



(Photos courtesy of PA Cast)

‘There’s a Lot that Pennsylvanians Can Learn From What’s Happening Here in Easton’

By Paul Muschick

EASTON - Pennsylvania’s increased commitment to economic development is paying off, with triple the amount of private investment since the state rolled out a strategy that includes making sites shovel ready, streamlining permitting approvals, boosting support for small businesses, and focusing on key industry sectors.

In 2024, projects supported by various state programs resulted in private investment of more than \$3 billion, Gov. Josh Shapiro said during a recent visit to the Lehigh Valley. In 2023, state supported projects triggered private investment of about \$1 billion.

“We want to know that when we’re investing a dollar of taxpayers’ hard-earned money that we’re spurring on private sector investment, because that’s what’s going to lead to real growth and opportunity on our main streets, in our suburban office parks, and in our downtowns,” Shapiro said Dec. 19 in Easton at Three OAK Steakhouse, one of several small businesses he visited to highlight their importance to the regional and state economies.

“There’s a lot that Pennsylvanians can learn from what’s happening here in Easton. And it’s not just beautiful restaurants like this, or wonderful bakeries. It’s about the whole vision and everyone working together. That attitude really, really matters,” Shapiro said.

“Easton’s small business owners are more than entrepreneurs — they’re community builders, creating gathering spaces, preserving traditions, and driving innovation,” said Julie VanOsdol, manager of the Easton Main Street Initiative.

Shapiro said Pennsylvania is more welcoming for businesses because of recent changes to the tax climate. They include a gradual reduction of the corporate net income tax rate to 4.99% in 2031, and a gradual increase in the amount of net operating losses that can be carried over for tax purposes.


In Easton, he visited Sweet Girlz Bakery, Queso at Casa, and Casa 401 before concluding at Three OAK Steakhouse. He was joined on the tour by Easton Mayor Sal Panto, state Sen. Lisa Boscola, state Rep. Bob Freeman, and VanOsdol, and during his remarks at Three OAK Steakhouse by Easton City Council members and representatives of Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation (LVEDC), the Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, and other local officials.

“As a former small business owner of a grocery store and meat market, I know firsthand the challenges it brings,” Panto said. “Our Governor understands the importance of supporting locally owned businesses that contribute so much to our economy.”

In January 2024, Shapiro chose the Lehigh Valley as the location to announce Pennsylvania’s first statewide economic development strategy in two decades. He said he chose to announce the plan at OraSure Technologies in Bethlehem Township because the Lehigh Valley is a “region on the rise” and a model for economic development.

The strategy, which can be downloaded here, focuses on five key industry sectors: life sciences, robotics and technology, manufacturing, agriculture, and energy. The plan was backed by a bipartisan state budget supported by the Legislature that provides \$400 million for the PA SITES program to invest in infrastructure to make properties shovel-ready for development and \$20 million for small businesses, among other investments.

Permits and business licenses are being issued faster, and key economic development projects are being “fast tracked” through the state permitting process.



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Bangor Area School District 2025-2026 Kindergarten Registration

**Do you know a child who will be 5 on or before August 25, 2025?
If so, register for kindergarten and follow these three steps:**

A complete registration must be submitted by Monday, August 18, 2025 to guarantee a first day start on Monday, August 25, 2025.

1

Gather Your Documents

1. Parent/Guardian Photo Identification
2. Proof of child's birth date
3. Two Proofs of Residency

One proof from List A:

- Mortgage agreement
- Lease agreement
- Rent payment receipts (with address)
- Property tax payment receipts
- Moving permit

One proof from List B:

- Utility bill with current address (dated within the last 3 months)
- Paycheck stub with employer and employee's address
- Current voter registration with Bangor residency address
- PA Driver's license with Bangor residency address
- PA vehicle registration with Bangor residency address

4. Immunization Record
5. Physical Exam Record
6. Dental Exam Record

2

Register

Visit www.bangorslaters.com
OR

[Register Online Here](#)

If you do not have access to a computer or call phone, please call District registration at 610-588-2163 to schedule a time to complete it at the District office.

To complete registration all documents must be:

Uploaded online

OR

Submitted to the registration secretary.

Once online registration is complete and approved by the registration secretary, Five Points Elementary School will contact you to schedule a kindergarten screening appointment.

3

Attend Screening Appointment

Kindergarten screening appointments for the 2025-2026 school year are in June.

All screenings are by appointment only, and are only scheduled when the online registration process is complete and approved by the registration secretary. Completed packets must be received and approved no later than May 15, 2025 to guarantee a June screening appointment.

When attending the appointment be sure to bring...

- Your child(ren).
- Photo Identification to verify parent/guardian identity.
- Any other updated documents.