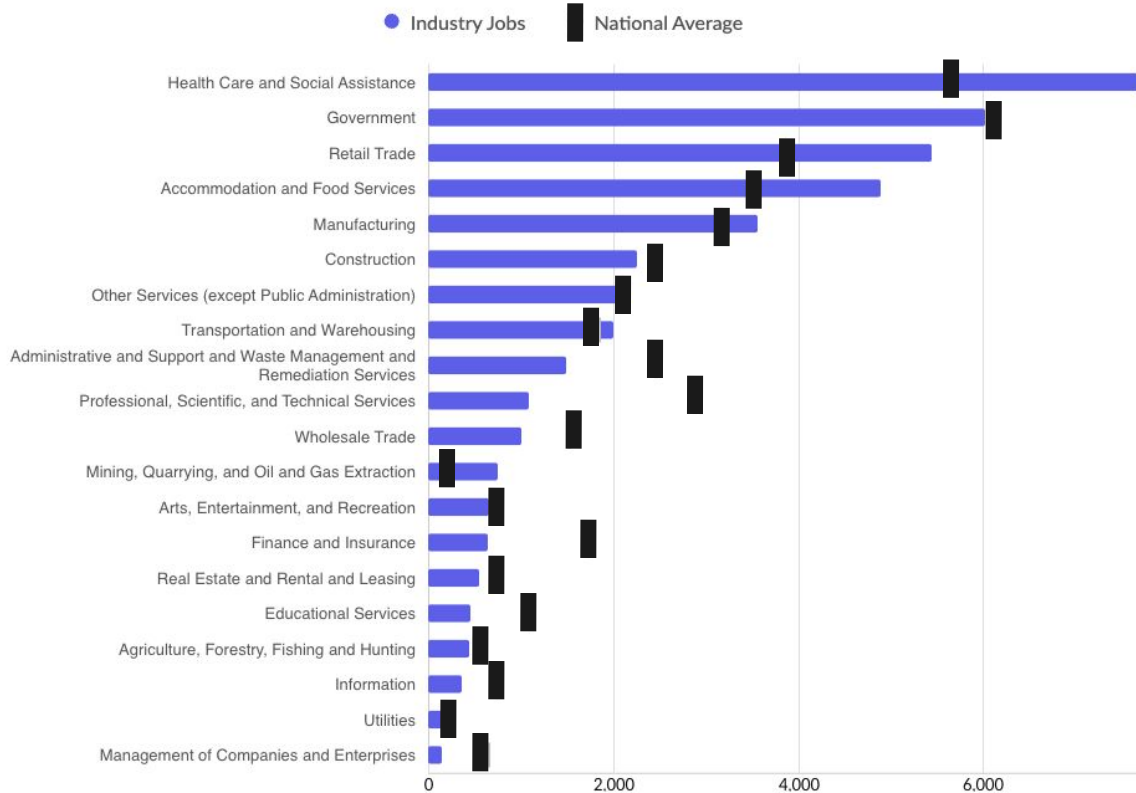
In Fayette County, total 2024 GRP was \$4.6 billion.



# Top employing industries outpace national averages

These industries employ residents at a higher rate:

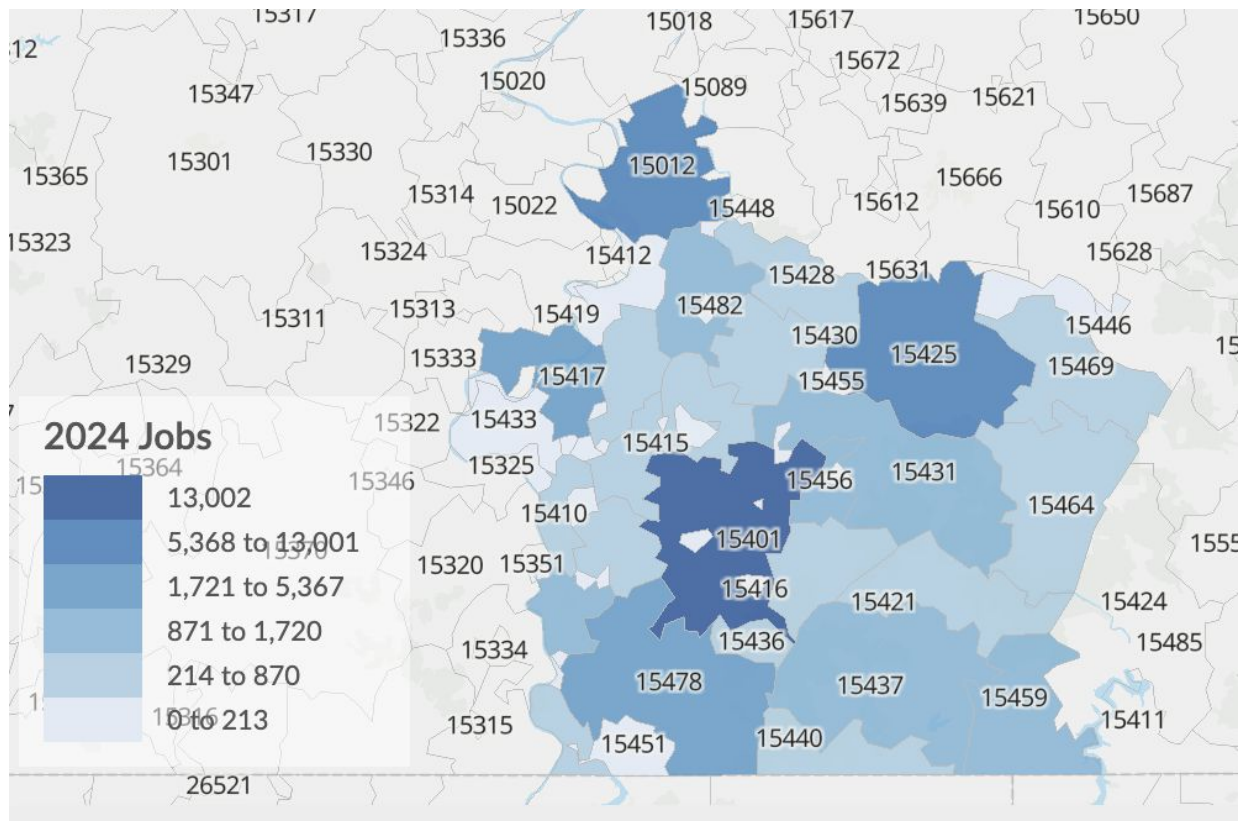
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Manufacturing
- Retail, Accommodations and Food



# Geographic Job Concentrations

Top employers drive employment concentrations in **Uniontown, Connellsville, and Belle Vernon.**

Top employers include **Nemacolin, Uniontown Hospital, and Walmart.**



# Education & Experience Requirements of Job Postings

- Educational level requirements of job postings generally matches local residents.
- The vast majority of Fayette County residents have attained a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Focusing on work experience can help boost employment prospects.

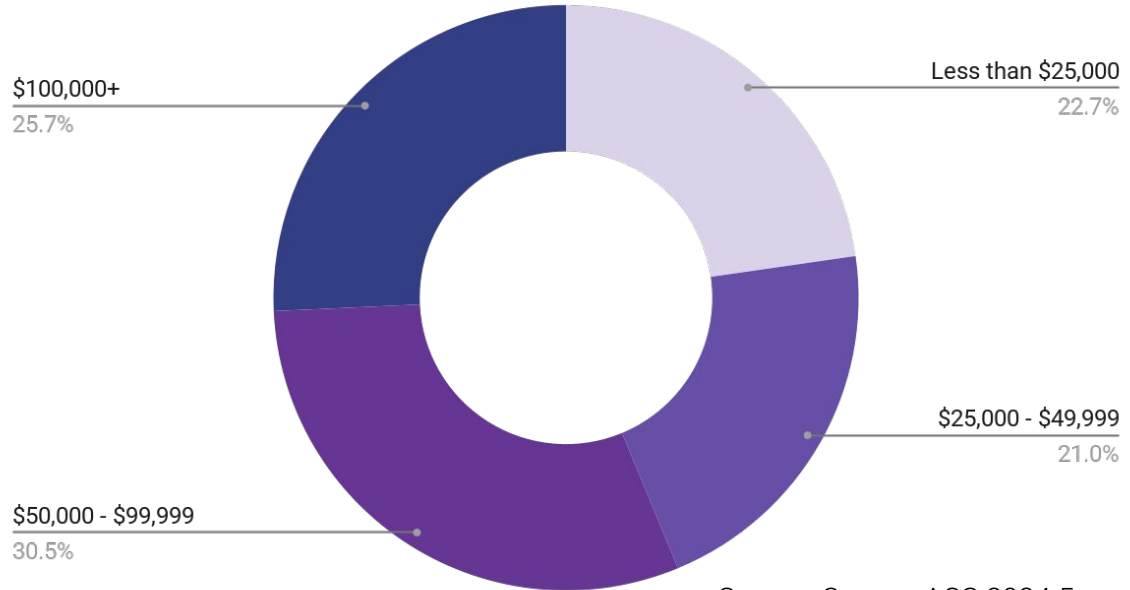
Education Level	Unique Postings	% of Total
No Education Listed	6,124	52%
High school or GED	3,677	31%
Associate's degree	809	7%
Bachelor's degree	1,266	11%
Master's degree	675	6%
Ph.D. or professional degree	306	3%

Minimum Experience	Unique Postings	% of Total
No Experience Listed	7,332	63%
0 - 1 Years	2,531	22%
2 - 3 Years	1,288	11%
4 - 6 Years	443	4%
7 - 9 Years	42	0%
10+ Years	71	1%

# Nearly half of Fayette County is middle income

Just over half of Fayette County residents have an income between \$25,000 - \$99,000

**Median Household Income**



Source: Census ACS 2024 5-year

# Fayette County is representative of middle income PA

Fayette County closely matches Pennsylvania's middle **income rates**.

This presents an opportunity to test new ideas and learn from other communities throughout the state.

**Median Household Income**



Source: Census ACS 2024 5-year

**Audience Input:** What other strengths should Fayette County leverage for economic growth?

Visit [fourtheconomy.com/fayette/pa](https://fourtheconomy.com/fayette/pa)  
to input your answers

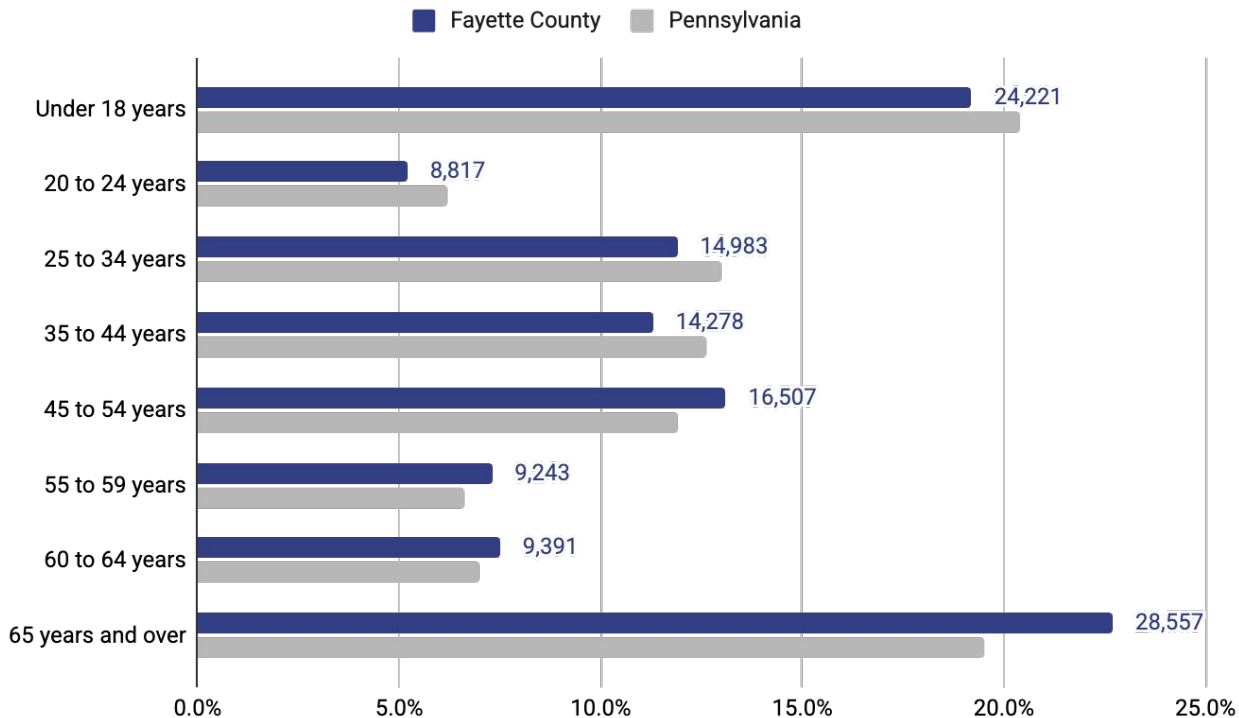
# Opportunities

- More health care and social service jobs are needed, and there is opportunity to better align services with the aging population.
- Fayette's older population means there will likely be many workers retiring meaning future workforce opportunities could be aligned with these jobs.
- Take advantage of the number of people moving to Fayette from neighboring counties, and identify opportunities to keep people in Fayette County.

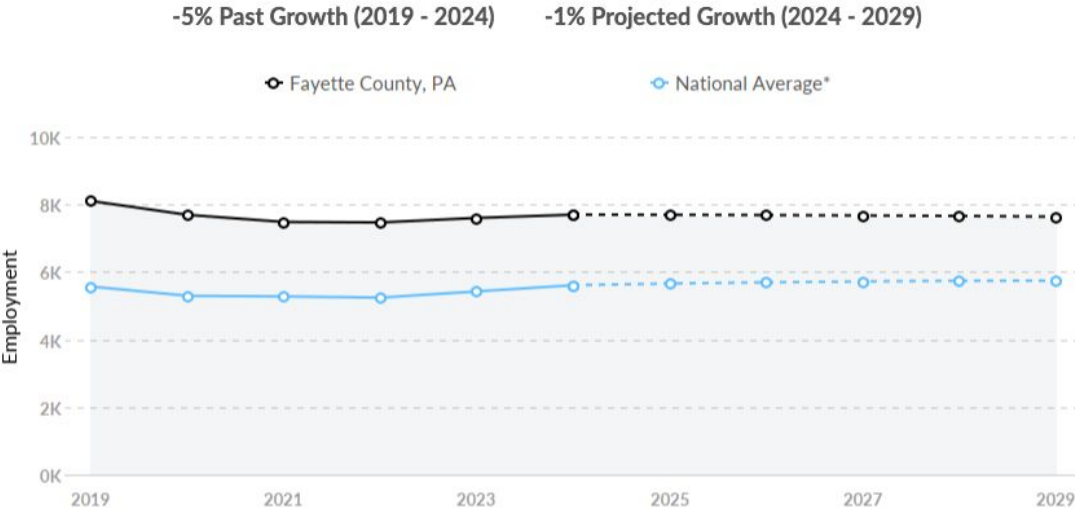
# Fayette County has a greater share of older adults

Almost 23% of Fayette County residents are 65 years of age or older.

**With intentional workforce development,** retirement openings can provide employment opportunities for younger generations.



# Healthcare is a top employing industry with opportunity to grow

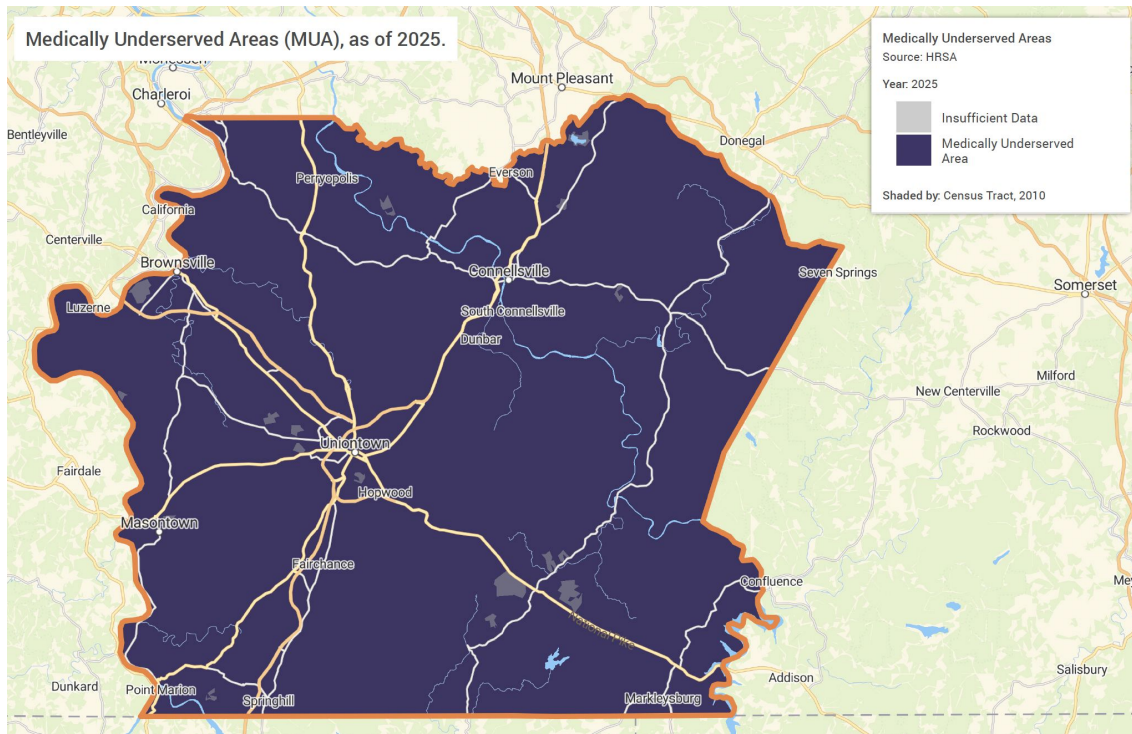


**1 in 8 jobs** in Fayette County are in Healthcare, a ratio consistent in Pennsylvania.

**Leader in Mental Health:** Fayette County Behavioral Health Administration (FCBHA) has reduced administrative costs and directly invested in community mental health.

# Fayette County is a Medically Underserved Area

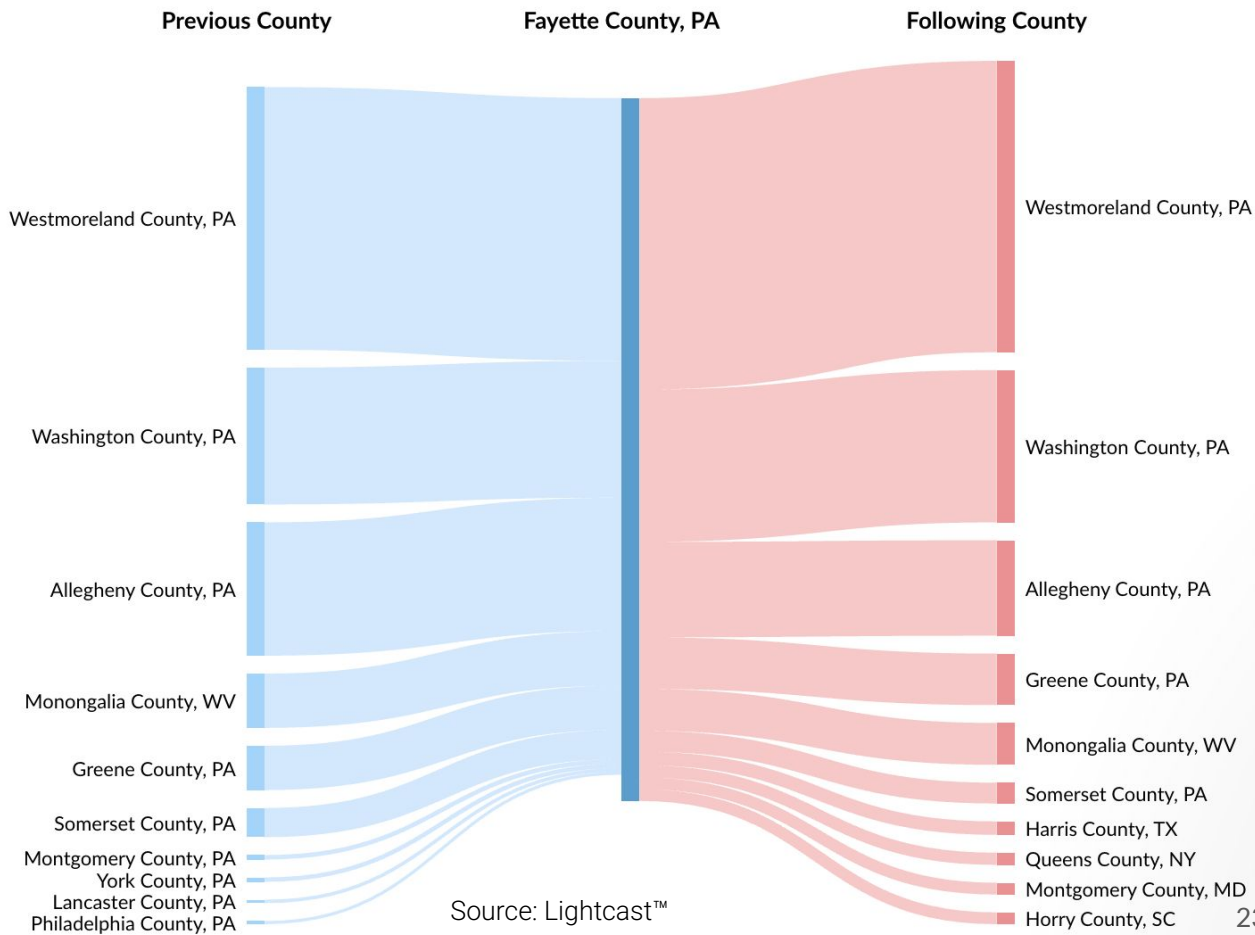
**Fayette County could support more healthcare options and services, particularly to serve the aging population.**



# Low Net Migration

Most people moving to or from Fayette are moving to or from neighboring counties.

**More people are coming from Monongalia (WV) and Allegheny (PA) Counties** than are moving to those urban centers.



Source: Lightcast™

**Audience Input:** What other opportunities should Fayette County leverage for economic growth?

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to input your answers

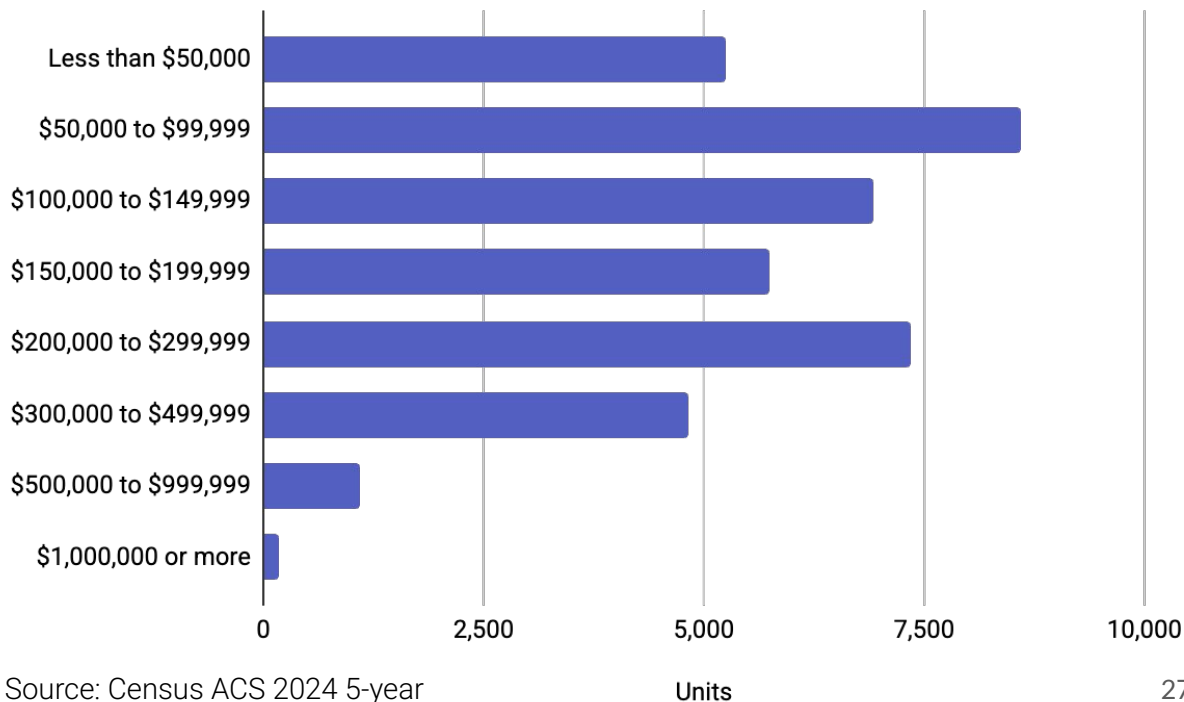
# Aspirations

- Retain residents and slow or reverse population decline
- Leverage location and cost of living to become a great “bedroom community” for nearby markets (e.g., Pittsburgh and Morgantown)
- Increase outdoor recreation and tourism, with strong main streets and corridors that serve local residents and visitors
- Continue innovating to grow key industries like agriculture, manufacturing, and energy

# Fayette is relatively affordable for homeowners

As of 2024, the median value of an owner-occupied home in Fayette County was **\$143,200**.

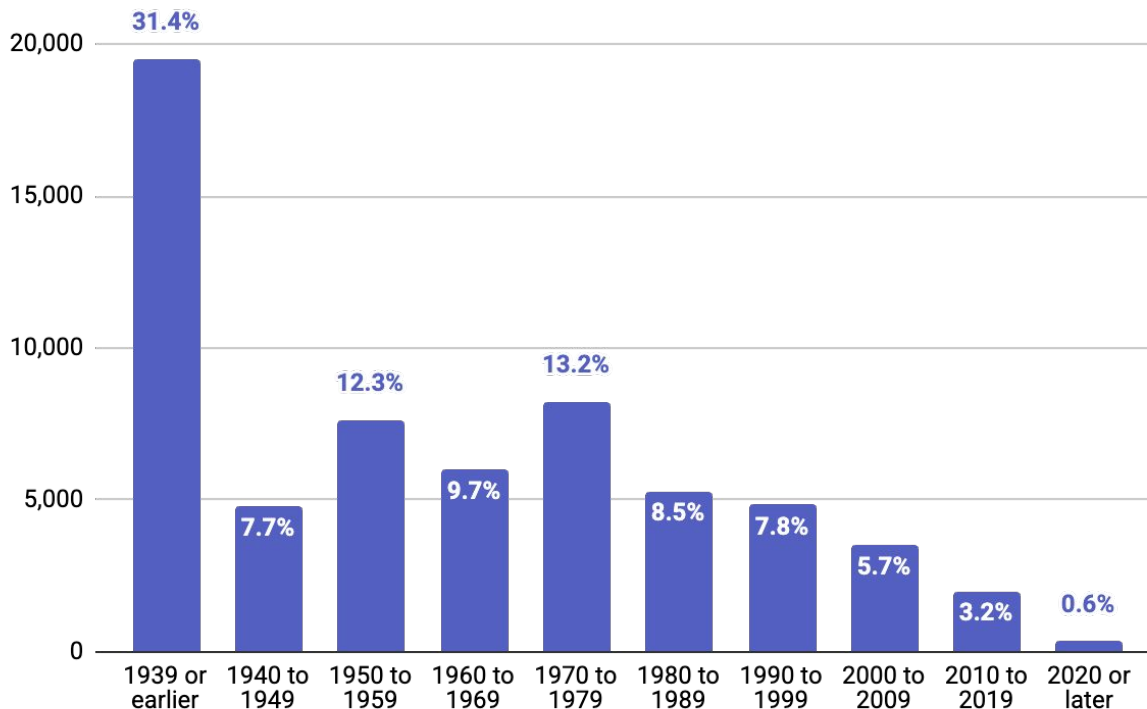
Number of housing units by home value range



# Housing unit production has declined over time

**In Fayette County, 75% of housing units were constructed before 1980,** with 40% constructed before 1950.

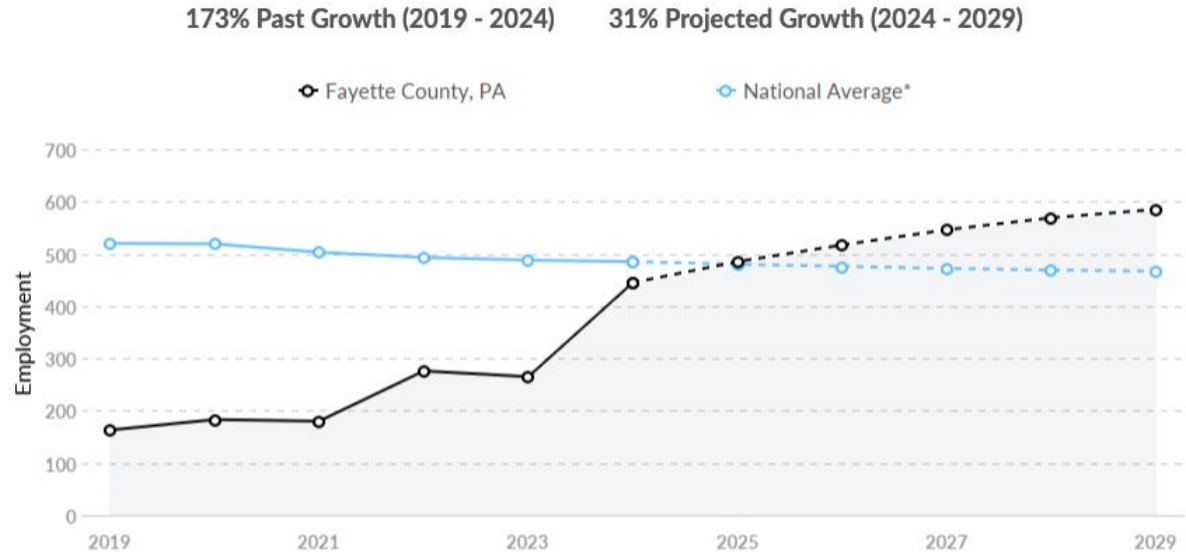
Older homes require maintenance and upgrades, and new housing stock can help attract and retain community members.



# Agriculture jobs are projected to increase

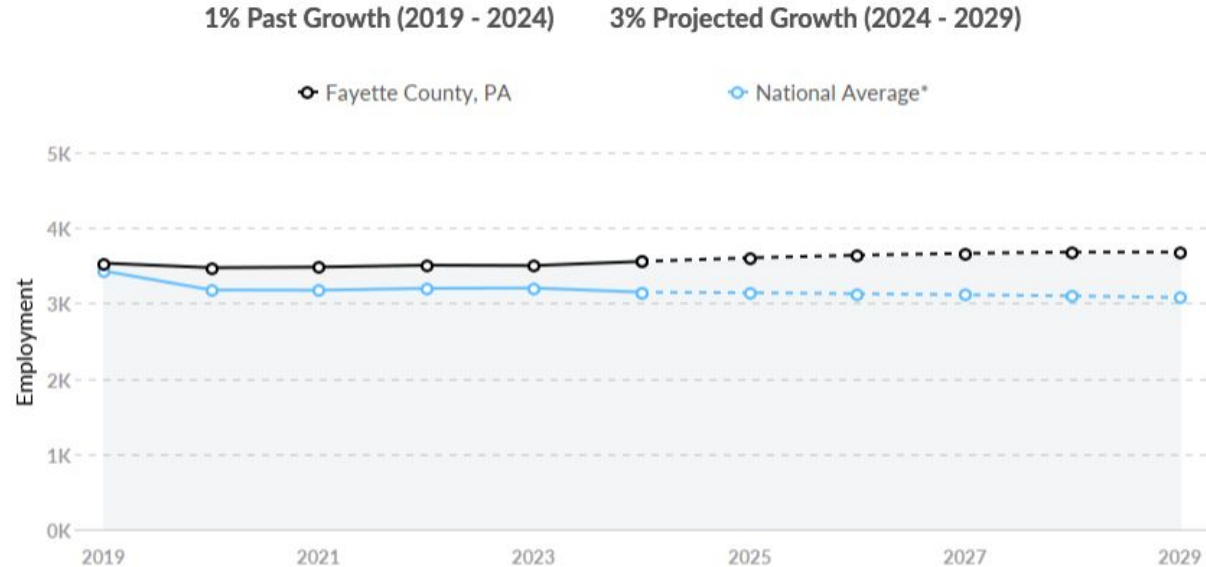
Fayette County is home to several long-standing, continuously operating farms.

**Every farm job supports an additional 0.60 jobs in the wider community**, such as in equipment repair, veterinary services, and processing.



# Manufacturing remains a growing industry

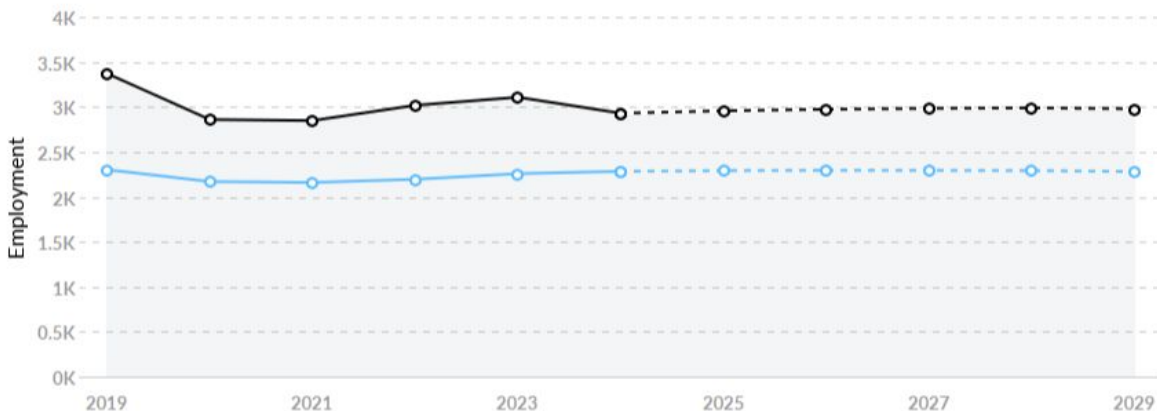
**Investment Multiplier:** Every \$1.00 of manufacturing output generates an additional \$1.45 in the local economy through supply chains (maintenance, logistics, and raw materials).



# Energy remains an opportunity industry

-13% Past Growth (2019 - 2024)      2% Projected Growth (2024 - 2029)

◆ Fayette County, PA      ◆ National Average\*



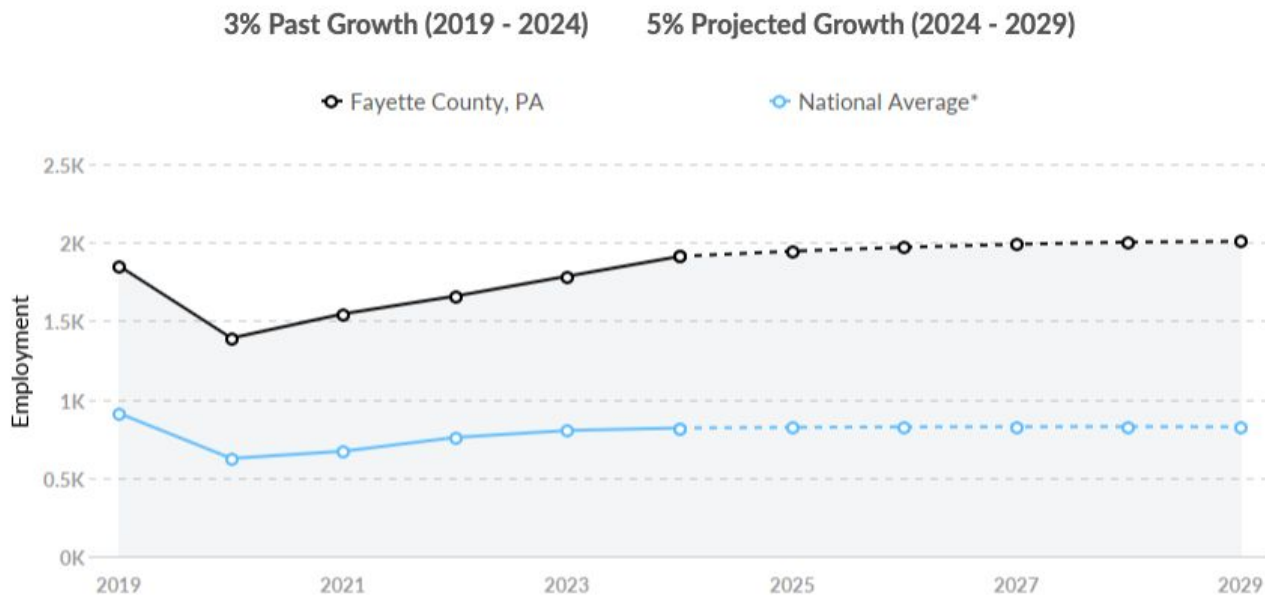
**Economic Advantage:** Direct access to natural gas allows local industrial users to pay roughly \$1.00 below the national benchmark for fuel, a competitive advantage for the county's manufacturing sector.

**Brownfield to Brightfield Leader:** Fayette is focused on transforming inactive, unproductive land like former coal mines into solar farms. This strategy preserves agricultural land while still growing the energy industry and tax base.

# Outdoor Recreation and Tourism are Growing

Fayette County tourism is well established as a source of visitor spending and employment.

Visitors spending supports 12% of total jobs and 10% of total wages in the Laurel Highlands Region.



**Audience Input:** What other aspirations do you have for Fayette County's future?

Visit [fourtheconomy.com/fayette/pa](https://fourtheconomy.com/fayette/pa)  
to input your answers

## SOAR: Results


- Increased job opportunities in the county with competitive wages
- A local workforce that is positioned to take advantage of employment opportunities and matches industry needs

# Employment & Wages


Fayette County offers higher wages in the following industries which can make Fayette economically attractive for those workers:



**Mining/Oil and Gas**



**Utilities**  
Electric power, natural gas, steam supply, water supply, and sewage removal through a permanent infrastructure of lines, mains, and pipes



**Accommodation and Food Services**



**Retail Trade**



**Healthcare and Social Assistance**

**Audience Input:** What other results should Fayette County pursue for a strong economic future?

Visit [fourtheconomy.com/fayette/pa](https://fourtheconomy.com/fayette/pa)  
to input your answers

## Creating a Vision

*What will our community's future look like?*

A shared vision helps articulate what Fayette County aspires to be in the future.

Coming to a consensus on a vision can be challenging; therefore, our team often uses what we've learned so far to draft several possible vision statements for further refinement.



# Fayette County Community Visioning Exercise

1. **My Priority for the County is...**  
Choose a word or phrase that is future facing - what should Fayette County focus on to drive economic success?

Visit  
[fourtheconomy.com/fayette/pa](https://fourtheconomy.com/fayette/pa)  
to input your answers

2. **Making Headlines:** It's 5 years in the future. Write a headline featuring Fayette County. Use this to describe what you want the community to be known for.

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# Thank you.

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