

## South Central

# A strategic location and transportation network fuel growth

**S**outh Central Pennsylvania is the third-largest region in the state by both population and number of businesses, consisting of eight counties along Pennsylvania's southern border with Maryland. Anchored by Lancaster, York, Gettysburg, Hershey and Harrisburg — Pennsylvania's capital city — the region boasts a population of nearly 2 million people, about 17 percent of the state's population. The strengths of the region are similar to those of Pennsylvania as a whole: a location convenient to markets and a quality workforce.

Strategically located on a network of interstate highways, rail lines with intermodal facilities and a growing air freight industry — and convenient passenger flights at Harrisburg International Airport — the region serves as the transportation crossroads of the Mid-Atlantic, with strategic routes east and west as well as north and south.

The region houses 22 colleges and universities, including the Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center and College of Medicine, Harrisburg Area Community College's five campuses and additional locations for job training, and many other private and public colleges, universities and trade schools. Many contend that the best part of South Central Pennsylvania is its quality of life, with innovative businesses offering well-paying jobs, quality public education, and a variety of urban, suburban and rural residence choices, as well as a vibrant arts and cultural community.

### Business Demographics

The region has a workforce of approximately 900,000 people. Nearly 200,000 businesses of all sizes and shapes — from well-known companies such as The Hershey Co., Harley-Davidson, Volvo Construction Equipment, Armstrong World Industries, Bayer, ArcelorMittal and Rite Aid Corp. to young technology companies and bio-tech companies — call the South Central region home. Charles & Alice Group, one of Europe's leading processors of applesauce products, announced plans to establish its first U.S. processing facility in the Lancaster area. The \$10.6 million investment will create 50 new jobs and continue to define Lancaster County as one of the leading locations for food processing firms in the northeastern

United States. Lancaster County continues to expand its reach to international firms interested in a stable and well-located starting point for entering the U.S. market.

With an annual GDP exceeding \$13.5 billion, the region has seen a resurgence in manufacturing that benefits from the skills and versatility of local machine shops, sheet metal shops and electronics and other technological skills. Having a strong local supply chain has encouraged more on-shore manufacturing. In addition, creative industries, particularly in York, have contributed to local job growth in architecture, construction, engineering and the arts. The wide range of skills in the area, coupled with a strategic location, provides a groundwork for future opportunities.

### Success Story: Tex Visions

Tex Visions is one of the leading manufacturers of custom-printed products and display hardware. Marcel Ruhland started the company in 2004 after moving to Central Pennsylvania from Germany. The business began with only two sales employees in an office suite at the Carlisle TechCelerator through DCED's Office of International Business Development. After their first two years brought success, Tex Visions began production, added staff, moved into the largest space at the TechCelerator and added three new innovative products.

In 2012, Tex Visions built an online store to better service clients and reach a much larger customer base. Tex Visions graduated from the TechCelerator in 2013 and moved into its own state-of-the-art 60,000-square-foot production facility. Since 2004, Tex Visions has added many innovative trademarked products to its product line. Today, it is a fully integrated printing and manufacturing company that offers products and services across the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, Latin America and South America.

### Success Story: WebpageFX

WebpageFX was founded in 2006 by the husband-and-wife team of Bill Craig and Karie Shearer with the vision of establishing a full-service digital marketing agency. They began their journey at the Carlisle TechCelerator.

In May 2014, Craig, Shearer and their 50



employees graduated from the TechCelerator and moved into the renovated Moffitt Mansion on Front Street in Harrisburg. The company has grown by more than 250 percent in the past three years. Today, WebpageFX is a leading search engine optimization (SEO) company.

Webpage FX also is an award-winning company, receiving recognition in Best Places to Work in PA and multiple prestigious Horizon awards. In addition, Heardable.com ranked it the No. 1 SEO firm in the nation. WebpageFX's total client revenue generated in the past 12 months is more than \$126 million.

### Success Story: Dutchland Inc.

Dutchland Inc. is an engineering, manufacturing and construction company that specializes in precast concrete structures for the water and wastewater industry. Over the past five years, Dutchland has realized more than a 35 percent growth in revenue.

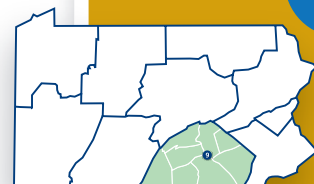
Dutchland's geographic location in Gap, Lancaster County, was a contributing factor to this growth. The central location favorably positioned it to serve the Chesapeake Bay watershed region and numerous projects associated with the federal and state cleanup initiatives for the bay in New York, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, Delaware and the District of Columbia.



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**COUNTIES:**

- Adams
- Cumberland
- Dauphin
- Franklin
- Lancaster
- Lebanon
- Perry
- York



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**Top Industries**

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Agriculture & Food Processing
- Business and Financial Services
- Education & Health Care
- Logistics



**Major Regional Employers**

- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- Giant Food Stores, a division of Ahold USA
- Harley-Davidson USA
- The Hershey Company
- Rite Aid



**Incentive Programs & Resources**

- City Revitalization and Investment Zone (CRIZ)
- Enterprise Zones
- Foreign Trade Zones
- Keystone Innovation Zones (KIZ)
- Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZ)
- Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA)
- Regional Export Network (REN)
- Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC)



**Building/Site Availability**

The region's economic development corporations have a network established to connect site selectors to sites, incentives and assistance on the ground. Contact Shaun Donovan, PREP region coordinator, to get information on this network as well as on building and site availability.