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### The Pittsburg Micropolitan Area Economic Report, Quarter 4, 2019

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# THE PITTSBURGH MICROPOLITAN AREA ECONOMIC REPORT

## Pittsburg Area Retailers Did Well In 2019

THERE HAS BEEN A LOT at stake for retailers during the current holiday season, with first estimates showing 3.8 percent increase in sales compared to the 2018 season. Coresight Research reports that holiday shopping accounts for 26.7 percent of annual sales for jewelry stores, 23.8 percent for department stores, 22.4 percent for clothing and accessories stores, 22.1 percent for electronics and appliance stores, and 20.4 percent for general merchandise stores. Department stores have been disproportionately affected by the advent of e-commerce, and it is estimated that 23.0 percent of all non-food retail

sales were online during the holiday season, with Amazon having the largest online share. Department stores fought back by offering buy-online and pick-up-in-mall services, and over 42 percent of all retailers offered buy-online and return-in-store to increase their share of online sales.

Preliminary estimates by Woods & Poole indicate that total retail sales in the Pittsburg micropolitan area increased to \$560.0 million during 2019 (up 3.2 percent), with general merchandise having the largest increase in annual sales, with total sales of \$108.2 million, up \$4.8 million (4.6 percent), followed

by building material and garden supplies at \$69.8 million, up \$3.1 million (4.7 percent); eating and drinking establishments at \$74.3 million, up \$2.3 million (3.2 percent); gasoline stations at \$61.5 million, up \$1.5 million (2.5 percent); motor vehicles and parts at \$84.5 million, up \$1.2 million (1.5 percent); food and beverage stores at \$78.2 million, up 1.1 million (1.4 percent); health and personal care at \$28.4 million, up \$1.0 million (3.8 percent); and all other types of retail at \$55.2 million, up \$2.0 million (3.8 percent). Furniture and home furnishings stores had the highest percentage increase in sales of 7.4 percent.

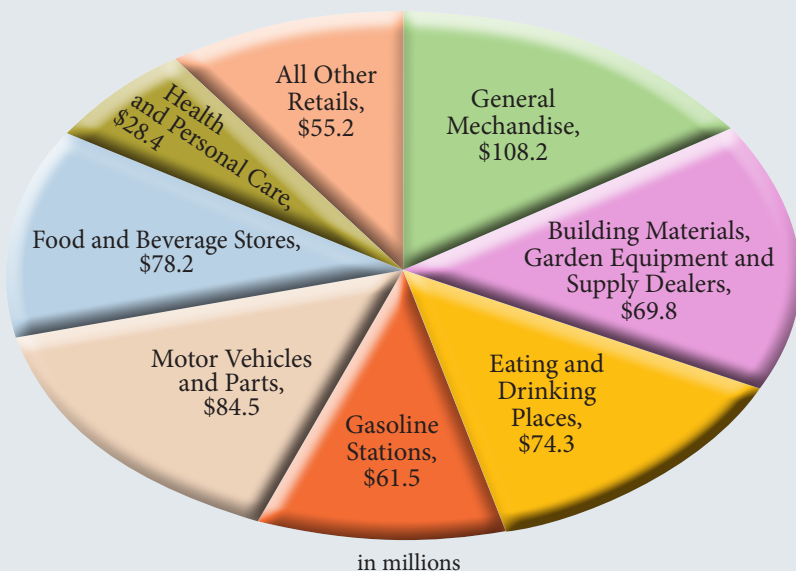
### INSIDE

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### Retail Sales By Category Pittsburg Micropolitan Area, 2019



Source: Woods & Poole



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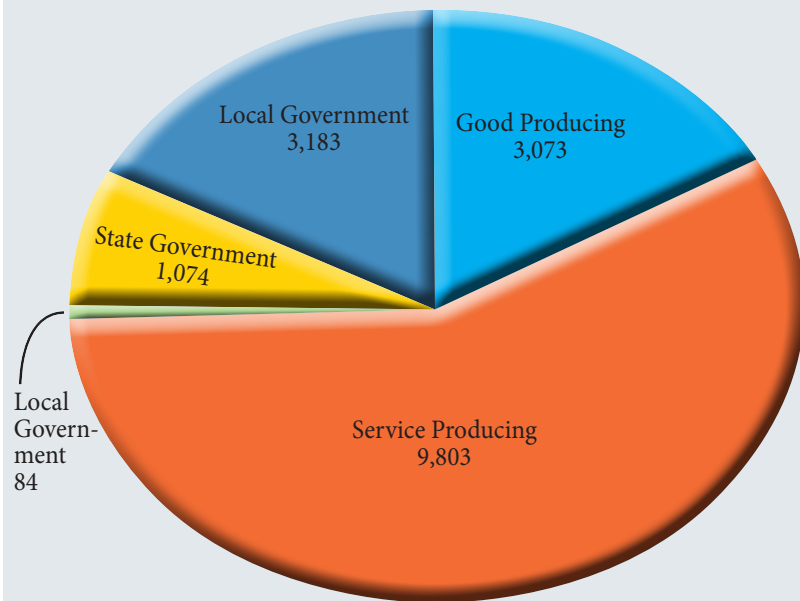
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## TOTAL JOBS

The number of jobs in the Pittsburgh Micropolitan Area increased at a healthy rate in 2019 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The 969 local businesses that pay unemployment insurance (excludes entrepreneurs, but includes government establishments) posted 17,217 jobs during the second quarter of 2019 (latest information available), up 116 jobs from the same quarter in 2018 (0.7 percent). The 751 local businesses in the service industries posted 9,803 jobs, up 139 jobs ( 1.4 percent); the 147 local goods-producing businesses posted 3,073 jobs, down 16 jobs (0.5 percent); local governments posted 3,183 jobs, up 22 jobs (0.7 percent); the state government posted 1,074 jobs, down 27 jobs (2.5 percent); and the federal government posted 84 jobs, down one job (1.2 percent). The Federal Reserve indicated recently that the US economy is on a stable growth path, which is good for the local economy because most of the major employers locally produce for the national market. The 87,869 businesses statewide that pay unemployment insurance posted 1,401,240 jobs during the second quarter, up 12,136 jobs (0.9 percent), and the 10,252,043 businesses nationwide that pay unemployment insurance posted 148,406,360 jobs, up 1,896,624 jobs (1.3 percent).

## Composition Of Jobs Pittsburg Micropolitan Area, Q2 - 2019



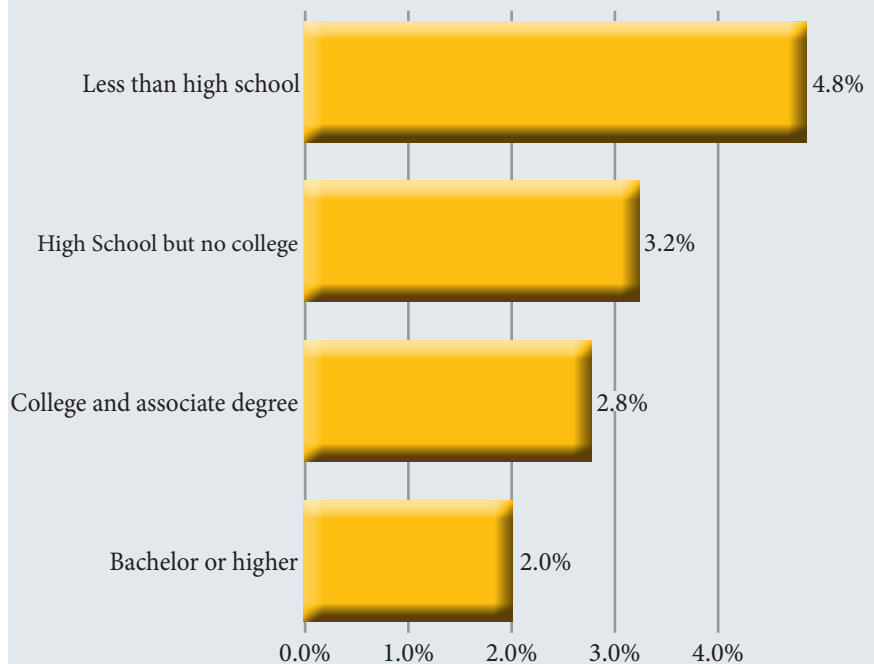
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## UNEMPLOYMENT

The 21st century economy is increasingly high tech, and employers tend to demand more education, with the result that the unemployment rate is lower for people with more education. The average unemployment rate during the first ten months of the year was 2.0 percent for people with a bachelor's degree or higher, 2.8 percent for people with some college or an associate degree, 3.2 percent for high school graduates with no college, and 4.8 percent for people without a high school diploma. The average unemployment rate was 2.7 percent for Asians, 3.4 percent for whites, 4.3 percent for Hispanics, and 6.2 percent for blacks.

The average national unemployment rate during the first 10 months of 2019 was 3.7 percent (down from 4.0 percent from the same period last year), 3.4 percent statewide (no change), and 4.1 percent in the Pittsburgh Micropolitan Area (no change). The low unemployment rate is starting to become a problem for businesses nationwide, which are looking for people to hire. Fewer people looking for a job means less density of skills for employers. Some economists are now beginning to wonder how much the unemployment rate can decline.

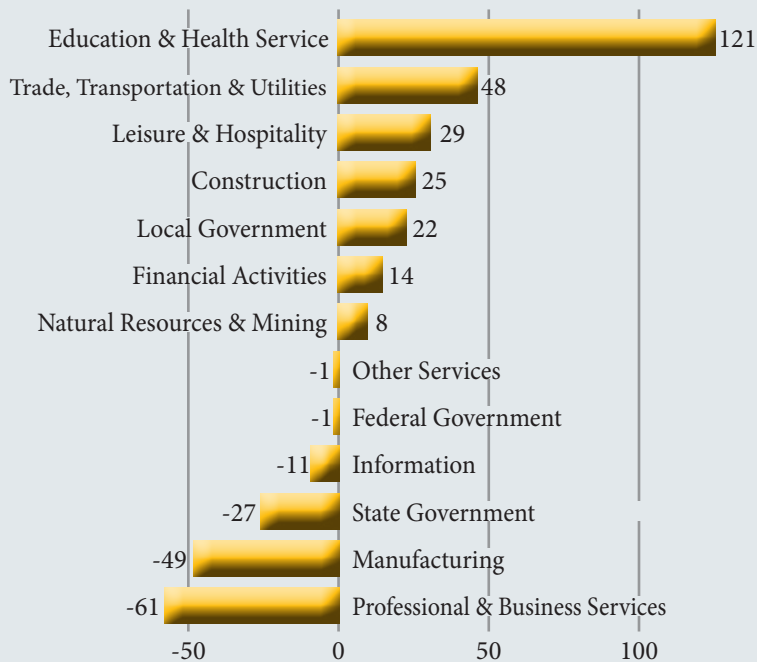
## Unemployment By Educational Attainment Nationwide, First Ten Months Of 2019



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



## Job Growth By Industry Pittsburg Micropolitan Area, Q2 '18 to Q2 '19

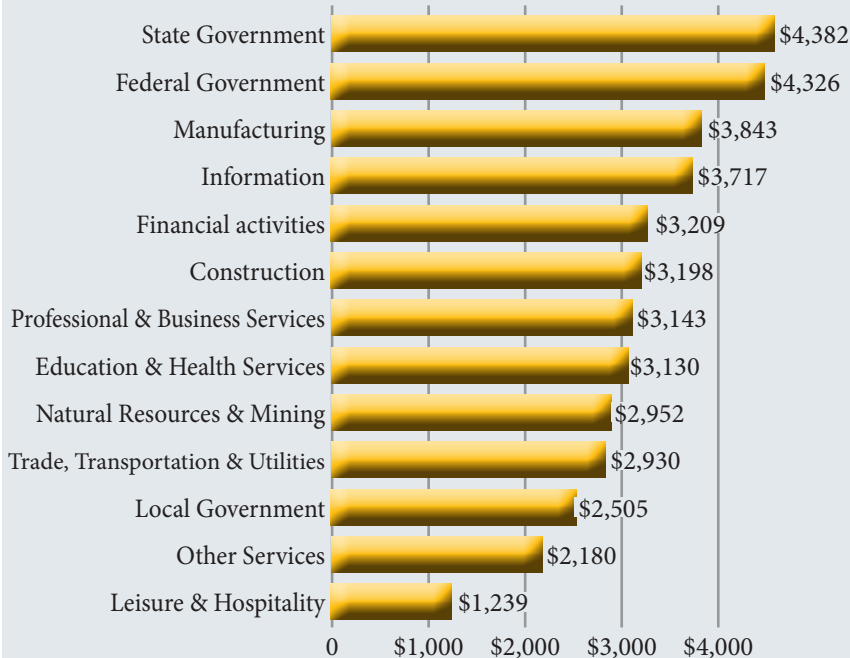


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## JOB GROWTH BY INDUSTRY

The trade war with China does not seem to have had a big negative impact on the national economy so far. However, tariffs on agriculture are affecting farmers nationwide, and Kansas soybean farming is greatly affected. Manufacturing nationwide is also beginning to show signs of a slowdown. Nationwide, the Education and Health Services industry was the fastest growing industry during the second quarter of 2019 (up 454,186 jobs from the second quarter 2018), while the Construction Industry was the fastest growing industry in Kansas (up 4,248 jobs). The fastest growing industry in the Pittsburg Micropolitan Area during the period was Education and Health Services, with 2,335 jobs, up 121 jobs, followed by Trade, Transportation, and Utilities with 3,132 jobs, up 48 jobs; Leisure and Hospitality with 2,010 jobs, up 29 jobs; Construction with 430 jobs, up 25 jobs; Financial Activities with 465 jobs, up 14 jobs; Other Services (automobile repair, dry cleaning services, etc.) with 230 jobs, down 1 job; Government (local, state, and federal) with 4,341 jobs, down 7 jobs; Information Services with 299 jobs, down 11 jobs; Manufacturing with 2,539 jobs, down 49 jobs; and Professional and Business Services with 1,331 jobs, down 61 jobs.

## Monthly Wages By Industry Pittsburg Micropolitan Area, Q2-2019



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## INCOMES BY INDUSTRY

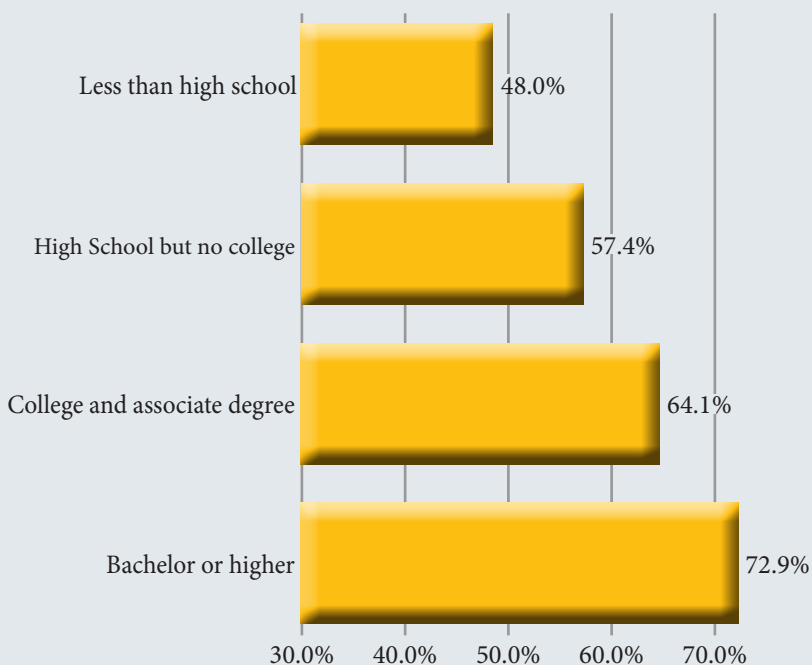
Nationwide, wages are growing at a healthy rate in 2019, especially at the lower end. Most economists expect wages to continue to grow at a healthy rate in the near future due to the low unemployment rate.

The Manufacturing Industry is one of the most important industries for the Pittsburg Micropolitan Area, accounting for 14.7 percent of all jobs, and it had the highest wages in the micropolitan area during the second quarter, posting monthly average wages of \$3,843 (well above the \$2,948 average for all the industries in the area), followed by Information Services with average monthly wages of \$3,717; Financial Activities with \$3,029; Construction with \$3,198; Professional and Business Services with \$3,143; Education and Health Services with \$3,130; Government (local, state, and federal) with \$3,004; Natural Resources and Mining with \$2,952; Trade, Transportation, and Utilities with \$2,930; Other Services (automobile repair, dry cleaning services, etc.) with \$2,180; and Leisure and Hospitality with \$1,239. Overall, average monthly wages during the second quarter were \$2,928 in the private industries, including \$3,723 in the goods-producing industries and \$2,679 in the service-producing industries. Average monthly wages were \$2,505 for local government, \$4,382 for state government, and \$4,326 for the federal government.

## LABOR FORCE

The labor force is defined as the sum of those who are employed and those who are unemployed. While the economy is rebounding, the average nationwide labor force participation rate of 63.1 percent during the first ten months of 2019 is still well below the 66.1 percent participation rate during the same period in 2007 (before the recession). It is a mystery why the people who left the labor force in the wake of the recession are not joining it again. There are now more jobs unfilled than the number of people unemployed. The labor force participation rate was 72.9 percent during the period for people with a bachelor's degree or higher, 64.1 percent for people with some college or an associate degree, 57.4 percent for people with only a high school diploma, and 48.0 percent for people with less than a high school diploma. Labor force participation was 66.7 percent for Hispanics, 64.0 percent for Asians, 63.0 percent for whites, and 62.4 percent for blacks. The average national labor force during the first 10 months of 2019 was 163.4 million (up 0.9 percent from the same period last year), 1,484,207 statewide (up 0.3 percent), and 18,698 in the Pittsburgh Micropolitan Area (down 0.2 percent).

### Labor Force Participation By Educational Attainment Nationwide, First Ten Months Of 2019



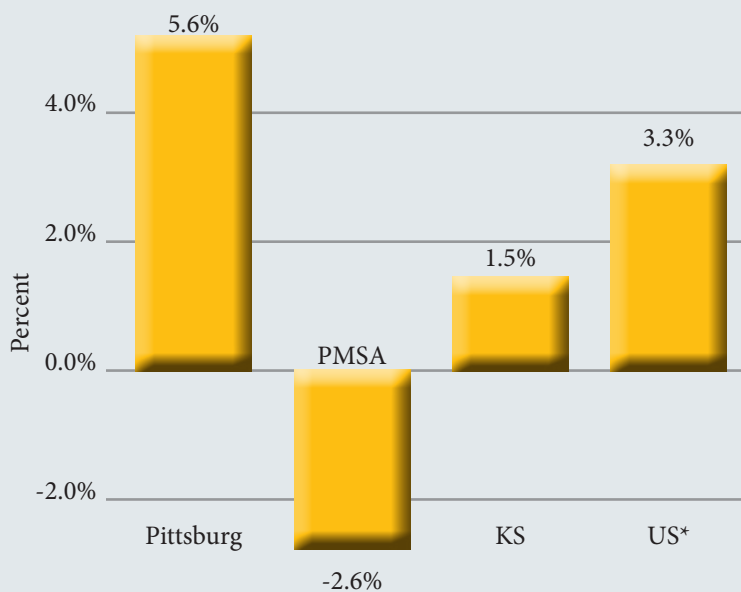
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## TAXABLE SALES

Traditional brick and mortar stores continue to be challenged by the growing popularity of online retail sales. Coresight reports that 9,052 stores have closed nationwide in 2019 (as of November), but only 3,956 stores opened. The overall average nationwide retail space vacancy was 10.1 percent during the third quarter, according to REIS, and 9.4 percent for malls (highest mall vacancy in the last eight years). The spate of bankruptcies and closures of national department stores such as Sears and J.C. Penny (which have been the traditional anchors for malls) is worrisome. Many malls which used to have three or more anchors, now have only one.

Total taxable sales (retail sales and some services sales which are mostly related to tourism) in the City of Pittsburgh increased to \$225.1 million during the first eight months of 2019 (up a significant 5.6 percent from the first eight months of 2019), according to the Kansas Department of Revenue; \$305.3 million in the Pittsburgh Micropolitan Area (down 2.6 percent), and \$28.5 billion statewide (up 1.5 percent). Total retail sales nationwide (taxable sales are not available for the nation), increased to \$4.1 trillion during the period, up 3.3 percent.

### Taxable Sales - Percent Increase Jan '18-Aug '18 to Jan '19-Aug '19

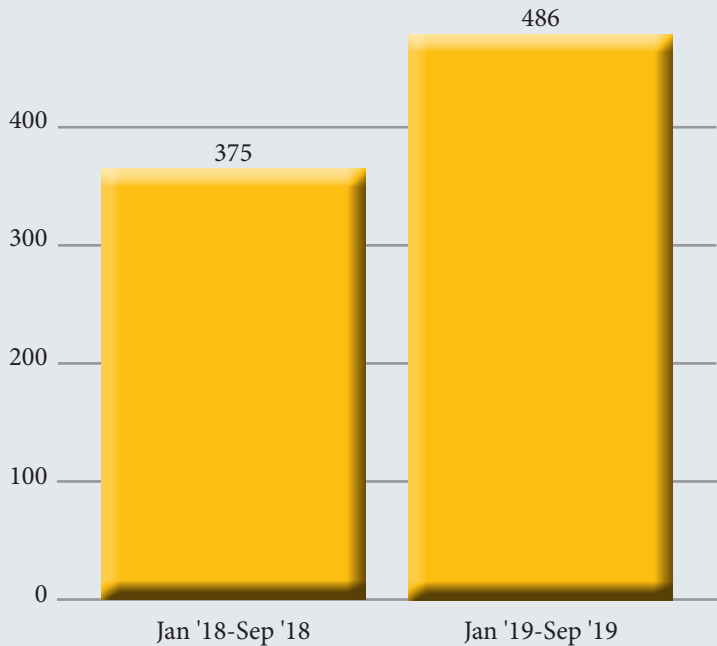


Source: Kansas Department of Revenue

\* Percent increase in total retail sales because taxable sales not available for US

## Number Of Homes Sold

### Pittsburg Area, Jan '18-Sep '18 to Jan '19-Sep '19



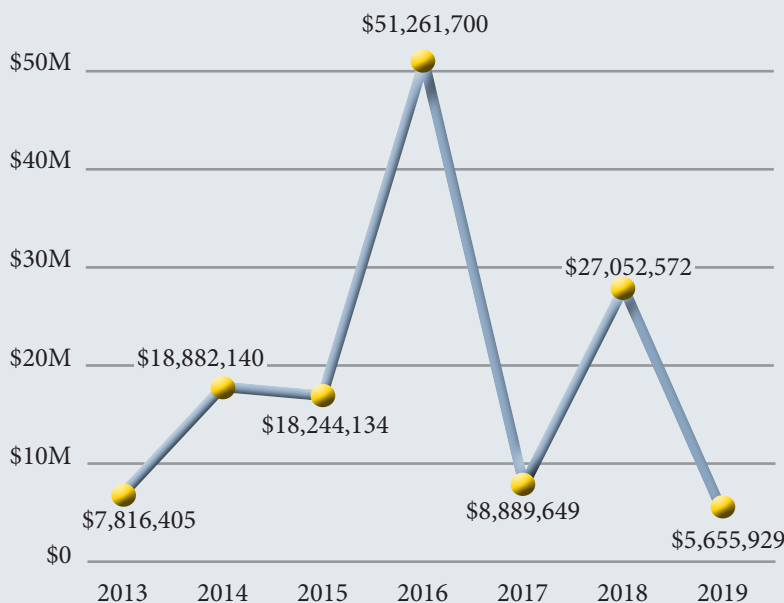
Source: Pittsburg Area Association of Realtors

## RESIDENTIAL PERMITS

The value of residential building permits increased over 194 percent in the City of Pittsburg in 2018 but is down so far in 2019. A total of 91 residential building permits were issued by the City during the first three quarters of the year, with a stated value of \$2,648,682, down 53.6 percent during the same period in 2018. A total of 15 new single-family permits were issued, for a stated value of \$1,850,000 (down 59.0 percent), and 76 permits were issued for additions, alterations, and conversions, for a stated value of \$798,682 (down 33.0 percent). No multi-family permits have been issued for couple of years. However, housing sales are up significantly in the Pittsburg area in 2019, according to the Pittsburg Area Association of Realtors, with 486 homes sold during the first nine months (up 29.6 percent from the same period last year), for an average price of \$121,904 (up 27.2 percent). Interestingly, a recently released survey by National Association of realtors finds that approximately 45 percent of people nationwide who are looking for a home are finding it difficult to buy a home because of credit card debt (up from 37 percent in 2018).

## Value Of Commercial Permits

### First Three Quarters, City of Pittsburg (Jan-Sep)



Source: City of Pittsburg

## COMMERCIAL PERMITS

The value of commercial building permits increased 133.2 percent in the City of Pittsburg in 2018 but is down so far in 2019. The city reports that three new commercial permits were issued during the first three quarters of 2019, with a stated value of \$916,000 (down 57.1 percent from the same period last year), and 67 commercial building permits were issued for additions, alterations, and conversions, with a stated value of \$4,739,929 (down 81.0 percent). Overall, 70 commercial permits were issued during the period, with a stated value of \$5,655,929 (down 79.1 percent).

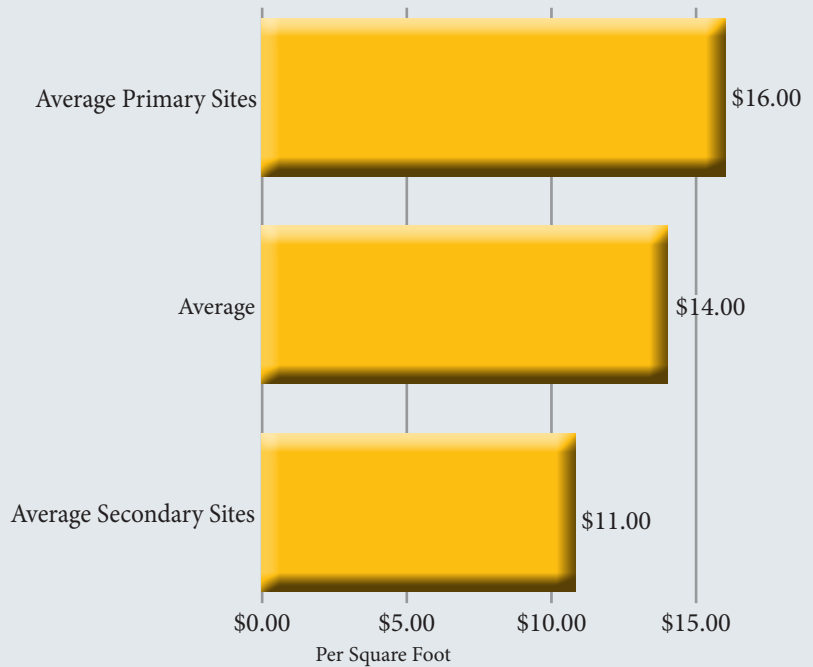
Some of the major permits issued during the period include: interior remodeling at Block 22 (401 N. Broadway) valued at \$1,000,000; interior remodeling at Drop the H Brewing Company (107 E. Rose) valued at \$850,000; New concession stand for a City of Pittsburg project (504 Memorial Drive) valued at \$400,000; New Commercial Carwash for Clean Bee Carwash (104 W. 29th) valued at \$316,000; Storage Silos remodeling at Ridley Block (1057 S. 69 Highway) valued at \$321,000; pharmacy remodeling at Via Christi Hospital (1 Mt. Carmel Way) valued at \$250,780; and CT renovation at Via Christi Hospital (1 Mt. Carmel Way) valued at \$250,000.

## MEDICAL SPACE MARKET

Pittsburg is a center for medical services in Southeast Kansas. Pittsburg is the home of the 401,000 square foot Via Christi hospital with 188 beds, featuring a level III trauma center, a recent 40,000 square foot surgery center with state-of-the-art technology offering robotics-assisted minimally invasive surgeries, a newly renovated \$2.6 million cardiac step-down unit, a state-of-the-art catheterization lab, and a comprehensive cancer center. Furthermore, the Joplin-based Freeman Hospital and Mercy Hospital have significant medical presence locally, the South East Kansas Community Health Center recently completed a significant expansion, and DaVita Kidney Care recently built a dialysis center in Pittsburg.

The local medical office space market is doing well, according to Jones Heritage Realtors, a local authority on commercial space, with an average low medical space rental rate of \$11.00 per square foot in 2019, an average high of \$16.00 per square foot, and an overall average of \$14.00 per square foot. Moreover, a new U.S. News and World Report study finds that the Pittsburg micropolitan area has 36.1 percent greater access to medical care per capita than the average for the 813 communities nationwide in its peer group.

## Medical Space Rental Rates Pittsburg Area - 2019



Source: Jones Heritage Realtors

## WAREHOUSING AND COMMERCIAL LAND VALUES

Due to the rapid increase in e-commerce and online retail shopping, warehousing is one of the hottest sectors in real-estate nationwide. However, most of the currently available warehouse space is geared towards industry, and is not suitable for online retailers. Developers nationwide are rushing to build warehouses suitable for e-commerce, and rental prices have increased 19.2 percent since 2015. Meanwhile, in cities with significant goods-producing industries, the real estate market is doing well. One of the most important industries in the Pittsburg micropolitan area is manufacturing. Most local manufacturers depend on the national industry, and some need extensive warehousing. The Pittsburg micropolitan area is well suited to manufacturing and warehousing, and due to improvement in the local economy and the widening of US Highway 69 from Fort Scott to Arma, which will provide for a four lane highway all the way to Kansas City, the future also looks promising for the local industrial land market. Jones Heritage Realtors reports that in the Pittsburg area, light industrial and warehouse rental rates start at an average low of \$1.75 per square foot and increase to an average high of \$4.00 per square foot, with an overall average rent of \$3.00 per square foot.

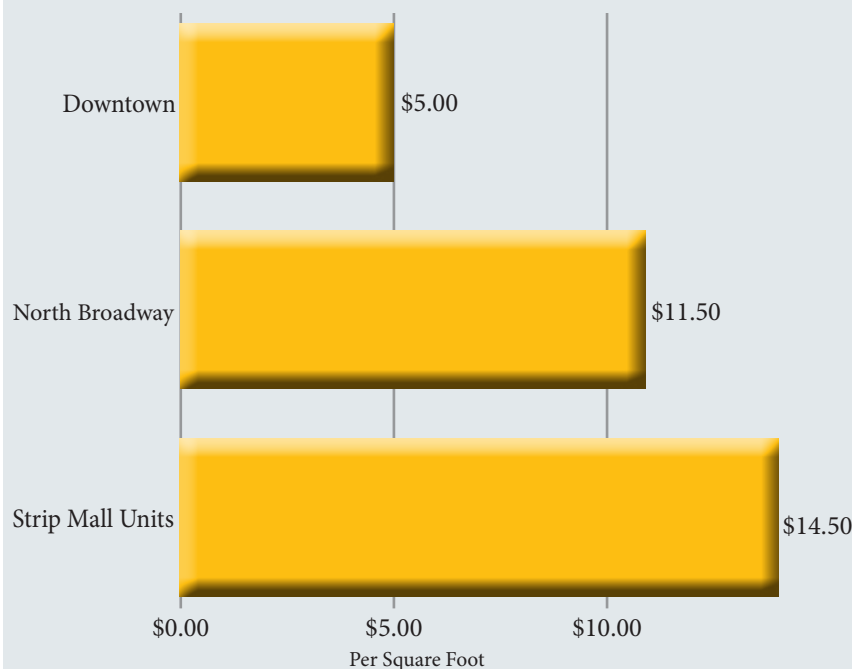
## Warehouse Rental Rates Pittsburg Area - 2019



Source: Jones Heritage Realtors



## Average Net Retail Rental Rates Pittsburg Area - 2019

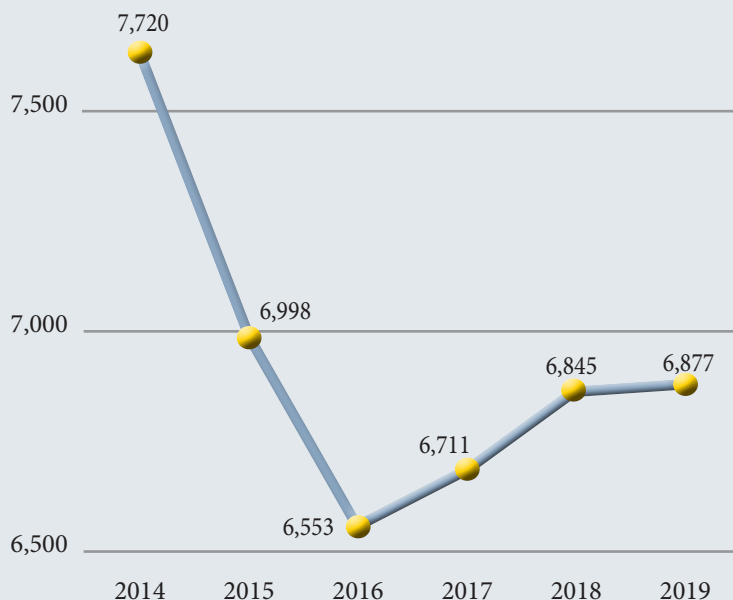


Source: Jones Heritage Realtors

## RETAIL SPACE MARKET

Pittsburg is an anchor of retail sales in Southeast Kansas, and the local retail space market is doing well according to Jones Heritage Realtors, which reports that the current average net rental rate (the tenant pays the property taxes, insurance premiums, and some maintenance) is \$5.00 per square foot for downtown retail space, \$11.50 on North Broadway, and \$14.50 in strip malls. A new report released in October by Demographics Now states that there are 324 retail businesses in the Pittsburg micropolitan area. There are more than 40 small specialty retailers in downtown Pittsburg, including boutiques and specialty clothing stores, jewelry stores, specialty candy and ice cream stores, bridal shops, sporting goods stores, specialty foods and art shops, and recreational activity centers, including axe throwing. Several new retailers opened locations in Pittsburg in 2019, including Brick & Mortar, Drop the H Brewing Company, Goodwill retail store, Gordman's in Meadowbrook Mall, Jolly Fox Brewery, Juicy's Burritos, Sakera Hibachi Grill & Sushi, Sign Brothers, Sonder & Company, and Toast LLC. As the home of Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg also has a significant relative concentration of general merchandise stores, which are popular with students shopping for necessities.

## Total Number Of Bankruptcies Twelve Months Ending In September, Kansas, 2014-2019



Source: US Courts & Demographics Now

## BANKRUPTCIES

The US Bankruptcy Court reports that 6,877 bankruptcies were filed in Kansas during the twelve-month period ending in September 2019, up 0.5 percent from the twelve-month period ending in September 2018. That includes 6,652 personal bankruptcies (down 0.1 percent) in the following categories: 3,600 Chapter 7 personal bankruptcies (straight bankruptcy, debt wiped out), down 0.7 percent; four Chapter 11 personal bankruptcies (reorganization of personal debt and temporary protection from creditors), up 300 percent; and 3,048 Chapter 13 personal bankruptcies (some debt wiped out and some repayments), up 0.7 percent. It also includes 225 business bankruptcies (up 18.4 percent), including 124 Chapter 7 business bankruptcies (total liquidation with no repayments), up 8.8 percent; 44 Chapter 11 business bankruptcies (reorganization of business debt and temporary protection from creditors), up 91.3 percent; 37 Chapter 12 business bankruptcies (reorganization of debt for family farms), up 37.0 percent; and 20 Chapter 13 business bankruptcies (total liquidation with some repayments), down 23.1 percent. During the same period, 776,674 bankruptcies were filed nationwide (up 0.4 percent), and 41 bankruptcies were filed in the Pittsburg micropolitan area (down 6.8 percent).

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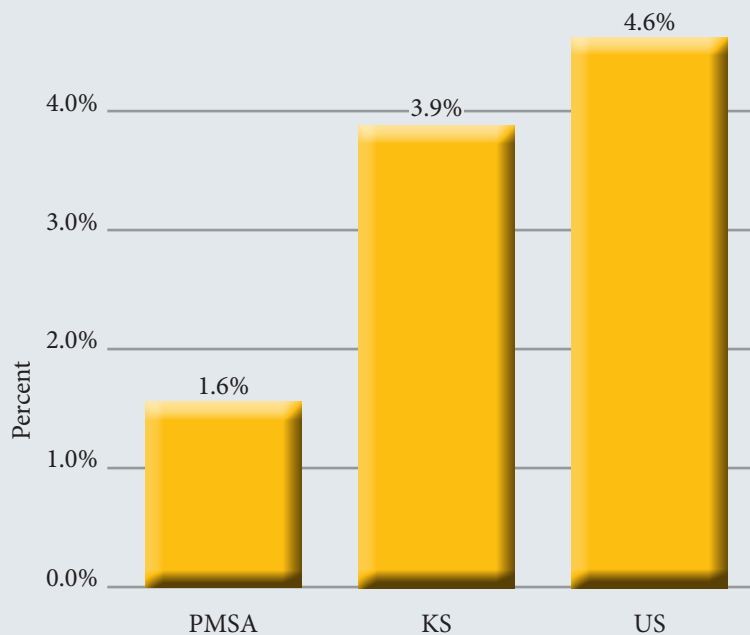
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## Banking Industry

### Growth In Assets, Q3 '18 - Q3 '19



Source: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

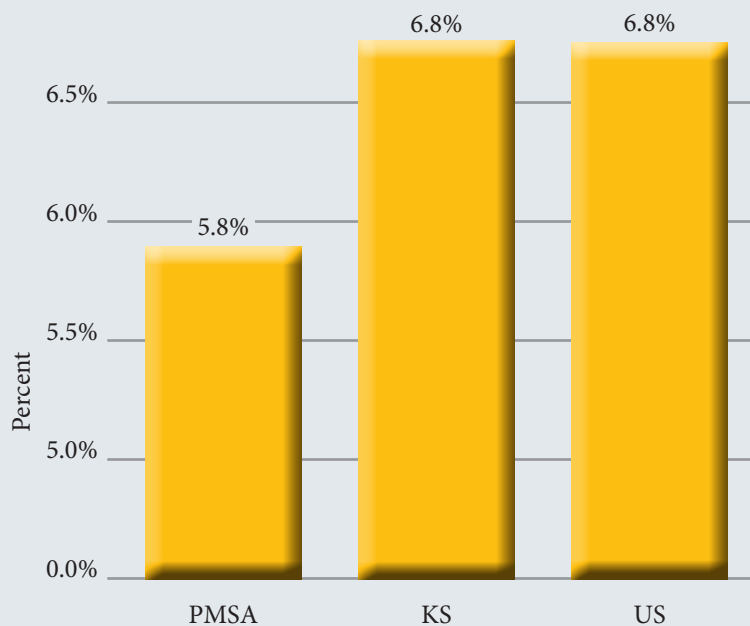
## BANKING INDUSTRY

The Federal Reserve says that the economy is strong and is on a sustainable path of economic growth and the fact that corporate debt has doubled since 2007 (to \$6.5 trillion) is not going to have any major implications on banks or financial markets. However, the federal government deficits are growing faster than national output and that is unsustainable in the long run.

The Pittsburg Micropolitan Area banking industry (with local headquarters) posted \$720.0 million in total assets during the third quarter 2019 (up 1.6 percent from same quarter last year), \$472.2 million in net loans and leases (down 4.0 percent), \$4.7 million in non-current loans and leases (down 40.3 percent), and \$5.9 million in net income (down 9.3 percent). Banks with headquarters in Kansas posted \$74.0 billion in total assets (up 3.9 percent), \$49.7 billion in net loans and leases of (up 4.0 percent), \$465.8 million in non-current loans and leases (up 27.8 percent), and net income of \$661.2 million (up 5.5 percent). The national industry posted \$18.5 trillion in total assets (up 4.6 percent), \$10.3 trillion in net loans and leases (up 4.7 percent), \$95.5 billion in non-current loans and leases (down 5.6 percent), and \$180.3 billion in net income (up 1.5 percent).

## Credit Union Industry

### Growth In Assets, Q3 '18 - Q3 '19



Source: National Credit Union Administration

## CREDIT UNION INDUSTRY

The performance of the credit union industry was good during the third quarter. The difference between credit unions and banks is that credit unions are tax-exempt and specialize in short term consumer loans. However, credit unions also do mortgage lending. Banks, on the other hand, do both business and consumer loans, as well as mortgages.

The Pittsburg Micropolitan Area credit union industry (with local headquarters) posted \$100.5 million in total assets during the third quarter 2019 (up 5.8 percent from same quarter last year), \$71.3 million in net loans and leases (down 1.5 percent), \$370,529 in non-current loans and leases (down 5.6 percent), and \$851,401 in net income (up 44.6 percent). Banks with headquarters in Kansas posted \$10.8 billion in total assets (up 6.8 percent), \$8.0 billion in net loans and leases of (up 5.2 percent), \$51.9 million in non-current loans and leases (down 2.5 percent), and net income of \$67.4 million (up 31.9 percent). The national industry posted \$1.6 trillion in total assets (up 6.8 percent), \$1.1 trillion in net loans and leases (up 5.9 percent), \$7.4 billion in non-current loans and leases (up 5.3 percent), and \$11.1 billion in net income (up 8.0 percent).

# Demographic Summary 2019

	70 Miles Radius Pittsburg, Kansas	100 Miles Radius Pittsburg, Kansas	130 Miles Radius Pittsburg, Kansas
Total Population	662,138	2,255,908	5,669,501
Population Density (per Sq. Mi.)	43.0	71.8	106.7
Total Households	261,758	878,618	2,239,463

## Population By Gender

Male Population	327,706	1,115,999	2,790,961
Female Population	334,432	1,139,909	2,878,540

## Population Percentage By Race and Ethnicity

White	87.0%	84.8%	78.6%
Black	1.6%	2.2%	7.4%
American Indian or Alaska Native	3.9%	3.5%	3.4%
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	1.3%	2.3%	2.6%
Some Other Race	2.6%	3.5%	4.0%
Two or More Races	3.8%	3.8%	4.1%
Hispanic Ethnicity	5.6%	7.5%	8.9%
Not of Hispanic Ethnicity	94.4%	92.6%	91.2%

## Households By Income

Average Household Income	\$58,833	\$70,026	\$75,159
Median Household Income	\$44,833	\$51,308	\$54,309
Per Capita Income	\$23,519	\$27,518	\$29,932

## Employment

Total Population 16+	523,914	1,777,993	4,467,564
% Blue Collar	49.1%	42.7%	40.1%
% White Collar	50.9%	57.3%	59.9%

## Educational Attainment

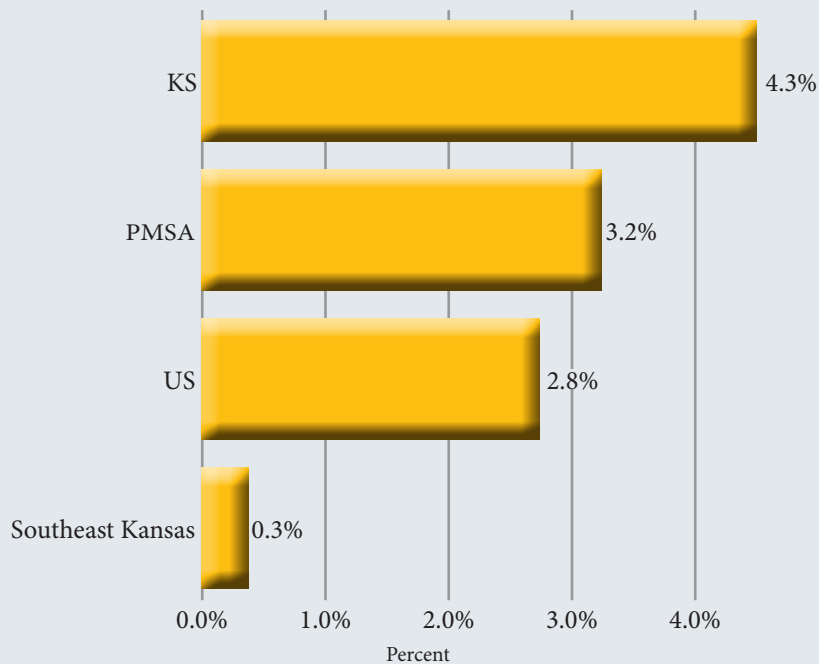
Total Population Age 25+	447,539	1,496,381	3,782,202
% Grade K - 8	3.7%	3.3%	2.9%
% Grade 9 - 11	9.2%	7.8%	7.2%
% High School Graduate	35.2%	32.4%	29.5%
% Some College, No Degree	24.2%	23.4%	23.2%
% Associates Degree	8.4%	7.5%	7.5%
% Bachelor's Degree	12.3%	16.5%	18.7%
% Graduate Degree	6.2%	8.4%	10.1%
% No Schooling Completed	1.0%	0.8%	0.9%

Source: Demographics Now



## Value Of Room Sales

### Lodging Industry - Percent Increase Jan '18-Oct '18 to Jan '19-Oct '19



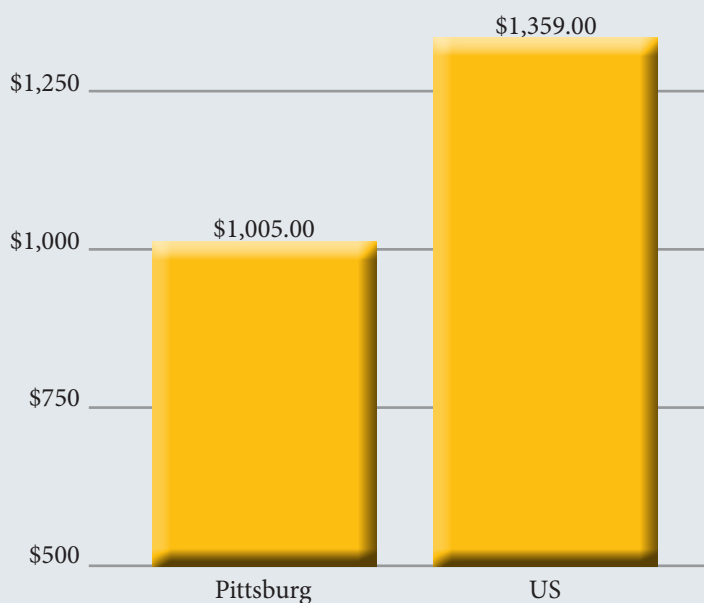
Source: Smith Travel Research

## LODGING INDUSTRY

The National Travel and Tourism Office reports that 26.6 percent of all tourists to the United States during the first nine months of 2019 came from Canada, 22.3 percent from Mexico, 17.9 percent from Western Europe, 16.0 percent from Asia and 7.7 percent from South America. The occupancy in the national lodging industry was 67.8 percent during the first ten months of 2019 and total room revenue was \$140.5 billion (up 2.8 percent from the first ten months in 2018), the occupancy rate was 58.0 percent statewide with total room revenue \$706,723,820 (up 4.3 percent) and the Southeast Kansas lodging industry posted an occupancy rate 45.8 percent and room revenue of \$12,618,223 (up 0.3 percent). The Pittsburg Micropolitan Area has seen a significant increase in tourism during the last few years, posting an occupancy rate of 51.7 percent during the period and room revenue of \$7,960,278 (up 3.2 percent from last year and up a significant 48.2 percent from three years ago). The most popular local tourist destinations are: Veterans Memorial Amphitheater, Crawford County Historical Museum; Robert W. Plaster Center & Sports Complex, The Wilderness Park, Crawford State Park, the Prairie State Park and the Wildlife Park.

## Monthly Mortgage & Insurance Payment

### 2,400 Sq. Home on 8,000 Sq. Lot In A Middle To Upper Income Neighborhood



Source: Council Of Community and Economic Research

## COST OF LIVING

The cost of living is one of the most important and most watched economic indicators because it has important implications for quality of life. For the average family, housing is the single biggest expenditure by far. People living in the Pittsburg micropolitan area enjoy a high quality of life and low cost of living. The Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness conducts a quarterly survey on cost of living in cities nationwide (however, many big cities decide not to participate). The July 2019 survey found that the average cost of a 2,400 square foot new home with four bedrooms and two baths on an 8,000 square foot lot in a middle to upper income neighborhood in the City of Pittsburg was approximately \$263,992. Assuming approximately 4.52 percent mortgage interest rate (good or fair credit rating), the monthly mortgage payment (including home owners' insurance) with a 25 percent down payment would be approximately \$1,005 monthly. This compares favorably to the average home price of \$352,330 nationwide with an estimated monthly mortgage payment (including home owners' insurance) of \$1,359.

# BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

## SUMMER TOURISM BREAKS CRAWFORD COUNTY RECORDS

A busy summer in Crawford County has led to a record number of visitors, with June totals surpassing 10,000 room nights in a month for only the second time in history, according to a release from the Crawford County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB).

“Our lodging numbers this year are great, and they would be record breaking across the board if last year hadn’t been so outstanding,” CVB Executive Director Devin Gorman said. “Summer is actually our busiest time of year for tourism, and we know that our local businesses appreciate the influx of visitors.”

Through the first seven months of 2019, hotel room demand was at 62,432, just 31 room nights shy of the record breaking pace set in 2018. The second quarter of 2019, however, saw 28,825 room nights filled – the highest quarterly total on record in Crawford County history. July surpassed 9,700 rooms, a record high for the month. The record high for any month was set after the 2011 Joplin tornado.  
*The Pittsburg Morning Sun*

## AREA ECONOMIC OUTLOOK DISCUSSED AT CONFERENCE

A wide range of local government, business and community stakeholders gathered on Tuesday 22nd October, at Pittsburg State University for the 2019 Pittsburg Regional Economic Outlook Conference. Speakers at the event included representatives of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, the University of Kansas Health System, Wichita State University, PSU, and the Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce.

One of the speakers said that manufacturing “is the anchor of economic growth locally, an anchor of economic stability,” that “there seems to be considerable optimism going on locally,” and home sales in the Pittsburg area “are through the roof.” Speaker also talked, however, about problems with the local housing market.

“Almost all major indicators of the city of Pittsburg and micropolitan area are improving, however, we have a very bad problem, a fundamental problem that can jeopardize all future growth and prosperity, and that’s population growth,” speaker said. “We are not growing in terms of population.” Speaker identified three key areas for a city’s successful economic development include a vibrant downtown, flexible housing markets, and strengthen-

ing public schools.

Following the conference, Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce President Blake Benson noted that the event takes place annually in October. He said he would “encourage anybody next year that would just like more information on where their state, their region, and their city is headed economically” to come to the 2020 conference.  
*Jonathan Riley, Pittsburg Morning Sun*

## SECOND CRAFT BREWERY WITHIN DAYS OPENS IN PITTSBURG

Drop The H opened on Thursday 17th October, 2019 following a ribbon cutting and some pre-opening events earlier in the week. Though a determined consumer might be able to acquire pizza and beer under one roof at a local gas station, among other places, a decidedly more elegant option for those seeking this classic combination is now available in Pittsburg.

In the process of planning for Drop The H, Mark McClain — who owns the new business with his wife Cathy — was certified in the University of Vermont’s Business of Craft Beer Program. Drop The H’s beer selection currently includes a pale ale, a Belgian wit, an India pale ale (IPA), and a dry Irish stout. Four more options are planned to soon be added to that list. The menu at Drop The H includes 10 specialty varieties of New York style, brick oven pizza along with a customizable option. Other than pizza, there are also salads, some appetizers, and charcuterie — a selection of meats, cheeses, fruits and crackers that comes in two varieties available at Drop The H.

Blake Benson, president of the Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce, attended Wednesday’s preopening event and commented on what a business like Drop The H can do for a community like Pittsburg. “This is obviously a mark of a progressive community, you know, having a place like this,” Benson said, “especially with the university community, having locally-owned businesses, locally owned breweries really shows that Pittsburg is progressive and we appreciate people like Mark and Cathy McClain investing in our community.”

*Jonathan Riley, Pittsburg Morning Sun*

## PITTSBURG MAY SOON GET RENTABLE SCOOTERS

ACassandra Ngo, administrative associate with University Strategic Initiatives at Pittsburg State University, tested out one of the new VeoRide scooters Thursday at an event celebrating the near completion of Block22 in downtown Pittsburg. If approved by the

city commission at its next meeting, Pittsburg residents and visitors will soon have access to a fleet of electric scooters that riders can easily rent using a mobile app on their phones for \$1 per 15 minutes.

The scooters will be owned and serviced by the company VeoRide. Deputy City Manager Jay Byers said similar mobile app operated scooter companies such as Bird and Lime might be reluctant to come to Pittsburg because they generally offer their services in larger cities.

Byers said VeoRide has seen and commented on the city’s ordinance, and having the scooters regulated by the city should prevent some of the problems that have been associated with similar mobile app operated scooters in other cities. The city will not have to spend any money to bring the VeoRide scooters to Pittsburg, Byers said.

“There is no need to use subsidies or public funding to incorporate a new transportation system,” VeoRide’s website notes. Byers said VeoRide would probably start off with 20 to 30 scooters in Pittsburg. Byers said appealing features of the VeoRide scooters include that they can be located by Global Positioning System and geo-fenced to prevent them from leaving a designated area. At first the scooters will be geo-fenced to only operate in the area of the Pittsburg State University campus and Broadway up to the downtown area near Block22.

*Jonathan Riley, Pittsburg Morning Sun*

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# PITTSBURG MICROPOLITAN AREA EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

	Average No. of Q2 '19 Employees	Average Q2 '19 Wages	Average No. of Q2 '18 Employees	Average Q2 '18 Wages	Average Jobs Growth	Average Wage Growth
Wired telecommunications carriers	101	\$5,057	99	\$4,933	2.0%	2.50%
Telecommunications	101	\$5,057	99	\$4,933	2.0%	2.50%
Wood product manufacturing	169	\$4,812	150	\$3,973	12.4%	21.10%
Farm supplies merchant wholesalers	38	\$4,793	33	\$4,789	14.1%	0.08%
Offices of dentists	105	\$4,591	102	\$5,200	3.0%	-11.72%
Agricultural market and commodity regulation	12	\$4,584	13	\$4,436	-2.6%	3.34%
Postal service	67	\$4,253	68	\$4,106	-1.0%	3.58%
Machinery and supply merchant wholesalers	61	\$4,130	80	\$3,745	-24.2%	10.28%
Managing offices	316	\$4,043	308	\$4,160	2.4%	-2.80%
Farm product raw material merch. whls.	55	\$4,010	57	\$3,825	-2.4%	4.84%
Printing	433	\$3,922	452	\$3,781	-4.2%	3.72%
Architectural and structural metals mfg.	287	\$3,888	319	\$3,492	-9.8%	11.35%
Legal services	85	\$3,881	91	\$3,290	-6.6%	17.98%
Utility system construction	125	\$3,814	89	\$3,696	39.9%	3.19%
Administrative management consulting services	13	\$3,638	10	\$3,596	34.5%	1.17%
Commercial banking	186	\$3,622	200	\$3,399	-7.2%	6.57%
Electrical and wiring contractors	25	\$3,411	23	\$3,561	7.1%	-4.22%
Truck transportation	90	\$3,327	86	\$3,158	4.7%	5.35%
Accounting and bookkeeping services	96	\$3,316	60	\$3,134	60.6%	5.81%
Insurance agencies and brokerages	45	\$3,171	41	\$3,295	8.1%	-3.77%
Machinery manufacturing	96	\$3,081	86	\$3,040	11.6%	1.37%
Water supply and irrigation systems	14	\$3,050	14	\$2,890	0.0%	5.53%
Automobile dealers	140	\$2,979	131	\$3,329	7.1%	-10.53%
Commercial building construction	57	\$2,977	66	\$2,799	-14.1%	6.36%
Furniture stores	23	\$2,952	26	\$2,353	-12.7%	25.46%
Oilseed and grain combination farming	33	\$2,894	32	\$3,114	3.1%	-7.06%
Building equipment contractors	64	\$2,787	60	\$2,913	6.7%	-4.33%
Pharmacies and drug stores	56	\$2,744	54	\$2,774	3.7%	-1.09%
Tire dealers	39	\$2,715	40	\$2,656	-2.5%	2.20%
Automotive repair and maintenance	84	\$2,669	85	\$2,549	-1.6%	4.70%
Automotive repair and maintenance	84	\$2,669	85	\$2,549	-1.6%	4.70%
Solid waste collection	36	\$2,623	39	\$1,841	-6.0%	42.50%
Computer systems design and related services	30	\$2,609	25	\$2,223	17.1%	17.39%
Repair and maintenance	93	\$2,600	89	\$2,506	4.5%	3.76%
Specialized freight trucking	33	\$2,525	29	\$2,542	13.6%	-0.66%
Home health care services	122	\$2,398	113	\$2,452	7.6%	-2.22%
Electronics and appliance stores	88	\$2,290	74	\$2,247	18.9%	1.88%
Traveler accommodation	326	\$2,168	328	\$2,154	-0.5%	0.66%
Nursing care facilities, skilled nursing	355	\$2,083	327	\$2,037	8.5%	2.27%
Residential building construction	16	\$2,017	12	\$2,082	30.6%	-3.11%
General merchandise stores	430	\$2,006	456	\$1,932	-5.7%	3.84%
Grocery stores	309	\$1,926	314	\$1,910	-1.5%	0.87%
Automotive parts and accessories stores	50	\$1,914	55	\$1,731	-9.6%	10.61%
Continuing care, assisted living facilities	216	\$1,892	224	\$1,923	-3.7%	-1.61%
Janitorial services	68	\$1,889	110	\$2,161	-37.7%	-12.59%
Residential property managers	26	\$1,844	27	\$1,637	-4.9%	12.69%
Child day care services	118	\$1,790	116	\$1,780	1.7%	0.53%
Building material and supplies dealers	152	\$1,786	164	\$1,690	-6.9%	5.72%
Offices of real estate agents and brokers	13	\$1,596	13	\$1,886	-2.6%	-15.41%
Landscaping services	40	\$1,527	35	\$1,746	16.3%	-12.53%
Nursery, garden, and farm supply stores	39	\$1,520	44	\$1,348	-12.8%	12.79%
Gasoline stations	159	\$1,433	154	\$1,435	3.0%	-0.13%
Clothing stores	47	\$1,049	46	\$1,020	2.2%	2.81%
Full-service restaurants	761	\$1,029	803	\$1,000	-5.3%	2.87%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics





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