

**COMMUNITY &  
ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES**



**City of Reading**





*On behalf of the citizens of Pennsylvania's fifth largest city, we welcome your interest in expanding or relocating here. We hope this booklet gives you some insight on how our City can assist your decision-making.*

*The City has diverse industrial and commercial sites as well as technically skilled labor, locally and in the region. There is solid infrastructure with ample capacity to accommodate the needs of both high technology and traditional businesses. The City's proximity to major markets and export sites opens up logistical advantages. To nurture your success, Reading equips its economic development professionals with special resources, including attractive financing packages for start-up capital, equipment, and/or working capital.*

*Reading also offers choices in education, health care, major tourist attractions, sporting events, and the outdoor experiences of hiking, boating, hunting, and fishing.*

*We invite you to contact our team of economic development professionals to answer any questions regarding specific needs.*

*Thanks for your interest. We hope to see you soon in Reading.*

*Sincerely,*

**Thomas McMahan  
MAYOR**

**[www.readingpa.gov](http://www.readingpa.gov)**

## CITY PROFILE

---

City of Reading is located in southeastern Pennsylvania, Berks County. A balanced mix of industry, retail, professional services, and institutions fosters fertile ground for commerce. The City also has a strong hospitality sector; ideal for meetings, conventions, and trade shows.

Competitive demographics, a productive workforce, a pleasant lifestyle, and a full range of utilities with ample capacity add to the City of Reading's business appeal.

The following are Reading area's top ten employers.

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name</u>
1.	Reading Hospital and Medical Center
2.	East Penn Manufacturing Co. Inc
3.	Reading School District
4.	Berks County Government
5.	Carpenter Technology Corp.
6.	Boscov's Inc.
7.	Sovereign Bancorp
8.	Reading Area Community College
9.	FirstEnergy Corp.
10.	City of Reading

To help you analyze your business expansion/location options, we can provide you with information on real estate listings, business incentive programs, tax information, employment statistics, local wage rates, and other related data.

Please check our website: [www.readingpa.gov](http://www.readingpa.gov) for updated information.

# City of Reading

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Reading is located in southeastern Pennsylvania. The city is largely bounded on the west by the Schuylkill River, on the east by Mount Penn, and on the south by Neversink Mountain.

## **DEMOGRAPHICS** (2006 U.S. Census estimates)

Population: 81,183

Median age: 29.6

Median household income: \$30,270

Labor force (age 16 and older) : 37,345

## **DISTANCE TO MAJOR CITIES**

Philadelphia — 56 miles

Baltimore, MD — 107 miles

New York City — 125 miles

Washington, D.C. — 134 miles



*Reading Public Library*



**Leg**



# Reading



**Legend**  
Educational Institution  
Water  
Park

**Municipality**  
Municipality  
Reading

## **BUSINESS FINANCING PROGRAMS**

---

**Tax Exempt Bond Financing**—*for individual, manufacturing, nonprofit, and environmental project.*

**Taxable Bond Financing**—*offering lower interest rates than conventional financing.*

**Ben Franklin Technology Partners**—*investments up to \$200,000. Provides seed funding for start-ups, as well as development money for established, technology-based companies to create or retain jobs in the area.*

**Community First Fund**—*for qualified borrowers, loans up to \$35,000 for the start or expansion of a small business. Interest rates starting at 9.5% and terms up to 5 years.*

**Enterprise Zone Loans**—*up to \$250,000 at low interest rates to manufacturing, office buildings, warehousing, and other facilities located in the zone.*

**Machinery & Working Capital Loans**—*up to \$25,000 available for a term up to seven years.*

**MELF Loans**—*up to \$500,000 or 50% of eligible project costs at below market interest rates; manufacturing, agricultural processing, and mining.*

**PEDFA Loans**—*tax exempt bonds that can finance manufacturing, nonprofits, and sewage and solid waste disposal projects.*

**PIDA Loans**—*up to \$1.5 million at below market rates for land and building; manufacturing, commercial, agribusiness, offices, and other qualified applicants.*

**Small Business First**—*loans up to \$200,000 for manufacturing, export-related, advanced technology industries, hospitality, defense-related firms, recyclers, and agricultural production.*

**SBA 7(a) Loan Program**—*loan guarantees through banks and lending institutions; loan guarantee limit \$1,000,000.*

**SBA Pre-Qualification Loan Program**—*part of the SBA 7(a) loan guarantee program designed to assist companies 51% owned by minorities, veterans, or women; loan guarantee limit \$250,000.*

**SBA 504 Loan Program**—*loans of \$1,000,000 (\$1.3 million in rural areas) or 40% of eligible project costs for most small businesses.*

**SBA Export Working Capital Loan Program**—*loan guarantee of 90% on borrowed funds for working capital up to \$1,000,000 used to help borrower complete export sales.*

Tax incentives, grants, and other loans may be available from the City of Reading. Reading maintains a database of traditional lending sources. Ask us, and we will arrange introductions for you.

## **EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, ENTERTAINMENT, AND TRANSPORTATION**

---

There are three institutions of higher learning located within the City of Reading, and three high schools serve the city. Early care for infants and pre-school children is also available in the area.

Reading Area Community College (RACC) is an accredited, comprehensive, open-enrollment education institution that is sponsored by Berks County Commissioners, and Albright College and Alvernia University can confer associate and bachelor degrees to graduates.

Reading Hospital and Medical Center and St. Joseph Medical Center are two healthcare centers offering an array of healthcare programs and services, as well as educating healthcare professionals.

RC Theatres includes a 10-screen Cineplex and an IMAX theater providing excellent enhanced 3D images.

The City of Reading has domestic connections for passenger and freight transport by truck, bus, train, regional airline, taxi, limousine, and automobile.

Looking for more information?

If you are seeking more space or a new site, call us at: 610-655-6211; FAX to: 610-373-2858; or e-mail Daniel S. Robinson, Director of Community Development at: [daniel.robinson@readingpa.org](mailto:daniel.robinson@readingpa.org) or visit the official city website [www.readingpa.gov](http://www.readingpa.gov) and click on the link [Business](#).



## CITY OF READING

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT

**Site Location  
Financing and Grants  
Keystone Opportunity Zones  
Workforce Development Assistance**

**We are ready to assist you!**

• Daniel S. Robinson •  
Director of Community Development

**610-655-6211**

**[www.readingpa.gov](http://www.readingpa.gov)**

**815 Washington Street**

**Reading, PA 19601**