



Barrett Township:

“A better tomorrow, today.”

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy



Photo Credits: Pam Gardsy, barrett community.com, Barrett Twp Fire Dept, Barrett Twp Historical Society, realestatebook.com



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Acknowledgements



Photo Credit: Samuel Zeller / Unsplash

BARRETT TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS

Penn Strategies was hired by Barrett Township, whose officials have offered support and local expertise throughout the process.

The following is a list of current Barrett Township officials:

- Chairman/Asst. Secretary, Board of Supervisor **William Pipolo, Jr.**
- Vice-Chairman/Secretary, Board of Supervisor **Benjie Labar**
- Roadmaster, Board of Supervisors, **John Seese**
- Board of Supervisors, **Grant Hilfiger**
- Board of Supervisors, **Patti O'Keefe**
- Executive Secretary/Treasurer, **Pamela Gardsy**
- Sewage Enforcement Officer/Zoning Officer, **Jeryl Rinehart**

BARRETT TOWNSHIP STAKEHOLDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In March of 2018, Penn Strategies helped to form the Barrett Township Stakeholder Advisory Committee, a non-partisan, diverse group involving local residents, business owners, and community leaders. Our goal was to obtain unbiased, non-political information to aid in the development of a comprehensive economic development strategy.

The following is a list of the members of the Barrett Township Stakeholder Advisory Committee:

Chuck Knipe	Owner Mountainhome Candle, Township resident
Annie Messina	President Rotary Club of the Poconos, volunteer Meals on Wheels
Eric Noone	Owner Frogtown Chophouse, Township resident
Peter Pipolo	Owner Winners Circle, co-owner Pourhouse; member of Rotary Club
Dina Rinehart	Employee Weiler Corporation, Township resident
Rob Uggucioni	Owner Destination Landscaping, Township resident

In addition to assisting with the development of the plan, it is our hope that these stakeholders will remain engaged as Barrett enters the implantation phase of this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. This Committee is uniquely positioned to help Penn Strategies and Township leaders to implement the recommendations listed in the plan.

Securing “buy-in” from these individuals was a critical component of our work. Each of the policy recommendations listed later in this document were fully vetted by this group and has their total support. Any recommendations that did not receive their support after extensive discussion, were discarded. These vetted policy recommendations are outlined later in this plan.

The Barrett Township Stakeholder Advisory Committee met on the dates listed below. These sessions lasted about one hour each. Selected notes from these meetings are available upon request.

- April 4, 2018
- April 26, 2018
- May 9, 2018
- May 30, 2018
- June 6, 2018
- June 27, 2018
- July 25, 2018
- October 3, 2018
- October 24, 2018

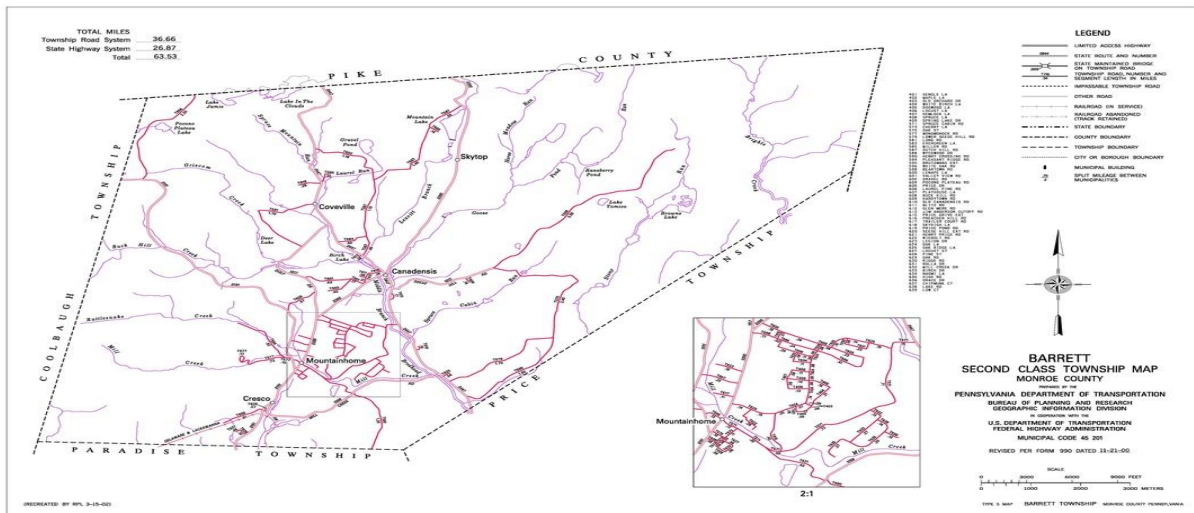
About Penn Strategies



Penn Strategies mission is to create economic opportunity for Pennsylvania's businesses and communities. With offices in Watsontown and Harrisburg, we provide economic development planning, grant writing, lobbying, public relations, consulting services and government and regulatory liaison to municipalities, corporations and organizations who are working to improve life for all Pennsylvanians.

Our team of professionals collectively offers many decades of diversified and robust experience, and strong relationships at the local, state and national level. We offer a documented track record of success and a resolute commitment to personal and thorough service to each and every one of our clients.

The Assignment



Source: PA Department of Transportation

SCOPE

As with many municipalities, Barrett Township desires to enhance its business district, improve its infrastructure and augment its cultural and recreational assets. While these aims will undoubtedly improve the community, the Township faces the common challenges of increasingly limited resources and funding opportunities. Thus Barrett is faced with the need to prioritize its requirements and objectives for community improvement projects, in order to ensure that development interests and economic growth in the Township are targeted, achievable and part of a long-term vision.

Penn Strategies was hired by the Township to establish these economic development priorities and outline a plan for implementation. In a joint effort, Barrett Township: “A better tomorrow, today.” was conceived.

The goal of Barrett Township: “A better tomorrow, today.” is to provide a roadmap for the total redevelopment of Barrett Township. This plan is intended to outline specific steps that, if taken, will make Barrett a better place to live, work, and raise a family.

Barrett Township: “A better tomorrow, today.” is the culmination of months of planning, analysis of economic trends, data gathering and interpretation, visioning, and prioritization. Both Barrett’s past and future were taken into consideration. The process began in March of 2018, with the creation of the Barrett Township Stakeholder Advisory Committee. The team’s collective skill sets, varied expertise and institutional knowledge have resulted in this focused, thoughtful blueprint for growth in the Township.

METHODOLOGY

Penn Strategies utilized a five-tiered approach to Barrett Township’s Comprehensive Economic Development Plan. Our unique approach is designed for a highly intuitive and tailored outcome to ensure that we capture the most essential factors to Barrett’s future success.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee

Creating a simple survey and identifying a representative sample of Barrett Township residents would have allowed us the opportunity to identify a few basic priorities. However, we wanted more extensive background information and prefer to develop recommendations based upon detailed, substantial conversations with community stakeholders.

So we asked Township officials to identify a group of community leaders, “grass-tops” as we call them, who were “plugged into” the needs and concerns of the community. We wanted people who understood the history of Barrett and had a stake in its future. This group became Barrett Township’s

Stakeholder Advisory Committee. By creating a Stakeholder Advisory Committee, we were able to use a “Focus Group Methodology” to collect information.

Another benefit of using this method is that the Stakeholder Advisory Committee may be kept in-tact by the Township, and at the discretion of its members, to serve during the implantation phase of the Plan.

Intuitive Interviews

According to the Center for Assessment, Planning & Accountability, focus groups allow for greater insights into how people think, while surveys generally ask closed-ended questions that may limit the feedback that can be gained from a respondent.

Penn Strategies employs skilled focus group facilitators who know the right questions to ask and also understand the importance of non-verbal communication, probing, reflection, and avoiding “tells.” We used these skills with open-ended questions to help identify Barrett’s chief needs and concerns.

SWOT

We asked each member of the Committee to list the strengths and weaknesses of the Township. We asked them not only to consider the Township’s economic health but also its educational, environmental, and cultural conditions as well. This information was very helpful in completing our SWOT Analysis (an in-depth review of the regions strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats). Collection of this information was the primary focus of our first meetings.

For each of these strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats we asked stakeholders to expand upon their thinking and asked pointed questions aimed at responding to this SWOT Analysis with some specific policy recommendations.

Data Collection and Interpretation

Our approach to developing this plan also included an extensive review of data and trends in municipal planning, as well as research and evaluation of the demography and geography relevant to Barrett Township.

We compared these statistics with the stakeholder concerns, which as a general rule, were validated by the statistical data. After these considerations, we offered details on specific policy initiatives which have been effective in communities with similar characteristics to Barrett Township.

Feet on the Street

Finally, we go a step further than many planning firms in that we begin and end “on the ground” – first in assessment and later in execution.

We make a point of seeing Barrett first-hand, driving and walking the streets, and observing first-hand the issues identified by the Advisory Committee. This informal component of our assessment helps us to relate to and comprehend the data we have gathered.

Following the formulation and presentation of the plan, we continue a presence as we assist Township leaders and staff in its actual implementation. Penn Strategies will write all Township Resolutions, and submit all grant applications which are deemed necessary.

Executive Summary



Photo Credit: Pam Gardsy / Barrett Township

BARRETT TODAY AND YESTERDAY

Barrett Township is located in Monroe County, the heart of the Pocono Mountain Region of Northeast Pennsylvania. It is a 53.25 square mile township. The Township is bordered on the south by Paradise Township, Price Township to the southeast, and Coolbaugh Township on the west. Barrett Township is bordered by Greene Township in Pike County to the north, and Porter Township in Pike County to the northeast.



Source: dnaprop.com

Barrett was formed in 1859 from portions of both Paradise Township and Price Township. According to the Barrett Township Historical Society, “over its past 150 years, Barrett Township was recognized for its dense forests and clean streams. The early industries of the township reflected the abundance of these natural resources. Bark from Barrett Township trees was used in the tanneries to process leather and pelts. Numerous lumber mills produced not only timber to be floated down the Delaware River to

Philadelphia markets, but created items such as clothespins, roof shingles, shoe pegs, barrels and sprags (used for braking cars in coal mines).



Cresco Station
Photo Credit: Barrett Township Historical Society

In 1856, the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad created its only stop in Barrett Township in Cresco. In addition to businesses benefiting from the rail line, the resort industry also flourished and promoted the beauty of the area. Vacationers traveled from New York and Philadelphia and further to experience the outdoors and to breathe the clean mountain air. Early owners of area boarding houses and resorts entertained their guests exploiting the outdoors: picnicking and fishing in the summer; tobogganing and skiing in the winter.”

This proud history, along with Barrett’s current strengths and opportunities, pave the road to a promising future.

Strengths

Barrett Township offers a small town community with deep family roots, where everybody knows everybody and feels safe. It has a sense of privacy without the feeling of being too “mainstream”.

Barrett’s location in the Pocono Mountain Region is a favored area for outdoor enthusiasts. Given the nation’s increased focus on health, exercise and the salubrious benefits of nature, Barrett’s temperate location, abundant open space and proximity to outdoor recreation, adds to its livability and aesthetic beauty.



Pasold Farms Nature Preserve

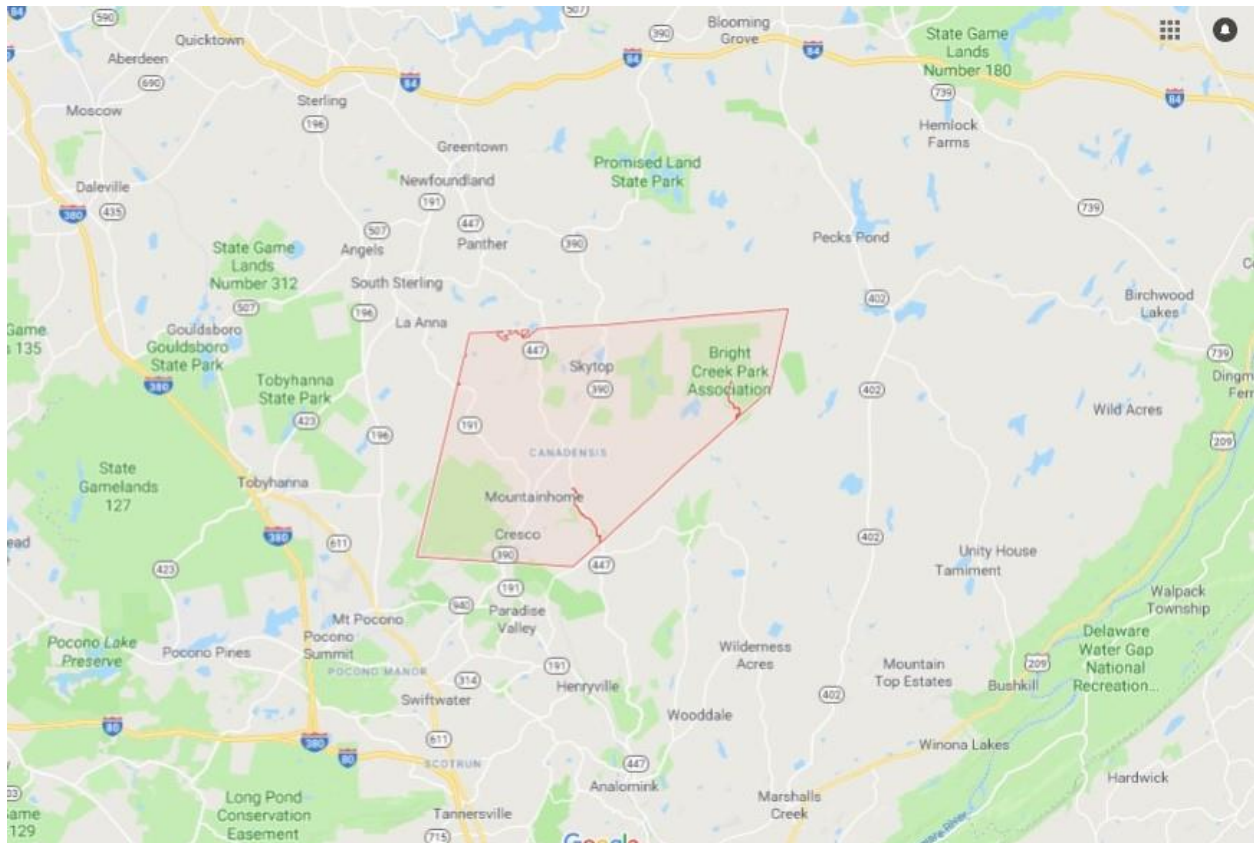
Barrett Township has various parks within its borders including: High Acres Park, Seven Pines Park, Pasold Farm Nature Preserve, Mount Wismer Preserve, Chestnut Mountain Nature Preserve, Gravel Family Preserve (which includes a dog park), Ice Lake, the Gunderson property and a community garden. Also, Skytop Lodge is a large vacation resort. Barrett is surrounded and offers access to State Game Lands, State Parks, and Delaware Water Gap National Recreation among others.



High Acres Park Baseball

The community has an active Little League program and lots of activities for younger children and families, including festivals and concerts. There is also a small community center and library with very active programming and participation. The Barrett Township Historical Society is also an active participant and resource to the community.

Regarding the issue of accessibility, a predominant factor in economic growth, Barrett has ready access to highways. Interstates 380 and 80 are only about 15 miles from Barrett according to Google maps. Route 447 and Route 390 intersect and transect through the middle of the Township and act as a through fare for Interstates 80 and 84. Route 191 also travels through the southern part of the Township. Barrett is also about 40 miles from the Wilkes-Barre / Scranton International Airport (AVP) and even has its own privately owned for public use airport the Flying Dollar Airport. This all adds up to infinite possibilities for traveling beyond the area or within it, which expands choices for both commerce and lifestyle.



Barrett Township and the Surrounding Area
Source: Google Maps

Barrett Township has other advantages including:

- A median household income which is higher than the state and national average.
- An unemployment rate less than both the state and national average.
- A higher than average high school graduation rate compared to Monroe County.
- An average home value that has increased 5% over the past year.
- A decrease in the crime rate, specifically violent crimes and crime rates lower than both the state and national average.
- Affordable and readily available housing stock.

Some of Barrett’s additional strengths such as a growing business district, job potential, propinquity to major markets, regional partnerships, and new tourist attractions coming to the region are addressed in the Opportunities section.

Weaknesses

The Pocono Mountain Region of Northeast Pennsylvania is a well-known tourist destination, yet it has struggled economically for the last two decades. While the tourism industry has been making a bit of a comeback in recent years, many jobs in this sector tend to be lower wage positions with limited hours available. And outside of manufacturing jobs, there are limited opportunities for employment with a competitive salary or family-sustaining income.



Increased Blight Due to Loss of Tourism

When the school closed the Township experienced a decline in through traffic and visitors. People from the surrounding region have perceptions that it is too far to travel to and that it isn’t a “destination” spot. There are also many abandoned building, empty storefronts and other declining infrastructure.

Pocono Medical Center, Pocono Urgent Care, Geisinger Health System, St. Luke’s Monroe Campus and Coordinated Health are the closest medical providers, but are not located within the Township and are about a 30 minute drive according to Google maps, which could be a barrier for current residents and people wanting to move to the area. There is only one doctor located in Barrett Township.

In addition, Northeastern Pennsylvania in general and Barrett Township in particular, face numerous challenges. A few of them include:

- Lower than average post-secondary education compared to Monroe County.
- Limited access to public transportation and infrastructure not suited for walkability.
- Lack of police presence.
- Limited cell and high speed internet services.
- Limited online presence for Township promotion and marketing.

These challenges are not uncommon among municipalities in older industrial states and can be overcome with careful planning, vision, and strong leadership.

Opportunities

Barrett has numerous potential economic drivers that have yet to be tapped to their full potential.

The Township has a growing business district, and a steady manufacturing sector, which includes JA Reinhardt & Co. Inc. and Weiler Corporation, which employs people at family sustaining wages. Other major employers in the area include Pocono Mountain School District, Sanofi Pasteur and Tobyhanna Army Depot.



Photo Credit: Weiler Corporation

The Old Canadensis Road Bridge is in a key location in the Township and its closing makes it very difficult to market the Township as a tourist destination or ideal location for new businesses. The Township has received grant funds to reopen this bridge and fundamentally revitalize this community.



Photo Credit: pennsnortheast.com

From Canadensis village in Barrett Township, one can reach 60% of the population of North America in less than 8 hours by car or truck. The ability for a business of any size to get their product to potential customers in a quick and cost-effective manner is critical. This market proximity offers great opportunities for companies in the warehousing, manufacturing, and technology industries.

Additionally, the shifting national mood toward embracing trade policies which favor the interest of domestic manufacturing over offering cheap goods to consumers could bode well for “Rust Belt” states like Pennsylvania. There is also a very strong “Buy Local” and “Buy American” resurgence in the United States which will increase the demand for locally sourced products. Barrett Township and Northeastern Pennsylvania have long been known for the strong work ethic of their residents. Manufacturers looking to add a facility would find an affordable, hardworking, and eager labor pool ready to fill these jobs.

Modern technology has enabled firms to open satellite locations to better access a balanced talent pool or allow e-commuting. Matched with a lower cost of labor in comparison with more urban areas, this makes Northeastern Pennsylvania an attractive place for new or expanding companies to locate.

Northern Monroe County has been experiencing a major surge in visitor traffic related to the construction of the Kalahari Resort and Convention Center. In the coming months, ground will be broken on another major attraction which will include Ripley’s Believe It or Not.

While these attractions are domiciled in neighboring Tobyhanna Township, visitors to these locations often enjoy visiting neighboring communities. It’s easy to see how any improvements in critical infrastructure in Barrett Township will benefit all northern Monroe County.

Barrett Township is part of numerous regional planning initiatives and partnerships that include promotion and collaboration of trails and recreation, and joined with Coolbaugh, Tobyhanna, Tunkhannock Townships and Mount Pocono Borough in the creation of the Pocono Mountain Regional Police Department.

Some other opportunities of note, are that the vacant school building offers an ideal place for a community center/multipurpose building. Canadensis has the potential for a revitalized “Main Street” area with plenty of vacant buildings available for new business growth.

Threats

In 2015, Pennsylvania ranked 5th among all US States for drug overdose rates. Barrett Township has not escaped this national epidemic. Drug use, overdoses and drug relation crimes are perceived as moderate within the Township. There is some debate about the direct link between the current opioid epidemic and its influence on petty and violent crime, although common sense dictates a correlation.



Photo Credit: drugabuse.com

However there is no debate that providing a community with a sense of pride and purpose, with attractive homes, meaningful work, restorative play and hope in the potential for good lives for ordinary working people and their families, diminishes both crime and drug abuse.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE POINTS OF DISCUSSION

This is a summary of points made during the Barrett Township Stakeholder Advisory Committee discussions.

Economic Development Authority

Stakeholders agreed that Barrett Township should develop an Economic Development Authority.

They expressed a concern that there is currently no Business Association and The Greater Pocono Chamber of Commerce's presence in the area is lacking and there is not enough focus on how to draw new businesses to the area. Stakeholders also feel that there is a lack of opportunities for family sustaining jobs and if more opportunities were available then more people would relocate to Barrett for employment. There is little to no reinvestment into the community once businesses leave.



Source: worldartsmet.com

The creation of an Economic Development Authority would allow decisions about funding allocations to be made for the various programs and projects outlined in this report as a priority and protect the Township from liabilities.

Mainstreet

Most stakeholders agreed that Barrett Township’s “downtown” is a top priority for development.

Barrett’s “Main Street” is Route 390 which extends through the middle of the township. Canadensis has the only stoplight in town at the intersections of Route 390 and Route 447. Right before the stoplight at Canadensis there are many abandoned buildings, which makes the town appear 75% empty. Travelers pass through this section on their way to Skytop Lodge, High Acres Park and other attractions.



Photo Credit: Pam Gardsy / Barrett Township

Many members of the committee shared memories that “Main Street” used to be vibrant with lots of shops and antique places. Stakeholders agreed that the area is troubled by dilapidated buildings, unappealing façades and vacant store fronts. Remarks detailed peeling paint, poor sidewalks, little or no curbing, poor stormwater management, deficient parking, inadequate lighting, visible utilities and exceeding posted speed limit signs.

Stakeholders expressed a desire to revitalize the most promising areas first, which would make the more blighted areas more appealing to investors. Stakeholders suggested initial façade and streetscaping improvements begin on Route 390 at either the Mountainhome Village Line (intersection with Pine Street) or at Mountainhome Antiques (intersection with Rich’s Road), and end at The First Keystone Community Bank at the intersection of Route 390 and Price Drive.

Community Center

The stakeholders also discussed the need to develop a mixed-use community center which could include recreation, arts, culture and retail space. The current Friendly Community Center is small and with current downward trends in tourism, a larger community center could offer not only a better quality of life of Township residents but also opportunities to increase tourism with various events and activities.



Photo Credit: nycgovparks.org

Identity/Branding

The stakeholders expressed the need to better market their community to outsiders and create an appeal and other opportunities to make people stop and visit the town rather than just drive through. There is also a need for consistent signage. Concerns were also expressed about the lack of promotion through the visitor's bureau and brochure availability for marketing.



Photo Credit: Canadensis.com

A need was also expressed for a mixed-communications approach that would help reach broader audiences through social media, newsletters, radio, website and newspaper. There is currently a private monthly publication that serves the Township, but it does not appear to have a large social media or website presence. The current Township website is organized and easy to use, but some mentioned having difficulties finding certain information and stakeholders admitted to not visiting the site much and they believe it has a low visitation rate. There is currently no official Township social media (Facebook) page, only an informal page that has approximately 75% negative content.

Members asserted that Barrett is in fact a wonderful place to live in and raise a family, and wished they could communicate that message convincingly to young families, professionals and affluent retirees.

Parks & Recreation Program

The Advisory Committee also discussed Barrett’s parks and identified the following concerns. High Acres Park lacks visibility and publicity. Seven Pines Park is generally more popular and used for traveling baseball teams, but lacks the features of High Acres Park. The Township also has a community garden, but there are still plots available for use. In general, parks are underutilized due to their locations.



High Acres Park

There are several open space properties which have the potential to be turned into parks and opportunities for adding outdoor exercise equipment for adults to current parks. The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) is working on development of a trail network along with increased open space.

Stakeholders expressed a desire for more recreational opportunities that people of different ages would be interested in, such as tennis courts, walking paths and biking trails. Seniors and older children ages 10-18 are not well-served by the current parks and they are too far away for older children to walk to. There is also a lack of handicapped accessibility in the current parks.

Group members also drew attention to Barrett’s Concerts in the Park, Pocono Mountain Music Festival Halloween parade, Earth Day events and multiple Historical Society events which all have high local participation as opportunities for inciting positive interest in the community and attracting outside visitors. But, having more activities and events for families with children and a more lively arts and

culture scene would be attractive for new residents and encourage current residents to stay in the area, while promoting revenue for local businesses with the possibility of increased tourism. Stakeholders suggested the need for race events to attract runner, bikers and other athletes who routinely travel for such events.

Regional Participation

Stakeholders expressed concern over the regionalization of the police services and have a perception of slower response times. Members noted the lack of a visible police presence and local ambulance services, which creates a safety concern for some residents.



Photo Credit: Flickr

There is a lack of regular regional transportation options such as bus service, which limits lower income people and seniors from taking advantage of the affordable housing opportunities in Barrett when they depend on public transportation for travel. Pocono Pony does have limited service in the area but it is necessary to call in advance for scheduling.

Internet & Cell Service

Stakeholders expressed concerns over the lack of available high-speed internet and cell phone service throughout Barrett Township. One of the barriers to e-commuting might be this lack of internet and cell phone access.



Photo Credit: clark.com

BARRETT TOWNSHIP: “A BETTER TOMORROW, TODAY.” PLAN OVERVIEW

To rebuild a community, planners must first clearly identify and rank the priority issues. Typically, we identify ten priority issues, however, we feel that in this case it would be wise to focus on seven achievable goals.

Economic Development Authority

PRIORITY ISSUE #1: BARRETT TOWNSHIP NEEDS TO CREATE AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.

The Municipal Authorities Act permits Township’s to create “special purpose” forms of government to provide specific services to residents. Often these Authorities focus on parking, recreation, water, or sewer. We believe that with the changing dynamics of economic development, Economic Development Authorities can serve as a perfect conduit for economic growth.



The Township should consider forming the Barrett Township Economic Development Authority with the sole purpose of creating an environment that is positive for economic growth and advancement.

This Authority would:

- ✓ Be comprised of business and community leaders with a wide range of backgrounds.
- ✓ Serve as a conduit for grant funding.
- ✓ Meet regularly and provide advice to the Township Supervisors on all economic development matters.
- ✓ Engage the community in their efforts.

Mainstreet

PRIORITY ISSUE #2: “MAIN STREET” NEEDS A FACE LIFT.

Barrett Township’s “Main Street” lacks an identity and features an aging housing stock and dated commercial structures.



Photo Credit: Pam Gardsy / Barrett Township

The Township should consider the following:

- ✓ Creation of a façade improvement program, matched by state funds when possible, which offers incentives to property owners willing to make improvements which are consistent with specifications which will be laid out in an ordinance passed by the Supervisors.
- ✓ The Township should devise a Main Street Reconstruction Plan. The Township should retain an engineer to design, provide cost estimates and “phase out” this plan. Possible funding sources may include; PA Department of Community & Economic Development (PA DCED) Multimodal Transportation Fund, PA Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Multimodal Transportation Fund, PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Fund, Local Share Account, and soon to be announced federal infrastructure funding.

Community Center

PRIORITY ISSUE #3: BARRETT TOWNSHIP NEEDS A COMMUNITY CENTER.

Barrett Township was a town built on tourism and recreation. When people decide to move their homes or businesses into a region they often consider quality of life issues. Quality of life includes recreation, arts, culture, and restaurants.



Photo Credit: Oakland Park

A Community Center can easily incorporate recreational, arts, and cultural components. Our experience has shown that restaurants will expand or open when Community Centers are successful, without significant incentives. Community Centers more often need incentives for the economics to work.

The Township should consider:

- ✓ Developing an RFP for development of the old school building, which includes the possible incentives offered through the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) Business In Our Sites Program, PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (PA DCNR) grant programs, and the PA Department of Community & Economic Development (PA DCED) Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP).

Identity/Brand

PRIORITY ISSUE #4: BARRETT TOWNSHIP NEEDS A NEW IDENTITY.

Barrett Township should be proud of its role in building the Pocono Region into a tourist destination. The Township needs to honor its proud past, while planning for its promising future. For a municipality to succeed it must understand and create a plan to respond to trends.



Two important trends that offer opportunity for Barrett Township are the ongoing expansion projects in Tobyhanna Township and the increase in e-commuting for employment opportunities. The expansion projects in Tobyhanna will bring more visitors to Monroe County, young people who are interested in the numerous outdoor activities available in the region will find Barrett Township to be a great place to live and raise their families

The Township should consider the following:

- ✓ Issue an RFP for the creation of a new Township logo, website, and Facebook page.
- ✓ Development of a new motto for the Township.
- ✓ Purchase new entrance signage with this new logo and motto.

Parks & Recreation Program

PRIORITY ISSUE #5: BARRETT TOWNSHIP NEEDS TO ENHANCE ITS PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAM.

Having a strong parks program is one of the key indicators of a strong community. Investments in parks have been demonstrated to significantly increase the attractiveness of a community to potential homeowners and business investors.



High Acres Park Fishing Pond

The Township should consider:

- ✓ Authorizing the completion of a Parks Master Plan (could be covered by MAP funding) to be completed in 2019 which will consider the best uses of the current recreational assets and potential connectivity options, which could include bike and pedestrian options. There are grant programs available through the Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA), PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (PA DCNR) and even PA Department of Transportation (PennDOT) which could help to fund suggested projects.

Regional Participation

PRIORITY ISSUE #6: BARRETT TOWNSHIP NEEDS TO CONTINUE TO ADVANCE REGIONAL PARTICIPATION.

Pennsylvania has 2,562 local governments, this causes a great deal of fragmentation. Many government rules, regulations, and policies are delegated to the most local level of government, in this case the Township. Often services are provided separately by each municipality. This type of government construct provides several benefits, namely local control and easy access to decision makers; but, it also can create a very challenging environment. In short, there are often difficulties in obtaining state and federal grant funding for smaller municipalities and lost opportunities for cost efficiency and enhanced public service delivery.



Photo Credit: PMRPD

Barrett Township has taken some very important positive steps towards increasing regional participation and this has benefited local taxpayers. The Township's involvement in the Pocono Mountains Council of Governments and the Pocono Mountain Regional Police Department are very positive.

The Township should consider:

- ✓ Sending a representative to neighboring Townships meetings to determine if there are any opportunities for joint project such as transportation improvements, trail enhancements etc. The state and federal government are always looking to fund project which increase regionalization of services.

Internet & Cell Service

PRIORITY ISSUE #7: BARRETT TOWNSHIP NEEDS BETTER INTERNET AND CELL SERVICE AVAILABILITY.

Barrett Township, like many rural municipalities throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, has spotty cell and internet service. Increasingly, Americans are working at least part of their weeks from home. In fact, by 2020 it is predicted that 50% of Americans will work from home. This is made possible by high speed internet and cloud based servers which allow employees to have quick access to information and their colleagues (who could be working anywhere in the world). In order to encourage millennials to move into Barrett Township, cell phone and high speed internet must be readily available throughout the entire Township.



Photo Credit: Marketing Land

The Township should consider:

- ✓ Working with Mark Smith, Governor Wolf's Executive Director of Broadband Initiatives and the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, to identify opportunities to expand cell and internet service into the region.

Statistical Analysis & Interpretation

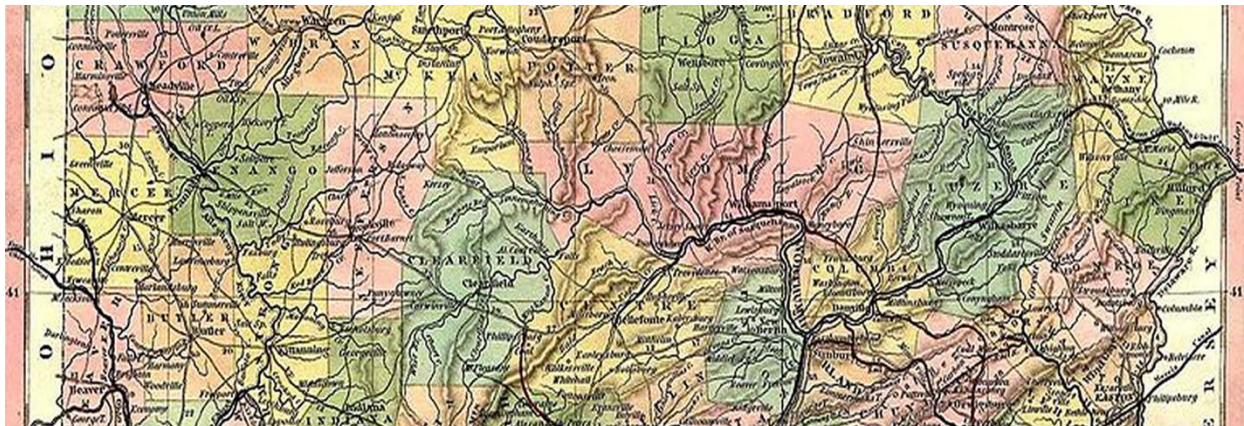


Photo Credit: Carlos Muza / Unsplash

An analysis of the economic development potential of Barrett Township would not be complete without considering the present condition of Monroe County and the region in general.

MONROE COUNTY

An overview of Monroe County, which is designated as the East Stroudsburg, PA MSA, needs to be included in this study as well, to help analyze the economic state of Barrett Township in the context of its county by pull out individual components of interest, that are relevant to understanding Barrett Township's challenges and assets.

Geography

Monroe County has a total area of 611 square miles of rural terrain, rolling hills, and farmlands and is the 12th most populated in the state. It consists of 16 townships and four boroughs.

Monroe County is part of the Pocono Mountains region (part of the Appalachian chain) and includes Big Pocono and Blue Mountain. The Delaware and Lehigh rivers form eastern and northwestern boundaries.



Delaware Water Gap
Photo Credit: rabbit75_ist / Getty Images

Scenic places of interest include Delaware Water Gap, Big Pocono State Park, Tobyhanna State Park, Bushkill Falls, Cranberry Bog along with The International Pocono Raceway (NASCAR) and various ski areas/resorts.

Demography

Following are statistics of economic interest about Monroe County residents, taken from various sources, according to the most recent year of available data.

Population

Monroe County has an estimated population of 168,046, according to the US Census Bureau information for 2017. According to Monroe County’s Affordable Housing Plan 2018, “after three decades of growth that saw Monroe County more than double in size, and a slight decline between 2010 and 2015, Monroe County’s population has stabilized recently. Based on figures from the 5-Year American Community Survey, population change since 2010 marks the first decline in the County’s population since at least 1950.

Municipality	2000	2010	2015	2010-2015 change
Barrett Township	3,880	4,225	4,127	-2.32%
Chestnuthill Township	14,418	17,156	16,874	-1.64%
Coolbaugh Township	15,205	20,564	20,387	-0.86%
Delaware Water Gap Borough	744	746	678	-9.12%
East Stroudsburg Borough	9,888	9,840	9,967	1.29%
Eldred Township	2,665	2,910	2,915	0.17%
Hamilton Township	8,235	9,083	8,915	-1.85%
Jackson Township	5,979	7,033	6,912	-1.72%
Middle Smithfield Township	11,495	15,997	15,837	-1.00%
Mount Pocono Borough	2,742	3,170	3,106	-2.02%
Paradise Township	2,671	3,186	3,133	-1.66%
Pocono Township	9,607	11,065	10,904	-1.46%
Polk Township	6,533	7,874	7,745	-1.64%
Price Township	2,649	3,573	3,547	-0.73%
Ross Township	5,435	5,940	5,842	-1.65%
Smithfield Township	5,672	7,357	7,324	-0.45%
Stroud Township	13,978	19,213	18,921	-1.52%
Stroudsburg Borough	5,756	5,567	5,516	-0.92%
Tobyhanna Township	6,152	8,554	8,484	-0.82%
Tunkhannock Township	4,983	6,789	6,747	-0.62%
Monroe County	138,687	169,842	167,881	-1.15%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 - 2015

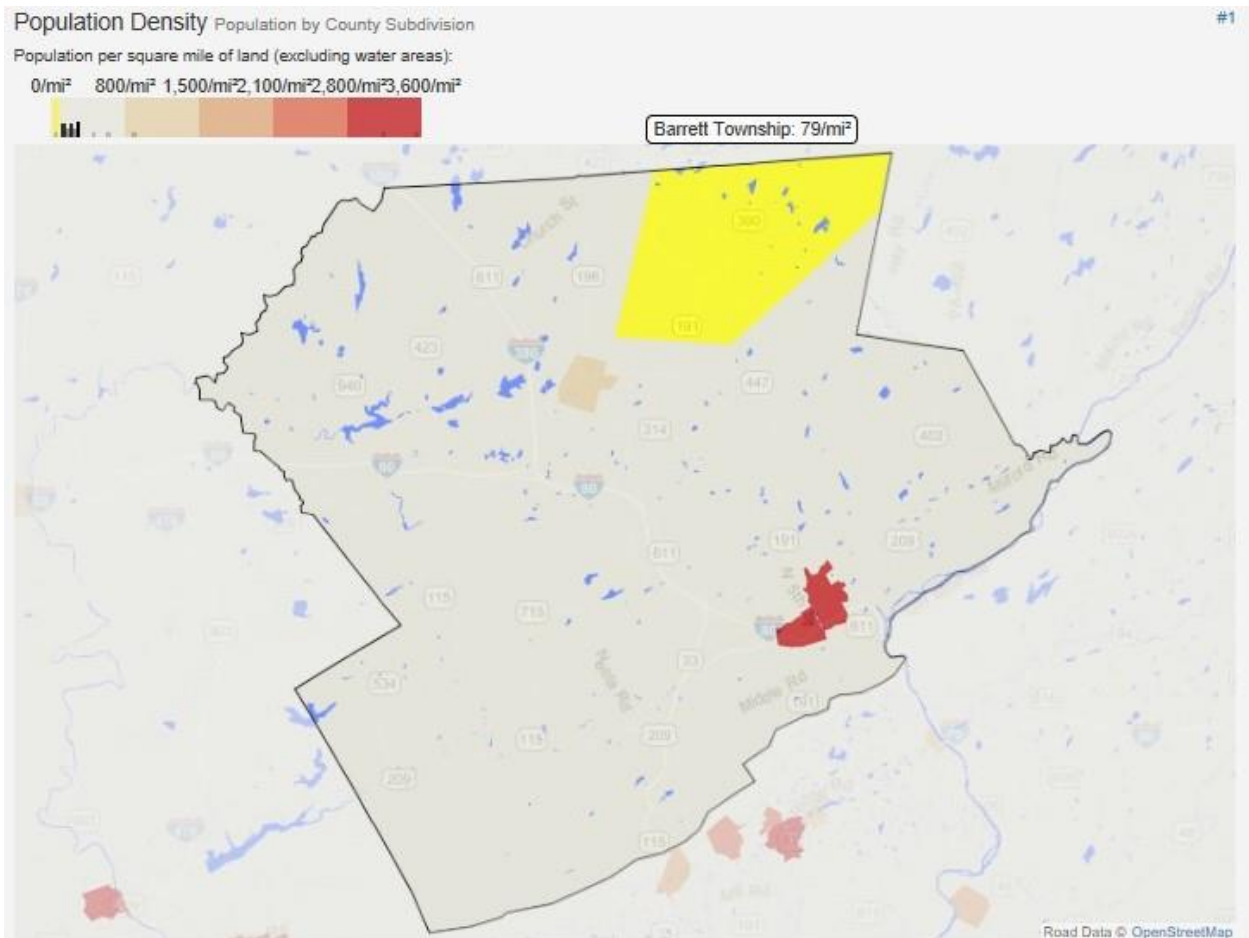
2010-2015 Population Change for Monroe County
Source: Monroe County Affordable Housing Plan 2018

Following suit, almost all of Monroe County’s municipalities also lost population during the past five years. The one significant exception is East Stroudsburg Borough, which grew by 1.3%. The highest rates of decline were in Barrett Township and Mount Pocono Borough in the northern part of the County, not counting Delaware Water Gap Borough which has fewer than 800 residents and therefore a high margin of error.”

According to the US Census Bureau information for 2015, the racial makeup of the County was 78.1% White, 13.6% African American, 0.3% Native American, 2.2% Asian, 2.7% from other races, and 3% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 14.2% of the population.

In 2017, US Census Bureau estimated that 19.9% of the population in Monroe County was under the age of 18 and 16.7% were 65 years of age or older. The population is approximately half female and half male. The median age is currently 42 years according to Data USA.

Below, a population density map shows the concentrations of Monroe County's population relative to Barrett Township.



Source: Statistical Atlas

Income

In 2016, Data USA shows that “households in Monroe County, PA have a median annual income of \$58,980, which is more than the median annual income in the United States. Look at the chart to see how the median household income in Monroe County, PA compares to that in its parent locations.



Median Household Income in 2016 for Monroe Co, PA, US and Other Regions
Source: Data USA

Males in Monroe County, PA have an average income that is 1.41 times higher than the average income of females, which is \$38,895. The income inequality of Monroe County, PA (measured using the GINI index) is 0.426 which is lower than the national average.

In 2016 the highest paid race/ethnicity of Monroe County PUMA, PA workers was Black or African American. These workers were paid 1.21 times more than White workers, who made the second highest salary of any race/ethnicity.

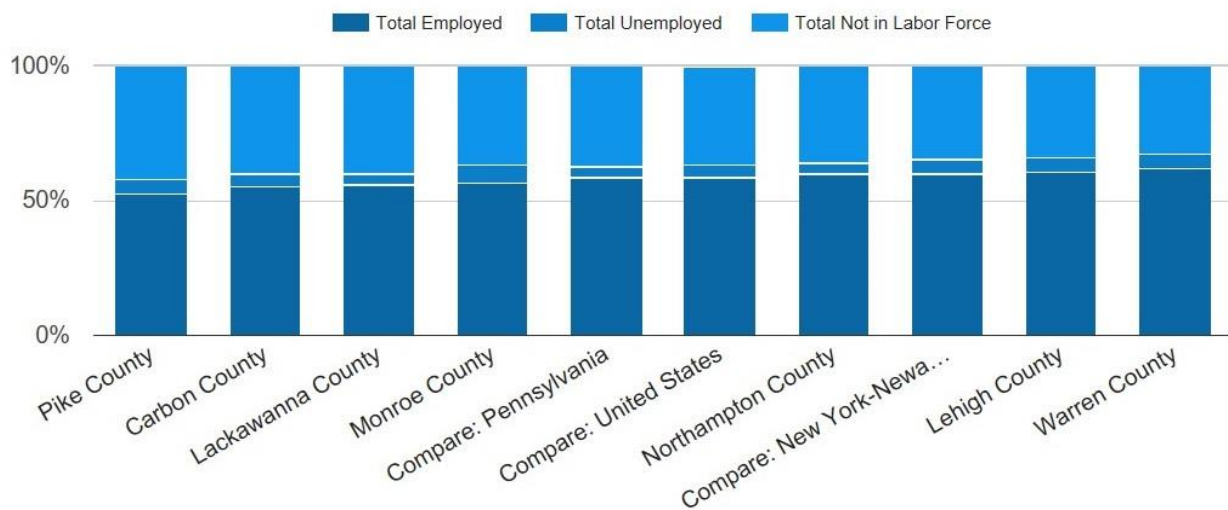
In 2016, the income inequality in Monroe County PUMA, PA was 0.426 according to the GINI calculation of the wage distribution. Income inequality had a 3.2% decline from 2015 to 2016, which means that wage distribution grew somewhat more even.

The 2016 GINI for Monroe County PUMA, PA is lower than the national average of 0.485. In other words, wages are distributed more evenly in Monroe County PUMA, PA in comparison to the national average.”

Considering the factors we have already discussed, this could indicate that Monroe County’s affordability and other merits are already beginning to attract the more highly skilled workers that will be a component in this area’s turnaround.

Employment

Currently according to Town Charts, 56% of Monroe County is employed, while 7% are unemployed. The percentage of unemployment is higher in Monroe County than both Pennsylvania and the United States at 5% unemployment.



Monroe County Employment Status Compared to PA, US and Other Regions
Source: Town Charts

The US census calculates that in 2016 there were 3,372 employer establishments in Monroe County. According to Monroe County’s Affordable Housing Plan 2018, “the education, healthcare, arts and entertainment, recreation and accommodation, food service and retail industries employed the majority of County residents. Major employers in the County include the Tobyhanna Army Depot, Sanofi Pasteur, Pocono Medical Center, Mount Airy Casino and Resort, and Wal-Mart Associates.”

Additionally, the census lists 10,441 nonemployer establishments. A nonemployer business is defined as

one that has no paid employees, has annual business receipts of \$1,000 or more (\$1 or more in the construction industries), and is subject to federal income taxes. The ratio of nonemployer to employer establishments in Monroe County is over 3:1.

Major Employers, 2017

Company	Location	Employees
Tobyhanna Army Depot	Coolbaugh Twp.	3,855
Sanofi Pasteur	Pocono Twp.	2,400
Pocono Medical Center	East Stroudsburg	2,000
Mount Airy Casino Resort	Paradise Twp.	1,400
Wal-Mart Associates	Coolbaugh Twp.	1,200
Pocono Mountain School District	Paradise Twp.	1,170
Kalahari Resort & Conventions	Tobyhanna Twp.	978
Pleasant Valley School District	Chestnuthill Twp.	900
East Stroudsburg School District	East Stroudsburg	900
Stroudsburg School District	Stroudsburg	900
East Stroudsburg University	East Stroudsburg	825
Weis Markets, Inc.	Multiple Locations	800
Great Wolf Lodge	Pocono Twp.	650
County of Monroe	Multiple Locations	640
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	Multiple Locations	600
Camelback Mountain Resort	Pocono Twp.	500
Ski Shawnee	Smithfield Twp.	500
GENCO	Coolbaugh Twp.	400
Weiler Corporation	Barrett Twp.	380
Fitzmaurice Community Services	Multiple Locations	330
Skytop Lodge	Barrett Twp.	311
The Home Depot USA, Inc.	Stroud Twp.	300
United Envelope Corporation	Coolbaugh Twp.	288
Pleasant Valley Manor	Stroud Twp.	250
Haines & Kibblehouse, Inc.	Tobyhanna Twp.	250
FedEx Freight	Tobyhanna Twp.	220

Source: Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corporation, 2017

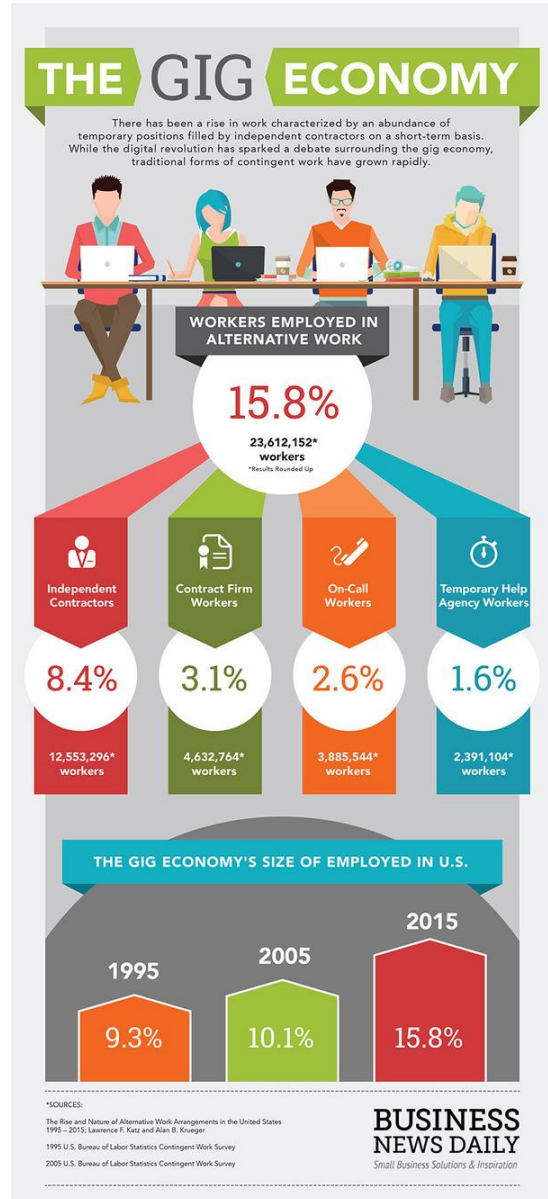
Source: Monroe County’s Affordable Housing Plan 2018

According to a 2015 U.S. Government Accountability Office report, this statistic is *not* particular to Monroe County. Nationally 40.4% of all American workers belong to the category of “contingent workers” – an increase of just under 10% since 2005.

Elaine Pofeldt, in a March 2015 Forbes article, describes some of the workers included in this data-set:

- Independent contractors who provide a product or service and find their own customers (12.9%)
- Standard part-time workers (16.2%)
- Self-employed workers such as shop and restaurant owners, etc. (3.3%)

If you haven’t heard the phrase before, the increasing prevalence of nonemployer establishments and growth in U6 unemployment is characteristic of “The Gig Economy.”



Source: Grant Reiner / Business News Daily

By definition The Gig Economy is a labor market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs. It is a national phenomenon, born of myriad factors including, but not limited to, availability of suitable employment and technology advances that facilitate the advantages of remote work.

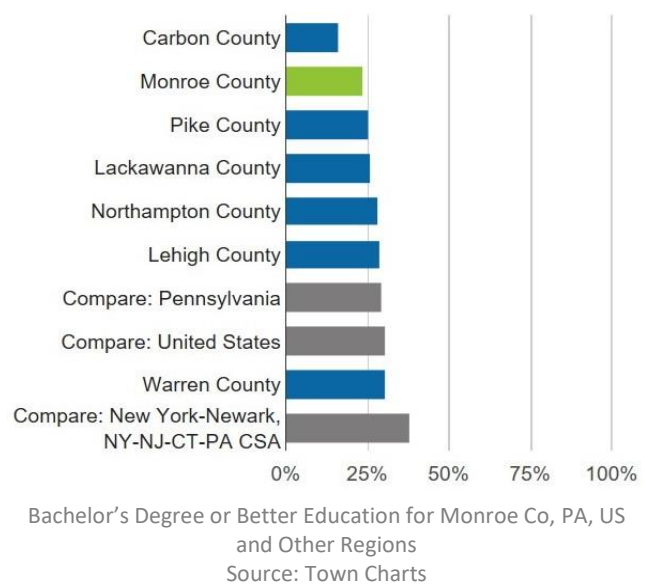
The significance of this to Barrett Township, is that people such as information workers and software developers, can now live anywhere, and use technology to access remote employment or make their own jobs in areas with affordable housing, access to major markets and desirable lifestyle conditions.

Education

Monroe County is served by four public school districts, each with its own elected school board. Additionally, the county has a number of private schools and the Monroe County Area Vocational Technical School. The East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania and the newly opened Monroe Campus of Northampton Community College are also located in Monroe County.

Recently Town Charts states that the total number of students enrolled in preschool to graduate school in Monroe County is 42,125. “Comparing total population enrolled in school to the United States average of 82,148,370, Monroe County is only about 0.1% the size. Also, benchmarked against the state of Pennsylvania, total population enrolled in school of 3,031,943, Monroe County is only about 1.4% the size.”

According to the Monroe County’s Affordable Housing Plan 2018, “Monroe County’s labor force has slightly lower educational attainment levels compared to Pennsylvania and the United States. While residents with high school diplomas comprise similar proportions of the population aged 25 years and over in the County, state and nation, only 23% of County residents in this cohort have a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 29.8% of Pennsylvania residents and 28.6% of the national population.



Higher-paying jobs tend to require a college degree, which may limit employment opportunities for the 77% of County residents aged 25 and older who do not have a Bachelor’s degree. College graduates in Monroe County have median earnings of \$48,369, compared to \$29,894 for residents with only a high school diploma.”

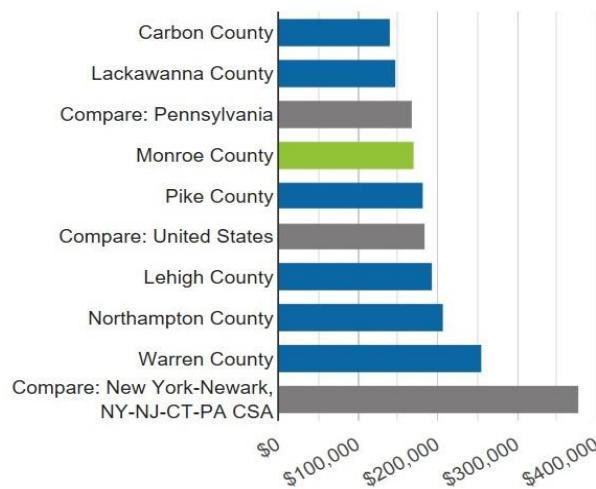
According to a Pocono Record article from July 2015, “racial diversity has increased overall in the student populations since the 2007-08 school year. Pocono Mountain School District, the largest district in the County, is made up of 52.81% of students identifying as non-white, up from 44.17% in 2007.” Racial diversity is a quality which is prized by many parents evaluating school systems when considering relocation.

Homes

Recent data from Town Charts shows, there are approximately 80,675 housing units in Monroe County. The median year built was 1984, compared with 1962 for the state of Pennsylvania and 1977 for the United States.

Monroe County has median home values at \$170,600, versus the State’s \$167,700 and the nation’s \$184,700.

According to Monroe County’s Affordable Housing Plan 2018, there were “13,642 residential building permits issued between 2000 and 2016 in Monroe County, less than 1% were for multi-unit buildings. The County saw a sharp drop off in building permits starting

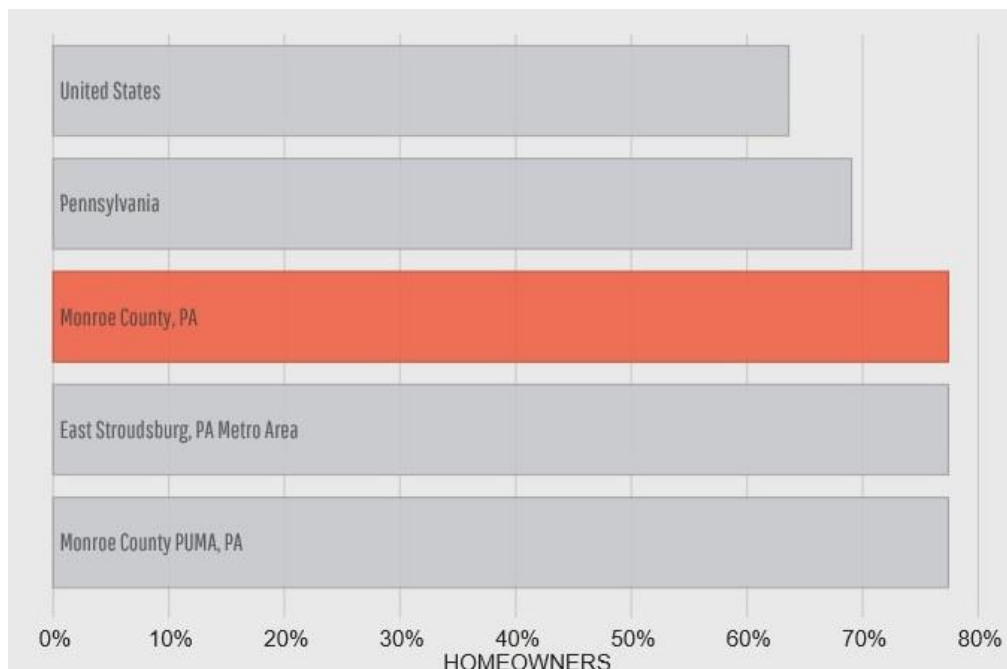


Median Home Values for Monroe Co, PA, US and Other Regions
Source: Towns Charts

around 2006, with the low in 2015 of around 150 permits being less than 10% of the 2003 high of nearly 1,700 permits. The Monroe County Planning Commission receives a tally from local municipalities of the single family building permits they've issued. Every municipality in the County has seen a drastic slowdown in the level of permitting activity over the past ten years, with the majority now issuing a number of permits in the single digits. Every part of the County is experiencing this trend, with no one area or municipality faring better or worse than another.

In 2015, the median gross rent across Monroe County was \$1,014 per month, compared to \$658 in 2000. If median gross rent had increased solely at the rate of inflation, it would have been only \$909 in 2015, over \$100 less than the actual value.”

According to Data USA in 2016, “77.4% of the housing units in Monroe County, PA were occupied by their owner. This percentage declined from the previous year's rate of 78.4%. This percentage of owner-occupation is higher than the national average of 63.6%. The chart below shows the ownership percentage in Monroe County, PA compared to its parent geographies.



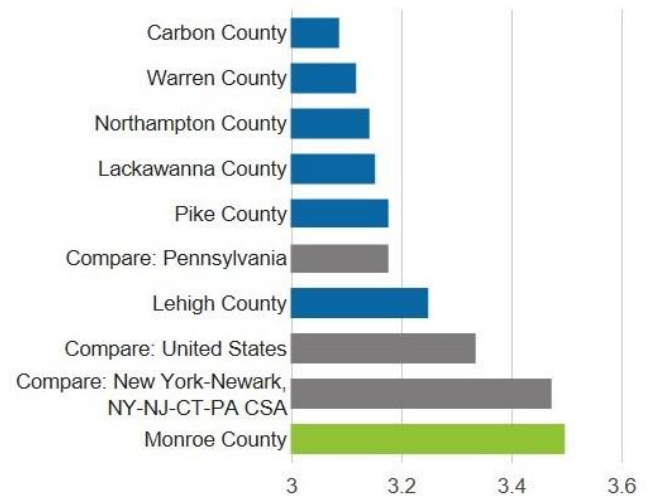
Homeowners in Monroe Co, PA, US and other Regions
Source: Data USA

In Monroe County the largest share of households pay taxes in the \$3,000+ range.”

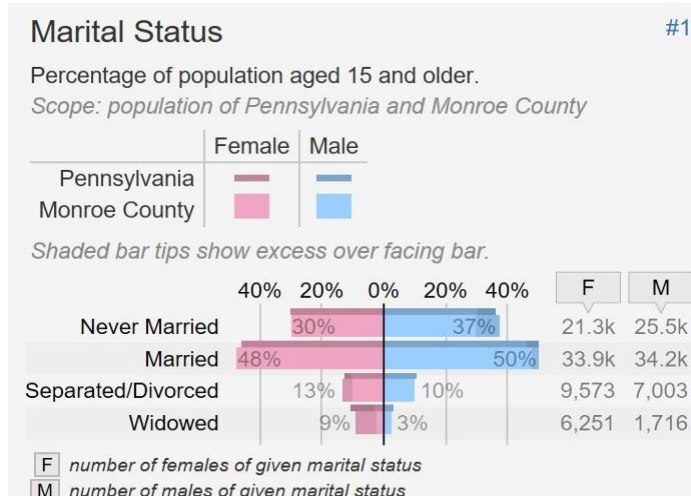
According to a 2016 report by RTI International, “Affordability of housing and the general cost of living is an important quality of life indicator that companies and individuals consider when they choose to move to or stay in an area. Affordable housing is important to economic diversification and optimization because housing availability for various income levels increases the ability of businesses to recruit employees and retain them in the local region. In fact, high housing costs are associated with out-migration. For these reasons, affordable housing can enhance economic sustainability.”

Families

Current data from Town Charts shows the average size of a typical family in Monroe County has 3.5 people in an average family size which is the highest of the counties compared, including Pennsylvania and United States averages. Of Monroe County residents 15 years and over, 48-50% are married compared to 46% in Pennsylvania according to current information from Statistical Atlas.

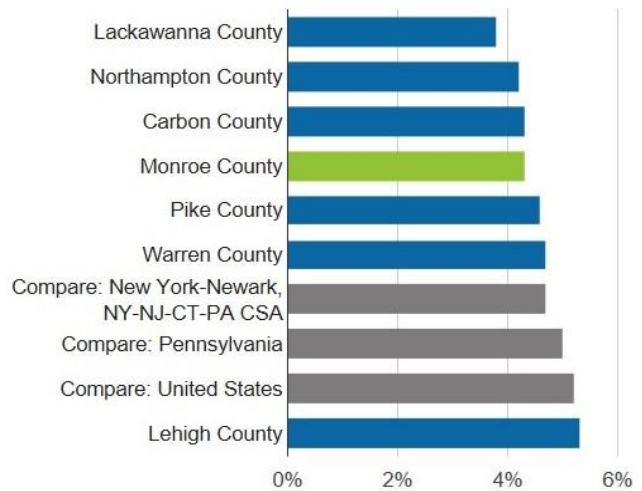


Average Family Size in Monroe Co Compared to PA, US and Other Regions
Source: Town Charts



Marital Status for Monroe Co and PA
Source: Statistical Atlas

The figure to the right shows the rate of women aged 15 to 50 years old who have given birth. Monroe County has 4% of women who gave birth, which is similar to surrounding counties. But, the birth rate in Monroe County is lower than both the state of Pennsylvania and the United States, which both have a 5% birth rate.



Birth Rate in Monroe Co Compared to PA, US and Other Regions
Source: Town Charts

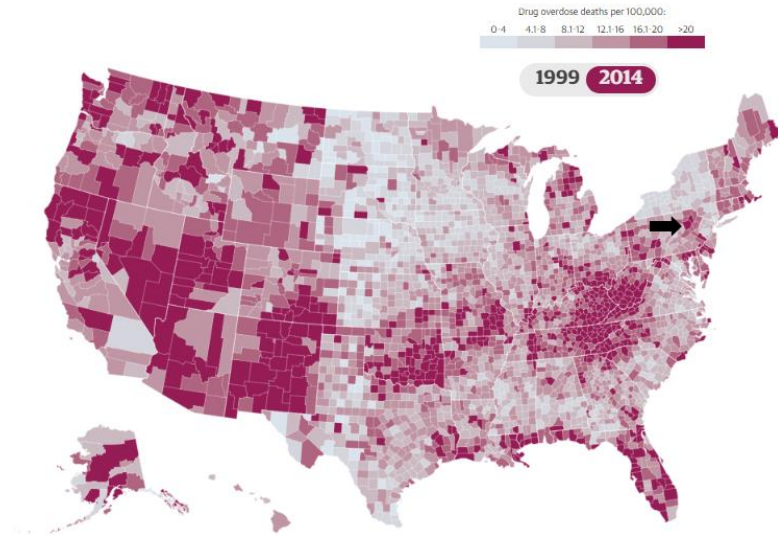
It is a mostly White county, with 12.2% living below the poverty line, of which 29% are children, 8% are seniors, 12% are White, 14% are Black or African American, 15% are American Indian, 13% are Asian and 19% are Hispanic.

Crime

According to the Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System (UCR) the top three crimes in Monroe County by frequency for 2017 were property offenses, other alcohol crimes and drug violations.

Monroe County 2017	Offenses	% of Total	Solved	% Solved
Criminal Homicide	10	0.1%	10	100.00%
Sex Related Offenses	321	3.4%	123	38.32%
Robbery	71	0.8%	25	35.21%
Assaults	1,175	12.6%	982	83.57%
Property Offenses	5,038	54.0%	1,430	28.38%
Arson	8	0.1%	2	25.00%
Drug Violations	1,205	12.9%	933	77.43%
Other Alcohol Crimes	1,502	16.1%	1,430	95.21%
Totals	9,330	100.0%	4935	52.89%

While this data doesn't highlight drug violations as the predominant crime concern in Monroe County, national and regional data suggest that the subject warrants attention. According to the National Institute of Justice, 60% of individuals arrested for most types of crimes test positive for illicit drugs at arrest. Furthermore, a 2004 Department of Justice study found that 17-18% of prisoners and inmates said they committed their current offense to obtain money for drugs.

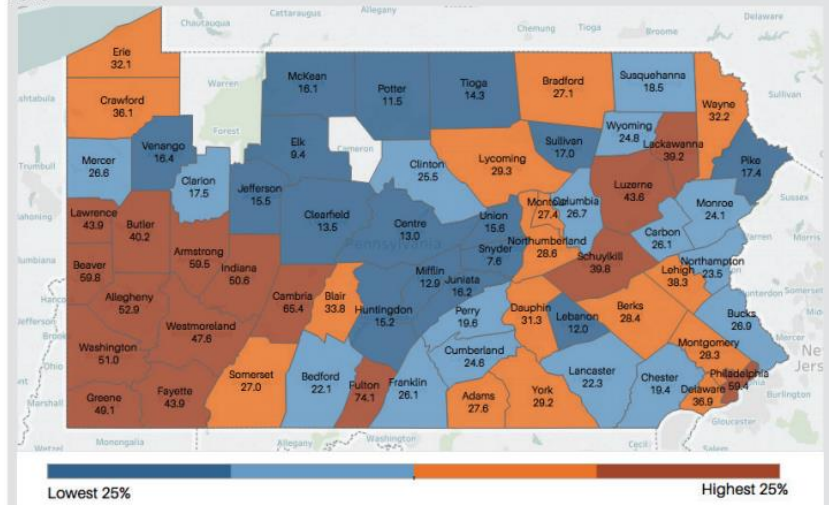


Infographic Credit: Nadja Popovich / The Guardian

The map shown left is from a 2014 article by Nadja Popovich for The Guardian on America's Drug Overdose Epidemic which currently claims more lives than gun fatalities or car crashes. The map highlights overdose deaths exceeding 20 per 100k in dark purple, as those areas most affected in the country. The black arrow points to Monroe County, unfortunately vividly demarcated.

Another map, right, shows drug-related overdose deaths by prevalence among Pennsylvania counties, Monrore County being a moderate percentage.

(U) Figure 2: Rate of Drug-Related Overdose Deaths per 100,000 people in Pennsylvania Counties, 2016



Source: Pennsylvania Coroner/Medical Examiner Data

Source: Pennsylvania Coroner / Medical Examiner Data

The National Safety Council stresses the importance of community involvement in overcoming this epidemic.

They advocate strategies including establishing addiction support groups, Narcan training for police officers and MedDrop boxes, which are making a difference.

The Carbon-Monroe-Pike Drug & Alcohol Commission, Inc. offers two outpatient treatment locations in Monroe County. The outpatient treatment units are licensed by the PA Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs to provide individual and group counseling for those with substance abuse and dependency problems.

BARRETT TOWNSHIP

In many instances what is true of Monroe County (East Stroudsburg, PA MSA), is true of Barrett itself. In this section we will continue to explore points and subtleties about the community that further illuminate the path to Barrett’s Township’s promising future.



Canadensis
Photo Credit: Zillow

Geography

Barrett Township is located at 41°13'00"N 75°11'59"W with an elevation of 1,407 ft. It is located 38 miles from Scranton and 48 miles from Wilkes-Barre. The 53.25 square miles is mostly land, with 1.22% being water bodies like ponds, lakes and creeks, primarily Mill Creek, Middle Branch Broadhead Creek and Buck Hill Creek.

PA Department of Community & Economic Development (PA DCED) Flood Zone Maps indicate that flood hazard zones exist mainly along Mill Creek, Buck Hill Creek and Middle Branch Broadhead Creek, which run through the middle of Township. There are also flood hazard zones in the northeast corner of the Township near two lakes and in the northwest corner of the Township along Brights Creek.



Flood Hazard Zones
Source: PA DCED

Barrett Township is encircled by Price Township to the east, Paradise Township to the south, Coolbaugh Township to the west, Greene Township to the north and small portions of Porter Township and Delaware State Forest on the northeast.

Google suggests a 45 minute drive time to Scranton, about an hour to Wilkes-Barre, just over an hour to Allentown, just over two hours to Harrisburg or Philadelphia, and two hours to Manhattan, NY.

Demography

Following are statistics of economic interest about Barrett Township residents, taken from various sources, according to the most recent year of available data.

Population

The US Census Bureau estimates the 2016 population of Barrett Township at 4,112. According to the 2010 US Census Bureau there were 4,225 people residing in Barrett Township. The racial makeup of the township was 91.4% White, 3.9% Black or African American, 0.1% Native American, 0.9% Asian, 1.6% from other races, and 1.9% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 5.2% of the population.

In the township the population was spread out, with 20.2% under the age of 18 and 18.3% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 45.8 years. The population is approximately half female and half male.

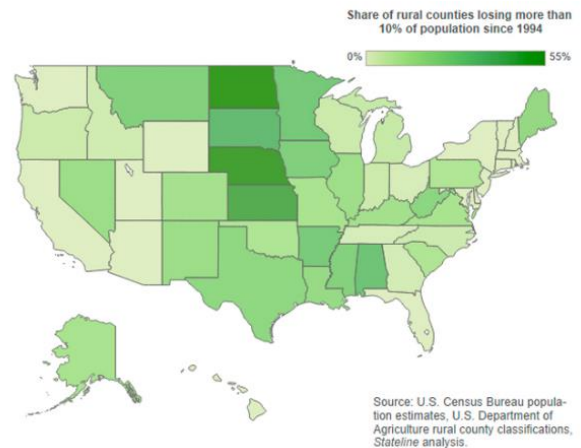
This number reflects a more recent population decline since the 2010 census, which is one of the highest population declines for Monroe County.

Barrett Township Population Variance

Year	Population	Growth / Decline
1980	3,273	-
1990	3,216	-1.8%
2000	3,880	+1.7%
2010	4,225	+8.2%
2016	4,112	-2.7%

Source: US Census

According to a 2015 Governing Magazine article, Barrett is not alone in this difficulty. Tim Henderson writes, “Population loss is a long-term trend in much of rural America, and it’s gotten more acute since 2010, according to a Stateline analysis. Although 759 rural counties in 42 states lost population between 1994 and 2010, more than 1,300 rural counties in 46 states have lost population since 2010.”

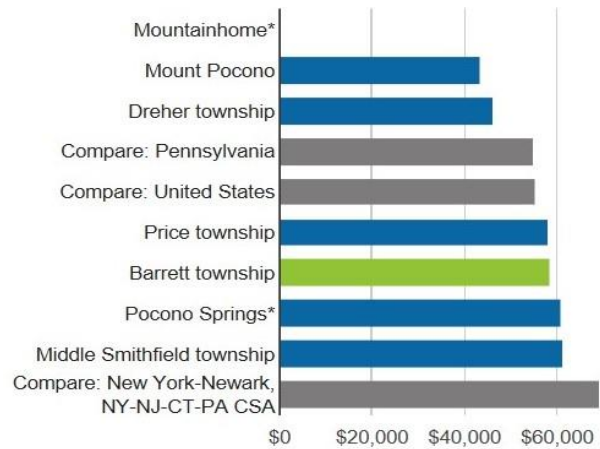


Source: Tim Henderson for Governing Magazine

Common strategies for responding to population decline include reducing costs by sharing services and cutting back, and increasing revenues by attracting new residents. The latter is accomplished by emphasizing and enhancing the city’s existing assets and resources, and developing a community brand with strong and appealing points of differentiation.

Income

The figure to the right includes all members in a household using the median household income. Barrett Township has a \$58,295 median income which is the 3rd most of all other places in the area. The city with the highest median income in the area is Middle Smithfield Township with an income of \$61,018 is only about 4.7% larger. Comparing median income to the United States average of \$55,322, Barrett Township is only about 5.4% larger. Also, benchmarked against the state of Pennsylvania, median income of \$54,895, Barrett Township is 6.2% larger.



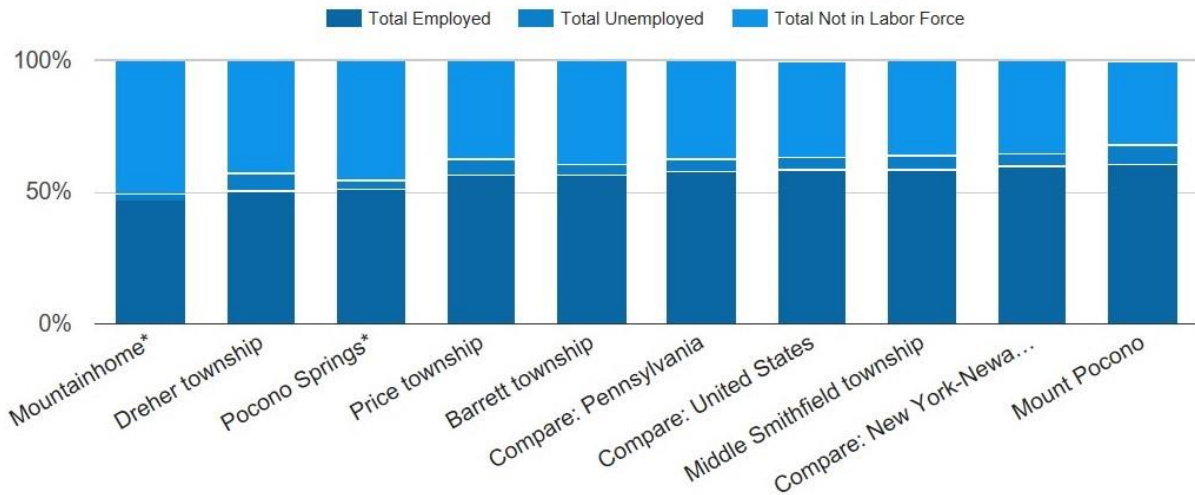
Median Household Income in Barrett Township Compared to PA, US and Other Municipalities
Source: Town Charts

A 2016 publication by the EPA entitled, Framework for Creating Smart Growth: A Tool for Small Cities and Towns, suggests trying different and creative methods, including promoting entrepreneurship as a strategy for increasing household incomes and reestablishing a healthy tax base. Given the County's employment statistics, this may be a workable solution for Barrett Township.

The publication suggests that, "Encouraging entrepreneurs to start businesses gives people power over their own lives and lets them build wealth in their own communities. Business owners who also live in the community tend to spend more on local business services and keep more of their earnings in the local economy. They also have a vested interest in the community and are less likely to move elsewhere in response to incentives offered by other cities.

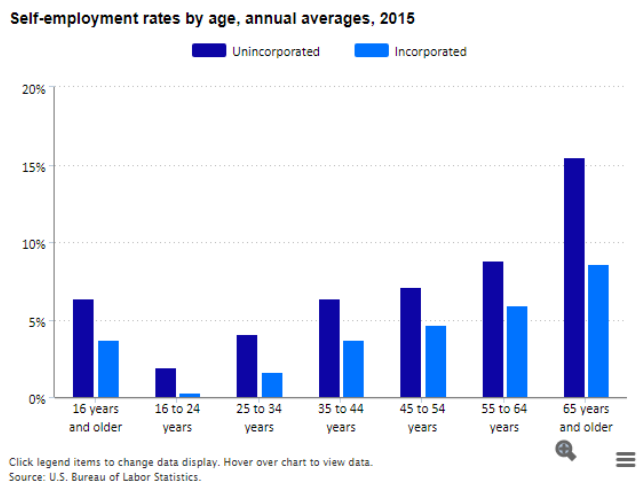
Employment

Currently according to Town Charts, 57% of Barrett Township is employed, while 4% are unemployed. The percentage of unemployment is less in Barrett Township than both Pennsylvania and the United States at 5% unemployment.



Barrett Township Employment Status Compared to PA, US and Other Municipalities
Source: Town Charts

The Bureau of Labor Statistics calculates that self-employment is more common among older workers, veterans and foreign-born workers.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

The Small Business Assistance Network (SBAN), an outreach of the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, provides budding entrepreneurs the necessary resources to start and grow a small business in Pennsylvania.

Barrett residents who prefer more traditional employment and wish to find a job or a better one, may receive free services including career

counseling and training through PA CareerLink in Tannersville. Indeed, a free online job site, currently lists 1,064 jobs available within a 15 mile radius of Barrett, with salary estimates between 20 and 90K. The available jobs are described as Full-time (750); Part-time (284); Commission (23); Temporary (123); Contract (36); and Internship (6). Another online service, Flexjobs, helps applicants find remote work for a modest fee.

Education

Barrett Township is in the Pocono Mountain School District (PMSD). The Pocono Mountain School District, is comprised of Coolbaugh, Jackson, Paradise, Pocono, Tobyhanna and Tunkhannock townships and Mount Pocono borough. The School District encompasses approximately 305 square miles and serves a population of approximately 55,000 and as of October 2016 was serving 9,024 students in grades K-12. The district consists of the East High School (grades 9-12), West High School (grades 9-12), East Junior High School (grades 7-8), West Junior High School (grades 7-8), Swiftwater Intermediate School (grades 4-6), Clear Run Intermediate School (grades 3-6), Swiftwater Elementary Center (grades K-3), Tobyhanna Elementary Center (grades K-6), Clear Run Elementary Center (grades K-2), Academy (grades 7-12) and Cyber Learning Program.



According to the PMSD Proposed 2018-2021 Comprehensive Plan, they “provide Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) which meet the needs of all children. In addition to the regular instruction of the core curriculum, various other opportunities and supports are available to children including: Special Education services, ESL services, 504 Plan accommodations, Alternative Education for Disruptive Youth program (Pocono Mountain Academy), OnLine Cyber Learning (Pocono Mountain Learning Academy), Monroe County Technical Institution vocational training, Credit Recovery for "At Risk" high school students, Student Assistance Programs and Instructional Support Programs.

A local county based committee (Monroe County Children's Roundtable) to address any and all concerns of the children in the four existing public school systems of Monroe County has been assembled. Representatives of the school districts including the Pocono Mountain SD, East Stroudsburg ASD, Stroudsburg SD and Pleasant Valley SD meet with representatives of the various county agencies that impact school aged-children. Concerns relevant to the care and welfare of all children, grades K - 12, are identified, discussed and resolved to the greatest degree possible.”



*Penn State World Campus Graduation
Photo Credit: PSU*

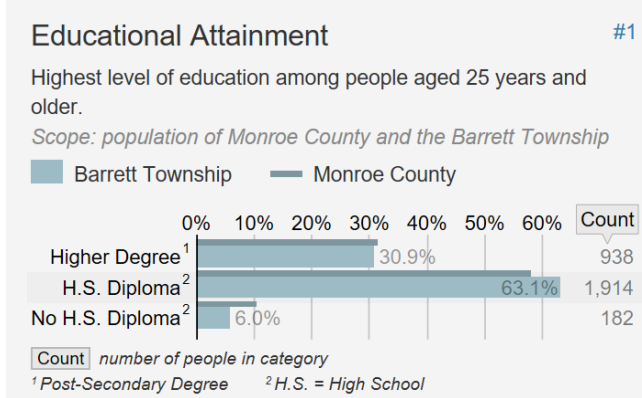
2004 to 2014, while the enrollment of those age 25 and over increased by 16%. From 2014 to 2025, however, NCES projects the increase for students under age 25 to be 13%, compared with 18% for students age 25 and over.”

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), “between fall 2004 and fall 2014, the percentage increase in the number of students enrolled in degree-granting institutions was higher for students under age 25 than for older students; however, the rate of increase is expected to be lower for students under age 25 than for older students in the coming years. The enrollment of students under age 25 increased by 18% from

A 2014 NBC news article entitled [Back to School: Older Students on the Rise in College Classrooms](#) reiterates this, citing that “In 2009, students aged 25 and older accounted for roughly 40% of all college and graduate students. That figure is expected to rise to 43% by 2020 as 9.6 million older students head to campus.”

Currently according to Statistical Atlas, Barrett residents have a higher than average rate of high-school graduation, but a lower than average rate of post-secondary education.

But, given the national trends for older Americans in both the labor market and in educational participation, and the success of Pocono Mountain School District, the Township of Barrett can hope to improve these levels in both its younger and older population.



Educational Attainment for Barrett Township and Monroe Co
 Source: Statistical Atlas

Homes

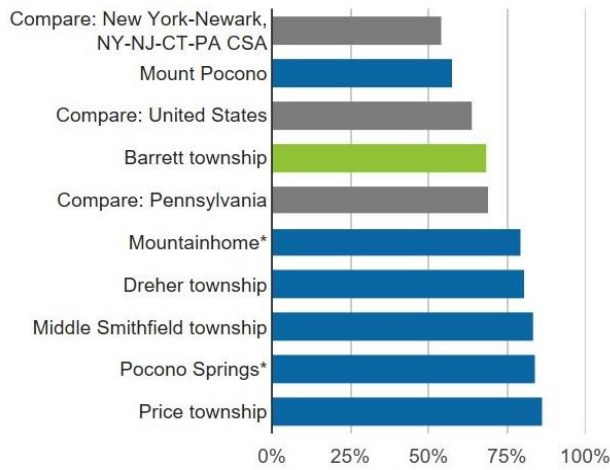
Currently according to Zillow the “median home value in Barrett is \$153,500. Barrett home values have gone up 5.0% over the past year and Zillow predicts they will rise 6.8% within the next year. The median list price per square foot in Barrett is \$100, which is lower than the East Stroudsburg Metro average of \$106.”



Median Home Values in Barrett Township Over Time
 Source: Zillow

Barrett has plenty of room to make housing improvements to increase the appeal of these homes, while yet remaining an affordable and accessible residential community, with superlative quality of life factors.

According to the Township tax collector, for a property valued at \$153,500 (the median home value) property owners would pay \$5,191.75 in base school taxes (135.29 millage rate), \$815.47 in base county taxes (21.25 millage rate) and \$777.09 in base township taxes (20.25 millage rate). According to Monroe County’s Affordable Housing Plan 2018, in 2017 Barrett Township’s total millage rate was 176.79, which is lower than the County average of 187.06.



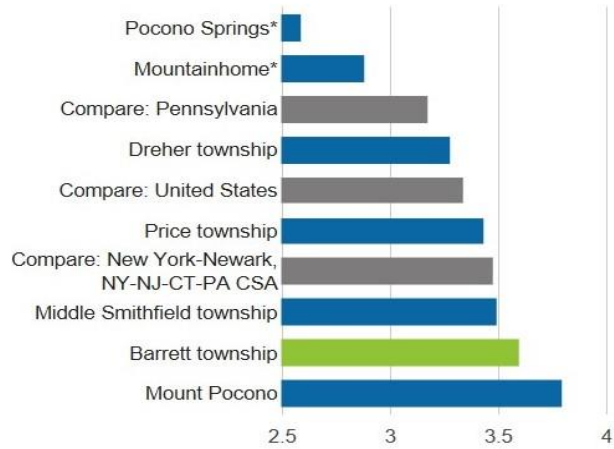
Owned Homes in Barrett Township Compared to PA, US and Other Municipalities
 Source: Town Charts

Finally, 69% of housing units in Barrett Township are owned, which is higher than the national average of 64%. Regarding the remaining 31%, according to The Center for Community Progress, “a stock of sound, well-managed single-family rental properties can be a valuable asset for a community.” Because Barrett’s housing supply has a wide margin for growth while yet remaining affordable, establishing standards for these units is one step the Township could take to improve housing options within the community.

A publication called Raising the Bar: A Short Guide to Landlord Incentives and Rental Property Regulation by Alan Mallach, provides a guide to municipalities seeking to reward responsible landlords, while focusing enforcement on chronic offenders.

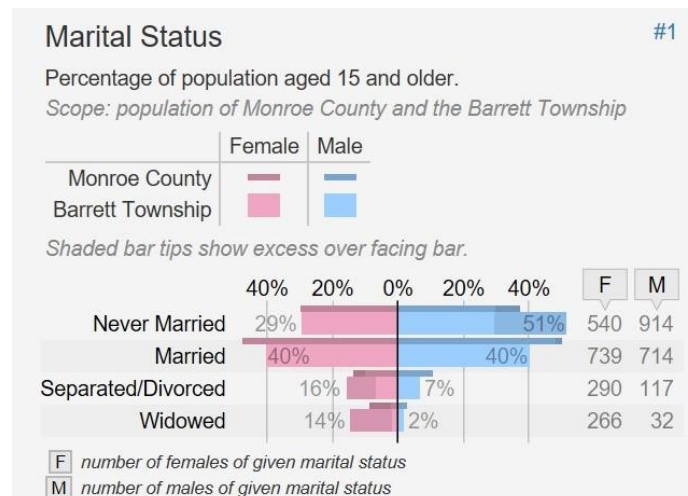
Families

Current data from Town Charts shows the average size of a typical family in Barrett Township has 3.6 people in an average family size which is the 2nd most of all the places in the area. The city with the highest average family size in the area is Mount Pocono with a size of 3.8 is only about 5.5% larger.



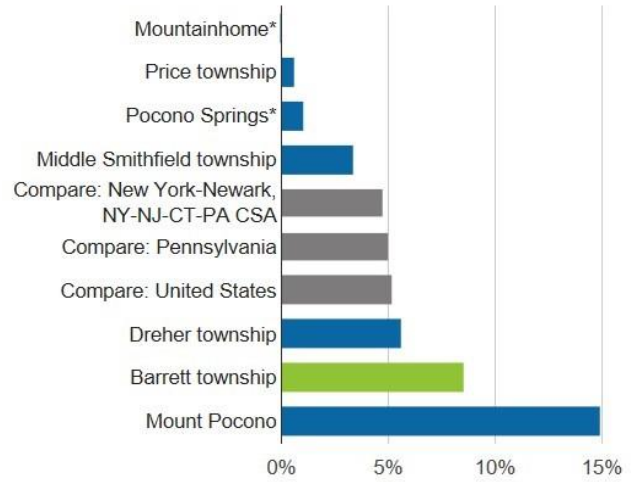
Of Barrett Township residents 15 years and over, 40% are married compared to 47.8% in Monroe County according to current information from Statistical Atlas.

Average Family Size in Barrett Township Compared to PA, US and Other Municipalities
Source: Town Charts



Marital Status for Barrett Township and Monroe County
Source: Statistical Atlas

Barrett’s affordability has made it an amenable place to start a family. The figure to the right shows the rate of women aged 15 to 50 years old who have given birth. Barrett Township has 8.5% of women who gave birth which is the 2nd most of all the places in the area. The city with the highest percent of women who gave birth in the area is Mount Pocono with a birth rate of 14.9% compares as 75% larger. But, the birth rate in Barrett is higher than both the state of Pennsylvania and the United States, which both have a 5% birth rate.



Birth Rate Barrett Township Compared to PA, US and Other Municipalities
 Source: Town Charts

It is a mostly White community, with 14.5% living below the poverty line, of which 10% are children, 30% are seniors, 15% are White, 5% are Black or African American and 40% are Hispanic.

Crime

Barrett Township Crime Rate Report from City Rating reports an “overall downward trend in crime based on data from 8 years, with violent crime decreasing and property crime increasing. Based on this trend, the crime rate in Barrett Township for 2018 is expected to be lower than in 2014.

The city violent crime rate for Barrett Township in 2014 was lower than the national violent crime rate average by 74% and the city property crime rate in Barrett Township was lower than the national property crime rate average by 58.61%.

In 2014, the city violent crime rate in Barrett Township was lower than the violent crime rate in Pennsylvania by 68.9% and the city property crime rate in Barrett Township was lower than the property crime rate in Pennsylvania by 44.38%.”

Barrett Township Crime Statistics Summary Report		2014 Crime (Actual Data)*	Incidents	2018 Crime (Projected Data)*	Incidents
		Aggravated Assault	4	Aggravated Assault	2
		Arson	0	Arson	0
		Burglary	13	Burglary	24
		Larceny and Theft	31	Larceny and Theft	34
		Motor Vehicle Theft	0	Motor Vehicle Theft	1
		Murder and Manslaughter	0	Murder and Manslaughter	0
		Rape	N/A	Rape	0
		Robbery	0	Robbery	0
		Crime Rate (Total Incidents)	53	Crime Rate (Total Incidents)	68
		Property Crime	44	Property Crime	59
		Violent Crime	4	Violent Crime	1

Source: City Rating

The National Institute of Justice defines property crime as taking money or property when there is no force or threat of force against the victims. The Institute has catalogued programs and practices used to combat property crime on a site called crimesolutions.gov, rating each method with evidence ratings that support its’ effectiveness. The practices listed include neighborhood watches, improved streetlighting and hot-spots policing along with other interesting strategies.

Conclusion



Photo Credit: Glenn Carstens-Peters / Unsplash

BARRETT TOWNSHIP: “A BETTER TOMMORROW, TODAY.”

In a paper entitled [Coalition Building: One Path to Empowered Communities](#), the author quotes Leonard Duhl’s description of a healthy community as one "that is continually creating and improving those physical and social environments, and expanding those community resources, which enable people to mutually support each other in performing all the functions of life, and developing to their maximum potential."

A mutually supportive community facilitating growth toward maximum potential in our families, in our health, in our careers and economy, and in our lasting impact – this is the goal we have for Barrett. It is of course a high ideal. It is true that Barrett’s challenges are real, and like all challenges, may at times seem overwhelming.

But other similar communities have leapt the hurdles that now stand between Barrett and the good of her citizens. In the coming months and years we will draw from their examples. We will garner the support of Monroe County, the state of Pennsylvania, and the United States itself, as well as, the coalition of Barrett’s own residents as we, Penn Strategies join you in the dream of Barrett Township: A better tomorrow, today.”