

THE COUNTY, ITS ECONOMY, AND SUPPORTING TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

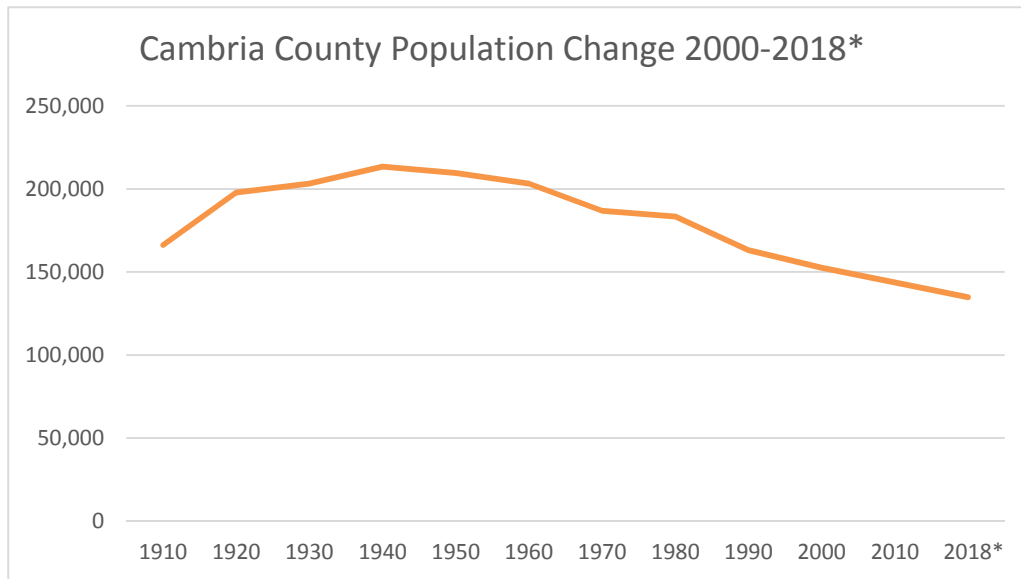
Cambria County's transportation infrastructure needs and future opportunities are, in large part, shaped by its economic history and demographic trends. Transportation planning must work to address both the current maintenance and safety needs while supporting new opportunities.

While large-scale manufacturing and natural resource extraction has decreased, small-scale manufacturing is growing in Johnstown, with a larger focus on craftspeople and entrepreneurial training opportunities. The county has also seen growth in the recreational and tourism based markets. Cambria County's mountainous landscape, restored rivers, award-winning trails, rich culture and historic downtown districts contribute to a growing industry that needs to be considered in long range planning.

To better understand what those opportunities may be and where best to focus transportation investments, Cambria County's Long Range Transportation Plan must be informed by demographic and economic trends. This section highlights recent demographic and industry sector trends and discusses how those trends can inform future transportation priorities. As you consider the community and demographic data found within this chapter, please be mindful that the majority of the figures come from the United States Census Bureau American Community Survey, which are estimates, some with a high margin of error. At the time of this publication, the 2020 Census is being conducted, therefore more dependable data is not yet available.

TOTAL POPULATION

Cambria County has witnessed a steady decline in population from more than 200,000 residents at its peak in 1940. Since then, the population has declined by 37% and is estimated to have declined by almost 9,000 since 2010. Recent estimates from the United States Census Bureau American Community Survey, Cambria County was estimated to have a population of 134, 732 in 2018, down from an estimated 137,732 in 2014. When considering these figures, please keep in mind that they are merely estimates and should be treated as such.

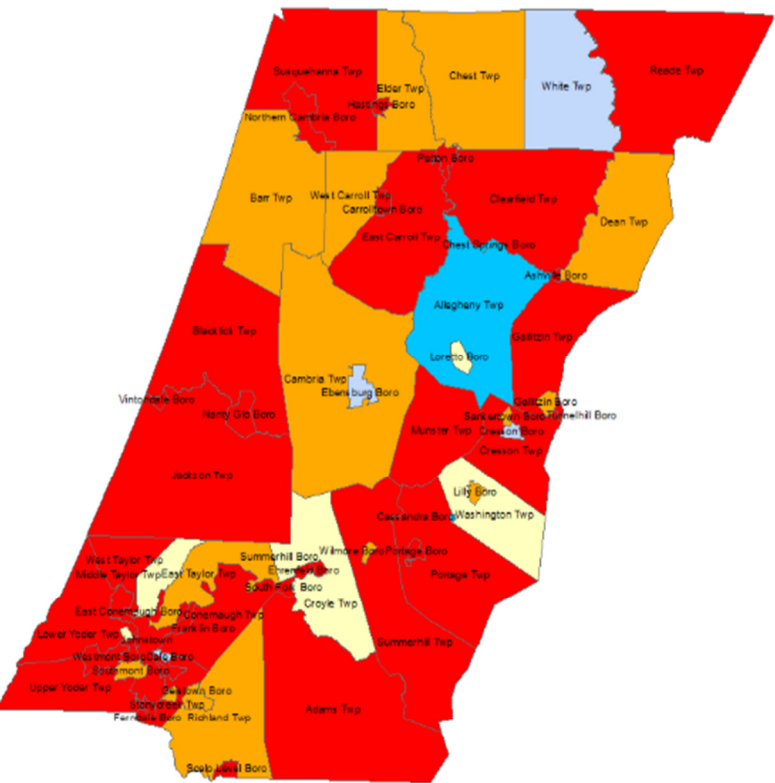


Source: U.S Census Bureau

1910	166,131
1920	197,839
1930	203,146
1940	213,459
1950	209,541
1960	203,283
1970	186,785
1980	183,263
1990	163,029
2000	152,598
2010	143,679
2018*	134,732

*Estimate

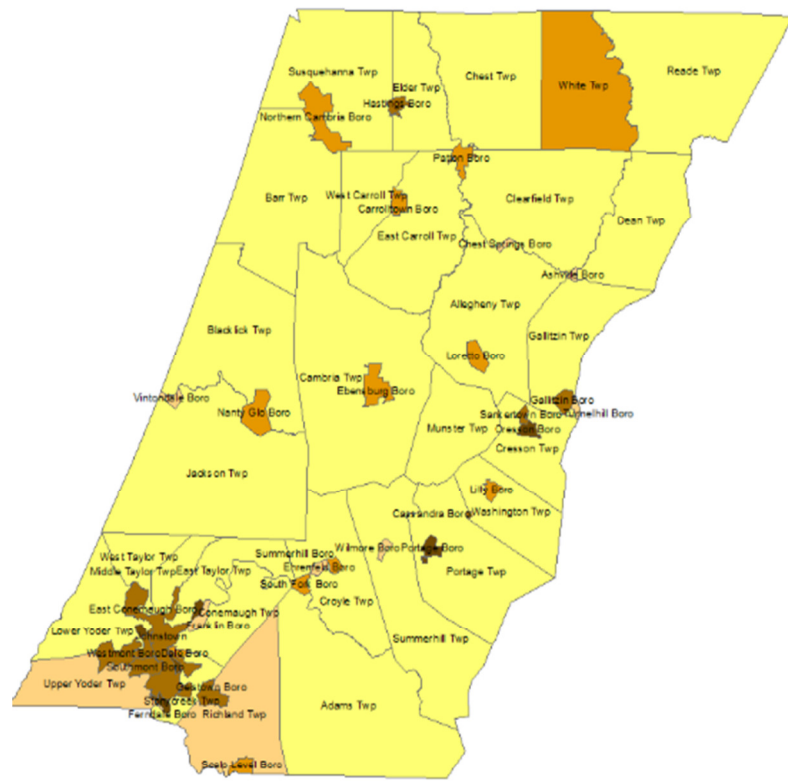
Since 2000, most municipalities have seen a significant population decline. Not all municipalities are shrinking, however. A few boroughs, including Ebensburg, have seen an estimated population gain of over 10%. It should be noted that the population of Allegheny Township is largely impacted by a federal correctional institution located within the township. This population contains inmates with few transportation needs, those of which are handled by prison personnel.



Estimated Percent of Population Change, 2000-2018

- Greater than 10% Loss
- -2.5% to -10%
- -2.4% to 2.4%
- 2.5% to 10%
- Greater than 10% Gain

Source: U.S. Census



Estimated Population Density per square mile, 2018

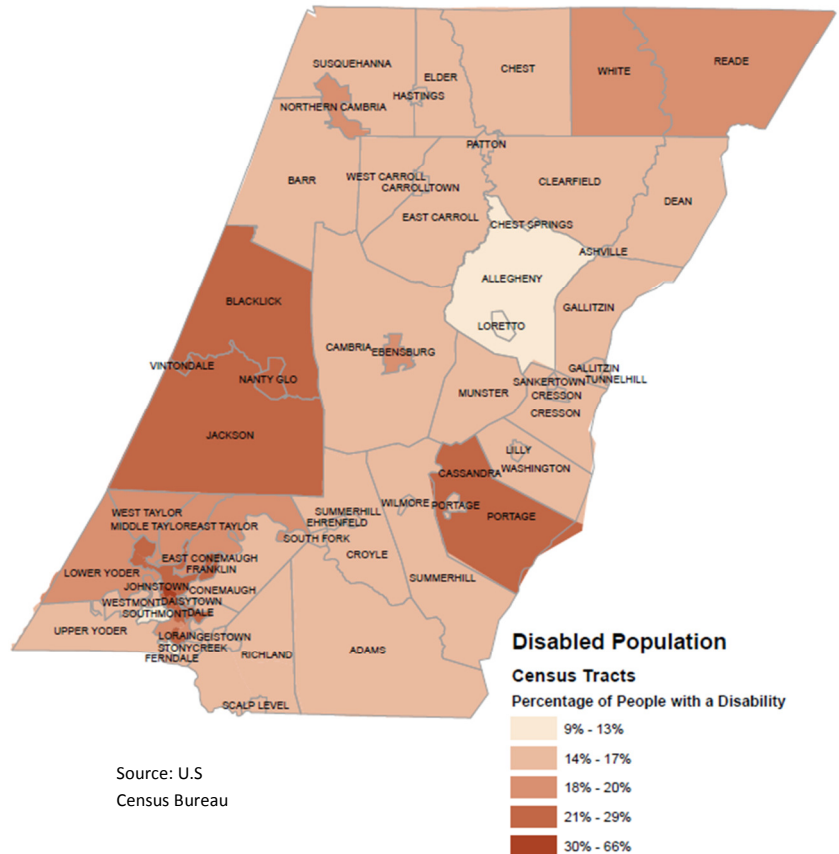
- Less than 300
- 301 - 999
- 1000 - 2000
- 2001 - 3499
- Greater than 3,500

Source: U.S. Census

ACCESSIBILITY AND MOBILITY NEEDS

The issues of accessibility and mobility are sometimes overlooked in transportation planning. Cambria County has an estimated 25,843 (20%) people living with a disability. The City of Johnstown has an estimated 5,479 (28%) people living with a disability. As an effort put forth during the planning process of the county’s most recent update to the bicycle and pedestrian plan, CCPC staff teamed up with the Ms. Wheelchair Pennsylvania organization to identify some of the transportation needs of people with disabilities, particularly wheelchair users, within Cambria County.

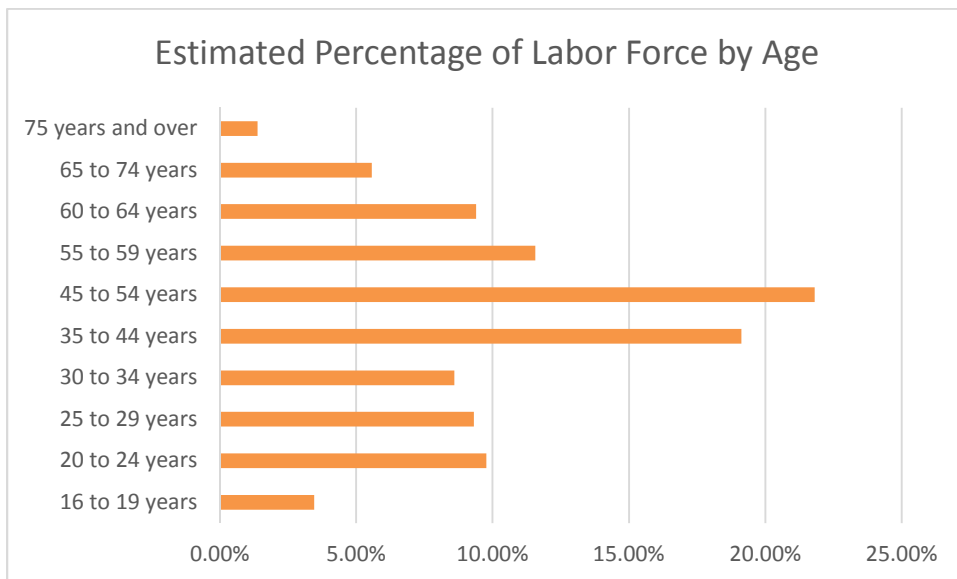
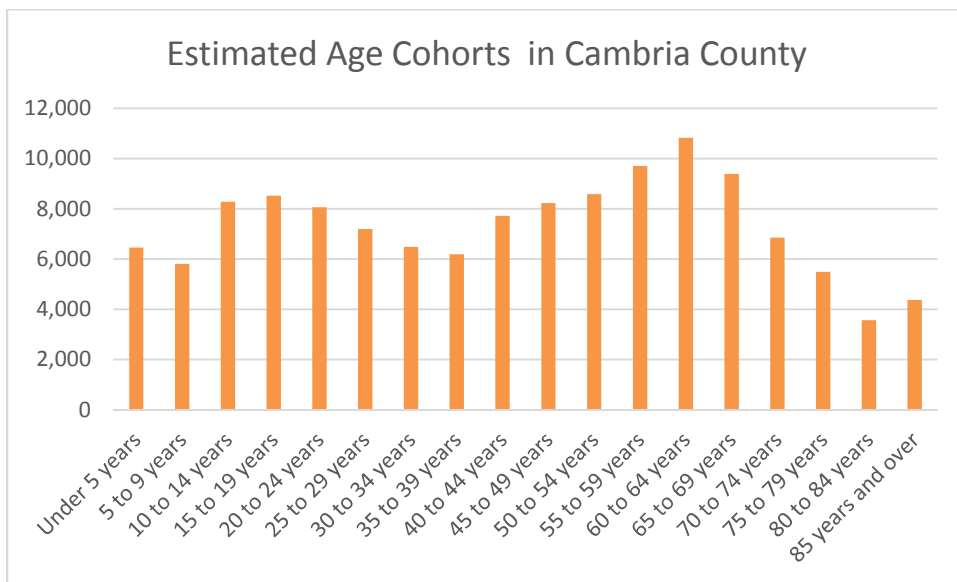
Through first-hand experience and testimonies from members of the community who have experienced difficulties being able to safely access good and services due to shortcomings in the county’s pedestrian infrastructure, we have been able to identify and better understand the accessibility needs in the county.



Future planning efforts include holding an annual Accessibility Day event where public officials are given a chance to experience navigating areas within county in a wheelchair, continuing to provide resources and assistance to people with disabilities and ensuring that future transportation projects and plans address accessibility and mobility needs.

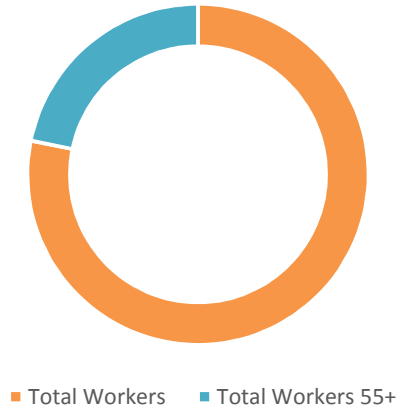
A GLIMPSE AT THE LABOR AND ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT IN CAMBRIA COUNTY

Beyond the absolute numbers, it is important to understand how Cambria County compares in key working age cohorts. Cambria County has a largely aging population and is aging at a faster rate than the rest of the country. Individuals 55 and older account for 27.6% of the workforce in Cambria County. Cambria County lags the nation in younger, working age residents as a percentage of the overall population. Ages 18 to 24 (college age) represent 9.08 percent of the total population and Young Adults (Ages 25 to 44) account for 20.09 percent. Both fall below the national averages. These age cohorts are critical as they represent a new labor force to support existing industry, business attraction and new start-ups.

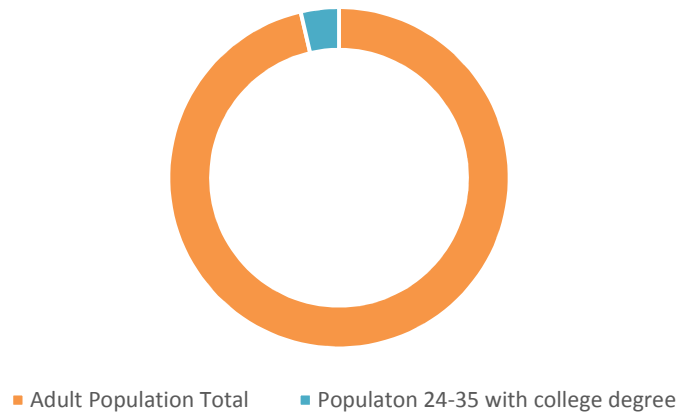


Source: U.S Census Bureau

Estimated Percentage of Labor Force Age 55 and Older



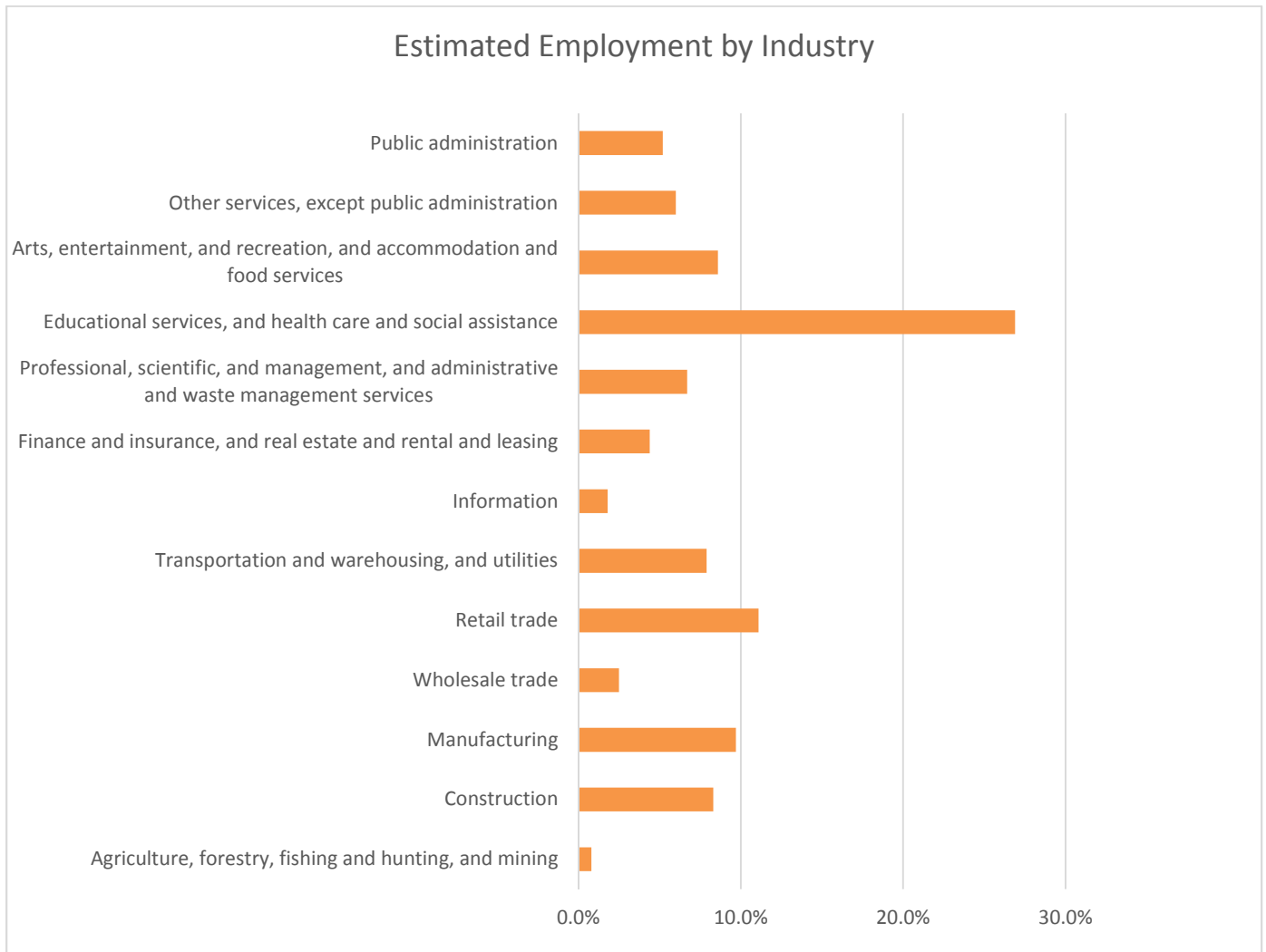
Estimated Young Adults (Ages 25-34) with College Degrees as a Percentage of the Adult Population



Source: U.S Census Bureau

Several questions come into play when considering the age of the present workforce including who will replace the aging workforce as they retire and what would attract younger workers to locate in Cambria County. Future planning efforts should address the transportation needs of the younger generation and evaluate if enhancements can be made to encourage college and prime working age individuals to stay in or move to Cambria County for education or employment. Also critical is assessing the needs of business owners and considering how to ensure that Cambria County is an attractive place to locate a new businesses.

Although once known for heavy manufacturing, fewer than 10% of the county’s civilian workforce are now employed in manufacturing, whereas nearly 30% are employed in the educational, health and human services industry. Cambria County is home to several medical institutions, including Duke LifePoint Memorial Medical Center, which offers nursing and residency programs. Cambria County is also home of several post-secondary education institutions, which include two universities, a liberal arts college, a community college and an adult career and technology center. The figures below better illustrate the employment and industry make up of Cambria County.



Source: U.S Census Bureau

Population 16 years and over	109,575
In labor force	56.3%
Civilian labor force	56.2%
Employed	53.8%
Unemployed	2.4%
COMMUTING TO WORK	
Workers 16 years and over	58,159
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	78.8%
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	9.0%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	1.0%
Walked	4.1%
Other means	2.7%
Worked at home	4.5%
OCCUPATION	
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	58,931
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	32.0%
Service occupations	19.2%
Sales and office occupations	20.9%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	11.3%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	16.5%
INDUSTRY	
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	58,931
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.8%
Construction	8.3%
Manufacturing	9.7%
Wholesale trade	2.5%
Retail trade	11.1%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	7.9%
Information	1.8%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	4.4%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	6.7%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	26.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	8.6%
Other services, except public administration	6.0%
Public administration	5.2%

Source: U.S Census Bureau

EMERGING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Various economic development interests are working to stimulate business growth and new business starts, predominantly in the Johnstown area. These emerging initiatives each have transportation needs that should be considered as the efforts are being established or piloted, and subsequently as they are evaluated.

Center for Metal Arts

The Center for Metal Arts is a training facility for aspiring blacksmiths and metalsmiths. It is located in the historic Cambria Iron Company facilities in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and is considered a world-class educational blacksmithing program. The program offers several short and long term programs for blacksmithing and is expecting to have a jewelry/metalsmithing program to be fully launched in 2020.



Photo Credit: Jarrod Bunk

The Center is hoping to get the shop to full capacity and presently hosts students from across the country in a former church rectory, with plans to sponsor emerging artists-in-residence, who will be given personal studio space to work.

Creator Square, Johnstown

Creator Square is an innovative artistic residency program located in Johnstown. Emerging and mid-career leaders in the local and national craft business communities can be chosen for residencies lasting up to two years. The purpose of Creator Square is for artisans to have access to low-cost, purpose-built studios equipped with production space, equipment, materials, teaching opportunities, sales promotion and advice. The program will create validated makers with the capabilities to go out into the community with the tools needed to be artisans, small batch manufacturers and other makers.

ETAL Transfer Authority

ETAL Transfer Authority is a provider of prepaid, scheduled and dependable transportation based out of Johnstown. Its mission is to provide a connection between Altoona and Pittsburgh to provide the opportunity to commute to and from the region in an affordable manner. Making this connection would allow people who work outside of the region to make Cambria County their home and grow and

strengthen the local economy. In addition to making trips between Johnstown and Pittsburgh, ETAL will also make trips to popular regional airports, including those that service the Washington, DC area.

ETAL Transfer Authority was a result of the entrepreneurship program, Startup Alleghenies, which is generating ideas to stimulate the rebirth of Johnstown and surrounding areas – ideas that may require or benefit from access or connectivity improvements (e.g., changes in facilities or service in one or more modes). ETAL Transfer Authority is looking to bridge the gaps within the present rail and bus transportation systems, which fall short of providing adequate daily service in and out of Cambria County.

Action Item:

Planners and transportation providers will address the needs of makers which include transportation connections to:

- Greater Johnstown Regional Technology Center and UPJ in Richland Township for equipment and technology
- Westmont (Menoher Blvd)
- the Bottleworks Arts on 3rd Avenue for product display and events
- the airport for travel and freight shipping

Makers will also need access from other areas for employees, interns, advisors, etc.

Planners and transportation providers should also continue to monitor and assess the availability of regional transportation connections as a driver for economic development.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Cambria County is home to several higher education institutions. The University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown (UPJ) is the largest of these institutions with a student population of approximately 3,000 people. Understanding the transportation needs of these students is essential in long-range planning and should also be explored as means to encourage students from outside the area to make Cambria County their home post-graduation.

Presently UPJ has several transportation options for students, although most come at an extra cost to the students and are not included in their tuition. The university presently offers a free campus shuttle that will also transport students to the Richland Town Center. The service runs from 7:45 AM until 9:00 PM and does not begin service to Richland Town Center until 2:00 PM. This could pose an issue for students who are employed at the Richland Town Center and have scheduled shifts outside of that timeframe. There is presently a multi-phased project, dubbed REACHland, which will construct a walking trail between the campus and the Richland Town Center, which will be lit for students to safely use during all hours.



Source: UPJ

Action Item: The University, transportation providers and planners should periodically assess the following relevant modes of student transportation:

- Bus - A one-month CamTran bus pass is \$35; reasonably affordable. UPJ has been approached but is hesitant to include a semester bus pass in its fees and charges; for fear that it will be perceived as a “tuition increase.” CamTran staff would like to continue having this conversation with UPJ administrators in hopes of being able to provide this service in the future.

UPJ presently supports late-night bus service between campus and Woodside Bar and Grill in Stonycreek Township. Affordable late night bus service to downtown Johnstown, hosted by the Young Professionals of the Alleghenies (now EPIC), was piloted in 2017, but was discontinued after lack of interest from the students and lack of support from the university. School administrators should reconsider their support for extending this service into downtown Johnstown to support the growing nightlife.

- Bicycle and Pedestrian– Consider convenient bike rentals for students and others throughout downtown. Accompany with safe bike lanes and secure bike parking/storage.

Continue the REACHland project and address other pedestrian infrastructure gaps to provide a safer connection between off-campus apartments, the university and Richland Town Center. Lack of crosswalks and accessible

infrastructure has been observed in this area and is to be addressed as a part of this project.

- RideShare/CarShare – Uber and Lyft will continue to grow in Johnstown and students will use them.

OUTDOOR RECREATION AND TOURISM TRANSPORTION NEEDS

As stated earlier in this section, Cambria County has become home to a growing outdoor recreation and tourism industry. People from across the nation and even abroad visit Cambria County to take advantage of natural resources and recreational assets available within the county, most notably the several hiking and biking trails. The Ghost Town Trail was recently named Pennsylvania's 2020 Trail of the Year by the state's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. An estimated 80,000 people use the trail annually. The annual Ghost Town Trail Challenge attracted 374 participants in 2019, with participants traveling from several states and as far as Dublin, Ireland. The Pennsylvanian, Amtrak's passenger rail service which spans the length of Pennsylvania, has recently added bicycle racks to the daily trains. The Pennsylvanian makes both a morning and evening stop in Johnstown and the addition of the bike racks allows trail users from outside the region to easily transport their bicycles and spend time utilizing the trails in Cambria County.



Action Item: Planners and transportation providers need to consider the following actions to ensure that the outdoor recreation and tourism assets continue to grow in Cambria County

- Continue regular updates to the Cambria County bicycle and pedestrian plan
- Continue to update and maintain a comprehensive inventory of existing and future trail assets
- Continue expansion of trail assets in the northern part of Cambria County
- Continue working closely with the Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority and other regional recreational stakeholders with providing support and assistance when needed on new trail and recreation projects

PUBLIC INPUT ON TRANSPORTATION NEEDS IN CAMBRIA COUNTY

Steering Committee meetings, public outreach meetings, and surveys to the public yielded a number of transportation issues and potential improvements that would strengthen community and economic development efforts in their communities.

- Sidewalks within the “education corridor” in Richland Township (UPJ, Penn Highlands, Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center and the Richland School District campuses) are in need of improvements
- Sidewalks in downtown Johnstown are in disrepair and unsafe for elderly residents and people with disabilities who frequently use the sidewalks to travel for goods and services
- Need for safer pedestrian infrastructure, notably crosswalks, on Scalp Avenue and Theatre Drive for safe access to medical, retail and restaurant facilities along the corridor.
- Congestion issues on Route 22 in Cambria Township cause difficulties accessing medical, retail and restaurant facilities along the corridor.
- Need for enhanced passenger rail service to allow commuters and tourists to travel to Cambria County with a more flexible itinerary
- Need for a public transit route to access the airport before/after scheduled flights
- Need for a regional public transit system to allow people from outside of Cambria County to visit the county to work and play