

# 2017

## Monroe County, Pennsylvania

# ECONOMIC SCORECARD



### PREPARED BY:

Business and Economic Research Group (BERG) of East Stroudsburg University

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Special thanks to the ESU Office of University Relations

**A MESSAGE FROM  
MARCIA G. WELSH, PH.D., PRESIDENT**

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East Stroudsburg University (ESU) is proud to present the fourth annual **Monroe County Economic Scorecard**. For more than 124 years, ESU has called Monroe County home. As ESU approaches its 125th anniversary, we pause to reflect on the transformation of our campus from a Normal School to a comprehensive university and of our county from the “Honeymoon Capitol” of the world to an innovative hub for business development and four-season adventures.

This year’s Economic Scorecard, which compares Monroe County to its seven neighboring counties across six economic indicators, ranks Monroe County 5th overall compared to 7th place rankings in 2015 and 2016. This impressive increase reinforces the significance of our strategic efforts to revitalize Monroe County’s economy. Most importantly, the leap is due to gains in employment and earnings – two essentials for a sustainable, thriving economy. While there is more work to be done, we are definitely moving in the right direction.

The 2017 Scorecard also features the results of this year’s Focus Survey, sent to elected/appointed officials and hired personnel in Monroe County’s 20 municipalities/boroughs. Questions focused on SWOT analysis, Infrastructure, Permitting Process, Development Preference, and School Funding, along with Best Kept Secrets – a new topic that garnered many insightful responses.

On behalf of ESU, I thank you for the shared commitment to the well-being of the Pocono region and the partnerships that have sustained all of us for over a century. The results of the 2017 Scorecard are more than just encouraging – they are proof that elbow grease will move the needle, local engagement will build communities, and these changes will continue for as long as there are dedicated citizens who take personal responsibility for the health and vitality of their home.

Our joint goal is to make Monroe County a better place to live, learn, work and play, and the 2017 Economic Outlook Summit and Scorecard are once again raising the bar. We invite you to use the Scorecard not as a report to be filed on a shelf, but as a dynamic tool that you reach for again and again as we move Monroe County toward its future as the best place to do business in Pennsylvania.

Thank you.

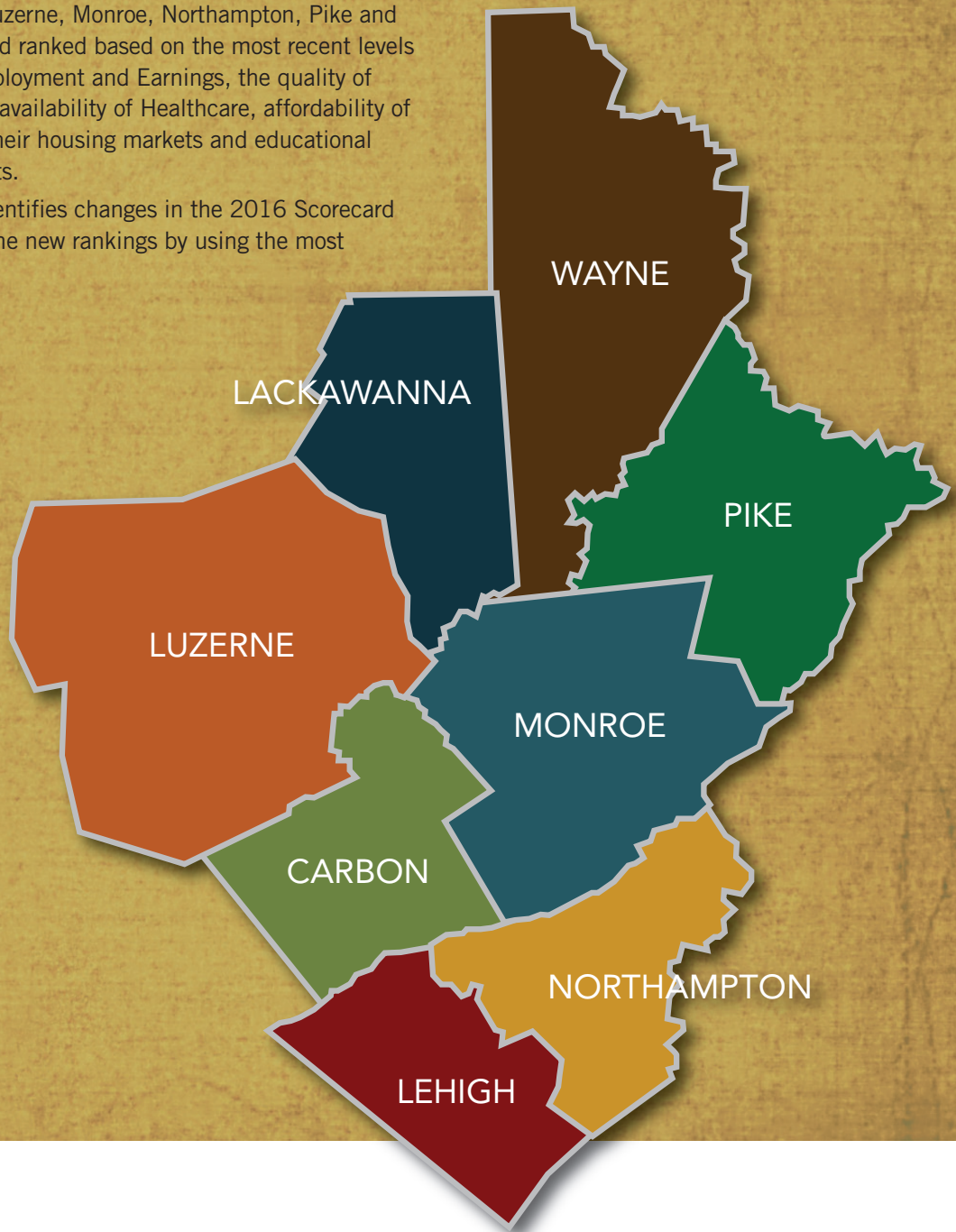
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marcia G. Welsh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Marcia G. Welsh, Ph.D.  
President

**The Economic Scorecard of Monroe County 2017** provides an updated version of the 2016 Monroe County Scorecard using newly available statistical data.

The eight adjacent counties of Northeast Pennsylvania: Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike and Wayne are compared and ranked based on the most recent levels and growth rates of Employment and Earnings, the quality of their Business Climate, availability of Healthcare, affordability of housing and trends in their housing markets and educational levels of county residents.

The 2017 Scorecard identifies changes in the 2016 Scorecard rankings and presents the new rankings by using the most recently available data.



**2** EMPLOYMENT | **4** EARNINGS | **6** BUSINESS CLIMATE  
**9** HEALTHCARE | **11** HOUSING | **13** EDUCATION  
**15** SUMMARY | **17** SURVEY

# OVERVIEW

The 2017 Economic Scorecard of Monroe County is the fourth annual report prepared by the Business and Economic Research Group (BERG) of East Stroudsburg University.

The inaugural Scorecard was launched in 2014 and compared only six counties in Northeast Pennsylvania and it did not include a Business Climate section.

The comparison area was expanded in 2015 and the wider comparison continued in 2016 and 2017.

The last three scorecards rate the eight counties in the areas of Employment, Earnings, Business Climate, Healthcare, Housing and Education.

The comparison periods may be slightly different depending on data availability and the new rankings are based on the most recent data available.

## EMPLOYMENT

The Employment rankings for the eight counties were based on the most recent statistics of four indicators: Labor Force Growth, Job Growth, Employment Growth and the Employment-to-Civilian Labor Force ratio.

Job Growth is measured by place of employment; the other indicators are measured by place of residence.

The leading county in each of the employment indicators was assigned eight points, the second seven, then third six and so on, and the sum of the assigned points determines the overall standings in the employment category.

Monroe County's employment situation continued to improve for the third consecutive year.

In the 2015 Scorecard Monroe County had the lowest score of all eight counties in the Employment category; in the 2016 Scorecard it improved to fourth and in the 2017 Scorecard Monroe County was tied for second place.



### Labor Force Growth

The labor force of Monroe County had the fastest growth rate among the eight county group in 2016.

Monroe County's 1.7% labor force growth rate was more than double the 0.7% Pennsylvania state average.

Lehigh County's labor force grew by 1.2% and Northampton by 1.0% for second and third place in the labor force growth category.

### Job Creation

Monroe County was ranked first in job growth in 2016, a remarkable turnaround after having the slowest job growth rate in last year's Scorecard. The total number of jobs in the county grew by 2.3% in 2016.

Northampton and Pike tied for second place with identical job growth rates of 2.1%.

### Employment by Place of Residence

The number of Monroe County residents employed grew by 1.6% in 2016. Monroe had the highest employment growth rate; Lehigh and Northampton tied for second place with 1.1% growth rates.

Lackawanna and Pike were tied for last place with the same employment growth rate of 0.4%.

### Employment-to-Civilian Labor Force

The Employment-to-Civilian labor force ratio measures the percentage of the county's labor force who are actually employed.

Lehigh County placed first with a 94.8% ratio followed by Northampton with 94.6%.

Monroe County was ranked sixth in this category with an employment to labor force ratio of 93.7%, the ratio probably suppressed by the high growth of the county's labor force.

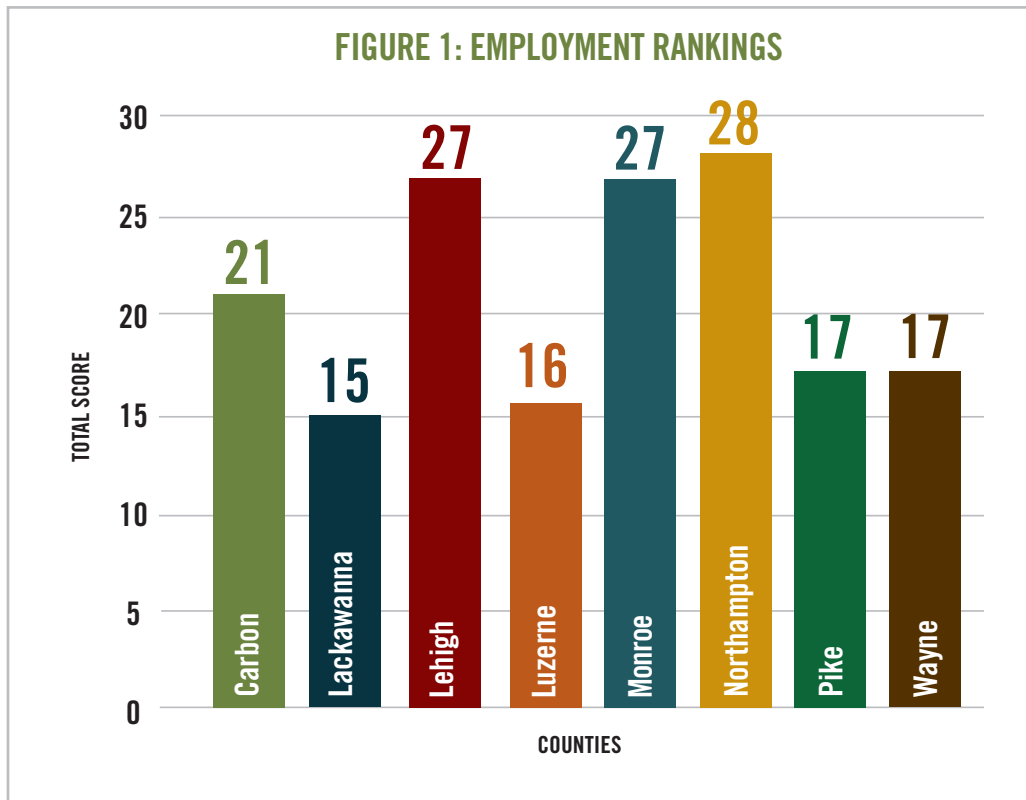
### Overall Employment Rankings

Monroe County was tied for second place with Lehigh in the Employment category of the 2017 Scorecard because of the fastest labor force growth, the highest job creation rate and the largest growth of employment among county residents.

Northampton County finished in first place one point ahead of Monroe and Lehigh.

**TABLE 1: EMPLOYMENT INDICATORS**

	Pennsylvania	Carbon	Lackawanna	Lehigh	Luzerne	Monroe	Northampton	Pike	Wayne
<b>Total Civilian Labor Force Growth 2015-2016</b>									
	0.7%	1.0%	0.3%	1.2%	0.4%	1.5%	1.0%	0.4%	0.9%
<b>SCORE</b>		6	3	7	4	8	6	4	5
<i>Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry LAUS</i>									
<b>Total Full-time and Part-time Employment (number of jobs) Growth 2014-2015 (Job Creation)</b>									
	1.2%	0.7%	0.2%	1.7%	1.3%	2.3%	2.1%	2.1%	0.4%
<b>SCORE</b>		4	2	6	5	8	7	7	3
<i>Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis</i>									
<b>Total Employment Growth 2015-2016 (Employment by Place of Residence)</b>									
	0.6%	1.0%	0.4%	1.1%	0.5%	1.6%	1.1%	0.4%	0.5%
<b>SCORE</b>		6	4	7	5	8	7	4	5
<i>Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry LAUS</i>									
<b>Employment/Civilian Labor Force 2016</b>									
	94.6%	94.0%	94.3%	94.6%	93.6%	93.7%	94.8%	93.6%	93.8%
<b>SCORE</b>		5	6	7	2	3	8	2	4
<i>Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry LAUS</i>									



# EARNINGS

The Earnings section of the 2017 Monroe County Economic Scorecard used five indicators to compare the eight counties in Northeast Pennsylvania:

- County per Capita Personal Income as a Percentage of the Pennsylvania State Average
- County per Capita Income Growth
- Earnings per Job as a Percentage of the Pennsylvania State Average
- Growth in Average Earnings per Job
- Percentage of County Population Living in Poverty

In the 2016 Scorecard Monroe County was ranked last in the Earnings category primarily because of the lowest growth in Earnings per Job.

Monroe County's rank improved considerably in the 2017 Scorecard as the Earnings per Job growth increased from 0.7% to 3.4% raising the county from last to fifth.



## Average Earnings per Job

Lehigh County repeated as the leader in this category for the third consecutive year matching the Pennsylvania state average of \$59,591.

Carbon was second with earnings per job at 94% of the state average.

Monroe was ranked sixth with earnings per job of 78% of the Pennsylvania state average.

## Growth of Average Earnings per Job

The highest growth rate of earnings per job in the 2017 Scorecard was recorded by Carbon County (4.9%) followed by Pike (3.6%) and Northampton (3.4%).

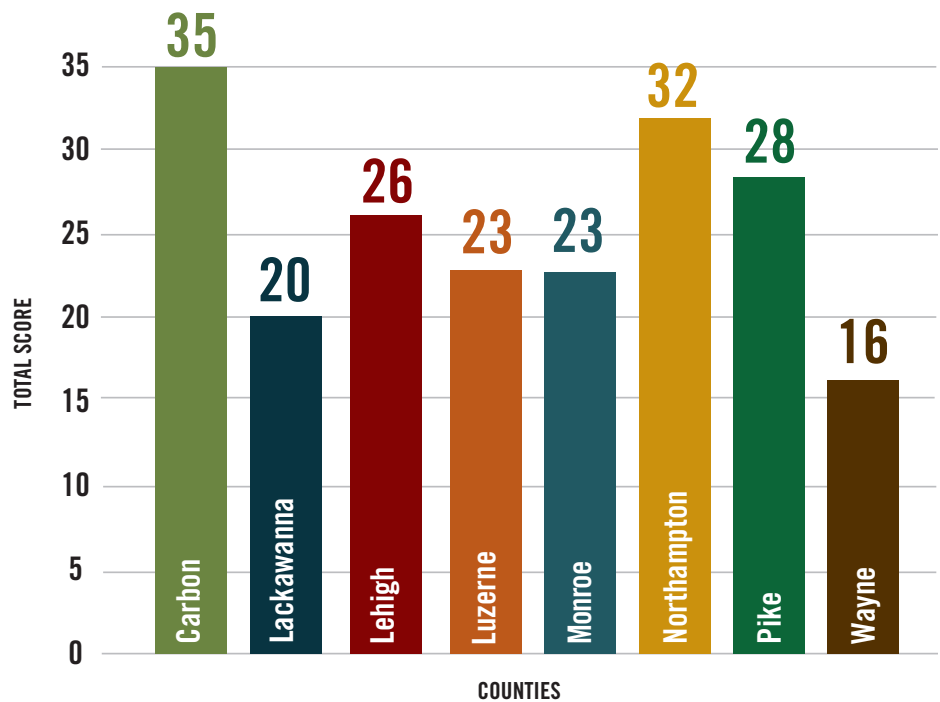
Monroe County was in fourth place with earnings per job growing at 3.4%, a significant improvement from last year's 0.7% growth rate.

## Poverty Rates

The lowest poverty rates in the 2017 Scorecard were recorded by Northampton County (8.8%) and the highest by Luzerne County (15.3%).

Monroe County's poverty rate decreased to 12.7% down from the 13.3% reported in last year's Scorecard.

FIGURE 2: EARNINGS RANKINGS



**TABLE 2: EARNINGS INDICATORS**

	Pennsylvania	Carbon	Lackawanna	Lehigh	Luzerne	Monroe	Northampton	Pike	Wayne
<b>Per Capita Personal Income as a % of PA 2015</b>									
	\$49,745	88%	86%	96%	82%	76%	96%	82%	75%
<b>SCORE</b>		7	6	8	5	4	8	5	3
<i>Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis</i>									
<b>Per Capita Personal Income Growth 2014 - 2015</b>									
	3.7%	4.5%	4.1%	3.2%	4.2%	4.5%	4.0%	5.0%	4.1%
<b>SCORE</b>		7	5	3	6	7	4	8	5
<i>Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis</i>									
<b>Average Earnings per Job (dollars) as a % of PA 2015</b>									
	\$59,591	94%	79%	100%	80%	78%	87%	60%	70%
<b>SCORE</b>		7	4	8	5	3	6	1	2
<i>Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis</i>									
<b>Growth in Average Earnings per Job (dollars) 2014 - 2015</b>									
	2.9%	4.9%	2.9%	2.1%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%	3.6%	2.5%
<b>SCORE</b>		8	4	2	5	5	6	7	3
<i>Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis</i>									
<b>All Ages in Poverty (%) 2015</b>									
	13.1%	11.5%	15.3%	12.1%	15.1%	12.7%	8.8%	10.9%	13.3%
<b>SCORE</b>		6	1	5	2	4	8	7	3
<i>Source: Census Bureau Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates</i>									

**Overall Earnings Rankings**

Carbon County was ranked first in the Earnings category because of its high per capita income, high earnings per job, high growth rates and low poverty rates.

Northampton County was ranked second, Pike placed third and last year's leader, Lehigh, dropped to fourth place.

Monroe County placed fifth in the Earnings category of the 2017 Scorecard.

## BUSINESS CLIMATE

The 2017 Monroe County Economic Scorecard used six indicators to estimate the existence of favorable conditions in each county that would stimulate economic development, business creation and growth.

The first two indicators measure the size of the entrepreneurial class and the presence and significance of small firms in each county.

The third indicator measures the size of the “creative class”, usually associated with providing quality of life amenities for residents and visitors.

The fourth indicator estimates the extent of the scientific and technical skills in the area. Such skills serve as an attraction for new firms and are also associated with higher productivity and income.

The fifth indicator measures the degree of business diversity prevailing in the region by deriving the industry concentration ratio for each county.

The sixth indicator focuses on the quality of business and living environment in each area by comparing crime rates among counties.



### Proprietors' Income as a Percentage of County Personal Income

This indicator measures the relative importance of the entrepreneurial class in each county.

Carbon County was ranked first in this category. In the 2017 Scorecard it was estimated that 17.8% of Carbon County's Personal Income consisted of Proprietor's Income almost twice as high as Pennsylvania's state average (9.3%).

### Small Business Employment as a Percentage of Total Employment

Small firms are considered important contributors to regional economic growth and creators of local job opportunities.

In the third quarter of 2016, Pike County reported that over half of their total employment (51.9%) worked in small firms.

Pike County's small firm employment ratio was the highest among the eight counties and significantly greater than Pennsylvania's state average ratio (27.4%).

### Employment in Arts, Entertainment and Recreation as a Percentage of Total Employment

The Arts, Entertainment and Recreation Industries produce services that enhance a region's quality of life.

Business and families may be attracted to these amenities.

The 2017 Scorecard uses this ratio to estimate the relative size of these industries in each county.

Carbon County was ranked first in the “creative class” category with 8% of their total employment working in these industries. Pike was ranked second (4.2%) and Monroe third (3.2%).

### Employment in Technical Occupations (Architecture-Engineering-Computer-Mathematical) as a Percentage of Total Employment

Technical Employment skills are associated with modern technology, high productivity and high wages.

Firms in need of scientific and technical skills may be attracted to locate in areas where such skills are available.

In the 2017 Scorecard Lehigh County was ranked first in this category with 4.3% of their total employment working in technical occupations.

Monroe County placed second with 3.4% of area employment in these occupations.



### Top-4 Industry Percentage Employment Share

Business diversity is a desirable characteristic in a region because it reduces the dependence of the local economy on a small number of industries, thus reducing the risk of seasonality and business cycles.

The Four Industry Employment Share measures the percentage of total employment occupied in the four largest industries of each county. The larger the percentage the greater the concentration and the smaller the degree of diversity.

Northampton County recorded the smallest industry concentration ratio in the 2017 Scorecard (43.7%) and was therefore considered to have the greatest business diversity.

### Serious Crime Rate per 100,000 Population

Crime rates seriously affect the business climate of a region.

Firms and families prefer to reside and work in low crime areas and both business and workers who are in the process of relocating may choose low crime areas.

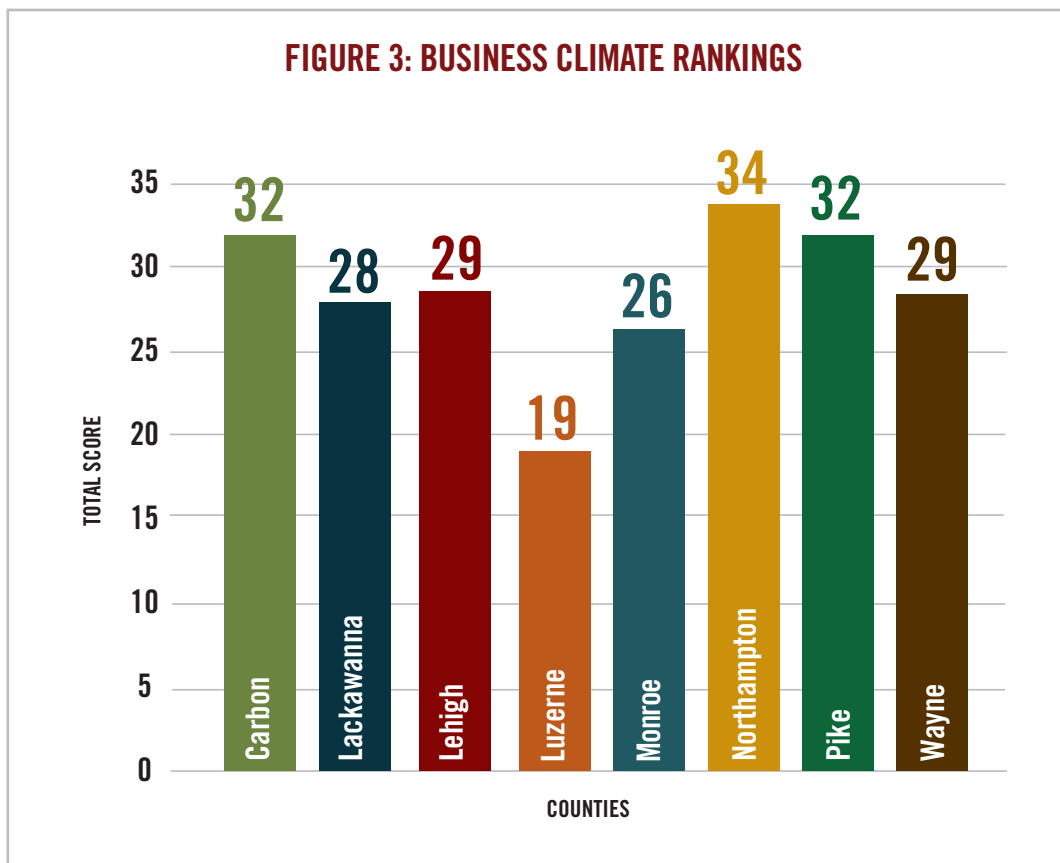
The 2017 Scorecard has determined that Monroe County had the highest crime rate in 2015 (2,455.8 per 100,000 Population). Luzerne County was second with 2,300.2 serious crimes per 100,000 Population.

### Business Climate Overall Rankings

Northampton County had the most favorable business climate in the 2017 Scorecard because of the greatest degree of business diversity, a large number of scientific and technical occupations and relatively low crime rate.

Carbon and Pike were tied for second place because of a relatively large number of small firms and a significant “creative class.”

Monroe County was ranked seventh among the eight counties in the Business Climate category because of a high crime rate, low business diversity, small creative class and a low percentage of small business employment.



**TABLE 3: BUSINESS CLIMATE INDICATORS**

	Pennsylvania	Carbon	Lackawanna	Lehigh	Luzerne	Monroe	Northampton	Pike	Wayne
<b>Proprietors' Income as a % of Personal Income 2015</b>									
	9.3%	17.8%	6.2%	8.8%	4.9%	6.2%	6.6%	6.2%	8.6%
<b>SCORE</b>		8	4	7	3	4	5	4	6
<i>Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis</i>									
<b>Small Firms (0-49 employees) as a % of Total Private Employment 2016 Q3</b>									
	27.4%	41.6%	27.7%	21.6%	25.0%	33.3%	29.4%	51.9%	45.3%
<b>SCORE</b>		6	3	1	2	5	4	8	7
<i>Source: Quarterly Workforce Indicators</i>									
<b>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation as a % of Total Employment 2016</b>									
	1.7%	8.0%	1.3%	1.8%	1.0%	3.2%	1.6%	4.2%	1.1%
<b>SCORE</b>		8	3	5	1	6	4	7	2
<i>Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages</i>									
<b>Employment in Technical (Architecture, Engineering, Computer and Mathematical) Occupations as a % of Total Employment 2016</b>									
	4.4%	**	3.2%	4.3%	3.1%	3.4%	3.4%	0.8%	1.3%
<b>SCORE</b>		2	6	8	5	7	7	3	4
<i>Note: ** Numbers suppressed by the OES for reasons of confidentiality.</i>									
<i>Source: Occupational Employment Survey (OES)</i>									
<b>Top 4 Industry % Employment Share 2015</b>									
	44.0%	50.7%	46.4%	47.2%	46.5%	53.3%	43.7%	53.3%	54.9%
<b>SCORE</b>		4	7	5	6	3	8	3	2
<i>Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis</i>									
<b>Serious Crime Rate (Part I Offenses) Per 100,000 Population 2015</b>									
	2,131.5	2,039.6	1,934.4	2,211.6	2,300.2	2,455.8	1,811.1	1,388.4	1,356.3
<b>SCORE</b>		4	5	3	2	1	6	7	8
<i>Source: Pennsylvania Annual Uniform Crime Report</i>									

# HEALTHCARE

The 2017 Monroe County Economic Scorecard utilized the same indicators as the 2016 Scorecard to rank the eight Northeast Pennsylvania Counties in terms of healthcare facilities and trained healthcare professionals in relation to county population.

Five indicators were used to determine the degree of healthcare services available in each county:

- General Hospital Beds per 1,000 People
- Nursing Home Beds per 1,000 People over 65 Years Old
- Ambulatory Surgery Centers Employees per Operating Room
- Number of Physicians per 1,000 People
- Number of Registered Nurses per 1,000 People

Healthcare rankings in the 2017 Scorecard were very similar to those in the 2016 rankings with Lehigh County remaining in first place, and Lackawanna, Luzerne and Northampton placing second, third and fourth.



## General Hospital Beds per 1,000 People

Lehigh County was ranked first in this category with 4.6 hospital beds per 1,000 people, well above the Pennsylvania state average of 2.5 hospital beds per 1,000 people.

Lackawanna was ranked second, Luzerne third and Carbon fourth.

Monroe County remained in fifth place with 1.4 hospital beds per 1,000 residents.

## Nursing Home Beds per 1,000 People over 65 Years Old

Lackawanna was ranked first in this category with 60.7 beds per 1,000 older residents; Lehigh was second (47.9) and Luzerne third (45.9).

Monroe County was in seventh place with 20.3 nursing home beds per 1,000 residents 65 and older.

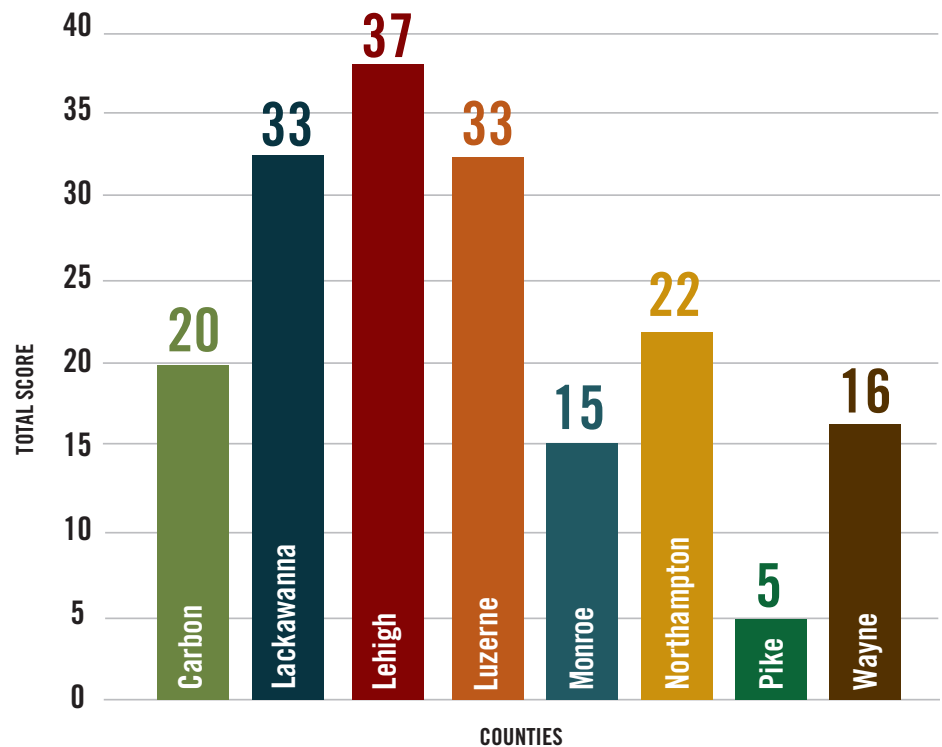
## Ambulatory Surgery Centers Total Employees per Operating Room

Luzerne County had more employees per operating room in their ambulatory surgery centers than all other counties (17.5).

Second in this category was Carbon (13.0) and third was Lehigh County (12.0).

Monroe County was ranked sixth with 8.9 employees per operating room.

**FIGURE 4: HEALTHCARE RANKINGS**



**TABLE 4: HEALTHCARE INDICATORS**

	Pennsylvania	Carbon	Lackawanna	Lehigh	Luzerne	Monroe	Northampton	Pike	Wayne
<b>General Hospital Beds per 1,000 7/13-6/14</b>									
	2.5	2.3	3.2	4.6	2.5	1.4	1.0	**	2.0
<b>SCORE</b>		5	7	8	6	3	2	1	4
<b>Licensed/Approved Nursing Home Beds per 1,000 Population Age 65 and Older 2014</b>									
	41.3	34.2	60.7	47.9	45.9	20.3	39.3	9.6	34.9
<b>SCORE</b>		3	8	7	6	2	5	1	4
<b>Ambulatory Surgery Centers - Total Employees per Operating Room 7/13-6/14</b>									
	13.6	13.0	9.2	12.0	17.5	8.9	10.8	**	8.3
<b>SCORE</b>		7	4	6	8	3	5	1	2
<b>Number of Physicians per 1,000 2014</b>									
	2.7	1.2	2.3	4.1	2.2	1.4	1.8	0.4	1.1
<b>SCORE</b>		3	7	8	6	4	5	1	2
<b>Number of Registered Nurses per 1,000 2012/2013<sup>#</sup></b>									
	12.1	5.6	13.3	17.8	12.4	6.2	8.2	1.6	7.7
<b>SCORE</b>		2	7	8	6	3	5	1	4

Note: \*\* Missing Data

Note: # PA Health Profiles 2016 did not update these numbers from the last survey.

Source: Pennsylvania and County Health Profiles 2015

### Number of Physicians per 1,000 People

Lehigh County had the greatest number of physicians per 1,000 than all other counties in Northeast Pennsylvania (4.1).

Lackawanna was second (2.3), Luzerne third (2.2) and Monroe was ranked sixth with 1.4 physicians per 1,000 residents.

### Number of Registered Nurses per 1,000 People

Lehigh, Lackawanna and Luzerne were ranked first, second and third in the 2015, 2016 and 2017 Scorecards. The most current numbers for registered nurses per 1,000 people in each county were:

17.8 Lehigh, 13.3 Lackawanna, and 12.4 Luzerne.

Monroe County was in sixth place with 6.2 nurses per 1,000 residents.

### Healthcare Overall Rankings

The 2017 Scorecard Healthcare Rankings were identical to last year's Scorecard for the first four counties.

Monroe County fell from fifth to seventh place in the Healthcare category; Carbon and Wayne improved in the Healthcare rankings and placed fifth and sixth overall.

# HOUSING

The 2017 Monroe County Economic Scorecard used two indicators to measure housing affordability in the eight counties of Northeast Pennsylvania and two indicators to determine trends in building activity among the counties.

To estimate housing affordability the 2017 Scorecard compared average house prices-to-income ratios and average rent-to-income ratios.

Building permits in relation to county population and growth rates in total building permits were used to compare trends in new construction.

The housing situation in Monroe County showed some improvement as building permits increased and housing affordability improved, lifting Monroe out of last place in the housing category.



## Median House Value as a Percentage of Median Income

This indicator measures housing affordability by comparing average house values to the average income of county residents. The lower the ratio, the greater the housing affordability.

Luzerne County had the lowest house value to income ratio in the 2017 Scorecard, repeating as the county with the most affordable housing for three consecutive years.

Monroe County placed third in this category.

## Median Annual Gross Rent as a Percentage of Median Income

This ratio measures the affordability of rental housing, and Lackawanna and Luzerne were tied for first place in this category.

Pike and Monroe were last in this category as they recorded the highest rent to income ratios.

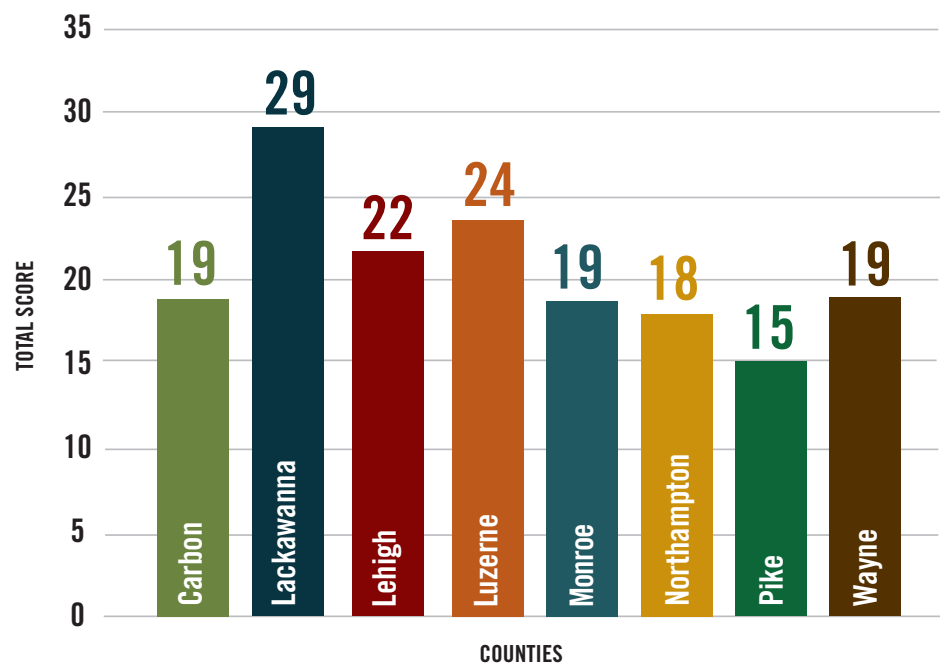
## Single Family Building Permits in 2016 as a Percentage of 2006

To estimate the degree of recovery from the last recession and housing crisis, the number of building permits issued by the various counties in 2016 was compared to those issued in 2006.

The only county whose current building permits exceeded the pre-recession number was Lackawanna.

The number of building permits issued in Monroe County in 2016 was 17.6% of the number issued in 2006.

FIGURE 5: HOUSING RANKINGS



**TABLE 5: HOUSING INDICATORS**

	Pennsylvania	Carbon	Lackawanna	Lehigh	Luzerne	Monroe	Northampton	Pike	Wayne
<b>Median House Value as a % of Median Income 2011-2015</b>									
	310%	290%	313%	342%	267%	304%	338%	304%	359%
<b>SCORE</b>		7	5	3	8	6	4	6	2
<i>Source: American Community Survey</i>									
<b>Median Annual Gross Rent as a % of Median Income 2011-2015</b>									
	18.8%	18.6%	18.4%	19.9%	18.4%	21.2%	18.8%	22.3%	19.9%
<b>SCORE</b>		7	8	5	8	4	6	3	5
<i>Source: American Community Survey</i>									
<b>Single Family Building Permits in 2016 as a % of 2006</b>									
	49.7%	9.1%	124.2%	46.1%	28.0%	17.6%	19.1%	7.5%	21.3%
<b>SCORE</b>		2	8	7	6	3	4	1	5
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau</i>									
<b>Single Family Building Permits per 1,000 People 2016**</b>									
	1.3	0.8	2.9	1.7	0.7	1.5	0.9	1.3	1.7
<b>SCORE</b>		3	8	7	2	6	4	5	7
<i>Note: ** Population numbers are based on Census Population Estimates for 2016</i>									
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau</i>									

**Single Family Building Permits per 1,000 People 2016**

This indicator examines the most recent level of building permits to compare recent trends in construction activity among the eight counties.

Lackawanna issued the largest number of building permits per 1,000 residents in 2016 (2.9).

Monroe County issued 1.5 per 1,000 residents and was ranked third among the eight counties; this was a significant improvement from last year's 0.9 permits per 1,000 and sixth place in this category.

**Overall Housing Rankings**

Lackawanna ranked first in the housing category because house prices and rents were relatively low and because of the highest level and growth in building permits in 2016.

Monroe County improved significantly in the housing category because of increased housing affordability and higher levels of building permits indicating more activity in the construction industry.

In the 2016 Scorecard Monroe County was ranked last overall in the housing section.

In the 2017 Scorecard Monroe placed fourth overall in Housing.

# EDUCATION

The 2017 Monroe County Economic Scorecard used four indicators to determine the educational status of county residents and the amount of money invested in educational institutions and resources per student.

The first three indicators measure the county educational level and growth:

- Percentage of Population 25 and Over with no High School Degree
- Percentage of Population 25 and Over with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher
- Percentage Change in Population 25 years and Over with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher

The fourth indicator attempts to measure the amount invested in human capital (Expenditures per Student). Studies show that regions with greater expenditures per student achieve higher future income levels, lower crime rates and improved living standards.



## Percentage of Population 25 Years and Older with No High School Degree

Pike, Lackawanna, Northampton and Monroe had the lowest percentage of adult population with no high school degree and therefore received the highest rankings in this category.

The highest percentage of county adult residents with no high school degree lived in Lehigh County.

## Change in Percentage of Population with Bachelor's Degree or Higher

The greatest growth rate in college-educated residents was reported by Pike County and the second highest by Carbon.

Monroe County was ranked last in this category because the percentage of college-educated Monroe County residents decreased by -0.2%.

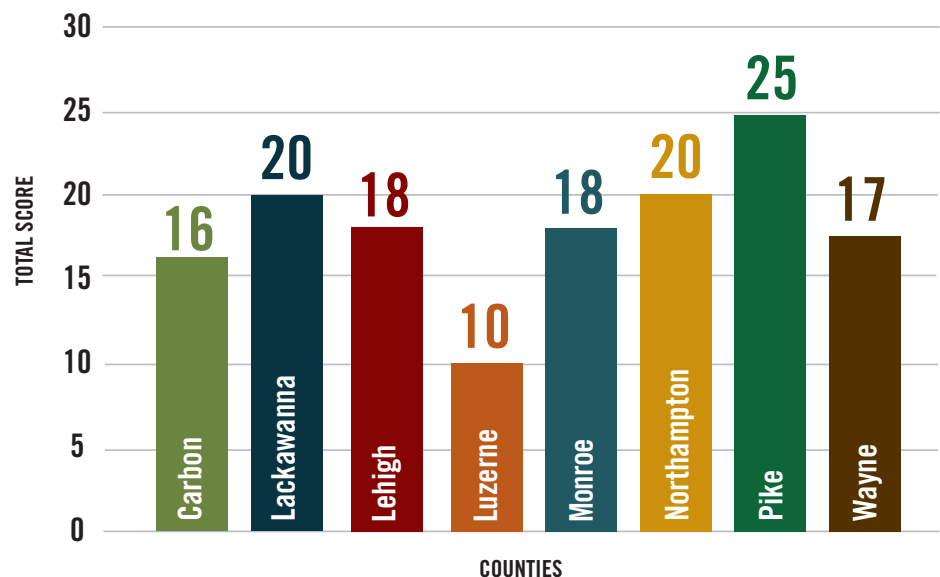
## K-12 School Expenditures per Student

Monroe County had the highest investment in human capital, leading all counties with school expenditures of \$21,194 per student in 2016.

Wayne County was second in this category with \$20,238 and Carbon third with \$17,640.

Luzerne had the lowest level of human capital investment with \$13,771 and was ranked last in this category.

FIGURE 6: EDUCATION RANKINGS



**TABLE 6: EDUCATION INDICATORS**

	Pennsylvania	Carbon	Lackawanna	Lehigh	Luzerne	Monroe	Northampton	Pike	Wayne
<b>% of Population 25 Years and Over with No High School Degree or Equivalency Degree 2010-2014</b>									
	11.0%	11.1%	10.4%	13.0%	11.3%	10.2%	10.5%	9.5%	11.7%
<b>SCORE</b>		4	6	1	3	7	5	8	2
<i>Source: American Community Survey</i>									
<b>% of Population 25 Years and Over with No High School Degree or Equivalency Degree 2011-2015</b>									
	10.8%	11.2%	10.1%	12.6%	11.1%	10.4%	10.3%	9.0%	10.7%
<b>SCORE</b>		2	7	1	3	5	6	8	4
<i>Source: American Community Survey</i>									
<b>% of Population 25 Years and Over with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher 2011-2015</b>									
	28.60%	15.50%	25.90%	28.50%	21.40%	23.00%	27.20%	23.70%	19.70%
<b>SCORE</b>		1	6	8	3	4	7	5	2
<i>Source: American Community Survey</i>									
<b>Change in % of Population 25 Years and Over With a Bachelor's Degree or Higher Between (2010-2014) &amp; 2011-2015 Surveys</b>									
	0.5%	0.6%	0.2%	0.5%	0.0%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.8%	0.2%
<b>SCORE</b>		7	5	6	3	1	2	8	4
<i>Source: American Community Survey</i>									
<b>K-12 School Expenditures Per Student Average Daily Membership 2015-2016 in dollars</b>									
	\$16,425	\$17,840	\$13,781	\$15,604	\$13,771	\$21,194	\$16,364	\$15,661	\$20,238
<b>SCORE</b>		6	2	3	1	8	5	4	7
<i>Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education</i>									

**Overall Education Rankings**

Pike County was ranked first in the Education category because of the lowest percentage of residents with no high school degree and the highest growth rate of college-educated adults.

Lackawanna and Northampton were tied for second place because of their relatively low percentage of adults with no high school degree and high percentage of college-educated residents.

Monroe County was tied for third place because it had the highest expenditures per student and relatively low percentage of residents with no high school degree.



# SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The 2017 Monroe County Economic Scorecard ranked the eight Northeast Pennsylvania Counties: Carbon, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Northampton, Pike and Wayne in six different categories:

- Employment
- Earnings
- Business Climate
- Healthcare
- Housing
- Education

Lehigh County was ranked first because of its top rank in the Healthcare category, its strong Employment situation, favorable Business Climate, relatively affordable Housing and high marks in the Education area.

Northampton County was ranked second overall because of the highest marks in the Employment and Business Climate categories and relatively high marks in Earnings and Education.

Lackawanna County was ranked third overall because of its top ranking in Housing affordability and high growth rates in building permits. Lackawanna's high overall rank was also

attributed to high marks in the Education and Business Climate categories.

Carbon County was ranked fourth overall because of great improvements in Earnings, favorable Business Climate and strong Employment indicators.

Monroe County improved from seventh place in the 2016 Scorecard to fifth place overall in 2017.

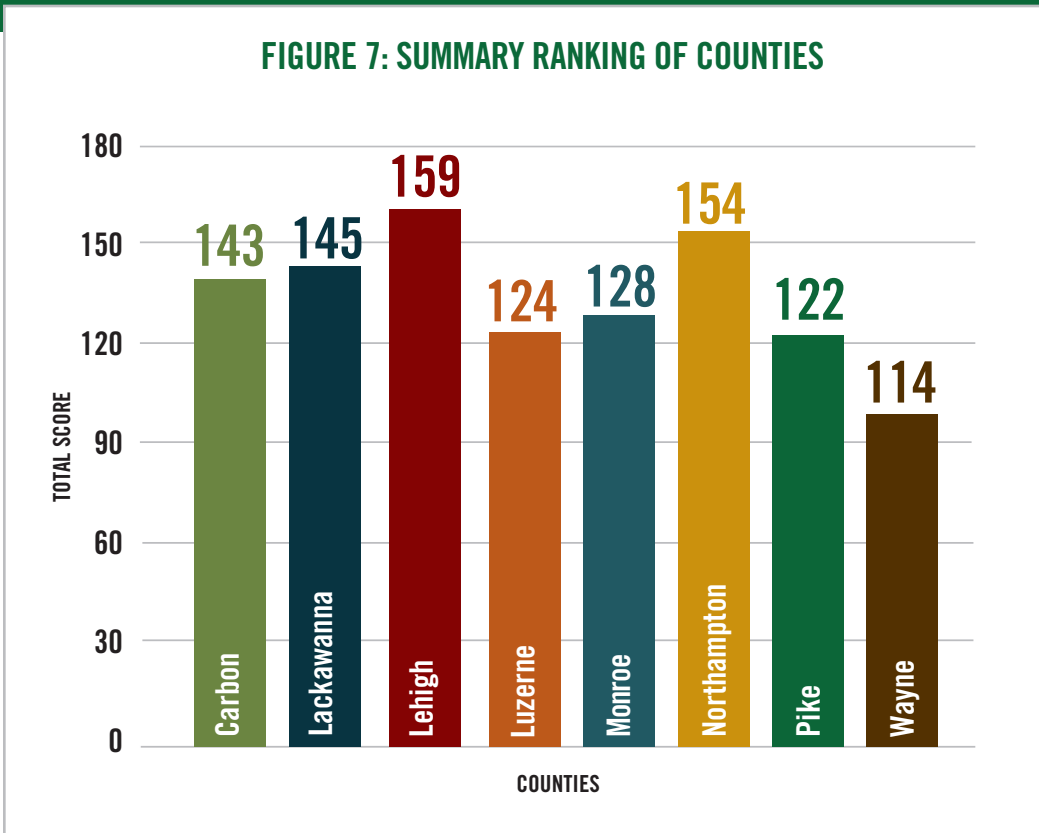
The improved rank of Monroe County is due primarily to significant gains in the Employment category, a more favorable Business Climate and gains in the Education area.

Luzerne County was ranked sixth overall. The low rank of Luzerne was due primarily to low marks in the Employment, Earnings, Business Climate and Education categories. Luzerne County earned high marks in Housing affordability and Healthcare.

Pike County was ranked seventh overall in spite of relatively high Earnings and high marks in the Education and Business Climate categories. The County's lack of Healthcare services, low Housing affordability and low employment growth contributed to its next-to-last place finish.

Wayne County remained in last place in 2017 because of low marks in Earnings, Healthcare and Education.

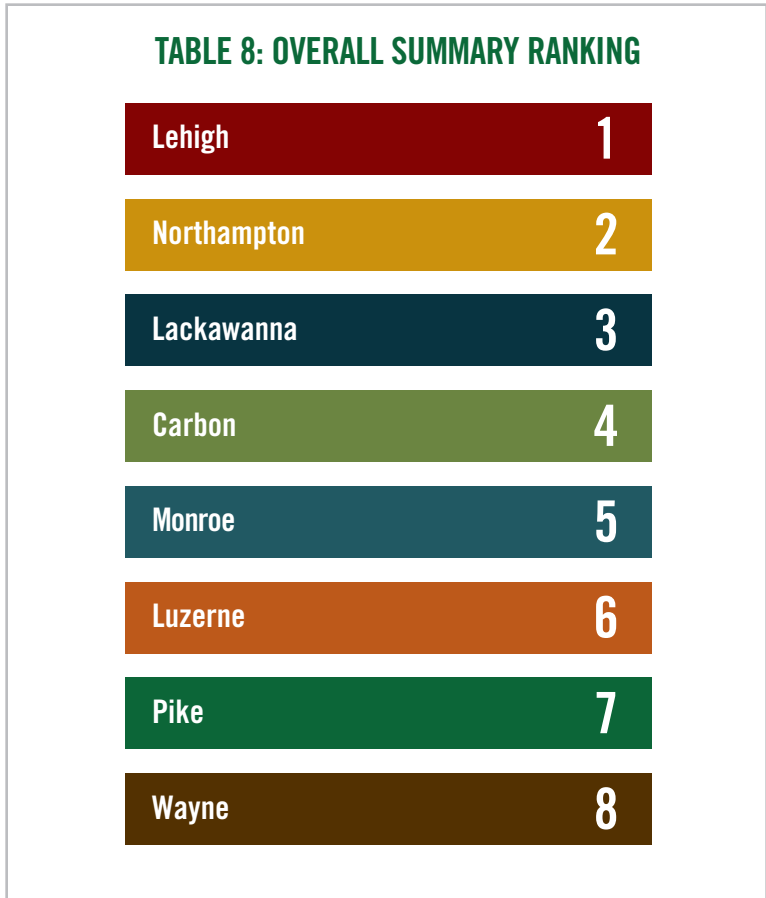
FIGURE 7: SUMMARY RANKING OF COUNTIES



**TABLE 7: SUMMARY RANKING OF COUNTIES**

Total Score	Carbon	Lackawanna	Lehigh	Luzerne	Monroe	Northampton	Pike	Wayne
<b>Employment</b>	21	15	27	16	27	28	17	17
<b>Earnings</b>	35	20	26	23	23	32	28	16
<b>Business Climate</b>	32	28	29	19	26	34	32	29
<b>Healthcare</b>	20	33	37	32	15	22	5	16
<b>Housing</b>	19	29	22	24	19	18	15	19
<b>Education</b>	16	20	18	10	18	20	25	17
<b>Overall Score</b>	143	145	159	124	128	154	122	114
<b>Overall Rank</b>	4	3	1	6	5	2	7	8

**TABLE 8: OVERALL SUMMARY RANKING**



# MONROE COUNTY 2017 ECONOMIC SCORECARD SURVEY

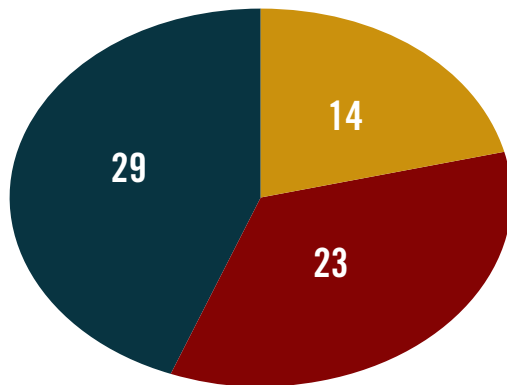
During last year's Business Survey (2016), local business leaders identified key challenges facing Monroe County in attracting and retaining businesses. As a follow-up, and in preparation for the upcoming 2017 Summit, ESU designed another survey to solicit data from Monroe County's elected/appointed officials and hired personnel. These questions were designed to assess the development priorities of the region that they represent, namely, the County or Municipality. It was distributed through Survey Monkey, and as of mid-August, 66 respondents had participated in the survey, representing a 50% response rate. The following paragraphs discuss some of the key findings.



The respondents included elected/appointed officials as well as hired local government employees. Roughly half the respondents have less than five years of service in their current position whereas seven had over 20 years representing the following regions.

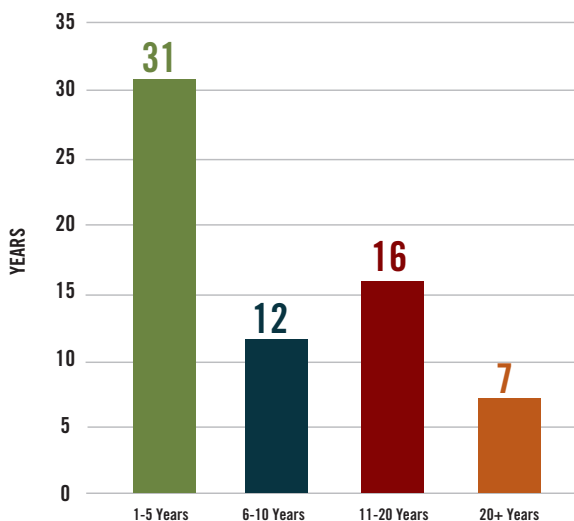
## DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

(Total Respondents =66)



■ Elected   
 ■ Appointed   
 ■ Hired Employee

## YEARS OF SERVICE IN CURRENT POSITION



## Respondent's Region

County of Monroe	10
Barrett Township	3
Chestnuthill Township	3
Coolbaugh Township	1
Delaware Water Gap Borough	1
East Stroudsburg Borough	11
Eldred Township	2
Hamilton Township	1
Jackson Township	1
Middle Smithfield Township	1
Mount Pocono Borough	1
Paradise Township	3
Pocono Township	7
Polk Township	5
Price Township	1
Ross Township	1
Smithfield Township	1
Stroud Township	2
Stroudsburg Borough	2
Tobyhanna Township	3
Tunkhannock Township	6
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>66</b>

**SWOT Analysis:** The following pages reflect local government leaders' perceptions on current strengths and weaknesses of their region as well as the opportunities and threats.

## REGION

## STRENGTHS

County of Monroe	38 years of public transportation service History of promoting conservation issues Natural resources Engaged citizens with various backgrounds and areas of expertise Rural setting, small town climate and ethos Community support, training, professionalism Natural surroundings Diversity, passionate people, recreational resources, good secondary and higher education institutions Financial solvency Beautiful mountains, streams and rivers; proximity to urban centers
Barrett Township	Beautiful scenery, restaurants, many essential stores Natural Resources, Community Group Resources Location
Chestnuthill Township	Student achievement Agricultural and commercial Population, agriculture, commercial development
Coolbaugh Township	Good workforce
Delaware Water Gap Borough	Volunteerism
East Stroudsburg Borough	Good educational program, ability to attract staff, good facilities ESU, LVH-Pocono, municipal utilities with capacity, railroad access, proximity to I-80 University, hospital Location ESU, hospital, and recreation Small community with major potential Enthusiasm of core groups of residents and business owners, involvement of university Good employees - strong ordinances - council committees Services - water, sewer, roads
Eldred Township	Small farming community...beautiful surroundings with the Chestnut Ridge and the Blue Mountain Rural community and esthetic
Hamilton Township	Central location to amenities, high property values, friendly and peaceful communities, well trained and superb fire protection
Jackson Township	Rural setting, great location near I80, beautiful lands
Middle Smithfield Township	No Response
Mount Pocono Borough	Location
Paradise Township	Natural beauty, green views, local businesses, trails, recreational land Beauty, natural resources Open space properties, maintenance of roads and buildings
Pocono Township	Central sewer; local police force; friendly to business growth Potential for business expansion in the area, untapped workforce – instead of commuting, solicit employers to move into our area, large tracts of land still undeveloped, and potential to plan now instead of later Resorts Great vacation area; shopping, resorts, activities
Polk Township	Farm community Permits and codes and zoning are obtainable in a reasonable amount of time and or looked into Primarily a residential/rural community Open space Beautiful rural farm area with many ASA properties
Price Township	70% conserved / hunting lands
Ross Township	Infrastructure thru commercial districts
Smithfield Township	Natural beauty, river, easy accessibility to interstate and N.J.
Stroud Township	Infrastructure, commercial corridor, park and recreation
Stroudsburg Borough	County seat, shopping district, services
Tobyhanna Township	Leadership Proximity to 45 million guests Geography, road system
Tunkhannock Township	Open space, rural, quiet Open space, natural landscape, clean water, road service, recycling service, annual cleanup program Vast green areas, trails, undeveloped areas Great open space, water/streams and wildlife Beautiful scenery Open space

## REGION

## WEAKNESS

County of Monroe	Limited resources (\$\$) to expand services to rural areas Broad based funding Poorly educated workforce Lack of sound planning for continued growth. No infrastructure planning Balancing progress and tradition Not enough law enforcement to protect and serve the entire county and lack of support from County government in order to perform our incumbent duties, responsibilities and mandates Roads build in the '50s with 2017 traffic Physical infrastructure, low social capital Lack of economic development opportunities High taxes, political gridlock, little capital investment in infrastructure, questionable leadership and governance; few rewarding career paths locally
Barrett Township	Closing of resorts limits visitors, businesses in trouble Blighted properties Local road conditions, property taxes
Chestnuthill Township	Government Funding Inadequate infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to attract major commercial projects Infrastructure, sewer and water, congested road system
Coolbaugh Township	Lack of family sustaining employment opportunities
Delaware Water Gap Borough	Main St. has too few businesses and too many residential rentals in poor condition
East Stroudsburg Borough	Uncertain healthcare system, reduction in tax base, high taxes Aging infrastructure, high percentage of tax-exempt properties, underutilized downtown area High school taxes Vacant properties, lack of pride Too many college students in homes that were previously occupied by families Borough needs to address \$\$\$ losses in the park and recreation areas; you can't keep spending taxpayer \$ on a golf course Enthusiasm, foresight, cooperation and engagement of town officials Short and long-term maintenance Business growth
Eldred Township	No industry, small businesses and lower tax revenue Non business and industrial tax base
Hamilton Township	Lack of central water and sewer
Jackson Township	Overly regulated
Middle Smithfield Township	No Response.
Mount Pocono Borough	Not enough sewage capacity to stimulate economic growth
Paradise Township	No "town center," need small businesses that support eco-tourism -- bike shop, deli, trail guides Reliance on state police, lack of affordable housing Foreclosed and vacant homes
Pocono Township	Divided BOC Job creation-higher wage jobs, infrastructure issues – Route 80, lack of support for residents, such as senior support services and low income housing Traffic Roads in area cannot handle the traffic
Polk Township	Commercial businesses jobs Low number of road maintenance crew to keep road upkeep up to par No central sewage or water Parks and recreation Roadways
Price Township	Very poor internet in a large portion of the township as well as lack of cable TV in the same area (Snow Hill Road)
Ross Township	Rural state roads
Smithfield Township	Lack of young entrepreneurs, new housing stock, fast internet
Stroud Township	Traffic Congestion
Stroudsburg Borough	Lack of open space, recreation
Tobyhanna Township	Infrastructure Environmentalists and Developers unwilling to work together Environmental Constraints, infrastructure
Tunkhannock Township	Lack of tax base Limited business and job opportunities due to our more rural environment Vast green areas, undeveloped areas Lack of access to open space Lack of central sewer and water No commercial development less tax revenue

## REGION

## OPPORTUNITIES

County of Monroe	Technological advancements result in improved public service Improving local economy Resource based recreation Economic growth and resource protection are not mutually exclusive and can be accomplished through more proactive planning efforts Close proximity to modern lifestyle Very limited, low pay, no jobs, no true professional job opportunities Limited Human resources (people to fill jobs), proximity to major markets, interstate highway, rail Little to none Visionary infrastructure planning and investment; true partnering for growth and sustainable development
Barrett Township	Concerned citizens, outdoor activities Businesses
Chestnuthill Township	Potential for agribusiness/agro-tourism such as wineries, farmers markets etc. Brodheads ville Corridor, villages
Coolbaugh Township	Minimal; Retail, blue collar and logistical employers
Delaware Water Gap Borough	Close to Delaware river and trails bordering town
East Stroudsburg Borough	Ability to expand educational programs, expand education to residents Public/private partnerships with ESU and LVH-Pocono Empty factories Co-operation with all the various institutions in the area Education and recreation There are a lot of residential and commercial properties available for growth Need someone in a dedicated economic development position. Expanding access to green space and building business to compliment it Better relations with ESU Crystal Street
Eldred Township	Great bedroom community Growing our community while retaining our character
Hamilton Township	Managed moderate commercial growth, combined with rural planned communities create a positive environment to live, work and recreate
Jackson Township	Room for growth
Middle Smithfield Township	No response
Mount Pocono Borough	Increased interest from small and major commercial businesses in our Borough's location for future considerations of expansion
Paradise Township	Businesses that support eco-tourism Well planned growth
Pocono Township	Business growth Expand the business districts, provide park and recreation activities for residents - bike trails/lanes, etc., expand community projects – update library services for more technology, support expanding the YMCA, etc. Business growth Many job opportunities
Polk Township	Based upon significant private capital investment Route 209 Pleasant Valley Schools in our Township
Price Township	No response
Ross Township	Preserve large land masses
Smithfield Township	Perfect environment for millennial businesses
Stroud Township	Room for growth
Stroudsburg Borough	Downtown and Historic District
Tobyhanna Township	Transformative village development Thoughtful and well planned development with multiple expansions with resorts giving the region a second chance Eco-tourism
Tunkhannock Township	To serve community via various committees, outdoor recreation Long commercial strip with lots available Making hiking trails in open space

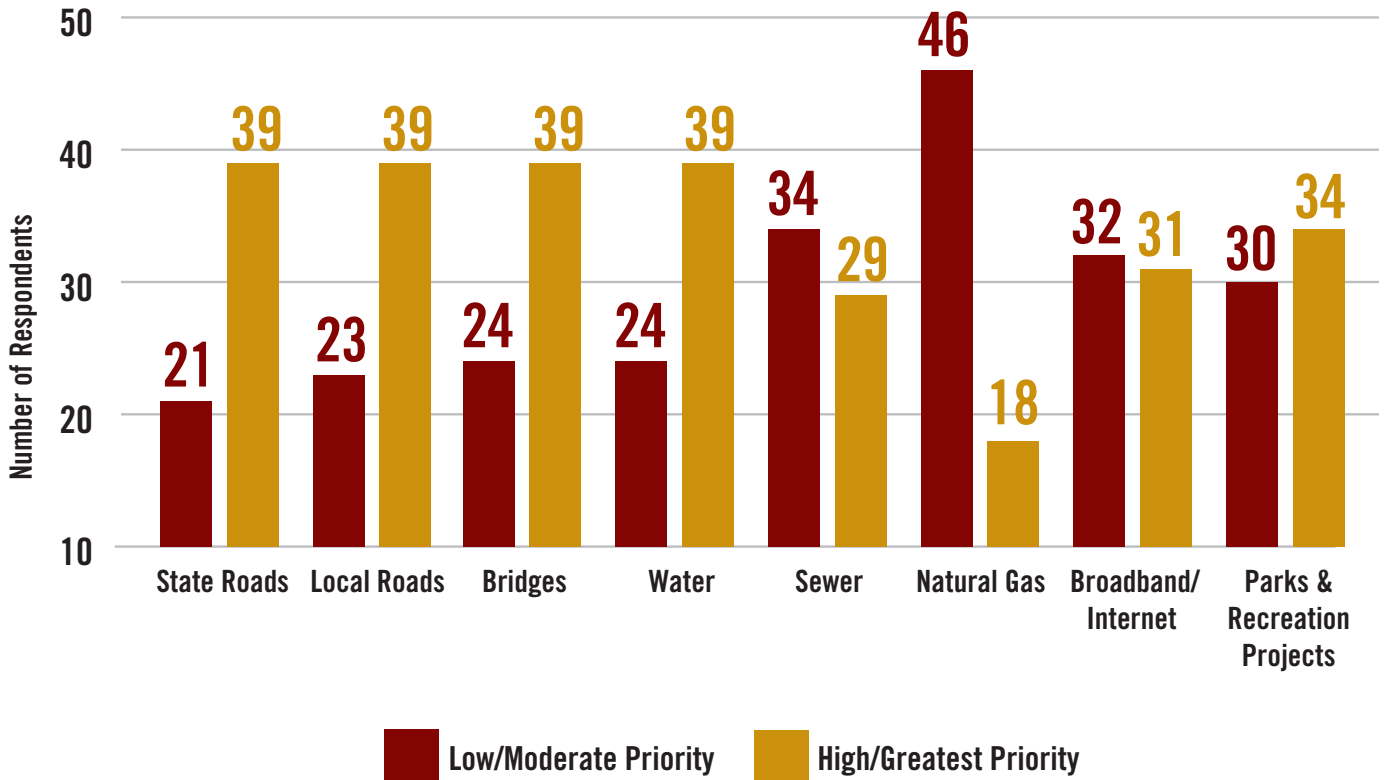
## REGION

## THREATS

County of Monroe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncertain future funding for growth (not just maintaining existing svcs)</li> <li>Disconnect with residents who need to commute to make a living wage</li> <li>Economic development plans that don't recognize value of natural resources</li> <li>Special interest groups operating in a manner that does not benefit Monroe County as a whole</li> <li>Crime and bad societal elements</li> <li>Homeland securities/gangs/influx of out crime and criminal activities from out of state and surrounding states which has blustered our County since 9/11</li> <li>Limited employment opportunities for youth</li> <li>Insufficient/no infrastructure planning, destruction of natural resources, perception of area populations from outside</li> <li>Financial depression if economic development is not addressed</li> <li>Failing government functions and outdated government structures</li> </ul>
Barrett Township	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shrinking population harms stores</li> <li>Opioid Crisis</li> <li>Ticks and Lyme disease</li> </ul>
Chestnuthill Township	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weather HazMat on highways, aging bridges</li> <li>Cyber and charter schools</li> </ul>
Coolbaugh Township	Blight due to lack of industrial and corporate business exposure and response to marketing
Delaware Water Gap Borough	Transient population
East Stroudsburg Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulty in contract negotiations (healthcare), no real increase in government funding</li> <li>Overcrowded I80</li> <li>Crime, urban blight</li> <li>Traffic</li> <li>ESU</li> <li>Ongoing concerns with drug dealers/users, blighted properties, so on</li> <li>Drug dealing, dilapidated housing</li> <li>Too many state &amp; federal government regulations</li> <li>Rental properties taking over borough</li> </ul>
Eldred Township	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inappropriate attempts of industry to take advantage of the land and water</li> <li>Non-funded government referendums</li> </ul>
Hamilton Township	The potential for increased costs for police and fire protection, school and property taxes
Jackson Township	Local crime filtering in, no police force to handle it
Middle Smithfield Township	No response
Mount Pocono Borough	Not having enough sewage capacity to meet their needs
Paradise Township	Drugs, lack of public transportation
Pocono Township	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of funds to do necessary projects</li> <li>Lack of planning for the future - infrastructure, jobs</li> <li>Traffic problems are impacting growth</li> <li>Too many people, not enough police</li> </ul>
Polk Township	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Congestion and declining quality of life issues</li> <li>Over development</li> <li>Deer when driving</li> </ul>
Price Township	No response
Ross Township	Water sources
Smithfield Township	Inferior residential and commercial development
Stroud Township	Economic downturn, school property taxes
Stroudsburg Borough	Loss of taxable property due to I-80 project
Tobyhanna Township	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intergovernmental disconnection</li> <li>Unwillingness to work as one</li> <li>Environmental and other regulations</li> </ul>
Tunkhannock Township	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encroachment on our natural environment especially waterways via development</li> <li>Too stringent attempts at controlling development</li> <li>Abandoned and junk properties</li> </ul>

## LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF INFRASTRUCTURE

(Total Respondents =66)



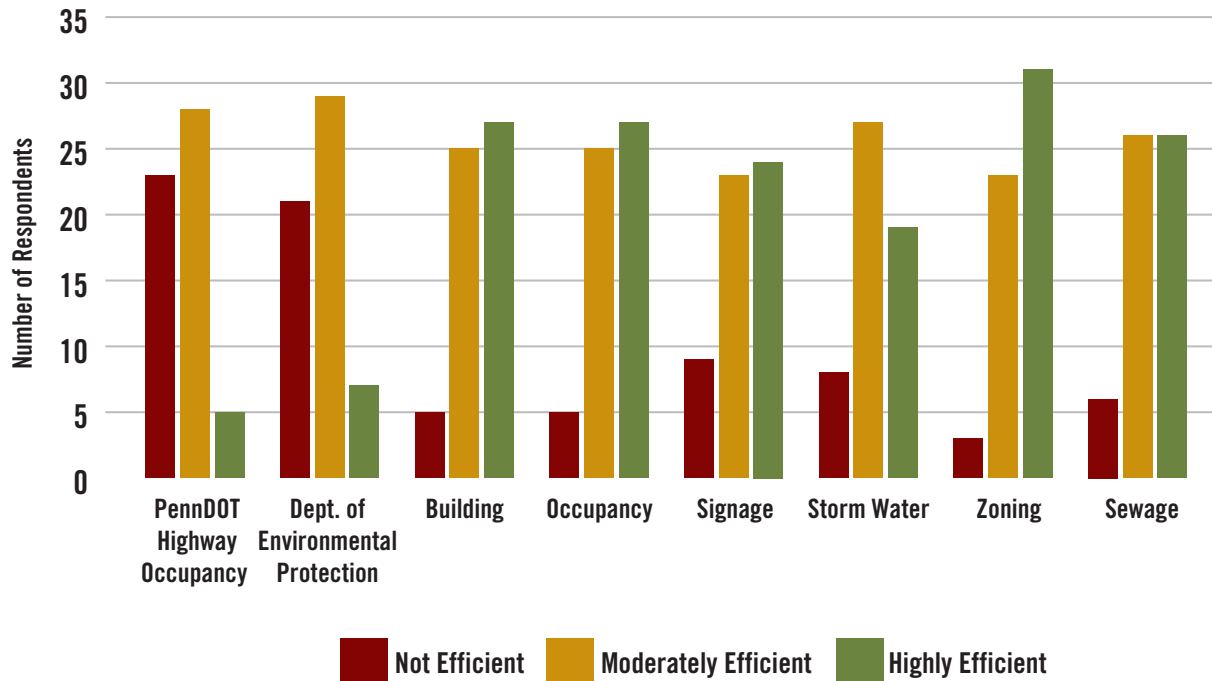
### Highlights

- During our last survey (Monroe County Economic Scorecard 2016, page 18), local business leaders conveyed that they were highly unsatisfied with certain types of infrastructure. To see how the local government officials view the same issue, the researchers asked them about the level of importance of various types of infrastructure needs/priorities in their region. The chart on this page shows summary responses:
- It is heartening to note that our local government officials are fully aware of local business leaders concerns (60% rated road infrastructure Poor/Below Average) and place top priority on bridges and road infrastructure.
- Though 37% of business leaders rated Sewer Access as Poor/Below Average, the level of importance given to this issue by local government officials varies by region; Pocono and Tobyhanna townships place very high importance whereas Paradise and Polk townships rated lower.
- When it comes to Natural Gas, 49% of business leaders rated the infrastructure as Poor/Below Average whereas the majority of local government officials do not rank it as a top priority.
- The story changes 180 degrees when it comes to Water. Last year, 80% of business leaders rated Water Access as Average or better whereas the regions' government leaders place a much higher priority, especially at the county level.
- The county officials place more priority on parks and recreation projects than local municipalities; Chestnuthill and Polk townships are exceptions.
- Last year, 36% of business leaders rated broadband availability as Poor/Below Average and only 19% rated highly; though the county officials place top priority on this issue, in general, the municipal government officials did not.



## EFFICIENCY OF PERMITTING PROCESS

(Total Respondents = 66)



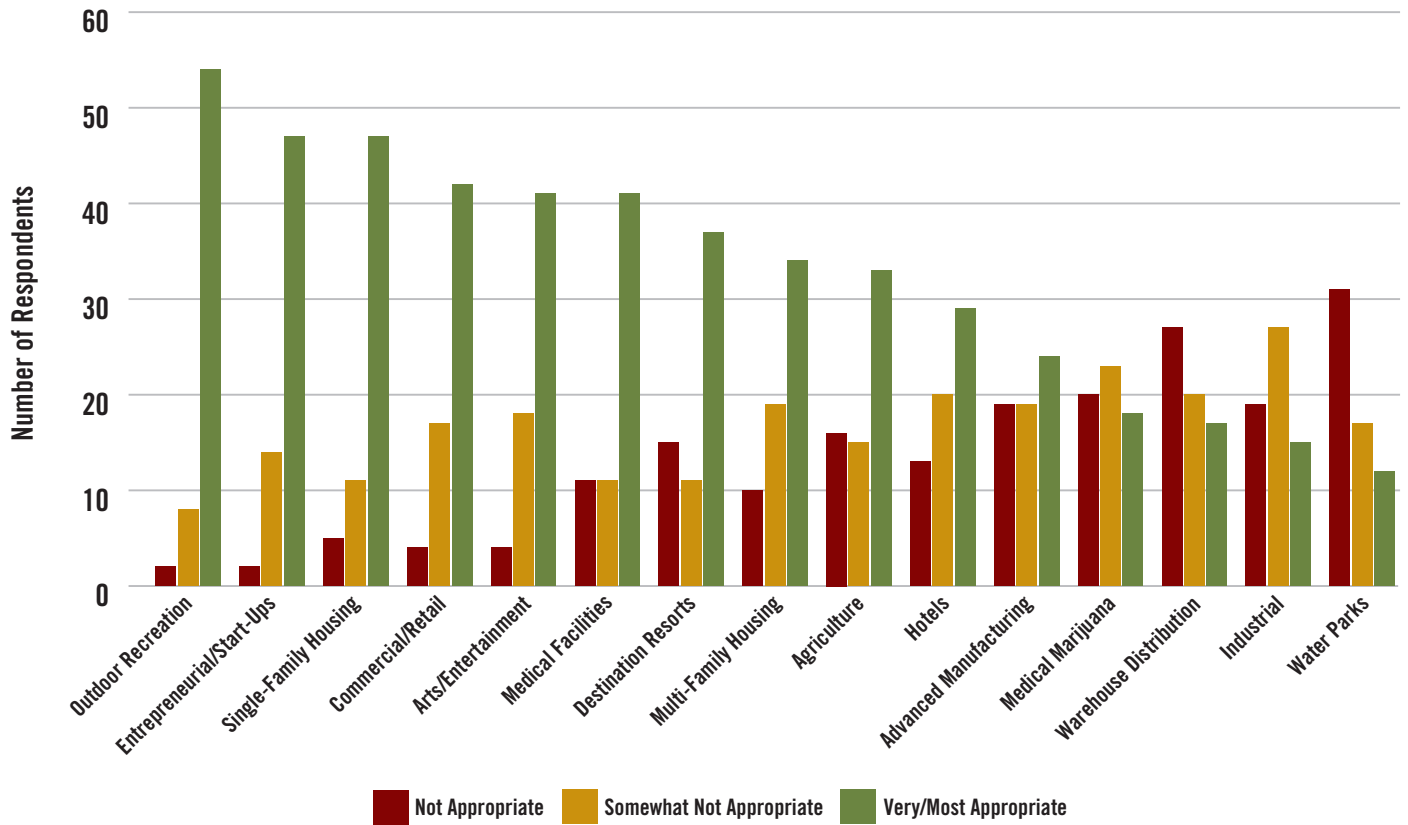
### Highlights

- In the 2016 survey (see page 19), local business leaders were extremely critical of government responsiveness to business needs and the permitting process (62% rated the permitting process as Poor/Below Average). In the current survey, the researchers asked the local government officials to rate the level of efficiency of the various permitting processes. The summary chart shows some interesting results.
- Clearly, the local government officials agree with the business leaders that the above two state-level permitting processes need

improvement. However, the story takes a turn when it comes to local permits that do not share this level of agreement.

- The chart shows a snapshot of how the local government officials rate the efficiency of the various types of permitting processes. In general, local government officials agree that state-level permitting processes need improvement whereas they think that the local-level permitting processes are efficient.

## APPROPRIATENESS OF DEVELOPMENT (Total Respondents = 66)



The chart shows a snapshot of the local government officials' order of preference for the various types of industries.

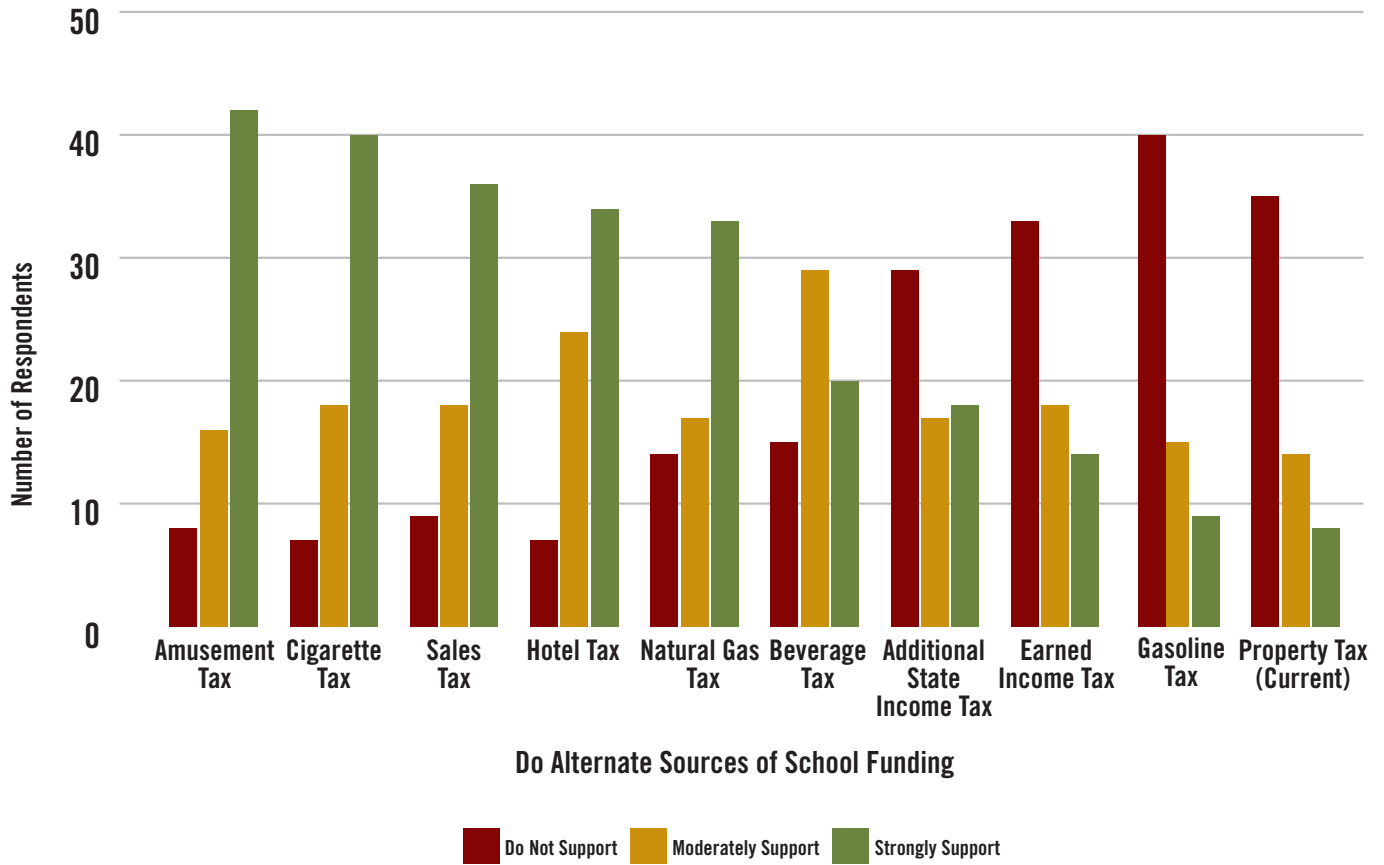
### Highlights

The 2016 survey (pages 20-21) showed how different industries rated business conditions in Monroe County. In the current survey, the researchers asked the local government officials what type of industries they prefer for our region. Their preferences appear to the right.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Outdoor Recreation</li> <li>2. Entrepreneurial/Start-Ups</li> <li>3. Single-Family Housing</li> <li>4. Commercial/Retail</li> <li>5. Arts &amp; Entertainment</li> <li>6. Medical Facilities</li> <li>7. Destination Resorts</li> <li>8. Multi-Family Housing</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. Agriculture</li> <li>10. Hotels</li> <li>11. Advanced Manufacturing</li> <li>12. Medical Marijuana</li> <li>13. Warehouse Distribution</li> <li>14. Industrial</li> <li>15. Water Parks</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

## LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF SCHOOL FUNDING

(Total Respondents = 66)



The chart shows a snapshot of the local government officials' support in descending order for some of the commonly suggested alternate sources of school funding.

### Highlights

- Though both newer and established firms had many concerns about the local business conditions, a significantly higher percentage (83%) of newer firms, i.e., firms 10 years or younger, would recommend Monroe County as a business location as opposed to only 65% of established firms (see page 23 of last year's Scorecard). From the chart, it is clear that our local government officials have a very high preference for Entrepreneurial/Start-up companies. The following summary reveals our local government officials' support for some commonly discussed funding alternatives.
- It was obvious from the last year business survey that property taxes are a big concern for local businesses. Given the high importance of K-12 schooling, there is an urgent need to explore alternate sources of school funding. The following summary tables reveal in the descending order our local government officials' support for some commonly discussed funding alternatives.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amusement Tax</li> <li>2. Cigarette Tax</li> <li>3. Sales Tax</li> <li>4. Hotel Tax</li> <li>5. Natural Gas Tax</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Beverage Tax</li> <li>7. Additional State Income Tax</li> <li>8. Earned Income Tax</li> <li>9. Gasoline Tax</li> <li>10. Property Tax (current)</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

Finally, the survey asked our local government officials some broader, open ended questions to assess their perceptions about our region. Following are the summaries:

## What is the “Best Kept Secret” about your municipality/county? Or, what do you think we SHOULD KNOW about your municipality/county?

### Region

County of Monroe	Public transportation provides over 300,000 trips to residents and guests annually AND employs 90 people. We have tripled in services and providing employment over the past 15 years! The natural beauty of the Pocono Mountains makes this a very desirable place to live and work Trails and views on public nature preserves and parks Somehow we have not yet figured out how to properly capitalize on the beauty and resources of Monroe County. Better connectivity to open space from town centers would be beneficial for sustainable economic growth We have a lot of great entrepreneurs; however, they are held back by codes and ordinances that do not fit. Many businesses have chosen not to do business in my township due to the zoning/building codes, and how they were treated Foreclosures and tax sales because people can't afford to live here, pay for their homes or the taxes Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, local parks and open space, the diversity of our citizens, educational attainment of our students The County's long, rich history
Barrett Township	As part of the scenic highway for the Poconos, we get many "drive through" visitors. We need to encourage them to stop. Our nature parks and Open Space properties
Chestnuthill Township	Farm stores, agri-tainment, natural areas/walking & biking trails.
Coolbaugh Township	Abundant natural resources for outdoor recreation. Accessibility to local, intrastate and interstate transportation. Alternative travel routes in case of major road closures. Talented, experienced and highly skilled industrial and corporate human resources
Delaware Water Gap Borough	Trail system
East Stroudsburg Borough	You should know that East Stroudsburg School District is working toward preparing students for immediate employment jobs upon graduation The natural beauty and location Levee Loop and downtown cinema Home to ESU, PMC, small business, and residential community with city water and sewer. Small but nice downtown district, we have a rail line thru our borough and have some room in the borough for growth The levee loop system The areas just outside the downtown that still have plenty of open space
Eldred Township	The location is central to upper Poconos, Scranton, Lehigh Valley, Turnpike and NYC Great place to live, no place to work
Hamilton Township	We have consistently maintained the highest property values in the region and due to fiscal responsibility our municipal tax has remained at 1 mill for 25 years
Jackson Township	Small town feel, good sense of community
Middle Smithfield Township	Business friendly
Mount Pocono Borough	The history of the Pocono Plateau, AKA top of the Mountain, began in the Borough of the Mount Pocono.
Paradise Township	We have more bio-diversity than most anywhere in the county. Trout fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, bird watching, photography, and similar are available in multiple recreational spots throughout the Township Elected officials, who care deeply about the community and who work well together
Pocono Township	Smallest township; best police department Central sewer and water for growth Sanofi Pasteur Our park, Mt. View Park. Clean, well run, pavilion rentals, ball fields, playground
Polk Township	Large number of agriculture security farms A nice place to raise children It should remain the township with the most land in agriculture preservation as well as open space
Price Township	No Response.
Ross Township	Saylors Lake
Smithfield Township	All season recreational activities, fronting on river, hidden corner of County
Stroud Township	Parks and open spaces High quality recreation/outdoor activity locations, in general. Waterways like the McMichael Creek, with swimming holes near the golf course and the ability to fish and kayak from the prison to the Willow Creek when the water is right
Stroudsburg Borough	National Register Historic Buildings, residential neighborhoods, local restaurants/wineries
Tobyhanna Township	Creating a thoughtful well planned coordinated approach for community transformation through economic development. We are open for business. Beautiful Natural areas, soon more hiking and biking opportunities. Great, premier recreational communities!
Tunkhannock Township	It is a beautiful place on the face of the earth! Great place to live; i.e., natural surroundings, peace and quiet, 2 acre limit on new housing, care and concern for the environment 1. The natural beauty; 2. Pocono Raceway - use for other events not NASCAR related - concerts, shows. None that I know Lots of open space to the public Our open space, which is not used and trails need to be madE

# What are your recommendations to make Monroe County a premier business location?

## Region

County of Monroe	<p>Better planning for infrastructure development. It is difficult to feel multiple entities are working together on county-wide projects. Specifically - CNG</p> <p>Improve infrastructure in an environmentally responsible way. Pay wages that can sustain a family</p> <p>Capitalize on natural resources</p> <p>Improve downtown Stroudsburg and East Stroudsburg to make it a regional draw. Then start improving outward to increase connectivity. We do not need more waterparks and strip malls; embrace the arts and culinary world as they have in Easton, Bethlehem and Lancaster in order to change the culture</p> <p>We have to make it easier for small business to grow. The permitting process is slow, cumbersome, inconsistent and unfair. Especially the storm water ordinance and some building codes</p> <p>Enforce the laws, ordinances, zoning laws etc. on the books. Properties, developments, streets, roadways, Main Street, industrial areas are filled with garbage, unregistered vehicles, dilapidated buildings, cigarette butts, puke from bars, un kept buildings, poor roadways and streets</p> <p>Access to sewage; water and turning lanes</p> <p>Develop a skilled and resourceful workforce, starting with our K12 students. Develop a streamlined business development/relocation process</p> <p>Improve infrastructure including technological internet, etc. as well as roads and bridges</p> <p>Plan, build and maintain properly planned infrastructure for water, sewer, roads, trains and planes</p>
Barrett Township	<p>Make use of the current buildings that have been vacant instead of adding more. Encourage businesses to locate here because of our location, quality of life, schools, outdoor recreation, and entertainment</p> <p>Programs to branch out businesses from the Route 611 corridor to off the beaten path areas</p>
Chestnuthill Township	Keeping a "sense of place" village/commercial development/redevelopment, smaller scale manufacturers and office space
Coolbaugh Township	Better marketing to the tristate regions of New York, New Jersey and Delaware. International marketing to Canada
Delaware Water Gap Borough	Better educated and employable workforce
East Stroudsburg Borough	<p>Create destination areas that are spread throughout the county and have services such as retail, visitor attractions also be more balanced in all areas. Encourage educational destinations, museums, theater etc., along with indoor attractions. Visitors although traveling, would prefer a variety of opportunities near their vacation spot. When the weather is not good, there are limited offerings.</p> <p>The railroad; change zoning.</p> <p>Clean trash off our roads and improve our infrastructure before building new facilities. Utilize the empty businesses</p> <p>Get the rail line going if travel and commercial needs and wants for add growth</p> <p>Promotion and advertising; funding and measures to promote business growth; programs to encourage rehabilitation of blighted areas</p> <p>Better roads, tax free zones, enhance the overall quality of life</p>
Eldred Township	<p>Pay attention to the municipals and their individual needs and attract the appropriate businesses to this high recreation area and vacation area. Provide variety of opportunities for employment with moderate sized industry and Keep the County Clean. I believe the current path is the right one. Zoning is essential with business growth. Large manufacturing, warehouses etc., in other words provide employment</p>
Hamilton Township	Solve the huge burden of property taxes, promote business in corridors where central water & sewer are located and being expanded
Jackson Township	Less regulations - they kill the entrepreneurial mind and finding harmony with progress and development
Middle Smithfield Township	The only way to make Monroe County a premier business location is for the elected officials in Harrisburg to figure out another formula to pay for school taxes. Infrastructure for the future is also key
Mount Pocono Borough	Stick to the plan that is presently in place
Paradise Township	<p>Keep it green, with safe drinking water, access to high quality outdoor recreation to attract quality businesses that value good living for their employees</p> <p>Roads/bridges maintenance; traffic control; protection of aesthetics and natural resources</p>
Pocono Township	<p>Better roads, easy access</p> <p>Better state roads</p> <p>Promote the existing workforce available, encourage a 'resident' friendly policies - parks, library, bus service, etc.</p> <p>Attract light manufacturing</p> <p>Better state roads, e.g., Route 611. Better pay for employees</p>
Polk Township	All Infrastructure must be in place to attract new and any expanding business. The work force needs to be skilled for the jobs of the future not low paying service jobs. There is a huge mismatch between existing skill levels of the work force and jobs/careers that need to be filled immediately in the marketplace
Price Township	Improve internet and cable coverage
Ross Township	Update Route 80; more natural gas usage; build better state roads
Smithfield Township	Forget the numbers in job creation and concentrate on attracting young entrepreneurs who see this as alternative to city life style
Stroud Township	<p>Better workforce</p> <p>Not sure it should be a premier business location. Depends on type of business. Improve traffic flow and road condition</p>
Stroudsburg Borough	Professional jobs, affordable housing, recreational opportunities
Tobyhanna Township	<p>Cure the disconnect between environmental stewardship and economic development</p> <p>Upgrades to Transportation and other infrastructure; flexibility with Environmental and other Regulations (especially unfunded mandates); cleanup of blighted area and overcoming past stereotypes</p>
Tunkhannock Township	<p>Widen and rebuild interstate Route 80 east and west bound from the state line to the Carbon County Line</p> <p>Quality of water to attract businesses that want to maintain a healthy environment and those who offer higher wages for our citizens</p> <p>Widen and improve Route 80; make an exit in our township (as was once proposed) to ease access</p> <p>Incentives to use and develop in the under-utilized Commercial/Industrial parks located on RT 115 and RT 940 in Tobyhanna and Coolbaugh Townships!</p> <p>Vacation Destination</p>

## Region

## What gets you excited about the Future of Monroe County?

County of Monroe	<p>I plan to retire from my position, able to recreate and enjoy the county's beauty firsthand, while feeling I contributed to public transportation improvements for all.</p> <p>There are many talented and bright people in this county, they need to take the leadership roles necessary to make Monroe flourish, we can be great.</p> <p>Plans that recognize the value of our natural resource base</p> <p>Potential</p> <p>Possibility of change</p> <p>Sadly, at this point, I hear more people talking about leaving the area than staying, based on taxes, lack of cooperation by municipal &amp; county governments.</p> <p>Term limits on the political elected</p> <p>It is a must that we properly site and develop the necessary infrastructure to allow businesses to come to our county. We also must create a vibrant and welcoming downtown/urban community in Stroudsburg/East Stroudsburg.</p> <p>Nothing. I don't think those in power have done much toward the economic development of this county. We are uniquely positioned to have tourism, alongside manufacturing and even include recreation and retail. Nobody does it. It is not rocket science. We can bring businesses here if those in charge knew how.</p> <p>Enhancing its spectacular geography and rich ecology with world-class planning and execution</p>
Barrett Township	We have an opportunity to guide development in a sustainable, environmentally sound way. Let us not squander our resources thoughtlessly.
Chestnuthill Township	Having positive economic growth while maintaining a quality environment.
Coolbaugh Township	Nothing to speak of. Monroe County is falling behind and off the coattails of Lehigh, Northampton and Lackawanna Counties.
Delaware Water Gap Borough	Small owner operated businesses
East Stroudsburg Borough	<p>That there is attention being given to the future needs, that the process is inclusive to many facets of life here. (Although more attention should be given to the EMS community's needs)</p> <p>Its location, natural beauty, East Stroudsburg University, The Medical Facilities, The Stroudsburg Downtown Community, East Stroudsburg Comprehensive and Vision plans.</p> <p>The growth of the northern sector of the county with the water parks bringing a lot of people through our area</p> <p>Many organizations working towards improvements. We need to keep the momentum going.</p> <p>The people</p>
Eldred Township	<p>The number of very talented and experienced population and the opportunities to grow</p> <p>The opportunity for continued, Planned growth. There is an opportunity here to create a truly, well thought out mapping of industrial, commercial and residential growth fit for a 21st century community.</p>
Hamilton Township	If in fact the problem of school and property taxes could be solved, the huge cloud that now covers the entire region would be lifted, providing great benefit and opportunities to all residents and commercial entities alike.
Jackson Township	The possibilities of keeping the small town vibe and physical aesthetics with progress by incorporating renewable resources
Middle Smithfield Township	No response
Mount Pocono Borough	It's location on the greatest transportation corridor in this great country, Interstate 80.
Paradise Township	<p>We haven't wrecked the place quite yet. Despite the painful views the whole length of 611 and much of 209, our green infrastructure is strong -- and should be nurtured and made stronger.</p> <p>County-wide broadband.</p>
Pocono Township	<p>Hope that our leaders will support creating a better place to live and work in Monroe County</p> <p>The improvements being made. New hospitals, new resorts, Hotels, and water parks. The effort to improve abandon old run down hotels.</p>
Polk Township	It will always be a recreational/relaxation center for the city dwellers of NY and Philadelphia areas. Open areas in private ownership need to be encouraged and "protected."
Price Township	No response
Ross Township	Maintaining outdoor activities
Smithfield Township	Auto drive cars and one-hour commute to GWB
Stroud Township	<p>Our potential with regards to our location</p> <p>The possibility of replacing the current county commissioners</p>
Stroudsburg Borough	Municipalities working together to attract businesses, jobs, etc.
Tobyhanna Township	<p>Monroe County is blessed with geographic fortune in terms of location and natural attributes as well as home to the national branding of The Poconos. Our opportunity now is to harness this power and responsibly manage its rewards.</p> <p>Future Eco-Tourism and Recreational Tourism in our Region</p>
Tunkhannock Township	<p>That it continues to be a good place to come "HOME" to</p> <p>General and steady progress over the years we have lived here to enhance the life and lifestyles of its residents</p> <p>Not overcrowded, potential for more commercial space</p> <p>The addition of the convention center at Kalahari should bring more opportunity for commercial expansion in the region</p> <p>Increased business and employment with preserving our natural beauty and resources</p> <p>Vacation development which could offset our property taxes</p>

# Monroe 2030 Action Team Re-Energizing Our Economy

## Work Plan Version 1.0 | Status Report 2017

Over the past year, the Monroe 2030 Action Team and Task Forces: Community Collaboration, Workforce Development, and Small Business and Entrepreneurship, have dedicated their time and resources in addressing the “Next Steps” outlined in 2016 Re-Energizing our Economy: Work Plan Version 1.0.

Version 1.0 marked the beginning of a countywide conversation about the economic future of Monroe County. At that time, the Action Team specifically avoided adopting or promoting a vision or mission statement for the Monroe 2030 Action Team’s work. That decision was based on the desire to engage more people in developing a strategy for making Monroe County the best place to live, learn, work and play. Those conversations and engagements occurred over the past year, and the Action Team is now proposing the following mission and vision statements for discussion:

**Vision Statement 1:** An economically thriving county that attracts visitors, permanent residents and businesses.

**Vision Statement 2:** An eco-friendly developed economy that encourages individuals and businesses to view Monroe County as a county of choice.

**Mission Statement 1:** Monroe County 2030 promotes vitality by creating and retaining life sustaining jobs while preserving the natural environment and culture of the region.

This past year also marked the beginning of the Task Force implementation of the “Ideas” presented in Work Plan Version 1.0 - Appendix A. These “Ideas” included the Action Team’s best assessment of the Task Force goals, who is leading the charge, and the status of implementation. This exercise was intended to aggressively pursue success in the areas of Community Collaboration, Workforce Development, and Small Business and Entrepreneurship and to provide accountability and a regular public report card on the work. The Task Force efforts are summarized below:

### COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

The Community Collaboration Task Force focused on the following five Ideas:

#### Create a Development Process Check List

**Goal:** Create a Development Checklist Template that can be customized by each township and borough for its own use.

**Status:** A Checklist is being prepared for review by the townships and boroughs.

#### Create a Monroe County Pre-Application Review Team

**Goal:** Create a standing Pre-Application Review Team that would provide informal reviews and feedback on concepts for new development or activities that require changes in zoning or planning rules. The Review Team would include key state and local officials including representatives from local governments, Monroe County, key state agencies, PennDOT, Department of Environmental Protection and the Monroe County Conservation District.

**Status:** Discussions continue on the development of the Pre-Application Review Team.

#### Update the Role of the Monroe County Planning Commission

**Goal:** Identify new ways to engage the Planning Commission in supporting economic development – including creating a Business Liaison position which could operate within the County Government or elsewhere such as the Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corporation. This individual will help businesses seeking to start or expand operations in Monroe County.

**Status:** Discussions are ongoing with the Planning Commission on developing a work plan for new roles and functions.

#### Create a Community Infrastructure Investment Fund

**Goal:** Identify and advocate for new ways to help finance needed infrastructure and other services, such as police or ambulance services in locations affected by large-scale resort activities.

**Status:** Advocacy efforts are underway to promote the establishment of the fund.

#### Promote Local Government Collaboration

**Goal:** Create a county-wide opportunity for multijurisdictional collaboration and partnerships by offering a pilot planning exercise. A request for proposals will be distributed to municipalities interested in participating. Funding will be provided as cost share with successful municipalities.

**Status:** Efforts are underway to develop a draft of the RFP to promote cross township collaboration.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Workforce Development Task Force focused on the following two Ideas:

### Workforce Councils

**Goal:** Develop a plan in collaboration with the Monroe County Technical Institute (MCTI) that will widen and deepen the impact of Advisory Councils across all educational systems in Monroe County.

**Status:** Discussions are underway with MCTI to address the need for expanded Advisory Councils.

### Bridging the K1-16 Continuum

**Goal:** Development of a cooperative and cohesive plan that will benefit the county's economic development initiatives, as well as employers and the educational system in the community.

**Status:** Discussions are underway with the Monroe County School District Superintendents focusing on the issue of the County's Workforce Development System (school districts, MCTI, post-secondary, and federal and state workforce development agencies).

## SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Small Business and Entrepreneurship Task Force focused on the following three Ideas:

### Develop Guide to Starting a New Business in Monroe County

**Goal:** Publish and disseminate the Guide to ensure that more local people and newcomers know where to get help in starting a new business.

**Status:** The How To Do Business Guide is complete and available at [MonroePabusiness.org](http://MonroePabusiness.org).

### Expand Local Availability of Business Consulting/Counseling Services

**Goal:** Expand the local knowledge and use of existing business consulting services provided by the University of Scranton Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and the SCORE chapter presently operating in the Lehigh Valley.

**Status:** SCORE/SBDC Business counseling is available throughout the year at East Stroudsburg University, Northampton Community College, Western Pocono Community Library and Tobyhanna Township Government Center. A total of 13 companies were advised during FY 16-17: 8 start-up companies and 5 existing companies.

### Promote Youth Entrepreneurship in Monroe County

**Goal:** Expand Monroe County's youth entrepreneurship offerings so that all youth have access to these resources and that the wider community gets more interested and engaged.

**Status:** The Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Region 21 Leadership Workshop is co-sponsored by Monroe 2030 and the FBLA is participating in the Made in the Poconos Initiative.

## ACTION ITEMS

Based on the preliminary successes of the Task Forces, the Monroe 2030 Executive Committee identified the following seven priorities for discussion with the Monroe County Commissioners:

- 1 Engage the Monroe County Planning Commission in more proactive planning
- 2 Hire a professional planner who will work with the county and with the Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corporation (PMEDC) to develop a comprehensive plan
- 3 Develop a long term, comprehensive infrastructure plan
- 4 Pursue the idea of a community investment fund
- 5 Develop a guide for starting small businesses and get the word out
- 6 Develop a workforce development plan that sees the big picture and supports the work of a professional planner
- 7 Get townships to work together or invest resources in townships that are supportive and want to grow.

On Wednesday, August 23, 2017, the Monroe 2030 Executive Team met with the Monroe County Commissioners to present the Monroe 2030 Action Team recommendations for their consideration. Following a lively and productive discussion, the Commissioners agreed to adopt the following:

- Engage the Monroe County Planning Commission in more proactive planning
- Hire a professional planner who will work with the county and with the Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corporation (PMEDC) to develop a comprehensive plan
- Develop a long term, comprehensive infrastructure plan

The Monroe 2030 Executive Team appreciates the Commissioners' acceptance of the work performed by the Task Forces. Their commitment to improve the business climate of Monroe County is evident in their adoption of three critical initiatives that will transform the county's economic future. Over the next several weeks, the Action Team will be working with the Commissioners to develop a timeline for the implementation of these initiatives and a schedule for progress reports.

It has been a rewarding year for the Monroe 2030 Action Team – Monroe County is ranked 5th in overall economic rankings in the 2017 Economic Scorecard a significant improvement from the 7th place ranking in 2016 and 2015. The Monroe 2030 efforts are making a measurable difference, and while there is still more work to be done, the "Call to Action" has been heard!



# Monroe 2030 Action Team

## Executive Committee

Matthew J. Connell (Chair)  
Dean, Monroe Campus, Northampton Community College

Anne Lambertson  
Supervisor, Tobyhanna Township  
(through July 2017)

Sharon Laverdure  
Former Superintendent, East Stroudsburg Schools

Charles Leonard  
Executive Director, Pocono Mountains  
Economic Development Corporation

Christine Meinhardt-Fritz  
Director, Monroe County Planning Commission

Troy Nauman  
Owner, Nauman Contracting

Gary Olson  
President/CEO, ESSA Bank & Trust

Mary Frances Postupack  
Vice President Economic Development and  
Entrepreneurship, East Stroudsburg University

Adam Schellhammer  
Executive Director, Monroe County Conservation District

Steve Somers  
President, Vigon International, Inc.

Michael Tukeva  
Executive Director, Pocono Alliance

Marcia G. Welsh  
President, East Stroudsburg University

## Community Collaboration Task Force

Michelle Bisbing

Kenneth Brown

John DeCusatis

Ricky Durst

Alex Grum

Anne Lambertson - Past Chair

Adam Schellhammer

Craig Todd

## Workforce Development Task Force

Michael Albert

William Bajor

Paul Balmforth

Todd Behr

John Casella

Merlyn Clarke

Cosmas Curry

Joshua De La Mata

Nitza Desire

Kris Dorsheim

Niambi Gadson

Thomas Grayuski

Michelle Pinnock Harper

Sharon Laverdure – Chair

Donald LeCompt

Charles Leonard

Jody Perry-Petrosak

Sherry Rex

Jonathan Santana

Rich Schlameuss

Don Seiple

Carolyn Shegelski

Greg Sherill

James Smith

Dennis Virga

Claudette Williams

## Small Business and Entrepreneurship Task Force

Dillan Buckelew

Denise Burdge

Richard Berkowitz

John DeCusatis

Joshua De La Mata

Don Hannig

John Holohan

Lisa Hutchins

Richard John

Patrick Kelley

Chuck Leonard

Pat Lincoln

Leigh Magnotta

Connie Merwine

Dave Moyer

Troy Nauman

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Mary Frances Postupack - Chair

Linda Rice

Adam Schellhammer

Zech Strauser

Shawn Walsh

# Monroe 2030 Action Team **BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES**

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Free Business Consulting Services for startup and existing businesses will be provided on the **second Thursday of each month** from September 2017 through August 2018 at the following locations:

## **Western Pocono Community Library**

wpcl.lib.pa.us/  
131 Pilgrim Way, Brodheadsville, PA 18322  
570-992-7934

**September 14, 2017** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

**January 11, 2018** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

**May 10, 2018** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.



## **East Stroudsburg University Innovation Center**

esu.edu/red/  
562 Independence Rd, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301  
570-422-7920

**October 12, 2017** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

**February 8, 2018** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

**June 14, 2018** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.



## **Tobyhanna Township Government Center**

tobyhannatownship.org  
105 Government Center Way  
Pocono Pines, PA 18350  
570-646-9026

**November 9, 2017** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

**March 8, 2018** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

**July 12, 2018** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.



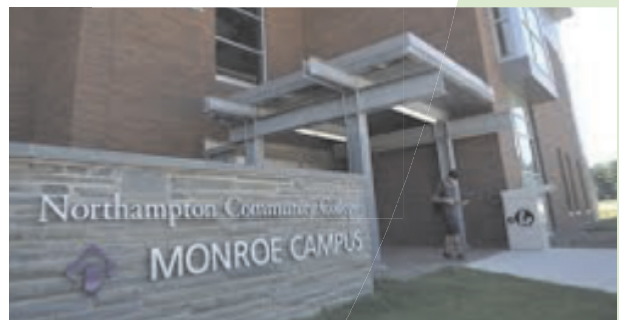
## **Northampton Community College, Monroe Campus**

northampton.edu/monroe-campus.htm  
2411 PA-715, Tannersville, PA 18372  
*Exact location TBA*

**December 14, 2017** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

**April 12, 2018** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

**August 9, 2018** from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.



**Schedule an appointment for FREE Business Consulting Services today.**

The University of Scranton Small Business Development Center • [scrantonsbdc.com](http://scrantonsbdc.com)

**Leigh Magnotta, Business Consultant, 570-941-4152 or [Leigh.Magnotta@Scranton.edu](mailto:Leigh.Magnotta@Scranton.edu) • [scrantonsbdc.com](http://scrantonsbdc.com)**

*Monroe 2030 – Assuring a Prosperous Monroe County!*

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For more information about the Monroe County Economic Scorecard  
or the East Stroudsburg University Economic Outlook Summit,  
please contact ESU Economic Development and Entrepreneurship at 570-422-7920.