



## Swales Selected as President of the Pennsylvania Economic Development Association

Robert Swales, has been appointed to serve as President of the Pennsylvania Economic Development Association (PEDA) effective January 1, 2026. Swales brings extensive experience in community and economic development to the Association. Under his leadership, Clearly Ahead has advanced numerous initiatives and projects aimed at expanding local industry, supporting entrepreneurship, and enhancing regional competitiveness.

"It's an honor to be recognized by statewide peers to lead the PEDA's mission to promote sound economic development policies, professional collaboration, and innovative strategies that support business growth and job creation in the Commonwealth," Swales expressed.

The appointment reflects his longstanding commitment to strengthening communities and advancing economic development projects throughout Clearfield County and the region over the past 26 years. Swales served on the PEDA Board for the last eight years and has co-Chaired the Advocacy Committee for the past four.

As President, Swales will lead the association's efforts to address critical issues facing Pennsylvania's economy, advocate for effective development programs, and foster partnerships among public and private sector leaders.

Swales will serve a two-year term as President, during which he will work closely with the association's board and membership to advance PEDA's mission of fostering vibrant, sustainable economic growth across Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Economic Development Association (PEDA) is the statewide association of local, state, corporate and non-profit economic development professionals. For more information visit [www.PEDA.org](http://www.PEDA.org)

## Philadelphia Federal Reserve Visits Clearfield County

Philadelphia Federal Reserve President and CEO Anna Paulson and Executive Vice President William Spaniel recently traveled to Clearfield, Pennsylvania, to meet with leaders from Clearly Ahead Development and discuss the opportunities and challenges facing rural communities. The visit provided an important opportunity to highlight Clearfield County's economic landscape and the collaborative efforts underway to advance strategic development initiatives.

Conversations focused on several key priorities, including brownfield redevelopment, the use of Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) credits, affordable housing needs, and the impact of current interest rates on local investment. Representatives from Clearly Ahead shared updates with ongoing projects and partnerships designed to strengthen the county's economy, attract new investment, and expand opportunities for residents and businesses alike.

Following the discussion, Federal Reserve officials toured the River's Landing building—a successful example of local brownfield redevelopment—and visited the Clearfield Riverwalk to gain a firsthand look at recent revitalization efforts and the community assets that continue to enhance quality of life in the region.



Greetings, Members,



The results are in! The Holidays are officially behind us, the Groundhog appears to be accurate, end of year analysis is done, and Q1 is off to a sprint!

In 2025 we partnered with 201 local businesses to assist with small business decisions and planning projects. This was a 13% increase over 2024 data.

Of which, our three-person team assisted six local companies that collectively invested \$8.4 million in Clearfield County, preserving over 138 jobs and creating 31 new positions. These projects span throughout Clearfield County, including Clearfield, Curwensville, DuBois, and the Moshannon Valley.

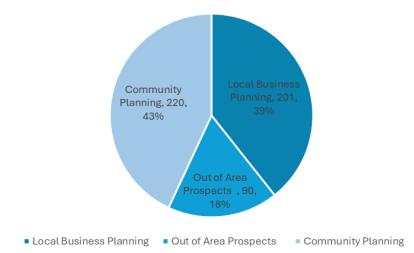
Across the board, companies continue adapting new business strategies in response to U.S. trade policies, a weakening US dollar, and workforce shortages. Out-of-area inquiries continued to be strong with 90 companies from 16 states and 10 foreign countries expressing interest in our region. This was a 27% increase from 2024. Both foreign and domestic firms are seeking opportunities to localize production, improve warehousing and logistics, and advanced technology implementation to remain competitive. These transitions often involve significant infrastructure planning, investment, and the need for technical or financial assistance—areas where Clearly Ahead is proud to help.

If your business is planning a project or exploring new opportunities, we welcome you to reach out. We're here to support your goals and help you grow right here in Clearfield County.

Thank you for your continued support—and for choosing to call Clearfield County home.

Take care,  
Rob Swales  
Chief Executive Officer  
Clearly Ahead Development

2026 Economic Impact Summary



# Clearly Ahead Development Newsletter



WINTER EDITION

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## Low 5.25% Rate to Help Clearfield County Businesses Grow

The Clearfield County Industrial Development Authority (CCIDA) helps local businesses expand and thrive through its Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). The program offers affordable financing options for businesses seeking to grow, renovate facilities, or invest in new equipment with a low interest rate of 5.25%.

Loans of up to \$250,000 or up to 50% of the project are available to eligible businesses in the manufacturing, industrial, commercial, and warehousing sectors. Funds may be used for a variety of purposes, including real estate purchases, new construction, building renovations, machinery and equipment upgrades, and working capital. Loan terms are tailored to meet individual project needs, and applicants are required to contribute at least 10 percent of the total project cost.

The CCIDA RLF Program continues to play an important role in strengthening the local economy and currently supporting 14 local businesses with expansions, equipment improvements, and facility enhancements. The application process is straightforward. Applicants are asked to provide a minimum of three years of financial records, along with any relevant agreements, proposals, or business plans. Funding decisions are made efficiently, with approvals typically issued within 30 to 45 days.

Businesses interested in learning more about this opportunity are encouraged to contact Paul McCloskey at [pmccloskey@clearlyahead.com](mailto:pmccloskey@clearlyahead.com).

## Commerce Park KOZ Renewal

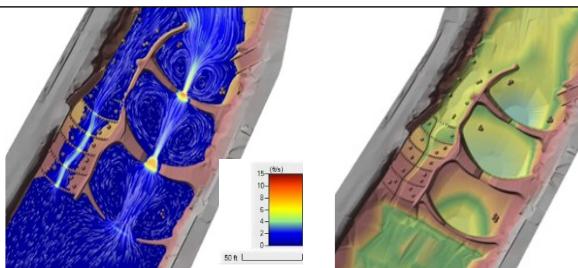
Clearfield County continues to position itself for growth through participation in Pennsylvania's Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) program—one of the Commonwealth's most effective economic development tools. KOZ sites provide eligible businesses and property owners with significant state and local tax abatements, creating a competitive environment that encourages new investment, job creation, and the redevelopment of underutilized properties.

By returning vacant or underperforming properties to productive use, KOZ designations strengthen the local tax base over the long term. New and expanding businesses generate employment opportunities for residents, increase demand for local services, and contribute to the vitality of our downtowns and industrial corridors.

In January, DCED approved a 10-year extension to the Clearfield Commerce Park, offering locations well suited for manufacturing, technology, logistics, and commercial development. Clearly Ahead Development works closely with prospective businesses to navigate eligibility requirements, connect with local and state partners, and ensure a smooth path from initial inquiry to project completion.

Businesses considering a start-up, relocation, or expansion are encouraged to explore whether a KOZ location could support their project. Our team is available to provide site information, guidance on incentives, and connections to regional resources to help turn plans into investment.

The KOZ program remains a critical tool for attracting new businesses, encouraging expansion, and supporting sustained economic growth in Clearfield County.



Photos to the left: Blue Image Depicts Water Flow Analysis, Green Image Depicts the Ground Level (River Bottom) Elevations

## State Police Barracks New Facility Update

Construction is nearing completion on a new, state-of-the-art Pennsylvania State Police barracks in Commerce Park. The Clearfield-based troop will relocate from its current Woodland location to the new 2,809-square-foot facility situated on an eight-acre site along Bud George Boulevard, directly across from the PennDOT District 2-0 offices.

The modernized facility will nearly double the size of the existing barracks, allowing the department to expand services and enhance operational efficiency and security. The site has been designed to support a full range of law-enforcement functions and will include a 75-foot-diameter helicopter pad, a 50-yard shooting range with a protective canopy, and 83 parking spaces.

Additional features include a secure vehicle impoundment area, a 14-by-20-foot storage building, a spacious training room, a communications radio tower, and an emergency generator to ensure uninterrupted operations. The new location represents a significant investment in public safety infrastructure and reinforces Commerce Park's role as a strategic hub for regional services.



## Whitewater Park Update

Whitewater engineers Scott Shipley and Riley Adams of Calibre Engineering, Inc. recently conducted site visits to the Raftsmans Dam in Clearfield and Pee Wee's Nest Dam in Irvin Park, Curwensville, as design work continues on the proposed Whitewater Recreation Parks. During the site visits, engineers identified potential water trail access points both upstream and downstream of the proposed features to help ensure ADA-accessible public access. The project team continues to evaluate how the designs can improve river safety, maintain upstream water elevations, and enhance fish and aquatic habitat. For the full article go to: <https://clearlyahead.com/Business-Services/News.aspx#prclearfieldwhitewater>

