

Neighborhood & Built Environment



A REPORT BY BRIDGE BUILDERS COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

2.1%

Area Covered by Parks (2018)

2,704

Households w/o Internet Access (2022)

365

Crimes per 100,000 People (2022)

19

Public & Private Schools (2023)

INTRODUCTION

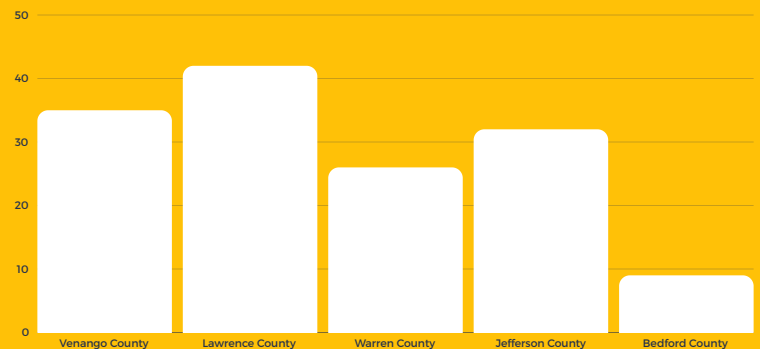
The neighborhoods in which people live have a major impact on their health and well-being. Green space access, internet access, school quality, and the health of the natural environment are just a few indicators that can measure the health of a community. This report will provide some insight into the health of Venango County and the impact these indicators have on its residents.

ACCESS TO GREEN SPACE

Access to parks is crucial for healthy communities. They promote physical health, mental well-being, environmental sustainability, and economic value. These green spaces enhance overall quality of life by fostering community interaction and offering educational opportunities. Venango County residents have access to 35 parks, which equals 13,187 acres of green space for public use. This is a combination of state game lands, city parks, and other publicly available green spaces.

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources releases an Outdoor Recreation Plan every five years to help guide its recreation policies, programs, and investments. Since 2020, the goal of this plan is to ensure that every resident has a public park within a 10-minute walk from where they live. According to data from this program, despite over 35 parks available, only 36% of Venango County (19,099 residents) lives within a 10-minute walk of a public park, while the statewide average is 53%, placing the region far behind in terms of public land accessibility. Promoting further creation and development of parks in Venango County will only increase the opportunity for residents to enjoy their natural environment and its benefits.

Number of Public Parks (2018)



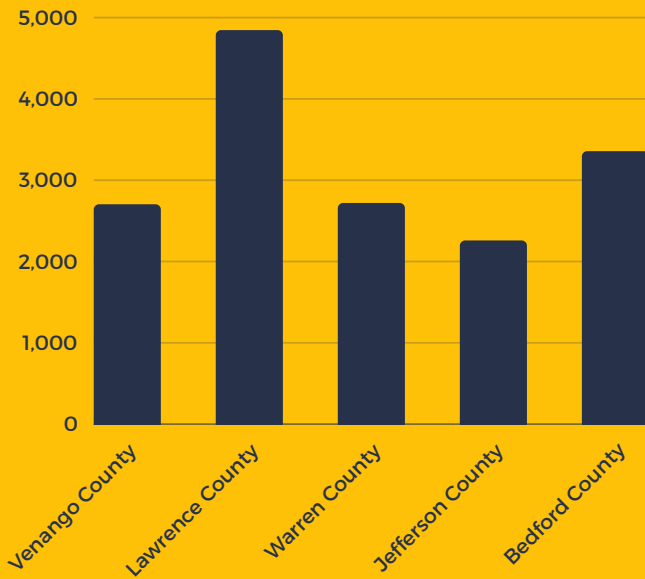
VENANGO COUNTY'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Community health is heavily impacted by the health of the surrounding environment. In Venango County, there is little hard data to directly illustrate the health of the environment, though Pennsylvania's industrial past (and present) is generally considered to have some negative community health impact. There will always be room for improvement, but the rural nature of Venango County allows residents to breathe cleaner air and enjoy cleaner water than many parts of the United States. Making efforts to protect and conserve the environment will continue to benefit residents' health.

INTERNET ACCESS IN VENANGO COUNTY

Like many rural regions, parts of Venango County face challenges with internet access. The infrastructure for high-speed internet, such as cable and fiber, is not as developed in many rural communities, leading to reliance on slower or more expensive options like Starlink or satellite. Internet access in rural communities is crucial for economic growth, educational opportunities, and healthcare access, enabling businesses to reach broader markets, students to participate in online learning, and patients to access telemedicine services. It also enhances social connectivity and quality of life by facilitating communication, entertainment, and access to government services. Ensuring reliable internet in these areas bridges the digital divide, promoting social and economic inclusion and preparing rural communities for future technological advancements.

Numbers of Households without Internet Access (2022)



Venango County Quick Facts

14

Number of Internet Providers (2018)

18,619

Households with Internet Access (2022)

2,222

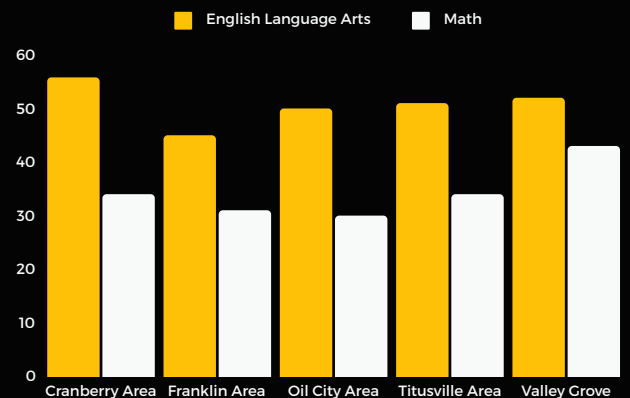
Households without Computer Device (2022)

SCHOOLS IN VENANGO COUNTY

In Pennsylvania, students in grades 3-8 are required to take assessments through the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). These tests are designed to measure a student's proficiency in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. The 2023 results for Venango County's primary public schools can be found in the chart.

A school's PSSA results can reveal its academic strengths and areas that need improvement in subjects like ELA and math. These results track trends over time, highlighting what is working well and areas requiring more support, and also identify achievement gaps among students.

Percent of Students Scoring Proficient & Above (Grades 3-8) (2023)



CONCLUSION

By engaging in various initiatives aimed at improving living conditions, enhancing access to resources, and fostering community well-being, local authorities and community leaders can contribute positively to this data.