



GREATER WHITE HAVEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
PO Box 363, White Haven, PA. 18661

Impact Report White Haven Center Closure
August 29, 2019
Submitted by: Linda Miller, President
Greater white Haven Chamber of Commerce

White Haven is a small Borough of approximately 1200 residents located in Luzerne County, Pa. Although a small community we are surrounded by Penn Lake Borough, East Side Borough, Kidder, Township, Foster Township, Dennison & Bear Creek Townships, As well as planned communities such as White Haven Poconos, Port Jenkins, Ramblewood, Hickory Hills, Sandy Valley and several Mobile Home Parks providing the comforts of home to many of the 429 employed by the White Haven Center. In addition to the 429 employed, the citizens of all of these communities depend on the White Haven business community to provide and satisfy the necessities of groceries, prepared food, prescriptions, dental care, gas, retail, sundries, grooming, repairs & home improvement facilities. As small business owners in our community we passionately strive to meet the needs of all citizens even with the challenges of maintaining profitable business with already such a small community. I cannot emphasize the devastation in conjunction with losing such a large percentage of our work force in our immediate area.

I have interviewed several of the small businesses located on our Main Street and have found a concern of business loss ranging from twenty (20%) to as much as a sixty five percent (65%) decrease which will force some of our businesses to actually close. We are already a low economic development zone and something like this can take us right off of the map. Why would we want to do this to a small, hard working, self sufficient town that actually has the potential for growth if not devastated by putting this percentage of people out of work. We depend on every person to utilize our services in one way or another. Furthermore with the state facility providing services to the residents for over seventy years, we as a community have embraced and invited the White Haven Center residents to our community events, organizations, meetings, parades and worked on many projects together. Not only will the closing of White Haven Center cripple our town financially you will be taking a large part of our family away.

I have taken the initiative and have compiled the percentage of business loss to our service and retail business establishments:

RESTAURANTS : 40% decrease in sandwich business and up to as much as a 65% decrease in sit in restaurant service. A Fear of closing has been expressed.

GAS STATIONS: 15% on Gasoline immediately. 10% on retail items.

APARTMENTS: Landlords worried about leases and lost rents leading to possible property foreclosures if renters are no longer available.

RETAIL: I have received information regarding indirect as well as direct loss of business via the closure. Although, I have not received the gross sales from the businesses interviewed we need to keep in mind ten (10%) of a business grossing \$500,000.00 is a decrease of \$50,000 dollars which may lead such business to relocate thus removing a major necessity from our town. Mom and Pop Businesses grossing under 100,000.00, losing a minimum of ten (10%) percent is enough to close their door.

SERVICE: Personal services such as dental care are vital to good health in an already underserved community in regard to healthcare. Our only local healthcare facility, a dental office has serviced our community and employees of White Haven Center for over 50 years in which it has developed approximately forty (40%) percent of revenue due to the existence of the Center. This practice will no longer have the resources to continue to exist, causing even more devastation.

The Action of closing The White Haven Center could actually lead to the dissolution of our community.

Our Chamber has volunteered our time diligently providing a business incentive plan which can be found on Greaterwhitehavenchamber.com, and it is our interest to work with the Boroughs and Legislators to rebuild our town as it once was. We have a tremendous opportunity if our State doesn't distress this beautiful community filled with fine people that receive the benefits and growth at the hands of our many loyal community organizations.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Miller
President
Greater White Haven Chamber of Commerce