

Clarion Blueprint Community Initiative Vision Statement

Clarion: America's Main Street

The historic Borough of Clarion, the seat of Clarion County, is a safe, clean and welcoming community that is the ideal location for modern families and active individuals. Because of its access to the wild and scenic Clarion River, Cook Forest State Park and the Allegheny National Forest, Clarion is a regionally recognized destination for outdoor tourism and adventure. As the home of the internationally known Autumn Leaf Festival and nationally recognized Clarion University, as well as being situated close to I-80, our community lies at the crossroads of commerce and innovation.

❖ Main Street:

Clarion has a vibrant and thriving Main Street that has retained its small-town charm, and offers an eclectic mix of specialty shops and services. Clarion is a very walkable town that invites a stroll to take in the quaint streetscape, stop for a rest at one of the cafes, bistros or restaurants where there is a menu for every palate. Galleries showcase regional artists and public art is prominently displayed, adding a touch of modern whimsy to the stately old buildings. Home to a growing farmers market and local food movement, the location for most Autumn Leaf Festival activities, and the heart of our community, Main Street is where residents and visitors alike can buy local produce, catch up with old friends and make new ones, patronize family businesses and savor the flavor of Clarion.

❖ A College Town:

Clarion University brings to rural western Pennsylvania the opportunity for community members to pursue an educational degree in one or more of 175 areas of study. This opportunity enhances the individual's job prospects and promotes a better educated workforce for our community and region. The university also offers art and cultural activities – including concerts, theater productions and art exhibits – that are not traditionally widely available in non-urban areas. Its beautiful, 128-acre campus, nestled in rolling hills, offers public green space for relaxation and athletic pursuits. University students and employees participate in, and enhance, a progressive and enlightened environment that welcomes and embraces diversity, while invigorating the community at large with new thoughts, ideas and a youthful optimism. Clarion alumni have a lifelong attachment to the town and the university, often returning to the area to visit as well as to live, work and thrive.

❖ The Clarion River, Cook Forest State Park, and Allegheny National Forest:

Clarion is Pennsylvania's gateway to Cook Forest State Park. With over 50 miles of scenic trails winding through 11,000 plus acres of old growth forest, the opportunities for outdoor recreation are endless. As a popular area for camping, hiking, biking and horseback riding; as well as easy access to the Clarion River where swimming, boating and fishing fill endless summer days, Clarion Borough is your base camp for an outdoor adventure. Near the North Country Trail and a county-wide network of bike trails, Clarion has the right mix of businesses and amenities for a day of boating/fishing with friends, a bike trip with the family or a solo hike with nature as your companion.

❖ Infrastructure and Regional Partners:

With close proximity to two interstate highways (I-80 and I-79) and world class communication infrastructure, as well as access to premier educational, health care, and recreational facilities, Clarion is the place to get away from the world while still being connected to it. All the benefits of small-town life with urban amenities close at hand, make this area a magnet for creative professionals, young families and active seniors. A mix of housing options are available, from the stately restored Victorians on tree-lined streets, to river-front cottages, single family homes, condominiums, and trendy apartments over Main Street business. In Clarion you can live where your heart makes its home. Entrepreneurial individuals and growth-minded businesses are encouraged to leverage existing opportunities with the Borough of Clarion, Clarion University, Clarion Chamber of Business and Industry, Small Business Development Center, Barnes Center for Biotechnology Business Development, Clarion Hospital, Clarion County Development Corporation, Industrial Development Authority, and local Keystone Opportunity Zones to build a successful future in Clarion. Our community and *your new hometown* is open for business and actively seeking additional partners in growth and development. Welcome home--to Clarion!