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### The Pittsburg Micropolitan Area Economic Report, Quarter 1, 2021

Pittsburg State University. Gladys A. Kelce College of Business

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# THE PITTSBURG MICROPOLITAN AREA ECONOMIC REPORT

## Restaurants and Brick and Mortar Stores Most Affected by COVID-19

**B**ankruptcies were up more than 50 percent for restaurants and brick and mortar retailers, nationwide, in 2020. It is estimated that more than 110,000 eating and drinking establishments closed in 2020, according to the National Restaurant Association. Restaurants that closed had been in business 16 years on average, and 72 percent of owners said they would not open another restaurant.

However, the good news is that restaurant sales are expected to increase 22.4 percent in 2021. COVID-19 also accelerated the online retail sales trend. Approximately 9.9 percent of all U. S. retail sales were online in 2018, increasing to 11.0 percent in 2019 and to 14.5

percent in 2020, and retail sales are now projected to increase to 25 percent by 2025. In response to this trend, brick and mortar stores have begun to offer curbside pickup, with the latest estimates showing that 43.7 percent of all retailers offer curbside pickup, up from 6.9 percent in January 2020.

Malls have been especially hard hit by declining traffic, and 25 percent of all malls nationwide might close within 4-5 years. Numerous traditional mall anchors have filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy and other anchors are abandoning malls in favor of strip shopping centers.

The 184,000-square-foot enclosed

Meadowbrook Mall in Pittsburgh seems to be doing relatively well, however. Additionally, local retail channels do not seem to be affected much by COVID-19, with preliminary estimates by the Kansas Department of Revenue (KDOR) indicating that online sales were only 1.7 percent of taxable sales in the Pittsburgh Micropolitan Area in 2020. Furthermore, taxable sales increased a healthy 3.7 percent in 2020 in the micropolitan area, and advanced estimates, based on sales tax collections returned to the City of Pittsburgh, indicate that taxable sales increased a significant 11.6 percent during the first quarter 2021 from the first quarter 2020.

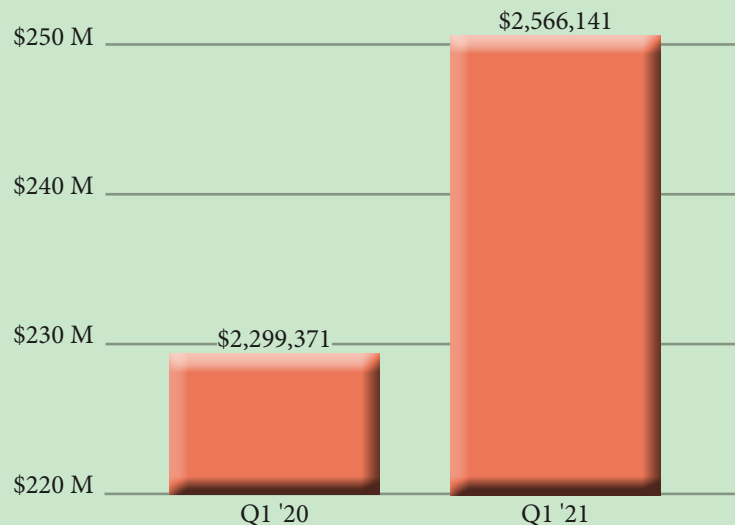
## INSIDE

- National Jobs and Incomes
- Unemployment
- Job Growth by Industry
- Income by Industry
- Labor Force
- Retail Sales
- Residential Permits
- Commercial Permits
- Office Space Market
- Commercial Market
- Retail Space Market
- Bankruptcies
- Banking, Credit Unions and more . . .



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## Sales Tax Collections City of Pittsburgh



Source: Kansas Department of Revenue

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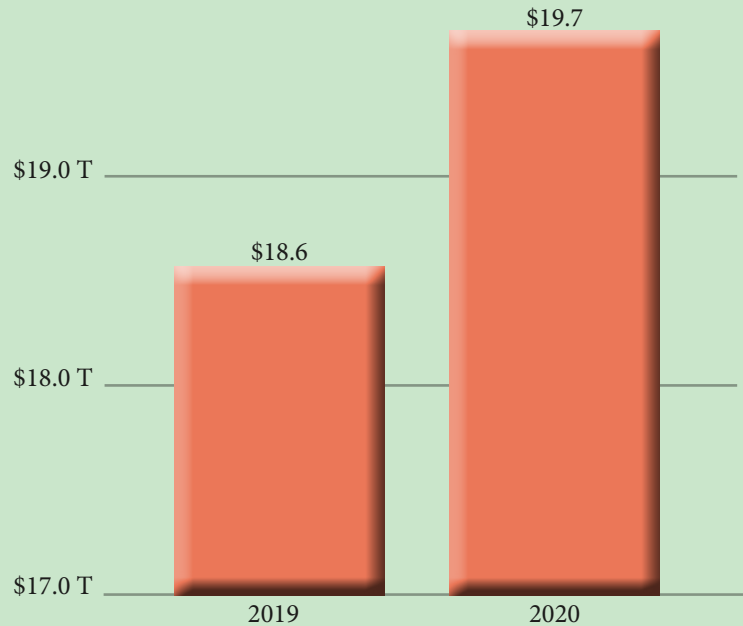


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## NATIONAL JOBS AND INCOMES

The national economy continues to improve, with an unexpected increase of 1.3 million not seasonally adjusted jobs in March, up 0.9 percent from February (up 916,000 seasonally adjusted jobs). During March and April 2020, 20.7 million jobs were lost, but 63.5 percent of those lost jobs have been recovered. However, employment is still 7.6 million jobs below the February 2020 level. The Leisure and Hospitality Industry took the biggest hit during COVID-19, losing 46.9 percent of total jobs in the industry (7.7 million jobs). However, Leisure and Hospitality is now one of the fastest growing industries, adding 436,000 jobs in March 2021 (up 3.3 percent since February) and 4,825,000 since April 2020 (up 55.8 percent). During the first quarter of 2021, there were 142.1 million average monthly jobs nationwide, down 8.2 million jobs (down 5.4 percent) from the first quarter of 2020. The average wage increased in March and April 2020 and has been rising steadily, with average monthly wages increasing 6.6 percent during the first quarter of 2021. Overall, personal income (wages, property values, unemployment, etc.) increased 6.1 percent nationwide in 2020 due to unprecedented transfer relief payments, which led the income growth in 25 states and D.C.

## Personal Income Nationwide



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

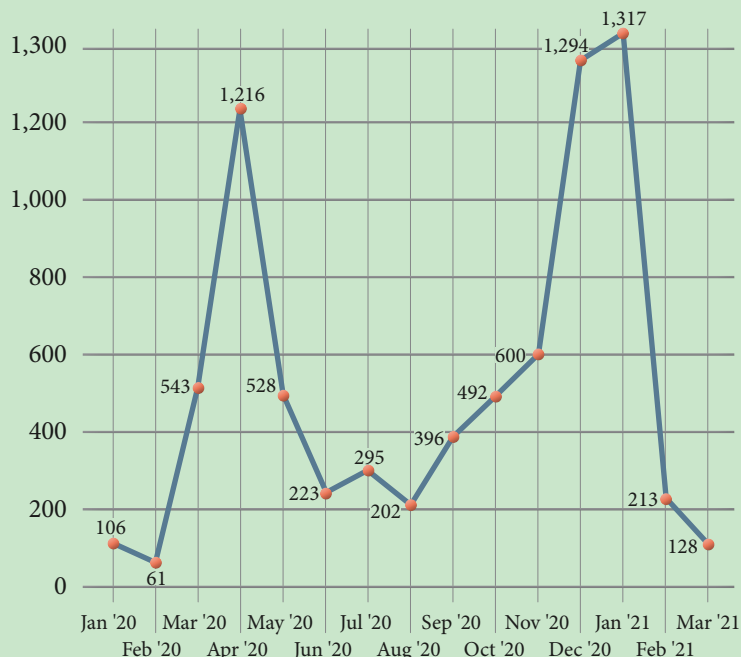
## UNEMPLOYMENT

The national economy was doing well at the beginning of 2020, with unemployment at a 50-year low and fewer unemployed people than the number of job openings (0.8 unemployed people per one job opening).

Then COVID-19 hit, and in April 2020 there were 5.0 unemployed people per job opening, with an unemployment rate of 14.4 percent. However, the economy has improved significantly since then. In February 2021 there were 1.4 unemployed people per job opening, and the unemployment rate declined to 6.2 percent nationwide in March 2021. The unemployment rate was 9.5 percent for people with less than a high school diploma, 7.1 percent for high school graduates with no college, 6.1 percent for people with some college or an associate's degree, and 3.6 percent for people with a bachelor's degree.

African Americans had the highest unemployment rate of 9.9 percent, followed by Hispanics 8.2 percent; Caucasians, 5.5 percent; and Asians, 5.9 percent. In March 2021, the unemployment rate was 3.8 percent statewide and 3.7 percent in the Pittsburgh Micropolitan Area. Initial unemployment claims have also declined significantly in the Pittsburgh Micropolitan Area.

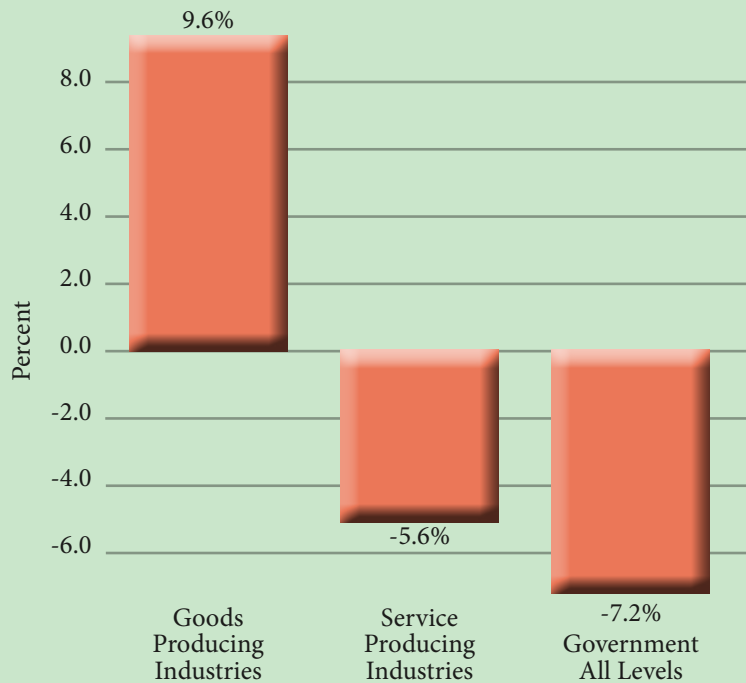
## Initial Unemployment Claims Pittsburg Micropolitan Area



Source: Kansas Department of Labor



## Growth In Jobs Q3 '19 - Q3 '20 Pittsburg Micropolitan Area



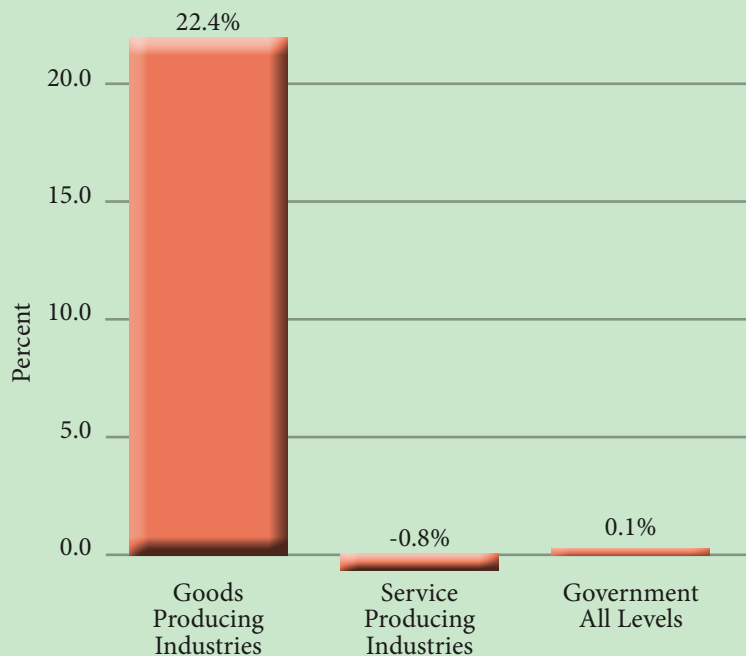
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## JOB GROWTH BY INDUSTRY

A recent Pittsburg Chamber survey found that 63.3 percent of local businesses intend to hire in the near future, and none indicated planned layoffs. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the number of jobs in the Pittsburg Micropolitan Area declined to 16,259 during the third quarter of 2020 (latest available), down 3.2 percent from the third quarter of 2019.

The goods-producing industries accounted for all the job growth, posting 3,345 average monthly jobs, up 9.6 percent from the third quarter of 2019. All the service-producing industries lost jobs. Construction had the highest growth in jobs, posting 727 average monthly jobs during the third quarter of 2020, up 72.5 percent, followed by Natural Resources and Mining, with 94 jobs, up 5.2 percent. Jobs declined in Manufacturing, with 2,524 jobs, down 0.7 percent; Education and Health Services, with 2,289 jobs, down 1.3 percent; Information Services, with 286 jobs, down 3.4 percent; Other Services (dry cleaning, clergy, etc.), with 217 jobs, down 3.4 percent; Professional and Business Services, with 1,219 jobs, down 4.1 percent; Financial Activities, with 436 jobs, down 4.4 percent; Leisure and Hospitality, with 1,829 jobs, down 7.1 percent; Government (all levels), with 3,807 jobs, down 7.2 percent; and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, with 2,831 jobs, down 9.1 percent.

## Growth In Payroll Q3 '19 - Q3 '20 Pittsburg Micropolitan Area



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## INCOME BY INDUSTRY

Payroll increased at a very healthy rate in the Pittsburg Micropolitan Area during the third quarter of 2020 (latest available). Total payroll increased to \$155.4 million (up 4.2 percent from the third quarter in 2019) and average monthly wages were \$3,186 (up a significant 7.8 percent).

Most of the growth in payroll came from the goods-producing industries, which posted \$38 million in payroll (up 22.4 percent) and monthly wages of \$3,797 (up 11.7 percent). The service-producing industries posted \$82.1 million in payroll (down 0.8 percent) and monthly wages of \$3,007 (up 5.1 percent).

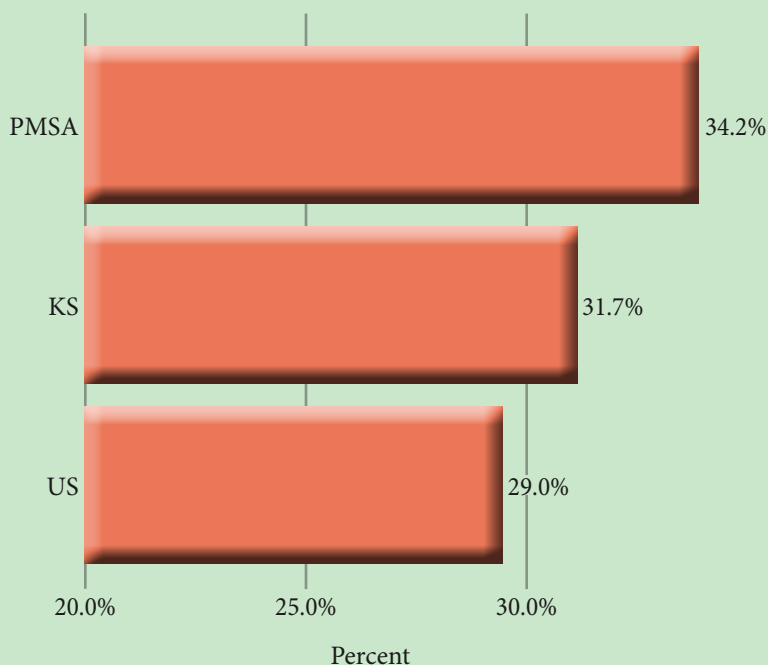
Construction had the highest increase in payroll, posting \$9.2 million in total payroll, up 114.1 percent, followed by Education and Health Services, with a payroll \$26.6 million, up 11.6 percent; Manufacturing, with \$27.9 million, up 7.9 percent; Information, with \$3.8 million, up 5.7 percent; Other Services (dry cleaning, clergy, etc.), with \$1.5 million, up 3.2 percent; Financial Activities, with \$4.3 million, up 2.9 percent; Natural Resources and Mining, with \$979,243, up 1.8 percent; Government (all levels), with \$35.1 million, up 0.1 percent. Declines in payroll occurred in Leisure and Hospitality, with \$7.2 million, down 7.7 percent; and Trade, Transportation and Utilities, with \$25.3 million, down 12.2 percent.

## LABOR FORCE

The Pittsburg micropolitan area labor force is 50.9 percent white collar and 49.1 percent blue collar. The local skilled labor force is relatively well educated according to Demographics Now. Approximately, 34.2 percent of the local labor force has some college or associate degree, 31.7 percent statewide and 29.0 percent nationwide. Approximately 8.6 percent of the local work force works in management occupations; 5.0 percent in business and financial; 2.7 in computer, engineering, and science; 13.7 percent in education, legal, and community service; 4.4 in health diagnosing; 2.0 percent in health technology; 6.0 percent in healthcare support; 19.2 percent in service occupations (other than healthcare related); 8.7 percent in sales-related occupations; 10.0 percent in office and administrative support; 9.4 percent in production; 3.0 percent in transportation; 4.0 percent in material moving; and 3.4 percent in other occupations. There are 156,917 people employed in blue-collar occupations (49.1 percent) within a 60-70 minute drive and 162,737 in white-collar occupations (50.9 percent).

The micropolitan labor force stood at 19,196 in March of 2021 (down 1.3 percent from March 2020), 1,507,020 statewide (up 1.3 percent) and 160,397 nationwide (down 1.3 percent).

## Percent Of Work Force With Some College Or Associate Degree 2020

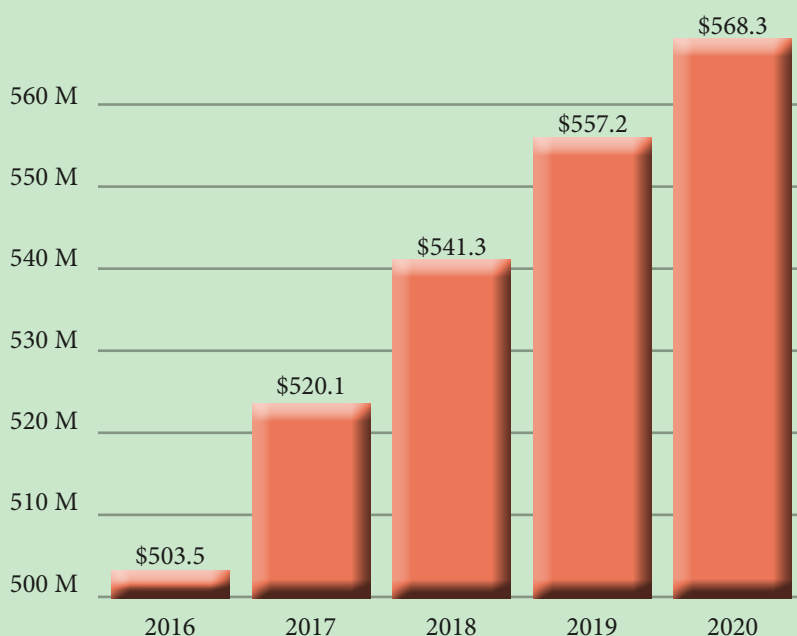


Source: Demographics Now

## RETAIL SALES

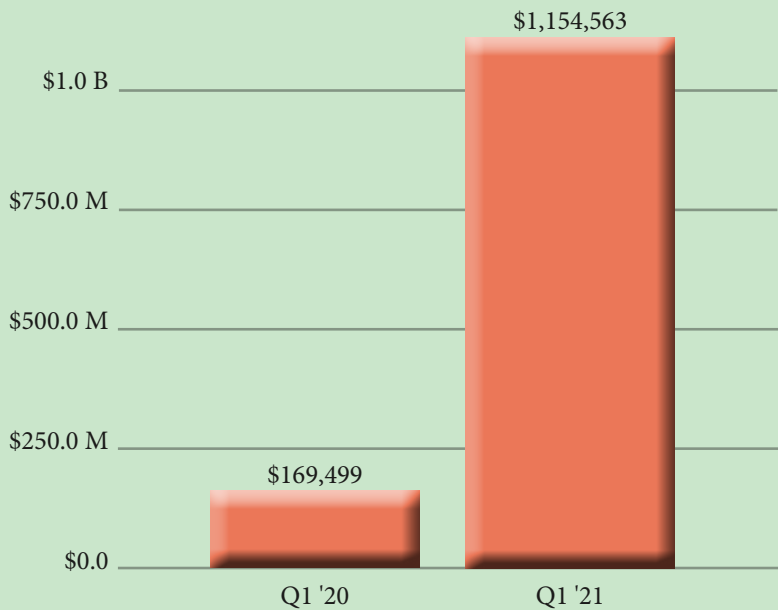
It is estimated that over 40,000 people visit Pittsburg on a regular basis annually to shop. Pittsburg's main thoroughfare, Broadway, has the highest traffic counts and goes through downtown. First estimates show that local retail sales did relatively well in 2020 with total retail sales in the Pittsburg micropolitan area increasing to \$568.3 million, up 2.0 percent from 2019, well above the 0.6 percent increase nationwide. No estimates are available for local retail sales so far in 2021. However, non-store retailers had the highest increase in 2020, up 22.1 percent, followed by Building Materials and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers, up 17.8 percent; Food and Beverage Stores, up 12.2 percent; General Merchandise, up 6.2 percent; Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores, up 5.7 percent; Health and Personal Care, up 1.7 percent; Motor Vehicles and Parts, up 1.1 percent. Declines were reported for Miscellaneous retail, down 1.2 percent; Furniture and Home Furnishing Stores, down 4.5 percent; Gasoline Stations, down 12.3 percent; Electronics and Appliance Stores, down 14.6 percent; Eating and Drinking Places, down 16.6 percent; and Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores, down 26.4 percent.

## Total Retail Sales Pittsburg Micropolitan Area



Source: Kansas Department of Revenue

## Total Value Of Residential Building Permits City Of Pittsburgh

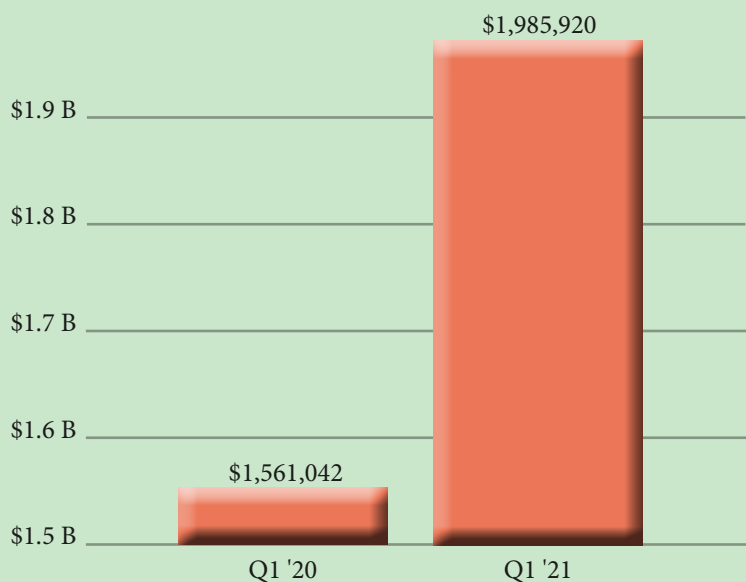


Source: City of Pittsburgh

## RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS

Low interest rates and optimism about the area's economic future are resulting in significant increases in local building permits. The City of Pittsburgh reports that the value of residential building permits increased a significant 42.2 percent in 2020 and 19 residential building permits were issued during the first quarter of 2021, with a stated value of \$1,154,563 (up 581.6 percent from the first quarter 2020). Four permits were issued for new residential construction, with a stated value of \$908,535 (up from zero) and 15 residential permits were issued for additions, alterations and conversions, for a stated value of \$246,028, up 45.2 percent. The Pittsburgh Area Realtors Association reports that 100 homes were sold during the first quarter, down 19.4 percent from the same quarter last year. However, home prices in the Pittsburgh micropolitan area are increasing significantly, with the average selling price increasing to \$146,001 (up 38.0 percent), and the median price increasing to \$132,500 (up 66.7 percent). Homes are also selling more quickly in 2021, with the average home on the market for 122 days before it sold (down from 125 days) and the median home on the market for 79 days, down from 93 days.

## Total Value Of Commercial Building Permits City Of Pittsburgh



Source: City of Pittsburgh

## COMMERCIAL BUILDING PERMITS

The local business community in the Pittsburgh micropolitan area is very optimistic about the area's economic future. The value of commercial property sales in the Pittsburgh area increased 17.2 percent in 2020, and the value of commercial building permits in the City of Pittsburgh increased a significant 91.8 percent. Additionally, there are 29 downtown revitalization programs either ongoing or recently finished, which might be a national record for a city with a population of 21,000. Furthermore, the City of Pittsburgh reports that 21 building permits were issued for commercial construction during the first quarter of 2021, with a stated value of \$1,985,920 (up 27.2 percent from the first quarter last year). One commercial building permit was issued for new construction, with a stated value of \$850,000 (up 0.1 percent), and 20 building permits were issued for additions, alterations, and conversions, with a stated value of \$1.1 million, up 59.6 percent.

Total commercial construction nationwide increased to \$5.7 billion in January (latest available), down 8.6 percent from January 2020, but overall non-residential construction declined to \$55.8 billion, down 6.6 percent.

## OFFICE SPACE MARKET

The average annual median gross rent for office space (the owner paying basic taxes, insurance, and also exterior and major maintenance) in the Pittsburgh micropolitan area is \$14.00 per square foot for high-end sites, \$10.50 per square foot for primary sites, and \$4.00 per square foot for secondary sites. First estimates show that the number of office establishments in Pittsburgh increased to 521 business establishments in 2020, employing 5,113 people. The area is also home to 141 health service establishments, employing 2,038 people; 61 business services establishments, employing 529 people; 54 personal service establishments, employing 140 people; 49 social services establishments, employing 794 people; 46 real estate establishments, employing 191 people; 46 engineering, accounting, research, management, and related establishments, employing 284 people; 31 depository institutions and non-depository credit institution establishments, employing 230 people; 31 insurance agents, brokers, and insurance carrier establishments, employing 79 people; 27 communications and utilities establishments, employing 649 people; 26 legal services establishments, employing 160 people; and 9 security and commodity brokers, dealers, exchanges, and services establishments, employing 19 people.

## Average Gross Office Space Rent Pittsburg Area 2021



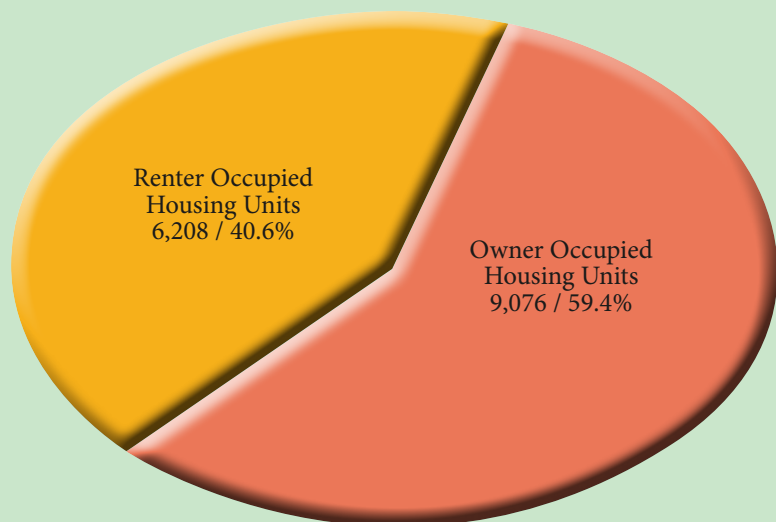
Source: Jones Heritage Realtors

## RESIDENTIAL LAND MARKET

Approximately 59.4 percent of all occupied housing in the Pittsburgh micropolitan area is owner-occupied, while 40.6 percent is renter-occupied. Pittsburgh is home to ten new or recently completed housing developments, including Silverback Landing, with 140 homes at price point of \$238,000 to \$261,000 and HOA; Creekside East, with 120 homes at \$210,000; Payton's Hamlet building 4 homes at \$350,000; Lakewood Drive Addition with 15 homes, at \$165,000 to \$200,000; and Pitt Highlands with 25 low-income homes. Additionally, 30 homes and one commercial property were built through the land bank program at \$87,000 to \$165,000. Villas at Creekside is building more than 29 high-end villas for residents aged 55 and up with amenities. Downtown campus housing includes Block 22, with 99 units. The average cost of a 2,400 square foot home on an 8,000 square foot lot in a middle-to upper-middle-class neighborhood is \$253,300. The Pittsburgh residential land market is doing relatively well, according to Jones Heritage Realtors which reports that local residential land values currently range from an average of \$0.65 per square foot in older neighborhoods to an average high of \$1.75 in primary sites, and going as high as \$2.25 per square foot in high-end locations.

## Residential Housing Demographics

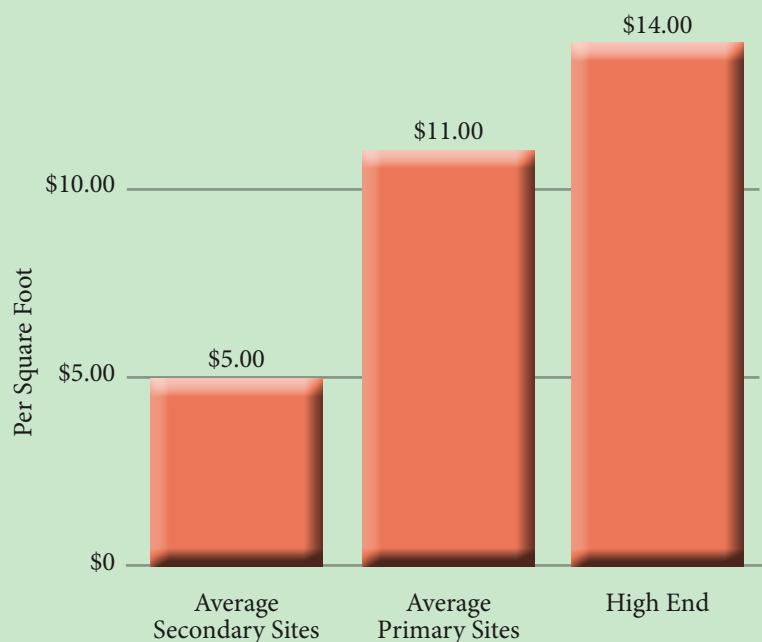
Occupied Housing Units  
Pittsburg Micropolitan Area, 2019



Source: Buereau of the Census, five year estimates



## Average Net Retail Space Rent Pittsburg Area 2021

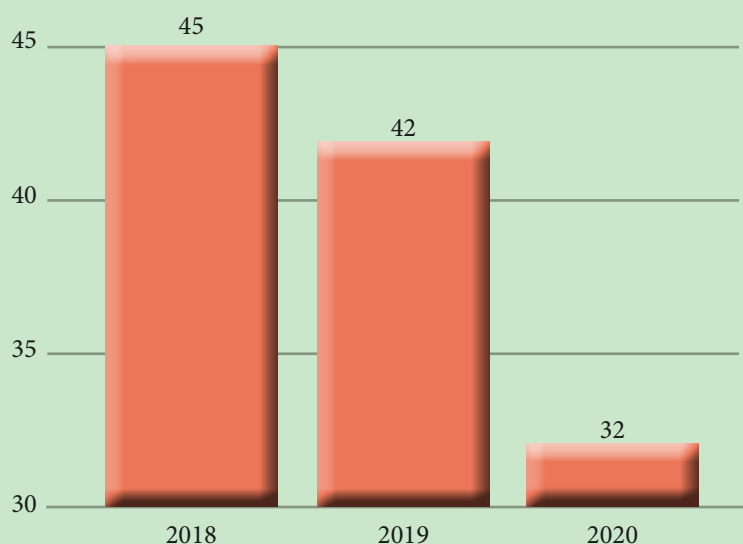


Source: Jones Heritage Realtors

## RETAIL SPACE MARKET

There are over 40 small specialty retailers in downtown Pittsburg. The downtown area is also home to several events and festivals during the year, including Artwalk, Little Balkans Days, and the Paint the Town Red celebration. The average annual net rent for retail space (the tenant pays the property taxes, insurance premiums, and some maintenance) is \$14.00 per square foot for high end locations, \$11.00 per square foot for primary locations, and \$5.00 per square foot for secondary locations. The Pittsburg micropolitan area had a total of 340 retail establishments in 2020 (down slightly from 2019), employing 3,895 people. There are 94 eating and drinking establishments, employing 1,283 people; 70 miscellaneous retail establishments, employing 254 people; 65 wholesale trade establishments, employing 685 people; 34 automotive dealers and gasoline service station establishments, employing 560 people; 26 food store establishments, employing 176 people; 15 apparel and accessory stores establishments, employing 80 people; 15 building materials, hardware, garden supply, and mobile home dealer establishments, employing 217 people; 11 home furniture, furnishings, and equipment store establishments, employing 113 people; and 10 general merchandise store establishments, employing 527 people.

## Total Bankruptcies Pittsburg Micropolitan Area



Source: US Bankruptcy Courts

## BANKRUPTCIES

Bankruptcies continued to decline locally in 2020, with 32 bankruptcies filed in the Pittsburg metropolitan area, down 23.8 percent, with 31 personal bankruptcies filed (down 24.4 percent) and one business bankruptcy (no change). There were 4,470 bankruptcies filed statewide during 2020, down 34.6 percent from 2019. Of those, 4,293 were personal bankruptcies (down 35.1 percent) in the following categories: 2,582 Chapter 7 personal bankruptcies (straight bankruptcy, debt wiped out), down 28.3 percent; 4 Chapter 11 personal bankruptcies (reorganization of personal debt and temporary protection from creditors), down 20.0 percent; and 1,707 Chapter 13 personal bankruptcies (some debt wiped out and some repayments), down 43.2 percent. That total also includes 177 business bankruptcies (down 22.4 percent), including 100 Chapter 7 business bankruptcies (total liquidation with no repayments), down 18.0 percent; 19 Chapter 11 business bankruptcies (reorganization of business debt and temporary protection from creditors), down 61.2 percent; 35 Chapter 12 business bankruptcies (reorganization of debt for family farms), down 2.8 percent; and 23 Chapter 13 business bankruptcies (total liquidation with some repayments), up 9.5 percent. There were 544,463 bankruptcies filed nationwide (down 29.7 percent).

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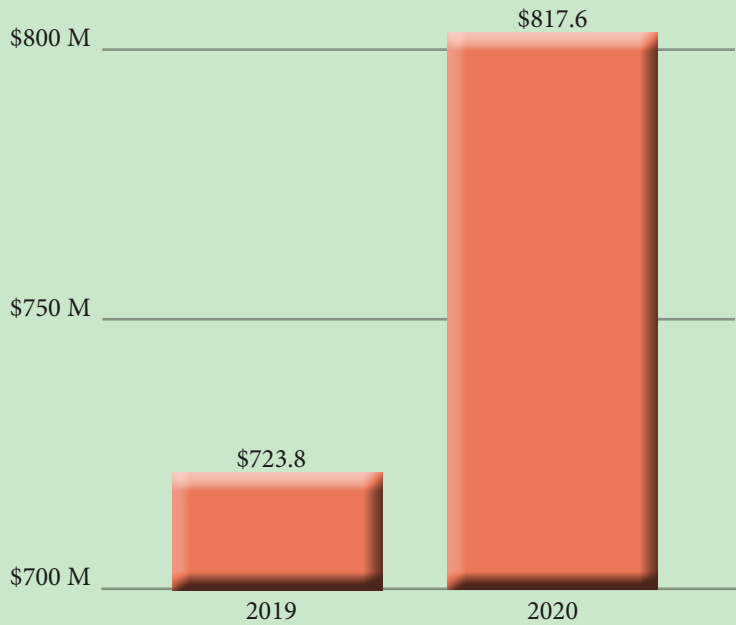
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## Total Assets

### Banking Industry - Pittsburg Micropolitan Area



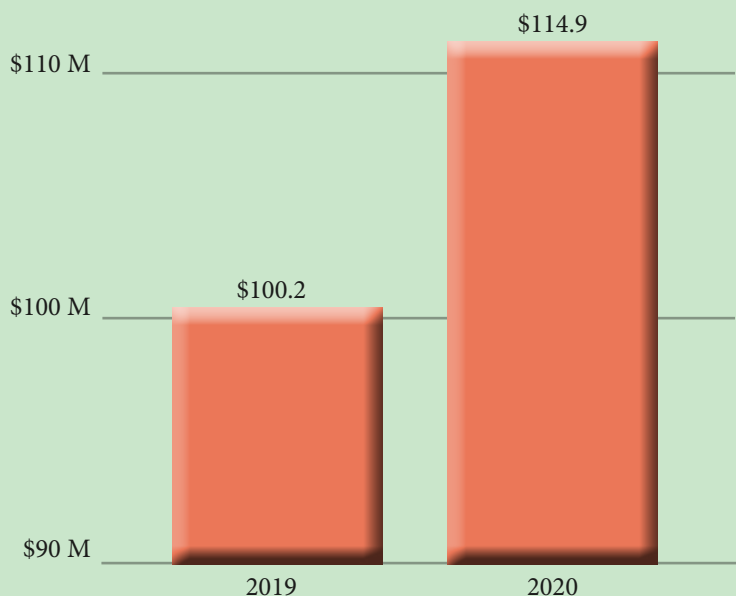
Source: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

## BANKING INDUSTRY

The national banking industry had a mixed performance in 2020, according to the FDIC, with net charge offs to loans falling to 0.5 in 2020 (down from 0.52 percent in 2019), but a decline in the net interest margin to 2.82 percent, down from 3.36 percent in 2019. Overall, the national banking industry posted \$21.1 trillion in average assets during 2020 (up 15.0 percent from 2019), \$10.7 trillion in net loans and leases (up 4.8 percent), \$291.9 billion in net income (down 51.1 percent), and \$119.2 billion in non-current loans and leases (up 23.1 percent). The statewide banking industry reported total assets of \$82.5 billion in average assets (up 11.3 percent), \$52.8 billion in net loans and leases (up 6.7 percent), \$2.1 billion in net income (down 2.4 percent), and \$505.8 million in non-current loans and leases (up 12.3 percent). The performance banks with headquarters in the Pittsburg micropolitan area has improved during the last few years. The local industry posted \$817.6 million in total assets (up 13.0 percent), \$503.1 million in net loans and leases (up 4.1 percent), \$20.7 million in net income (up 9.6 percent), and \$11.6 million in non-current loans and leases (up 84.7 percent).

## Total Assets

### Credit Union Industry-Pittsburg Micropolitan Area



Source: National Credit Union Administration

## CREDIT UNIONS

The national credit union industry added 4.0 million members during 2020, increasing membership to 124.3 million. There were 1,159 credit unions with less than \$10 million in assets in December 2020, 1,541 with assets of \$10-\$50 million, 687 with assets of \$50-100 million, 1,063 with assets of \$100-500 millions, 279 with assets of \$500-\$1 billion, and 370 with assets greater than \$1 billion. The nationwide industry posted \$1.8 trillion in average assets in 2020 (up 14.4 percent), \$1.2 trillion in net loans and leases (up 6.0 percent), \$2.7 billion in net operating income (down 24.5 percent), and \$7.3 billion in non-current loans and leases (up 3.3 percent). The statewide credit union industry reported total assets of \$12.3 billion (up 18.1 percent), \$8.5 billion in net loans and leases (up 11.8 percent), \$188.7 million in net income (down 13.4 percent), and \$47.7 million in non-current loans and leases (down 5.6 percent). The Pittsburg micropolitan area credit union industry (credit unions with local headquarters) posted \$114.9 million in total assets (up 14.7 percent), \$71.8 million in net loans and leases (up 0.8 percent), \$1,568,128 in net income (down 42.7 percent), and \$470,266 in non-current loans and leases (up 66.6 percent).

# Pittsburg Area Snapshot 2020

	Pittsburg Micropolitan Area	70 Miles Radius Pittsburg, Kansas	100 Miles Radius Pittsburg, Kansas
Labor Force	19,195	331,327	1,207,915
Total Population	39,472	658,720	2,270,478
Population Density (per Sq. Mi.)	66.3	42.8	72.2
Total Households	16,043	260,591	885,128

## Population By Gender

Male Population	19,793	326,245	1,123,482
Female Population	19,679	332,475	1,146,996

## Population Percentage By Race and Ethnicity

White	89.1%	86.8%	84.6%
Black	2.3%	1.6%	2.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.1%	3.9%	3.4%
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	2.1%	1.3%	2.4%
Some Other Race	2.4%	2.6%	3.6%
Two or More Races	3.1%	3.8%	3.8%
Hispanic Ethnicity	5.8%	5.7%	7.6%
Not of Hispanic Ethnicity	94.2%	94.3%	92.4%

## Households By Income

Average Household Income	\$57,169	\$60,747	\$72,872
Median Household Income	\$41,547	\$45,869	\$53,327
Per Capita Income	\$23,852	\$24,296	\$28,653

## Employment

Total Population 16+	31,836	521,908	1,792,322
% Blue Collar	44.9%	49.1%	42.6%
% White Collar	55.1%	50.9%	57.4%

## Educational Attainment

Total Population Age 25+	23,738	446,233	1,510,265
% Grade K - 8	2.4%	3.5%	3.2%
% Grade 9 - 11	6.5%	8.9%	7.6%
% High School Graduate	27.7%	35.5%	32.2%
% Some College, No Degree	25.5%	24.0%	23.4%
% Associates Degree	8.8%	8.5%	7.7%
% Bachelor's Degree	17.5%	12.4%	16.6%
% Graduate Degree	10.7%	6.2%	8.7%
% No Schooling Completed	1.0%	1.0%	0.8%

Source: Demographics Now

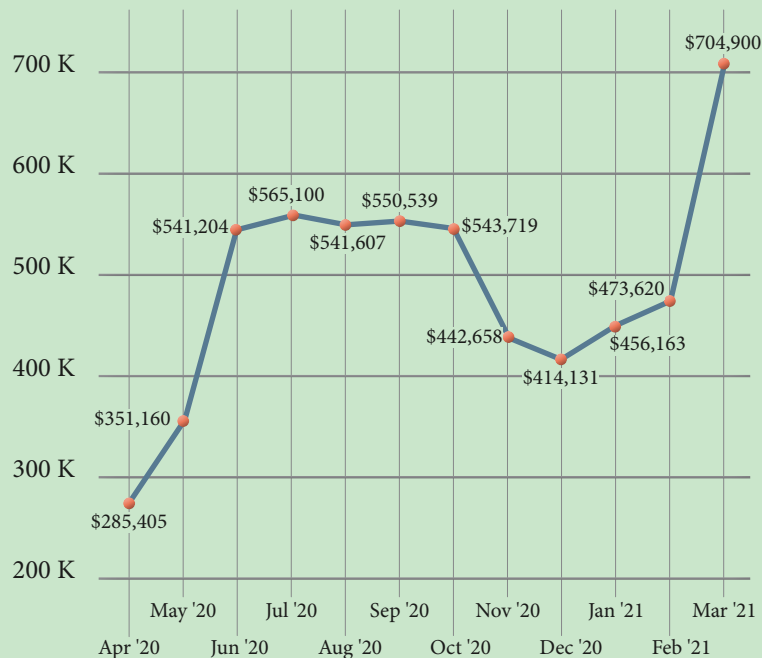
## Annual Wages for Pittsburg Micropolitan Area 2020

Accountants and Auditors	\$56,282	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	\$64,799
Advertising, Marketing, & Sales Managers Etc.	\$101,112	Healthcare Support Occupations	\$26,545
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	\$60,738	Industrial Engineers	\$72,220
Cashiers	\$20,957	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	\$30,092
Chief Executives	\$183,085	Loan Officers	\$58,063
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	\$39,200	Machinists	\$32,602
Coaches and Scouts	\$25,024	Management Occupations	\$100,534
Computer Programmers	\$62,265	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	\$52,114
Computer User Support Specialists	\$37,921	Medical Assistants	\$28,025
Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	\$23,033	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	\$30,347
Counselors, Social Workers & Etc.	\$39,819	Pharmacists	\$132,702
Customer Service Representatives	\$26,685	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	\$40,405
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	\$39,020	Postal Service Mail Carriers	\$52,191
Electricians	\$45,465	Receptionists and Information Clerks	\$26,529
Engineers	\$67,469	Retail Sales Workers	\$20,233
Financial Managers	\$128,888	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	\$33,702
Firefighters	\$33,428	Software Devs., Software Quality Assurance Anals. & Testers	\$76,544
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	\$19,368	Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	\$85,437
General and Operations Managers	\$89,170	Waiters and Waitresses	\$17,398
Graphic Designers	\$34,639	Woodworkers	\$26,619

Source: Kansas Labor Market Information Center



## Total Revenues Pittsburg Micropolitan Area

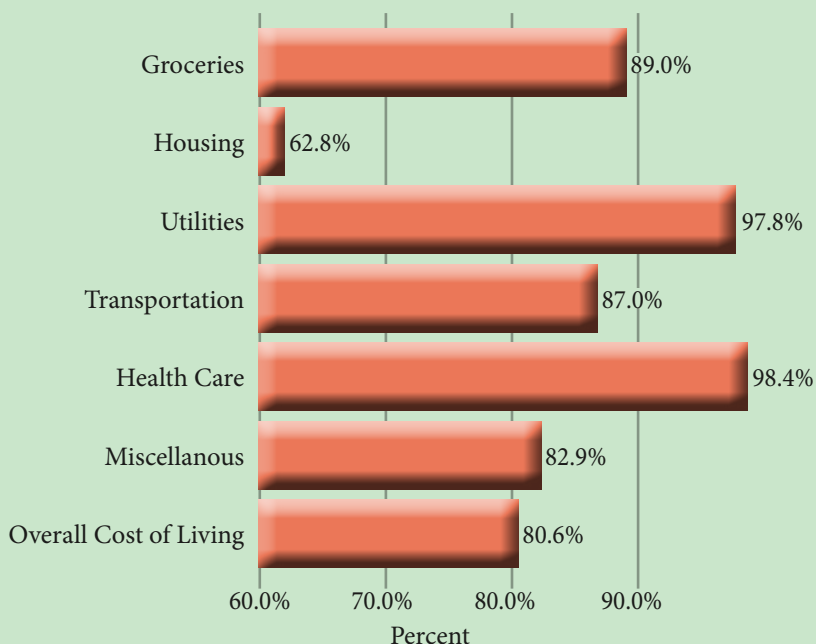


Source: Smith Travel Research

## LODGING INDUSTRY

The local lodging industry, which consists of eight properties with 589 rooms, is improving significantly in 2021, according to Smith Travel Research. The average occupancy in the Pittsburg micropolitan area lodging industry was 39.7 percent during the first quarter of 2021 (up from 37.1 percent during the first quarter of 2020), the average daily room rate was \$77.7 (down 6.6 percent), room supply increased 0.0 percent, room demand increased 6.9 percent, and overall lodging revenues declined 0.2 percent. The average occupancy in the Southeast Kansas lodging industry was 39.4 percent (up from 36.5 percent), the average daily room rate was \$70.0 (down 4.4 percent), room supply increased 0.0 percent, room demand increased 7.9 percent and overall lodging revenues increased 3.2 percent. Statewide, the average occupancy rate was 40.3 percent (down from 43.2 percent), the average daily room rate was 74.6 (down 11.0 percent), room supply increased 0.4 percent, room demand declined 6.4 percent and overall lodging revenue declined 16.7 percent. Nationwide, the average occupancy rate was 46.5 percent (down from 51.7 percent), the average daily room rate was \$97.8 (down 19.6 percent), room supply declined 2.0 percent, room demand declined 11.9 percent and overall lodging revenue declined 29.2 percent.

## Cost of Living Pittsburg Micropolitan Area - Percent of the National Average 2020



Source: The Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness

## QUALITY OF LIFE & COST OF LIVING

The quality of life is very high in the Pittsburg Micropolitan Area and the overall cost of living is relatively low. In January 2021, Business View Magazine called Pittsburg a "diamond in the rough," and in February PCMag ranked Pittsburg as the 31st best city nationwide in which to work from home. In 2020, SmartAsset ranked Pittsburg 9th nationwide for seniors who have over \$1 million and the Wichita Business Journal ranked the MBA program at Pittsburg State University the best in Kansas. Additionally, there are 29 downtown revitalization programs either ongoing or recently finished, and the area business community is very optimistic about the local economic future. The cost of living is an important quality of life indicator. The average cost of living in the Pittsburg Micropolitan area is 80.6 percent of the national average, according to the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness. The cost of groceries is 89.0 percent of the national average, the cost of housing is 62.8 percent, utilities are 97.8 percent, transportation is 87 percent, health care is 98.4 percent, and the cost of miscellaneous goods and services is 82.9 percent of the national average.

# BUSINESS HIGHLIGHTS

## CVB OPTIMISTIC ABOUT 2021 CRAWFORD COUNTY TOURISM

COVID-19 temporarily stifled the steady growth of tourism and hotel room demand in Crawford County in 2020. Hotel room demand has steadily increased each year, hitting the 100,000-plus room mark in both 2018 and 2019. Throughout 2020 the county still saw hotel demand hit 78,200 rooms, which outpaced the norm from just four years ago.

There are some major events planned for the year that support the CVB's optimism, including the NJCAA Indoor Track & Field National Championship, the Four State Farm Show, the National Club Baseball Division I World Series, and others. Local attractions, such as Big Brutus, have had healthy visitations numbers as well. All of this leads the CVB to predict a healthy lodging industry for the county in 2021. *Staff, The Pittsburg Morning Sun*

**PITTSBURG RANKED AMONG TOP WORK-FROM-HOME CITIES AS LOCAL HOMES SALES SEE UPTICK**  
PCMag list Pittsburg, Kansas as #31 on a list of the top 50 work-from-home cities in the U.S. in their 2021 released this week by tech news. A PCMag analyst commented that this was due to the people here both have and use gigabit broadband. On top of that, Pittsburg has a cost of living that is 31.2% lower than the U.S. national average, as well as 23 parks in the area. The PCMag analyst added that these factors led them to consider Pittsburg a "hidden gem". This recognition is seen as a point of success to the local government, who want to continue to promote the city's economic growth and entrepreneurial activity.

Pittsburg has also seen growth in the housing market. Total sales volume was up more than 70 percent from a year earlier, an increase of more than \$5 million. In Crawford County, total home sales increased by more than 36 percent in December 2020 compared to 2019. This may also be due to the City of Pittsburg encouraging new housing development. New housing developments include planned neighborhoods such as Silverback Landing and Creekside East.

*Jonathan Riley, The Pittsburg Morning Sun*

**SOON KANSAS FARMERS MIGHT HAVE ANOTHER WAY OF MAKING MONEY OFF THEIR CORN CROP**  
CornBoard Manufacturing CEO and founder Lane Segerstrom came to Hutchinson, Kansas to speak about his company. CornBoard Manufacturing takes corn

husks, stalks, leaves and cobs and turns it into CornBoard. They can use their technology to make a variety of products, such as surfboards, coffee tables and pallets with the corn byproducts. This is a cutting-edge company which is considered to be more sustainable than traditional wood pallets, of which there were 2.6 billion in circulation in the U.S. last year.

Segerstrom is focusing his production, sourcing, and manufacturing efforts in the Midwest. He plans to build one of his 15 those factories in central Kansas, and then add a couple others throughout the state. This should bring new opportunities for Kansas farmers to earn revenue. *Alice Mannette, The Hutchinson News*

## LITTLE BALKANS DAYS SET FOR LABOR DAY WEEKEND

After being canceled in 2020, the Little Balkans Days Festival is set to return this year. The festival will take place on Labor Day Weekend at Lincoln Park in Pittsburg, Kansas. The Balkans Days Festival hosts vendors, events, entertainment, and activities for the Crawford County community. The funds donated from the 2020 sponsors and donors will be rolled over to this year's festival. This will be a good opportunity for local vendors, as the fees have been lowered for vendors who have not been able to sell their goods for the past year. The vendors typically consist of the artisan, craft, antique, and food variety.

The Festival Committee has been reaching out to the community asking for suggestions for new activities, as well as which ones to bring back from previous festivals. With the pandemic in mind, the committee is working alongside the Crawford County Health Department to create a mitigation plan for COVID-19 at the festival. *Staff, The Pittsburg Morning Sun*

## CITY OF PITTSBURG & CRAWFORD COUNTY PARTNER TO LAUNCH NEW TEXT-TO-9-1-1 SYSTEM

The City of Pittsburg and Crawford County partnered to purchase a new state-of-the-art emergency call handling and management system. This new system allows residents to texturgent alerts to 9-1-1.

The new Next Gen 9-1-1 solution is based on Internet Protocol, which is designed to keep up with the rapidly evolving communication habits of today. Call takers at the Pittsburg Police Department and Crawford County Sheriff's Office will be able to manage calls from any device, at any time, in any format, and they will also be able to pinpoint landline and mobile calls

with the new geo-location and mapping solution. This also allows the city and county to expand their partnership to include nearby jurisdictions and coordinate together. This new system is already up and running.

*City Press Release, The Pittsburg Morning Sun*

## WATCO RANKED ONE OF AMERICA'S BEST MID-SIZED EMPLOYERS BY FORBES

Watco has been named on Forbes 2021 list of America's Best Mid-Size Employers. Forbes partnered with Statista, a market research firm, to survey over 50,000 businesses. The surveys covered work-related topics, such as working conditions, salary, potential for development, and company image. These surveys were anonymously filled out by employees, which allowed them to openly share their opinions. Of these 50,000 businesses, only the top 500 were recognized as being a top employer. Watco made it into this top 500 list, fitting into the "mid-size companies" category, meaning companies that employ between 1,000 and 5,000 people. The Pittsburg-based transportation and supply chain services company was listed by Forbes as having 1,000 employees.

"Being recognized as a top employer is a reflection of the players we have on the Watco team. Our team should be incredibly proud of the environment and culture they have created." Said Rachael Peterson, Watco's Executive Vice President and Chief People Officer

*Staff, The Pittsburg Morning Sun*

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# PITTSBURG MICROPOLITAN AREA EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

	Jobs, Q3 '20	Average Monthly Wages, Q3 '20	Jobs, Q3 '19	Average Monthly Wages, Q3 '19	Average Job Growth	Average Wage Growth
Full-service restaurants	678	\$1,062.22	734	\$1,104.15	-7.67%	-3.80%
Printing	396	\$3,456.30	432	\$3,212.87	-8.41%	7.58%
Architectural and structural metals mfg.	357	\$4,040.15	324	\$3,914.94	10.29%	3.20%
Managing offices	321	\$4,433.30	325	\$3,817.94	-1.23%	16.12%
Services for the elderly and disabled	197	\$2,554.63	215	\$1,849.51	-8.51%	38.12%
Continuing care, assisted living facilities	190	\$2,534.32	213	\$2,120.33	-10.80%	19.53%
Commercial banking	175	\$3,568.35	183	\$3,450.73	-4.55%	3.41%
Gasoline stations	159	\$1,628.17	159	\$1,555.18	-0.42%	4.69%
Home health care services	118	\$2,856.03	121	\$2,715.29	-2.75%	5.18%
Offices of dentists	116	\$5,060.82	102	\$5,252.04	14.43%	-3.64%
Child day care services	113	\$1,789.29	114	\$1,544.36	-0.88%	15.86%
Utility system construction	97	\$4,270.58	100	\$4,086.28	-3.00%	4.51%
Natural resources and mining	94	\$3,460.22	90	\$3,575.34	5.20%	-3.22%
Electronics and appliance stores	81	\$2,649.46	77	\$2,450.97	5.19%	8.10%
Janitorial services	77	\$2,019.88	71	\$2,149.66	8.45%	-6.04%
All other general merchandise stores	75	\$1,438.67	70	\$1,370.05	7.66%	5.01%
Power and communication system construction	75	\$4,394.91	67	\$4,060.94	12.00%	8.22%
Commercial building construction	74	\$3,726.73	63	\$3,229.79	16.32%	15.39%
Postal service	67	\$3,825.77	68	\$3,563.26	-0.49%	7.37%
Solid waste collection	62	\$2,851.22	38	\$2,651.54	65.49%	7.53%
Motorcycle, boat, and other vehicle dealers	59	\$4,284.82	56	\$4,416.56	4.14%	-2.98%
Landscaping services	54	\$2,170.54	39	\$1,622.13	37.29%	33.81%
Grain and field bean merchant wholesalers	54	\$4,526.37	55	\$3,906.98	-1.83%	15.85%
Automotive parts and accessories stores	51	\$1,720.50	54	\$1,710.04	-4.94%	0.61%
Pharmacies and drug stores	51	\$3,057.05	55	\$3,073.27	-6.67%	-0.53%
Offices of specialty therapists	48	\$2,061.72	51	\$2,078.26	-4.61%	-0.80%
Masonry contractors	42	\$3,061.43	32	\$2,908.73	32.63%	5.25%
Nursery, garden, and farm supply stores	41	\$2,145.49	35	\$1,740.51	16.19%	23.27%
Offices of optometrists	40	\$4,624.43	39	\$2,875.79	1.69%	60.81%
Other accounting services	39	\$3,597.02	68	\$3,797.85	-41.87%	-5.29%
Tire dealers	37	\$3,291.75	39	\$3,113.93	-4.27%	5.71%
Farm supplies merchant wholesalers	37	\$5,456.15	39	\$5,648.74	-5.17%	-3.41%
Insurance agencies and brokerages	33	\$2,921.53	39	\$2,627.71	-14.66%	11.18%
Automotive body, interior, and glass repair	29	\$3,276.33	33	\$2,896.77	-14.00%	13.10%
Oilseed and grain combination farming	28	\$3,131.47	28	\$3,308.21	-2.35%	-5.34%
Beauty salons	24	\$1,964.88	22	\$1,906.81	8.96%	3.05%
Management consulting services	24	\$5,166.82	33	\$3,678.29	-25.51%	40.47%
Residential property managers	24	\$2,147.47	27	\$1,756.53	-11.11%	22.26%
Women's clothing stores	22	\$778.85	23	\$868.85	-2.94%	-10.36%
Site preparation contractors	22	\$2,751.14	20	\$2,378.24	11.86%	15.68%
Beef cattle ranching and farming	20	\$3,070.88	19	\$3,354.14	1.72%	-8.44%
Computer systems design and related services	19	\$3,282.70	21	\$3,093.80	-12.50%	6.11%
Other specialized trucking, local	18	\$2,157.71	23	\$2,843.59	-20.29%	-24.12%
Residential poured foundation contractors	17	\$3,689.48	19	\$3,200.36	-10.71%	15.28%
Offices of chiropractors	16	\$2,290.73	12	\$2,565.14	32.43%	-10.70%
Civic and social organizations	16	\$661.46	15	\$712.16	9.09%	-7.12%
Offices of real estate agents and brokers	16	\$2,039.72	12	\$1,761.94	34.29%	15.77%
Other building material dealers	14	\$3,083.31	11	\$3,521.18	27.27%	-12.44%
Water supply and irrigation systems	13	\$3,015.67	14	\$2,821.90	-7.14%	6.87%
Agricultural market and commodity regulation	12	\$5,438.69	11	\$5,898.97	2.94%	-7.80%
Commercial machinery repair and maintenance	10	\$2,265.29	9	\$1,981.48	14.81%	14.32%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



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