

Land Use and Growth Management Profile

Crawford County is located in northwest Pennsylvania between Pittsburgh and Erie. It is bordered by the Pennsylvania counties of Erie, Warren, Mercer, and Venango, and the Ohio counties of Ashtabula and Trumbull. Predominantly rural but significant in industrial history (the first oil well was drilled in the county), Crawford County has 51 municipalities, including 2 cities, 14 boroughs, and 35 townships.

Covering 1,038 square miles, Crawford County ranks as Pennsylvania's 10th largest county and 34th in total population with 90,366 citizens.

Existing Land Use Conditions

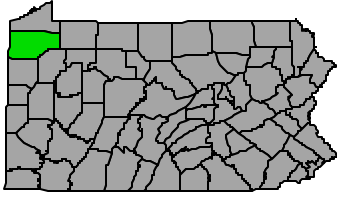
Crawford County's is predominantly rural with nearly 94 percent of its total land area being undeveloped. Of this total, 41.5 percent of the County is agricultural and the remaining undeveloped land includes forested tracts, state game lands, wetlands, and water bodies. Only 6.1 percent of the County is developed, with the majority devoted to residential land use.

Crawford County lies entirely in the glaciated part of the Allegheny Plateau, with topography varying greatly from east to west. The eastern portion of the County has irregular terrain with deeper valleys and steeper slopes and, like most of the County, it drains south into the Allegheny River system. The northwestern area of the County is quite flat and drains into Lake Erie. Nearly three-fourths of the County consists of soils that are very poorly to

somewhat poorly drained, greatly impacting County land use patterns.

Key Land Use Issues

- ☑ **A shift in population from Crawford County's cities and larger boroughs has resulted in a net loss of quality affordable housing.** Loss of housing units in Meadville, Titusville, and larger boroughs is due to neglect or conversion to commercial uses. To address this condition, the County encourages home ownership, promotes housing rehabilitation programs, and endorses housing development for all types of families.
- ☑ **Transportation system improvements will encourage business development at appropriate locations, while preserving the County's rural character.** Like many rural Pennsylvania counties, improving the transportation network would not only help encourage soundly planned development, but also help improve cross-county travel for residents.
- ☑ **The County's modest population increase is due to retirees and Amish citizens.** Lacking significant business development during the 1990s, Crawford County's population increased by over 4,000 residents. This increase is partly due to the influx of retirees using vacation homes located along Pymatuning Reservoir as permanent residences. In addition, demographic indicators, such as lower median age, larger household size, and



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lack of specific housing characteristics quantify an in-migration of Amish citizens from Lancaster County to municipalities in the northeast corner of the County.

Land Use Planning Activities

- Crawford County recently updated its comprehensive plan.** Crawford County's comprehensive plan was updated in 2000 using LUPTAP funding.