

Land Use and Growth Management Profile

Cameron County is located in the north central region of Pennsylvania. It is surrounded by Clearfield County to the south, Elk County to the west, McKean County to the north, and Potter and Clinton Counties to the east. With seven municipalities comprised of two boroughs and five townships, Cameron County is rural in character. The two boroughs are Emporium (population 2,526) and Driftwood (population 103). Emporium is the county seat.

The population recorded in the 2000 Census is 5,974, ranking Cameron County in 66th position among Pennsylvania's 67 counties. With a land area of 397.16 square miles, it is the 12th smallest county in Pennsylvania. The County's population density is 15 people per square mile, making it the third most sparsely populated county in the state. From 1990 to 2000, Census figures show a one percent increase in population, making Cameron County the 26th slowest growing county.

Cameron County's 4,592 housing units is the smallest number among the state's 67 counties. The number of housing units increased by 4.4 percent from 1990 to 2000, the 22nd slowest rate of growth of housing units. The number of households grew by 2.9 percent, placing the County in 51st position among Pennsylvania's counties. The size of households decreased by 2.4 percent, the 8th smallest decrease.

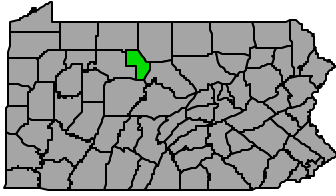
The median age of Cameron County residents is 41.3 years, the fourth highest median age among Pennsylvania counties. According to 1997 estimates in the 2000 Census, 10.8 percent of Cameron County residents have incomes below federal poverty guidelines. This places Cameron County in 38th position among the 67 counties, but is slightly below the statewide average of 10.9 percent. Among County residents, 12.1 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher, ranking 52nd among the 67 counties.

Existing Land Use Conditions

The majority (97.4 percent) of Cameron County's total land area is undeveloped, and is largely devoted to forestland and some agricultural uses.

Most of Cameron County is devoted to either state forest or state game lands. A substantial part of the Elk Forest lies within Cameron County's borders. This 200,000-acre forest located primarily in Cameron and adjoining Elk County is available for primitive camping, licensed hunting and fishing, and other recreational pursuits. Cameron County also includes Bucktail State Park, with a scenic drive following PA Route 120 from Lock Haven to Emporium along the West Branch of the Susquehanna River and the Sinnemahoning Creek.

Cameron County's total of 26 farms is the second smallest number of farms among Pennsylvania's 67 counties. An average county in Pennsylvania has 678 farms. The 4,000 acres of agricultural land is also the



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second smallest amount of farm acreage statewide. The average amount of agricultural land among Pennsylvania counties is 107,045 acres. The average size of a Cameron County farm is 159 acres, which ranks Cameron County in 31st position in average size of farms, and very close to the statewide average size of 158 acres per farm. The average annual income of a farm in Cameron County is \$8,769, the smallest average annual farm income among the 67 counties. Statewide, the average annual farm income is \$87,942.

Route 120 is the major highway artery in Cameron County. It connects Cameron County to the Borough of Renovo located to the east in Clinton County, and to the City of St. Marys and to Ridgway Borough in Elk County to the west. Several Keystone Opportunity Zones for local and state tax abatement are located along Route 120 just west of Emporium. Route 46 provides access to Smethport, the county seat of McKean County, to the north. Route 120 offers some lots with site infrastructure, and is the only transportation corridor in the County that is attracting development. Development along Route 120 is occurring at a moderate pace and has resulted in minimal agricultural land conversion. A third transportation corridor in the County is Route 155.

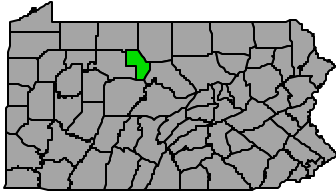
Extension of sewer lines along Route 120 near Emporium Borough has opened additional sites for development. Water line extensions have been more difficult to fund because the water company serving

the area is privately owned. A new water treatment plant has just been built for Driftwood Borough, which had experienced water quality problems.

The core communities in Cameron County are the Borough of Emporium and Shippen Township. Emporium Borough contains the largest concentration of business and residential investment in the County. Shippen Township, just outside of Emporium Borough, is predominantly residential but also includes a broad mix of business development.

Manufacturing in Cameron County is based in Emporium. The two dominant types of manufacturing businesses are machine shops, including tool and die shops, and sintered metals, also known as the powder metal sector. These sectors represent over 1,000 jobs, which represents over 80 percent of the manufacturing jobs in Cameron County; they are experiencing continuing moderate expansion and employment growth.

Located in a region with one of the world's best hardwood stands, there are also logging, lumber, and furniture dimension firms in Cameron County. Although hardwoods firms are doing well, decline in demand in the paper and particleboard sectors has also affected demand for logs.



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Key Land Use Issues

subdivision and land development ordinance.

- The number one land issue in Cameron County is the effect of the flood plain ordinances on the availability of development sites.** Cameron County has a high percentage of state-owned forests, steep slopes, and valleys identified as floodplain. Many locations within the County are relatively near a stream, fork, or branch. The flood plain ordinance effectively restricts the availability of valley development sites; impeding business investment, tax base growth, and employment opportunity.
- Cameron County's new comprehensive plan will provide an opportunity to re-examine highest and best use of this land,** given the low average annual income from Cameron County's 4,000 acres of agricultural land and the shortage of developable land.

Land Use Planning Activities

- In the absence of planning staff, volunteers on the County Planning Commission and the Zoning Hearing Board provide reviews of permit applications, subdivision and land development proposals, and applications for exceptions and special permits to the County zoning ordinance.
- Preparation is underway for an update of the County comprehensive plan, official map, zoning ordinance, and