

Workforce Supply

- **Jefferson County has an 89,790-strong available labor pool that includes 73,938 underemployed workers who are looking for better jobs and 15,852 unemployed residents.**

The underemployed are less willing to commute farther and longer for a better job. For the one-way commute, 30.0 percent are prepared for 20 or more minutes longer and 22.5 percent will go 20 or more extra miles.

Labor force	298,707
Employed	282,855
Underemployment rate	26.1%
Number of underemployed workers	73,938
Unemployed	15,852
Available labor pool	89,790

Note: Based on December 2013 labor force data.

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama and Alabama Department of Labor.

- **Congestion worsened in the county as commute time and distance went up in 2013 from the previous year. Congestion will continue being a problem as the county economy recovers and in-commuting rises to meet job growth demands.**

Continuous maintenance and development of the county's transportation infrastructure and systems is essential because impeding the mobility of workers and the flow of goods can slow economic development.

- **Jefferson County has better educational attainment than the state but the population has been shrinking.**

	Jefferson County	AL
Population growth, 2000-2010	-0.5%	7.5%
<i>Educational attainment, age 25 and over</i>		
High School or higher	87.2%	82.6%
Bachelor's or higher degree	29.3%	22.3%

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama and U.S. Census Bureau.

Workforce Demand

- **Job growth is projected to be faster than the labor force and population growth.**
- **By sector the five largest employers in the county provided 171,290 jobs (50.2 percent of the region's 341,448 total) in the fourth quarter of 2012.**

Industry	Employment	Share
Health Care and Social Assistance	50,795	14.9%
Retail Trade	41,413	12.1%
Educational Services	27,878	8.2%
Accommodation and Food Services	26,708	7.8%
Manufacturing	24,496	7.2%

Source: Alabama Department of Labor and U.S. Census Bureau.

- **On average 16,168 jobs were created per quarter from second quarter 2001 to fourth quarter 2012; quarterly net job flows averaged 699.**

Job creation is the number of new jobs that are created either by new businesses or through expansion of existing firms. Net job flows reflect the difference between current and previous employment at all businesses.

- **The 50 highest earning occupations are mostly in the fields of in health, management, business, and engineering and have a minimum salary of \$81,644. Nine of these do not require a bachelor's or higher degree. Seven of the top 10 are health occupations.**

- **The top five high-demand occupations are:**
Registered Nurses
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
Home Health Aides
Lawyers
Personal Care Aides

- **The top five fast-growing occupations are:**
Personal Care Aides
Home Health Aides
Occupational Therapy Assistants
Helpers—Pipelayers, Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters
Rehabilitation Counselors

- **Eight jobs are high-earning and in high-demand:**
Lawyers
Family and General Practitioners
Personal Financial Advisors
Management Analysts
Medical and Health Services Managers
Software Developers, Applications
Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists
Software Developers, Systems Software
- **The county has 10 jobs that are both fast-growing and in high-demand:**
Personal Care Aides
Home Health Aides
Occupational Therapy Assistants
Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers
Physical Therapist Assistants
Dental Hygienists
Social and Community Service Managers
Occupational Therapists
Medical Secretaries

Implications for Workforce Development

- **Worker shortfalls of about 41,500 and 76,500 are estimated by 2020 and 2030, respectively, due to low labor force and population growth rates.**

	2020	2030
Total population growth	0.5	0.8
Age 20-64 population growth	-4.0	-8.6
Job growth	7.7	12.9
Worker shortfall (percent)	11.7	21.6
Worker shortfall (number)	41,475	76,480

Source: Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama.

This is likely to increase in-commuting and worsen congestion. A focus on both worker skills and shortfalls, especially for critical occupations, must be a top priority.

- **Strategies to address skill needs and worker shortfalls should aim at increasing labor force participation, encouraging in-migration, and raising worker productivity.**

Such strategies might include:

1. Improving education and educational funding
2. Continuing and enhancing programs to assess, retrain, and place dislocated workers
3. Focusing on hard-to-serve populations (e.g. out-of-school youth)
4. Using economic opportunities to attract new and younger residents
5. Facilitating in-commuting
6. Encouraging older worker participation

- **Investment in education/training and skills development is crucial.**

Improving education is important because: (a) a highly educated and productive workforce is a critical economic development asset, (b) productivity rises with additional education, (c) more educated people are more likely to work, and (d) education yields high private and social rates of return on investment.

Publicizing both private and public returns to education can encourage individuals to raise their own educational attainment levels and promote public and legislative support for education.

Higher incomes that come with improved educational attainment and work skills would help increase personal income for the county as well as raise additional local (county and city) tax revenues. This is important, especially for a county that has low or declining population and labor force growth rates.

Of the county's 725 single occupations, 88 are expected to decline over the 2010 to 2020 period. Twenty occupations are expected to see a sharp decline of at least six percent, with each losing a minimum of 20 jobs. Education and training for declining occupations should slow accordingly.

- **Skill and education requirements keep rising. In the future, more jobs will require postsecondary education and training at a minimum.**

The importance of basic skills generally and for high-demand, high-growth, and high-earning jobs indicates a strong need for training in these skills.

The pace of training needs to increase for systems, complex problem solving, and social skills while the scale of training needs to be raised for basic and social skills.

Ideally, all high school graduates should possess basic skills so that postsecondary and higher education can focus on other and more complex skills.

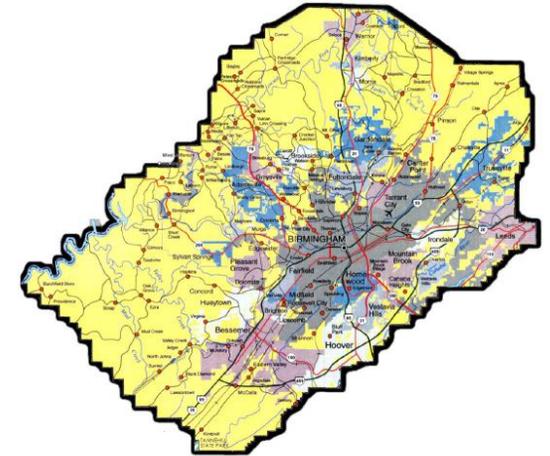
Employers should be an integral part of planning for training as they can help identify future skill needs and any existing gaps.

- **Economic development should target high-earning industries and workforce development should ensure availability of workers for such industries.**

Economic development should aim to diversify and strengthen the Jefferson County economy by retaining, expanding, and attracting more high-wage providing industries. This is necessary given that only two large employment sectors are paying higher than average wages.

- **Workforce development and economic development can together build a strong and well-diversified Jefferson County economy. Indeed, one cannot achieve success without the other.**

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