

Marketing consultant discusses Fayette County's assets

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Local officials and the president of a Pittsburgh business

[property](#) marketing firm agree that Fayette County is poised for development.

Dewitt Peart, president of the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance (PRA), said that Fayette County leaders are on the right track as they partner in their efforts to promote potential business locations, various transportation opportunities, natural resources, tourist attractions and the area's

[workforce](#).

"Fayette County is doing very well in its preparation for business development," he said. "(County officials) are trying to ensure that the county will be on the contender short list when company owners are looking for properties to locate their businesses."

Peart and a team of national and international marketing representatives from PRA met with Fayette County Commission Chairman Al Ambrosini, representatives of Fay-Penn Economic Development Council and Fayette County Redevelopment Authority and others to tour about a dozen properties suitable for manufacturing or industrial development.

The properties included several business parks, privately owned property and the former ICMI plant in Dunbar Township.

"In order for us to promote an area, it is important that we see the available

[real estate](#), know what is happening in the county, the quality of life, the available workforce and what is being done to develop these properties," said Peart.

The PRA offers assistance to private and public sector leaders and economic development professions to market the 10-county region.

The alliance

[has](#) been a partner with Fay-Penn for several years and has had success in bringing business to the county.

Peart said that the county is a standout with its mountains, waterways, bike trails and historic landmarks.

"A lot of companies want to be close to the outdoors," he said. "Owners and employees like to be able to go fishing, hiking or biking; the amenities are a real selling point."

The PRA representatives were additionally pleased with the efforts of Fay-Penn and the redevelopment authority to prepare their respective properties by installing utilities, roads, model buildings and concrete pads.

"It allows them to begin construction or move in and start their business in a relatively short period of time," said Peart.

Adding to the county's benefits are access to major roads, such as the now-completed Mon/Fayette Expressway and Interstate 68, rail service, the Monongahela River that allows for barge transportation, along with the Joseph A. Hardy III/Connellsville Airport, added Peart.

"The access to the Mon/Fayette Expressway will bring opportunities," he said.

An additional asset is the proximity to the Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus.

"To have a competitive advantage, you must have an educated workforce," said Peart. "To have the campus in the county is beneficial."

Michael Jordan, Fay-Penn's executive director, said that while there has been a lull in the further development of the natural gas industry, drilling is expected to ramp up later next year and Fayette County will be poised to offer locations to gas and other companies wanting to establish their businesses in the county.

Although unable to disclose specifics, Jordan said that the county properties are drawing interest from outside companies because of the location and available amenities.

"There are two companies that have expressed interest in the Dunbar Business Park and that's without us turning one shovel of dirt," he said. "Because of the location and rail capability, we have interest."

The former ICMI site has been visited by several potential buyers.

"We could move somebody in there within 30 to 60 days," said Jordan.

Ambrosini, meanwhile, said the cooperative effort will be to the county's advantage.

"Both the redevelopment authority and Fay-Penn have had success in marketing their properties," he said. "I believe that these two agencies, the county and PRA forming a partnership will bring more opportunities to Fayette County."