

Invest:

Philadelphia 2019

An in-depth review of the key issues facing the Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties' economies featuring the exclusive insights of prominent industry leaders





Commodore Barry Bridge by Rick M. on Flickr

CITY OF CHESTER



IT ALL



STARTS HERE



Premier geographical location

- Oldest city in Pennsylvania
- Largest city in Delaware County
- Home to Philadelphia Union
- Widener University Main Campus
- Harrah's Racetrack & Casino



City of Chester News and Information



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City of Chester

The City of Chester sits between Philadelphia and Wilmington in Delaware County. Home to the Philadelphia Union and Harrah's Casino, Chester is undergoing a period of revitalization. The city is working hard to attract more businesses and development, and with anchor institutions like Widener University, Kimberly Clark and Crozer Health System, Chester is quickly rewriting its story.





Phoenix rising:

Once an industrial powerhouse, Chester faced years of economic decline but today is rising from the ashes with a strong sense of community

The City of Chester, located south of Philadelphia on the way to Wilmington, Delaware, is the largest city in Delaware County and technically the oldest city in Pennsylvania. Chester sits right on the edge of the Delaware River with direct access to New Jersey via the Commodore Barry Bridge. It also offers quick and convenient access to the Philadelphia International Airport and the area's numerous ports, making it a prime location for businesses and residents alike.

Once an industrial powerhouse, Chester fell on hard times thanks to urban upheaval and a changing economy. Plagued by the stigmas of political corruption, organized crime and historic redlining, this small city surrounded by thriving middle-class suburbs has faced an uphill battle to reinvent itself. However, today major institutions like Widener University, the Philadelphia Union soccer team and Harrah's Casino, along with an energized government, the Delaware County Riverfront Alliance and the city's residents, are showing both their commitment to the city and their faith that Chester will not only bounce back but also rise from the ashes even stronger.

■ Deep roots

Chester has a rich history. The area was settled in 1644 by the Swedish and originally called Upland. William Penn — who allegedly first stepped ashore here, not at Penn's Landing — changed the name to Chester in 1682, when he acquired the settlement as a safe haven for Quakers. Chester is the oldest city in Pennsylvania, incorporated as a borough in 1701 and then as a city in 1866. Chester is also home to the country's longest continually used municipal building, the Chester Courthouse, which has been in use since 1774.

From its settlement in the mid-1600s and through the next 300 years, Chester was a prosperous manufacturing hub focused primarily on metal, machinery, textiles and shipbuilding. The city saw massive growth around World War I, welcoming 20,000 new residents who swelled the population from 38,000 to 58,000. This growth was fueled by a surge in the industrial base, creating many jobs and a need for workers to fill them. The influx of residents also raised a need for housing.

The city saw a second period of economic prosperity during World War II, fueled again by industrial and (•••)

Revitalization

How the City of Chester is reinventing itself as a great and affordable place to live, work and play, with a focus on safety, education and job growth

Thaddeus **Kirkland**

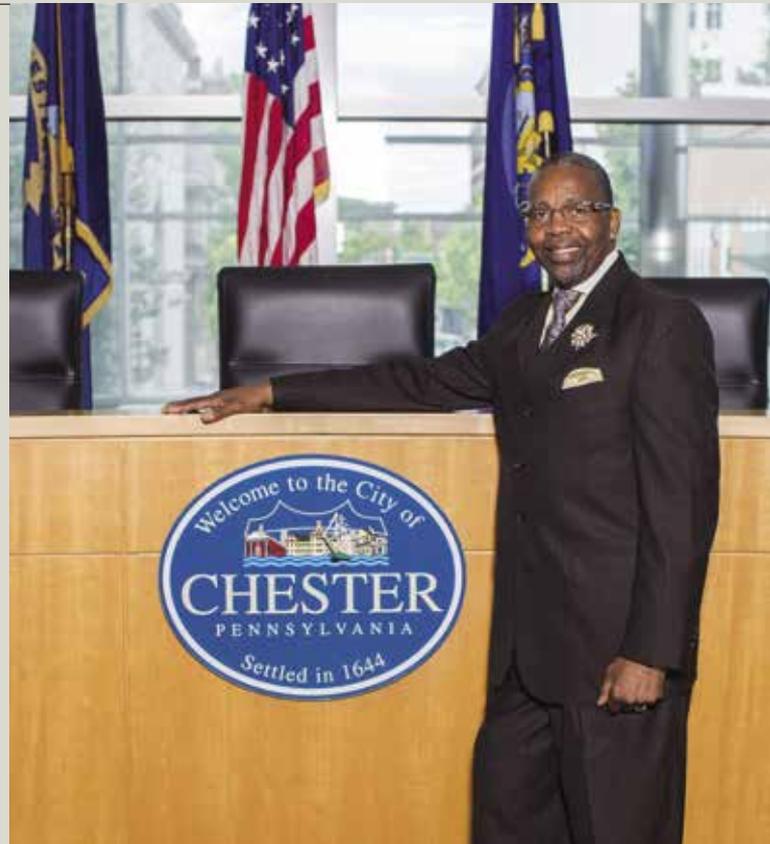
Mayor – City of Chester

What are some things the city is doing to drive business and jobs to Chester?

We lowered our business tax, and now we have one of the lowest rates in the county. We are seeing a lot of younger residents opening up businesses in our Overtown section of the city. We are seeing more boutiques and restaurants. We were very excited to have Uno's, a large chain restaurant, come to the city. That created a lot of jobs for our residents. The development of an 86-room hotel right near city hall is going to bring in jobs, as well as new business. It will give visitors to Harrah's Casino a close place to stay and generate more commerce in our city. Bringing in business and creating jobs is important, not just because it helps our residents and gives them employment opportunities here so they don't have to leave the city for work, but it also helps Chester's reputation. The City of Chester doesn't always get the best reputation, and we are committed to changing that and showing that it is a great place to live and raise a family.

How are you working to better the education system in Chester?

Chester Charter School of the Arts, a new K-11 school, opened recently. Next year it will be K-12, and it has been an amazing asset to our community. It is a beautiful facility that focuses on the arts, as well as regular academics, and it is something that our children, parents and teachers are all excited about. Currently, a large number of Chester children seek their education outside of the city, but we are hoping that more choose to be educated in the city and that Chester Charter will help with that retention. Our biggest challenge is funding. We have greater needs than a lot of other communities, and right now we are not getting significant funding. We are continuously looking for creative and innovative ways to generate funding so we can give these children the best education possible.



We want to increase our graduation rate and offer more opportunities for the parents who want to go back to school to earn their degrees. Right now our biggest challenge is getting the funding from the state and showing it that we have greater needs that are not being met.

What is your outlook for the city of Chester?

I see great things happening here in the city. We received a grant from the state that allowed us to put more cameras in the city to increase security, and we also increased our police force. We are recruiting directly from our community, which has been an amazing way to create jobs, make the city safer and involve the community more. A huge challenge for us as a city is stigma, and as mayor I am working hard to reduce that stigma. ■

Julie Wollman
President
Widener University



How is Widener University staying innovative in its research and program offerings?

Widener launched a new robotics engineering program in the fall of 2018. It is the first undergraduate program of its kind in our region, and one of less than 20 in the country. We pride ourselves on our ability to offer prospective students new and innovative programs. Widener is a research-focused institution, and that work not only leads to innovation, but also enhances our academic programs and gives our students experiences that accelerate their careers. We are classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a Doctoral and Research Institution, and our students can start conducting research with professors as freshmen. We offer a summer research program that allows our students to continue their research outside of the traditional school year. We are conducting a significant amount of research in the sciences and healthcare, as well as in engineering. In a highly competitive region, Widener's focus on engaging students in research that changes lives distinguishes us from other universities.

How does Widener University impact the Chester community?

Widener is an anchor institution in the City of Chester. We have almost 1,300 employees; some who live in Chester, and many who live in the county. We are proud to offer many resources to the city, including our pro-bono clinics. We have one of the leading student-led pro-bono physical therapy clinics in the country. It has been so successful that our faculty and students host conferences and teach others to run successful student-run pro-bono clinics for people across the country. We offer several other clinics in the city in fields including mental health, nursing and child therapy. Every year, Widener students, faculty and staff consistently contribute more than 100,000 hours of community service within the Chester community, valued at more than \$2.5 million annually. ■

■■■) business growth. Its population hit a peak shortly after the Second World War in the 1950s. However, in the mid-1950s and 1960s, Chester entered a period of economic decline as manufacturing and other industries moved out of the city. With employment waning, people migrated to the surrounding suburban areas in search of opportunities.

The lack of industry and outward migration led to an economic downturn. The history of the manufacturing industry also caused environmental challenges that the county has worked hard to rectify. In the 1980s, the Wade Dump, a rubber recycling facility, was declared a Superfund cleanup site and saw remediation throughout the decade. It was declared safe in 1989. In 1995, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania declared Chester a financially distressed municipality. Today, Chester's population numbers just under 34,000 residents, 75 percent of whom are African-American — a demographic makeup the city boasted at its peak as well. The 2010 census ranked Chester the largest city in Delaware County.

■ Rebirth

Chester is in a period of tremendous revitalization. Despite being declared a financially distressed municipality in the mid-1990s, the city is working diligently to turn things around. Chester is a Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ), which means it is part of a program that incentivized businesses, in the form of local and state tax breaks, to invest and develop in KOZ-designated areas. Businesses that took advantage of the KOZs were exempt, for the most part, from all state and local taxes through 2013. December 2017's federal tax reform created Qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZs), which are similar to KOZs but have fewer restrictions. QOZs are designated by Governor Wolf, and at the time of print he had already highlighted 300 across the commonwealth to partake in the program. Two of these fall within the City of Chester.

A great deal of economic development in Chester has been focused on the waterfront, which was once home to the booming industrial industry. The Philadelphia Union, the region's major-league soccer team, calls the Chester waterfront home, as does Harrah's Casino and Racetrack, Kimberly-Clark and Power Home Remodeling. The waterfront itself is a KOZ, which has greatly encouraged its development. The KOZ designation brought the Wharf at Rivertown, which in turn brought businesses directly to the waterfront. The Kimberly-Clark mill, which produces Scott 1000 toilet paper, is investing \$150 million into its waterfront



Chester is in a period of tremendous revitalization, and the community celebrates the new development and investment.

property to make it more green. Investments like this on the waterfront are incredibly important to the city of Chester.

Thaddeus Kirkland was elected mayor in 2016 and has pushed hard for the revitalization of the city. He delivered a State of the City address in June 2018 in which he provided those in attendance with an update on the state of the economy, education, crime, infrastructure and the city as a whole. Developing partnerships is a big focus for Mayor Kirkland, who has been fostering a strong relationship with the Delaware

County Chamber of Commerce. Many retail storefronts in the downtown part of Chester have reopened in the past few years, bringing private business back to the city in a way that it hasn't seen in quite some time.

One of the businesses that has been seeing success in downtown Chester is DTLR, a shoe and apparel store opened by Orlando Tucker, better known as Jahlil Beats. Beats is a hip-hop producer native to Chester who was signed to Roc Nation and rose to fame producing Philadelphia native Meek Mill's "Ima Boss" and "Burn." Having grown up below the



Chris **Albrecht**

Senior Vice President and General Manager – Harrah's Philadelphia

“ Harrah's is an anchor institution for the City of Chester, drawing over 2.7 million customer visits to the area in the last year. The city sees a direct benefit from the tax out of our facility. Our gaming operations are taxed, and that money goes directly to Delaware County and the City of Chester. Indirectly, we are a very active organization in the city. We also invest in the local community, and we have built partnerships with different organizations throughout the city, as well as the county. ”



Jahlil Beats
Founder – Tandem

“ We have become more involved in the economic development of Chester. We own a few properties in the downtown area, and our main focus is to create jobs. We are closing on a deal that includes 340 properties, which we are going to keep as affordable housing for people in Chester. We want to bring more businesses and jobs to the city, but we don’t want anyone to be displaced or priced out. That is important to us — making sure the people who live here can stay here. ”

poverty level in Chester, Beats promised to give back to his community. He and his fellow Tandem business partners, Ra-Tah Johnson and David Elliott, have worked hard to bring business into Chester. They have made significant investments in real estate, as well as acting as promoters for the city, courting businesses that see the same opportunity as they do.

■ New development

Development is happening in Chester; whether it is down by the waterfront or in downtown, the city is rebuilding. The Riverfront Alliance of Delaware County, in partnership with the Chester Community Improvement Project, is engaged in an overall housing revitalization effort for the residential neighborhood Nova Vista, located between Widener University and Crozer Hospital. The lot slated for development is half an acre and is in a neighborhood that has been around since the 1960s. The project that will go up on the site is called

Arbor Estates, two pairs of twin homes totaling four three-bedroom homes that will be the first new homes built in Chester in the last five years. The properties will be listed at \$130,000, making them affordable for people at or below 80 percent of the area’s median income.

The Nova Vista neighborhood is also home to Uno Chicago Grill, another major recent development that Chester is proud of. Uno is the first national casual dining chain restaurant to enter the city and sits near Arbor Estates and Widener University. The 8,076-square-foot restaurant holds 224 guests and has created 150 jobs in the city.

July 2017 saw the groundbreaking of the Candlewood Suites Hotel in Chester, and the 89-room hotel opened in the spring of 2018. This \$6 million project is located near Chester City Hall and is in proximity to the Philadelphia International Airport, which makes it a great extended stay option for business travelers, the hotel’s target demographic.



**KEEP LIFE
ROLLING**



Renewed growth

How Delaware County is helping to revitalize the City of Chester by providing government representation and tax incentives to potential investors

Brian Zidek

Councilman – Delaware County

What are some benefits for businesses to be located in Delaware County?

Delaware County is a very dynamic place that is extraordinarily diverse. You can go from Chester to Thornbury in about 20 minutes and go from an urban community to rolling horse country. We have communities that appeal to every type of person and business. We have a lot of industrial space in Chester and some of the neighboring townships, but we also have rolling farmland for companies like Wawa. We also have numerous highly rated colleges and universities like Widener, Swarthmore and Villanova, so we are producing a lot of highly educated talent for local businesses. In Chester, we are home to Kimberly-Clark, which produces Scott toilet paper. SAP has its headquarters in Newtown Square and Boeing has a large presence near the airport. With I-95 running right around us and our proximity to Philadelphia, New Jersey and Delaware, this is a great place to locate a business.

How is Delaware County aiding in the revitalization of the city of Chester?

Chester is going through immense change at the moment, and the county is supporting the revitalization in every way we can. When investors tour Chester, we make sure that we have government representation there to support them. Bringing investors to Chester not only helps them but also the county as a whole. The county has access to resources that the City of Chester might not have, so our economic oversight board and our commerce center are able to act as resources for the City of Chester. We are also a taxing authority, so we might be asked to step in and offer support from a tax perspective. We are very involved with the City of Chester, and its revitalization is something we are going to continue to support.



What are some challenges facing Delaware County?

Delaware County used to be a huge manufacturing and industrial hub, but much of that industry left the county decades ago. When a huge industry leaves an area it can be hard to find a new identity. Our industrial history also created some environmental challenges that Delaware County has been working hard to rectify. The Kimberly-Clark mill in Chester just invested \$150 million to switch to a natural gas cogeneration facility as opposed to coal, which is a huge help. We are seeing more companies come into the county, which helps replace the jobs we lost when manufacturing left. However, the future for Delaware County is very bright. We are seeing growth and more businesses coming in, and we don't expect that to slow down any time soon. ■

Tom Shoemaker

Chair

Riverfront Alliance of

Delaware County

Pennsylvania Market

President

TD Bank



What is the primary goal of the Riverfront Alliance?

The Riverfront Alliance was originally formed in 1996 as the Institute of Economic Development. We are an organization consisting of all the major corporate and not-for-profit stakeholders of the City of Chester and the surrounding Delaware County waterfront. The goal is to improve and sustain economic development in the area of Chester and the surrounding waterfront. Our three main areas of focus are economic development, housing and public safety. We have narrowed our focus to these three areas because we think they will have the greatest long-term, sustainable benefit to the local community. We are creating a master plan for the city that will help communicate to the citizens, stakeholders and potential investors what the residential, commercial and retail zones are because that is a little unclear at the moment. We are also putting in a great deal of effort to revitalize the waterfront, which is an amazing asset for the city.

What are some of your current public safety and housing projects?

A highlight for us has been our continued investment in our public safety program. We have raised almost \$1.5 million in grants for security cameras. This has allowed us to create a network of cameras across a portion of the city and work toward making it a much safer place to live. We work closely with the Chester police department and other anchor institutions — like Widener University, Crozer Hospital, the Philadelphia Union and Harrah's — that are involved with the public safety of the city as well.

We also have a strategic priority for housing, and we are well underway with Arbor Estates, which are four new homes being constructed within Chester. These are the first new homes in Chester in five years, and they are expected to be finished by early 2019. In addition, we have established programs that help people in Chester purchase and renovate homes, which has been very helpful in building the community. ■

Infrastructure improvements

Much like the rest of Pennsylvania, Chester has aging infrastructure that, with the help of the commonwealth, is being replaced. In May 2017, the city announced the launch of a \$50 million stormwater infrastructure community-based public-private partnership (CBP3) for the Stormwater Authority of the City of Chester. The purpose of the Stormwater Authority is to help the city with its efforts to reduce stormwater runoff and educate the residents on safe practices so water does not become polluted. These initiatives are in place to help improve water quality in Chester, as well as quality of life.

The CBP3 plans on financing, building and maintaining \$50 million worth of green stormwater infrastructure in Chester over the next 20 to 30 years. The projects will take place on 350 acres of city land and will address critical pollution and flooding issues in the area. They are also expected to fuel economic growth, support small and minority-owned businesses and lead to significant job creation in the city. Additionally, there are proposed cost savings in regards to other private and public capital improvements, such as streets, housing and education. The partnership consists of the Chester Water Authority, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, PENNVEST and Corivas.

Along with the projects involving the utility infrastructure in Chester, there is also significant rehabilitation going on surrounding the bridges in the city. At the beginning of 2017, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) announced that construction on eight bridges on I-95 in Chester would begin in March of that year. The project, estimated to cost \$16.6 million, calls for the closing of each bridge while it is being worked on, with all work expected to be completed in November 2018. At the time of print it had not been completed. PennDOT stated that since the bridges go over highways and railroad tracks, they are critical to fix. The project also includes improvements to Chestnut Street and Morton Avenue in Chester.

Transportation

Transportation is the backbone of the Greater Philadelphia region, and Chester is no different. Chester City sits just 12 minutes south of the Philadelphia International Airport, making it closer to the gateway to the rest of the world than Center City Philadelphia itself. Another 12 minutes south of Chester is the Delaware border, putting the city in a prime location to commute to or from both

Philadelphia and Wilmington. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) started service in Chester in 1968 and today operates seven bus lines in the city.

SEPTA serves the city by regional rail on the Wilmington/Newark Line. Both the Chester Transportation Center and the Highland Avenue stop are within city limits. The Chester Transportation Center sees trains every hour at off-peak times going in both directions and twice an hour at peak times. While this certainly helps people commuting both to and from Chester, more frequency would allow for more opportunity for residents to move to Chester to take advantage of its lower housing costs. Improving connectivity between Chester and Philadelphia is essential; currently there is more frequency between Chester and Wilmington, and the ride between Delaware and Chester takes only 18 minutes. However, the city of Chester would benefit greatly from more frequency in both directions.

There are ride-sharing opportunities in Chester that come at a fairly low price point. An Uber or Lyft from Chester to Center City Philadelphia costs about \$28, with a ride from Chester to downtown Wilmington running about \$30. A ride from the downtown area of Chester to the Philadelphia International Airport costs less than \$20 — less expensive than riding from Center City Philadelphia to the airport. This makes accessing key players like the Talen Energy Stadium, Widener University, Harrah's Casino and Crozer-Keystone Hospital an affordable option from both hubs. Chester used to be a stop on the Pennsylvania Railroad service to Washington, D.C., but has not had routes since the 1970s.

■ Health matters

Chester City is home to Crozer-Keystone Health System, a five-hospital health system that serves Delaware County, Northern Delaware and Western New Jersey. The Crozer-Chester Medical Center is an anchor institution for Chester. A large portion of the population is employed by the healthcare profession, and 20 percent of the jobs in the city are healthcare related. Crozer-Chester Medical Center is a 68-acre campus established in 1963 through the merger of Chester Hospital (established in 1893) and Crozer Hospital (established in 1902). It became one of the founding hospitals of the Crozer-Keystone Health System in 1990. The hospital is a 300-bed, tertiary care teaching hospital and admits 19,000 patients a year, treats 53,000 patients in the Emergency Department and delivers almost 2,000 babies.

Delaware County State Health Center, part of the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Bureau of



Tim McDermott
Chief Business Officer
Philadelphia Union

I am bullish on the sport of soccer in the U.S. and especially in Philadelphia. I have been with the Union for two and a half years now, but I have always been impressed with how the franchise entered the market. There are two components of the Union that have made it as successful as it is. The first part is the fan base. Union fans are amazingly passionate, which is largely driven by our supporters group, the Sons of Ben. They were a huge part of bringing the sport to Philadelphia on a major-league level and a huge part in getting fans involved and making the fan experience what it is. With most major-league sports, excitement comes from the game itself, but there is also “manufactured” entertainment from the music, the fanfare and the promotions during the games. In soccer, that sort of piped-in entertainment isn't there as the fans create an organic atmosphere themselves that is unique to the sport itself.

The second component of what has made the Union really resonate with people in the area is the stadium. The stadium is directly next to the Commodore Barry Bridge in Delaware County overlooking the Delaware River. The views are amazing! We recently acquired adjacent land and a 400,000 square foot Class A office building and now control about a mile of waterfront campus. With the help of county, city and Riverfront Alliance officials, we are collectively looking at how we can transform the waterfront into an even more incredible year round destination.

We are laser focused on growth and how we grow the Union brand and the sport of soccer in the Philadelphia region. Part of that opportunity comes from focusing on youth soccer programs. When we help the local youth soccer community we are building a fan base from an early age. To that end, we recently hired Dave Pettican as our Youth General Manager. He will focus on getting kids in the surrounding communities engaged with the sport and giving them a home team to root for. ■

Community Health Systems, is also located in Chester. The Health Center offers services to the residents of Delaware County, while the bureau of health is responsible for monitoring the health of the residents. Direct services offered by the State Health Center include free STD testing, a free tuberculosis disease clinic and free or low-cost child immunizations. Child immunizations are provided at no cost for people without health insurance. According to the latest census, 15 percent of people under the age of 65 are without health insurance in the city of Chester. Due to the city's history of manufacturing, many residents suffer from asthma. Both Chester and Delaware County are working diligently to make environmental changes to improve air quality.

Education

Widener University is another major anchor institution for the city of Chester, fueling the region's reputation for being a top higher education destination.

The university is a partial owner of Uno's Pizzeria, the city's first chain restaurant, and a significant employer for the city. It also fosters the community through the Widener University Partnership Charter School, a K-7 school that offers opportunities to students who attend. Provided they maintain a strong GPA and meet the admission requirements, students who attend Widener University Partnership Charter School are awarded scholarships to attend Widener University

upon their graduation from high school. The K-7 school also offers experiential learning opportunities for students in Widener University's education and social work programs.

Arts and culture

Chester has a longstanding history of arts and culture. The city boasted a thriving arts community in the 1950s led largely by William Dandridge, who was once known as the "Father of Arts and Culture in the City of Chester." Dandridge strived to create an arts corridor right in the center of Chester while also being a vocal activist. His nephew, Devon Walls, is currently fostering the community's arts and culture scene with a focus on local ownership.

Part of the city's revitalization program is supporting the arts and culture communities in the city. The campaign "Chester Made" is a big part of that support. This campaign is a collaborative effort

to support the Historic Chester Arts and Culture District and the proposed concept of a Chester Cultural Corridor that would run through the downtown area from City Hall to Widener University. The initiative is a collaborative effort between the city, Widener University, Chester Arts Alive!, Gas and Electrics Arts, Pennsylvania Humanities Council and the Artist Warehouse. In 2015, a Cultural Asset Map was created to mark areas of artistic and cultural significance in the city. Notable areas include

“Part of the city's revitalization program is supporting the arts and culture communities.”

Riverfront Alliance of Delaware County

The Riverfront Alliance of Delaware County is a non-profit organization focused on revitalizing the Delaware County Waterfront through economic development, housing and community development and public safety initiatives.

Address: P.O. Box 782, Chester, PA 19016
Phone: 610-447-7861





Jeff Hutter

Mill Manager – Kimberly-Clark

“ Kimberly-Clark is a large employer for the city of Chester. We employ about 600 people at this mill, which is significant for this area. We spend a lot of time in schools teaching them about STEM, as well as the wide array of opportunities we offer here. We want the children of Chester to know the different jobs they can do right in their backyard, whether they want to learn a skilled trade or become an engineer. Community involvement, especially in Chester, is very important to us. ”

the MJ Freed Performing Arts Theater, Art on Avenue of the States, Artist Warehouse and Laran Bronze.

■ Cleaning up

Environmental injustice is an issue that Chester has been fighting since 1993. As the home to a trash incinerator for the county, processing plants, oil refineries and a sewage treatment plant that receives waste from the entire county, Chester has been the home to many environmental pollutants that affect not just the environment but the health of the residents as well. Chester residents and politicians pushed back against the entry of bottom-rung projects like the aforementioned into the community as a half-baked attempt at economic redevelopment. Residents worried about pollution and noise. In 1993, a community activist group called Chester Residents Concerned for Quality Living partnered with the Law Center to launch a lawsuit to stop the opening of Thermal Pure, an infectious waste-processing facility. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court finally revoked the plant's permit in 1995, forcing the plant to close. The plant was originally given its permit by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources (DER) even though the plans exceeded the DER's limits tenfold.

A more recent environmental success story involves Chester's Sun Village Park, a place where people would illegally dump tires and other debris. On Earth Day 2018, volunteers worked to not only clean up the park but also paint murals, rebuild stream beds and plant native vegetation. Led by a local resident, the volunteers were able to give the city back a usable park, as well as clean local waterways.

■ Challenges

Chester has had its fair share of challenges, but with challenges comes opportunity. While once deemed

unsafe, Chester is putting an immense effort into improving public safety for its residents. In April 2018, the city announced that it was closer to its goal of citywide surveillance thanks to a grant of \$240,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. The city installed sixteen surveillance cameras across the west end (the east end already has 110 cameras installed). Some of the cameras are in plain sight, and some are hidden. According to the mayor, the city has seen an increase in crimes solved, as well as a reduction in crime.

■ Bright future

Chester is experiencing a renaissance, shaking off its rough history and becoming safer every day. The city of Chester, both its residents and government alike, is committed to the revitalization efforts happening within its borders. As more businesses take advantage of the two Qualified Opportunity Zones and the prime real estate on the waterfront, Chester will continue its upward trajectory. The city was advised by recovery coordinators to enter a three-year exit plan from its status as a financially distressed municipality. During his State of the City address, Mayor Kirkland was positive that the city would not need all three years. With people like Jahlil Beats and Mayor Kirkland working hard to show the surrounding areas what Chester has to offer, there is no doubt Chester will make a name for itself as the hot new place to live, work and play on the Delaware River. ■



Capital Analytics would like to thank the City of Chester for its contribution in compiling this chapter. To learn more, visit their website: www.chestercity.com.