



# ROUTE 8 CORRIDOR SHALER TOWNSHIP

**LOCATION:** Pittsburgh, PA

**SIZE:** 61 acres (The Route 8 Corridor is comprised of approximately 2,100 acres.)

**FEATURES:** Riverfront, Accessibility (Roads, Rail, and River)

**OWNER:** More than 15 different owners total - Anchor landholder: Glenshaw Glass - Bill Kelman

**CURRENT USE:** Light Industry/ Manufacturing, Storage, Retail, Warehouse, None (Vacant)

**PAST USE:** Light Industry/ Manufacturing, Retail, Storage

**CONTAMINANTS:** VOCs, PCBs

**TOTAL ACTUAL COST:** unknown

## TIMELINE

1895 Glenshaw Glass Company is built.

1904 Ball Chemical moves into the corridor.

2004 Hurricane Ivan floods the Route 8 Corridor.

2005 Glenshaw Glass closes.

2005 The area receives funding for assessment and redevelopment through the Riverside Center for Innovation (RCI) and Allegheny River Towns Enterprise Zone (ARTEZ) partnership.

2006 New owner resumes a lower capacity of plant activity at Glenshaw Glass.

2006 ARTEZ and Shaler Township approach the Western Pennsylvania Brownfields Center (WPBC) regarding a 1.5-mile portion of Route 8 Corridor.

2007 WPBC facilitates a workshop in the area.

## HISTORY

The industry on Route 8 began when four men raised enough money to build the Glenshaw Glass Factory in 1895. In 1904, Ball Chemical moved in nearby the plant firmly establishing the corridor's industrial character. After a see-saw of on-site fires and out-of-state expansions in its 100-year history, Hurricane Ivan flooded Glenshaw Glass in 2004, severely damaging the plant and discouraging potential investor Sun Capital Partners, Inc. In 2005, the plant closed, resulting in more than 300 layoffs. A year later, plant activity resumed with one of three furnaces active when new owner Bill Kelman bought the site.

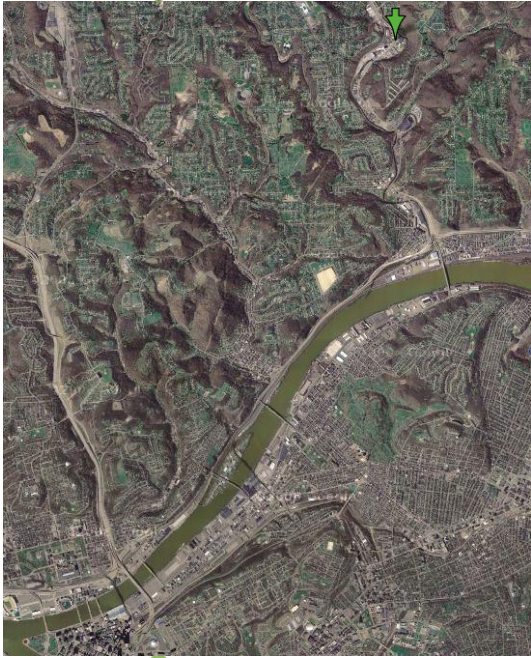
## TOPOGRAPHY

The Route 8 Corridor lies on the north bank of the Allegheny River. The area includes approximately seven miles of river frontage. Rail lines run within the area, and the corridor straddles Route 8, a major North-South road that connects downtown to the suburbs. The site is within twelve miles of Pittsburgh's Golden Triangle. The corridor also lies along Pine Creek, a major tributary of the Allegheny River.

Also, while the total acreage of available land is significant, the parcels of land that make up the Route 8 Corridor are relatively narrow, bounded by the railroad on one side and Pine Creek on the other.



Photo courtesy of <http://taxprof.typepad.com>



Picture courtesy of Google Maps

## MARKET CONDITIONS

More than 700 jobs have been lost along the Route 8 corridor since Hurricane Ivan flooded the corridor. The area's businesses continue struggle with persistent flooding, transit, transportation, and land use challenges.

After the former owner of the Glenshaw Glass Factory John Ghaznavi defaulted on a loan in 2005, the plant closed. The next year, businessman Bill Kelman purchased the 25-acre site for \$3.8 million. Kelman has opened a scaled-down version of the former operations and auctioned off the excess equipment.

Allegheny River Towns Enterprise Zone (ARTEZ) and the township hope to stimulate business in this area. The corridor has many points of access (river, rail, and road), a skilled labor force, various building sites, available housing, and excellent school districts.

Incentives for incoming business include tax credits on investment and low-interest loans for expansions or relocations into the area.

## SITE ASSEMBLY AND CONTROL

The 1.5-mile portion of the corridor under most intense consideration is bound by Glenshaw Glass in the south, Spencer Lane on the north, and flanked by Pine Creek and the Allegheny Valley Railroad. This portion of the Route 8 Corridor contains 15 different owners. Businesses in the area include Glenshaw Glass, Ball Chemical, Benshaw Glenshaw Steel, East Liberty Electroplating, Pannier, Works in Wood, Eastley Inc., Nicklas Supply, Krebs Toyota, Urso Racing Supplies, Miller Homes, and Triangle Machine & Manufacturing.

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

The Allegheny River Towns Enterprise Zone (ARTEZ) established an environmental assessment partnership with the Riverside Center for Innovation (RCI). Seven properties were assessed in the first year of the partnership.

The Ranbar property on Route 8 was once home to both Ranbar and previously, Ball Chemicals. Environmental consultants investigated the presence of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) on the site.



Photo courtesy of Kevin Creagh, Shaler Township Engineer

## SOCIAL/COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

This 14-mile Route 8 Corridor passes through Etna Borough, Shaler Township, Hampton Township, and Richland Township. Etna Borough maintains its urban character with a mixture of residential, commercial, and industrial properties. Shaler Township has housing available in all price ranges and a mixture of old and new industrial and commercial developments. Hampton Township has primarily commercial development, and Richland Township is the most rural of the four.

The Riverside Center for Innovation (RCI) is a community development corporation involved in the corridor. Incorporated in 1964, RCI's purpose is to be a resource for businesses and communities to foster the creation of new enterprises, the rapid commercialization of innovations, and the expansions of existing businesses. The group works on projects that include housing, small commercial real estate, and neighborhood advocacy.

In 2002 the Route 8 Partnership – a community coalition formed by the Borough of Etna, Shaler Township, Hampton Township, and Richland Township, assisted by the North Hills Council of Governments, the



Photo courtesy of Kevin Creagh, Shaler Township Engineer

Allegheny County Department of Planning and Economic Development, the Port Authority of Allegheny County, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission developed the Route 8 Corridor Economic Development Plan. This was a long-range strategic plan that imagined what the Corridor should look like in 2020. The plan included a policy framework, marketing, transportation improvement, and the development of public land.

In 2003, Allegheny River Towns Enterprise Zone (ARTEZ), an economic development agency was formed to collaborate with seven communities along the Allegheny River – Milvalle, Etna, Shaler, Sharpsburg, O’Hara,

Aspinwall, and Blawnox. All seven are joined together by Route 28, the Norfolk Southern Railroad and by the shoreline of the Allegheny River. This area includes a portion of the Route 8 Corridor.

The group also joined four established enterprise zones in Allegheny County – three in Mon Valley, plus the City of Pittsburgh’s technology zone which is managed by the Urban Redevelopment Authority. ARTEZ’s goal is to revitalize the distressed neighborhoods within these areas and promote business.

In 2007, Shaler Township and ARTEZ approached the Western Pennsylvania Brownfields Center (WPBC) at Carnegie Mellon University to facilitate a workshop to study 1.5 miles of the 14-mile Route 8 Corridor. (This 1.5-mile portion is delineated in the section *Site Control and Assembly*.) The workshop entailed the participation of national redevelopment experts that could provide the community and property owners with unbiased courses of action for redevelopment while overcoming the struggles with persistent flooding, transit, transportation, and land use.



Photo courtesy of Kevin Creagh, Shaler Township Engineer

### PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In 2005 Shaler, Etna, Hampton, and the Northern Allegheny Chamber of Commerce formed a partnership to conduct the Route 8 Corridor Study, completed by Environmental Planning and Design. This study was paid for by grants from the County of Allegheny and the State Department of Economic Development and noted improvements that could be made in order to make the area more attractive to new businesses. The study recommends designated areas for certain types of businesses as well as traffic improvements.

For instance, Krebs Toyota is vacant partially because it is dangerous to pull out make a northbound movement on Route 8 from the site due to the “blind spots.”

Also, due to Route 8’s industrial heritage, natural gas, and electric utilities enjoy surplus capacity to meet anticipated future demand. However, storm water sewers remain inadequate, shown in the immediate flooding of Hurricane Ivan.

### COSTS & ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

The Riverside Center for Innovation (RCI) and ARTEZ received funding for assessment, remediation, and redevelopment in 2005. Some of these funds may be available for use in the corridor.

## CURRENT STATUS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The WPBC workshop held in the corridor engaged local property owners, and discussions made clear that existing businesses would benefit from the development of synergistic business clusters.

## ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY IMPACT

An improved business development has the potential to return jobs to the community and make the roadway safer for travel.



Photo courtesy of Kevin Creagh, Shaler Township Engineer

Case Study Completed Summer 2007

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