

Land Use and Growth Management Profile

Clarion County is located in northwest Pennsylvania adjacent to Forest, Jefferson, Armstrong, Butler, and Venango Counties. Clarion Borough is the county seat of Clarion County. Predominantly rural, Clarion County has a total of 34 municipalities, including 12 boroughs and 22 townships.

Of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, Clarion ranks 53rd in population with 41,765 citizens. The County includes 602.5 acres with a population density of 69.3 persons per square mile.

Existing Land Use Conditions

Approximately 86.7 percent of the County's total land area is undeveloped, with most of this percentage devoted to forest and agricultural uses.

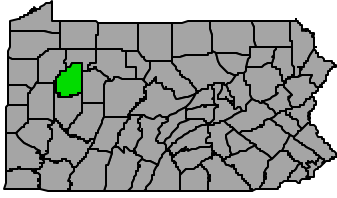
Clarion County's terrain has impacted its land use, with only 13.3 percent of its land considered developed. The County is moderately to steeply sloping and was formerly a peneplain. In time, the land was eroded by the creeks and streams that drain into the Allegheny River system. As with many counties in northwestern Pennsylvania, early land uses in Clarion County were attributed to the iron, lumber, and oil industries.

Clarion County's prime timber resources led to the construction of numerous logging and mill operations during the 1800s. After the drilling of the first oil well in Crawford County in 1859, the County began producing oil. In addition, natural

resources such as sand, fire clay, and bituminous coal were also extracted for shipping to products producers, primarily in the Pittsburgh area.

Key Land Use Issues

- ☑ **Inadequate public infrastructure adversely impacts the County's economic and community development opportunities.** Inadequate water resources, sewage disposal, lack of storm water protection, and substandard telecommunications systems are roadblocks to new community sustainability and growth.
- ☑ **Clarion County's household size is decreasing while the number of housing units is increasing.** The number of housing units increased by 7.8 percent during the 1990s, while the household size decreased by 5.0 percent. This would suggest that more County land is being developed for fewer people.
- ☑ **Lack of employment opportunities force the County's younger citizens to move to areas with greater employment opportunities.** Although Clarion County is home to Clarion University, the County's younger citizens often leave the area due to lack of employment opportunities.
- ☑ **The County's housing stock is aging and decent affordable rental housing is lacking.** The County does not have adequate housing stock to meet the needs of today's younger homebuyers.



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Land Use Planning Activities

- ☑ **Clarion County recently completed an update to its County comprehensive plan.** LUPTAP funds were secured to complete the 2002 update to the County's comprehensive plan. The County's last comprehensive plan update was completed in 1970.
- ☑ **Clarion County has developed regional partnerships to strengthen solid waste management.** Clarion County is working with Forest and Venango Counties to prepare a tri-county solid waste plan.
- ☑ **Intergovernmental cooperation is the focus of a County study.** Clarion County retained the Pennsylvania Economy League to prepare an Intergovernmental Cooperation Study to analyze the formation of a County council of governments. The efforts have resulted in the adoption of two municipal joint comprehensive plans and three joint municipal zoning ordinances.