



# EAST ALABAMA

Regional Planning and Development Commission

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Individuals

FROM: Lori Sokol, Executive Director  
Eric Wright, Director of Planning and Development

DATE: November 30, 2023

RE: East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission - EDA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs)

Enclosed is the 2023 Annual Update of the 2022 CEDs for the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission – Economic Development District. The attached information can also be found at: <https://www.earpdc.org/>

Should you have any questions or need any additional information, please contact Director of Planning and Development Eric Wright at (256) 237-6741 or [eric.wright@earpdc.org](mailto:eric.wright@earpdc.org).

Sincerely,

*Lori Sokol*

Lori Sokol (Dec 1, 2023 08:50 CST)

Lori Sokol  
Executive Director

# 2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the East Alabama Region

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ALABAMA REGION IV

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Prepared by  
East Alabama Regional Planning and Development  
Commission





COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR  
THE EAST ALABAMA REGION

**Alabama Region IV**

2022

East Alabama Regional Planning and Development  
Commission

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## RESOLUTION NO. 6516

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) recognize the importance of guiding and coordinating the efforts of local governments and organizations concerned with the economic development of the district and promoting a stable and diversified economy throughout our Economic Development District (EDD) as designated by the Economic Development Administration (EDA); and

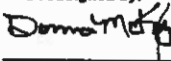
WHEREAS, the EARPDC EDD is required to prepare an updated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) every five years and maintain it as part of the annual work program; and

WHEREAS, the EARPDC Staff and CEDS Strategy Committee have undertaken and completed the content requirements per 13 CFR 303.6 and 303.7 and EDA guidance; and


WHEREAS, the CEDS is recommended to the EARPDC Board of Directors to cover the next five-year period from 2022 to 2026 along with the required annual reports.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the EARPDC Board of Directors approves and adopts the EARPDC 2022 CEDS, pending the 30-day required comment period.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 28<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2022.

DocuSigned by:  
  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Donna McKay, Mayor of Wadley  
Chairman

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:  
  
2092D8DDDE8C4D0

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Baker, Mayor of Piedmont  
Secretary

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

### **CEDS Strategy Committee**

Toby Bennington, Director of Planning and Economic Development, City of Anniston

Lamar Dewberry, Former Executive Director, Clay County EDC

Jennifer Green, Director, JSU Center for Economic Development and Business Research

Albertha Grant, City Administrator, City of Jacksonville

Greg Haney, Vice President, Commercial Relationships Manager, PNC Bank

Luanne Hayes, Director, Cherokee County IDA

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David Hooks, Executive Director, Gadsden-Etowah IDA

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Mark Stephens, Planning, Development & Stormwater Director, City of Jacksonville

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### **Data, Statistics, and Resiliency Consultation**

JSU Center for Economic Development and Business Research

### **East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission**

Shelby Peterson, Senior Planner

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## INTRODUCTION

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*A comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen a regional economy. The East Alabama CEDS provides an analysis of the regional economy and serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources.*

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The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) serves as the Economic Development District (EDD) for a ten-county region encompassing the following counties: Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega, and Tallapoosa. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a regional planning and implementation process designed to create jobs, foster more stable and diversified economies, improve living conditions, and provide a mechanism for guiding and coordinating the efforts of people and organizations involved in economic development. Through the planning process, a CEDS document is developed which:

- outlines the region's assets, challenges, needs, and opportunities;
- identifies the goals and objectives of the development program;
- presents the strategies and action plans devised to achieve those goals; and
- outlines criteria for evaluating the program's achievements.

The program is intended to provide greater economic and social stability for the region and its people and to assist existing and guide new economic development activities in the region.

This document is being prepared to keep the *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the East Alabama Region* in compliance with the requirements of the Economic Development Administration Regulatory Revision Final Rule, which went into effect on January 20, 2015. It will be comprehensively updated once every five years. Annual reports will be prepared in the interim years to summarize and assess any significant changes that may affect development within the region.



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## Public Participation

The 2022 CEDS incorporates information gathered for the *CLEAR Plan 2030: Community Livability for the East Alabama Region*—a citizen-based, grassroots planning effort designed to enhance the quality of life for residents in the region and provide a course to economic resiliency, housing affordability and land reuse and preservation. The project was funded by a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The *CLEAR Plan 2030* was the culmination of a three-year planning process conducted by the East Alabama Partnership for Livability, a thirteen-member consortium of public and private entities and non-profit organizations—including the EARPDC—that provide services to multiple jurisdictions in east central Alabama. The Consortium hired Partners for Livable Communities and The Walker Collaborative—which partnered with Randall Gross / Development Economics, Skipper Consulting, Inc., and Epiphany Collaboration, LLC—to assist with the project.

Each Consortium member co-chaired one of six Livability Resource Teams (LRTs), comprised of regional stakeholders (including local elected officials and residents) and experts in one of six key aspects of livability: Community Engagement, Economic Competitiveness, Transportation, Housing, Education, and Health. Each LRT created individual studies pertaining to its area of expertise. Each study included an examination of existing conditions, identification of needs, and establishment of goals, objectives, and performance measures.

The planning process also included an extensive community outreach campaign consisting of a regionwide survey, two “County Conversations” in each county, sessions at senior centers and housing authorities, “mini-conversations”, distribution of printed materials, use of local broadcast stations and newspapers, and the *CLEAR Plan 2030* website and Facebook and Google Plus pages. Participants in these activities received information about livability and provided feedback about livability practices and needs in their communities. Partners in community outreach included Chambers of Commerce, educational institutions (including Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind), civic clubs, human service providers, and local governments. Ultimately, at least 5,400 people throughout the region contributed to the *CLEAR Plan 2030*.

In addition to continuing to utilize the beneficial research provided by the *CLEAR Plan 2030*, the 2022 CEDS planning process included a regionwide survey, regional public hearings, and use of the EARPDC website. Survey results are available in Appendix A. Also, for additional sourcing and information, please see the Appendices.

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## PART I BACKGROUND

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*The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county area in east-central Alabama, bordering the Alabama-Georgia state line. The region lies between the expanding Birmingham and Atlanta metropolitan areas and is convenient to the Montgomery, Chattanooga, Tennessee and Columbus, Georgia metropolitan areas. Some of the region's ten counties and 59 municipalities have shared in the neighboring regions' successes or leveraged their own natural, human, and/or man-made resources to generate their own success; others have not been as fortunate. The following chapters present an overview of East Alabama's people, economy, and resources.*

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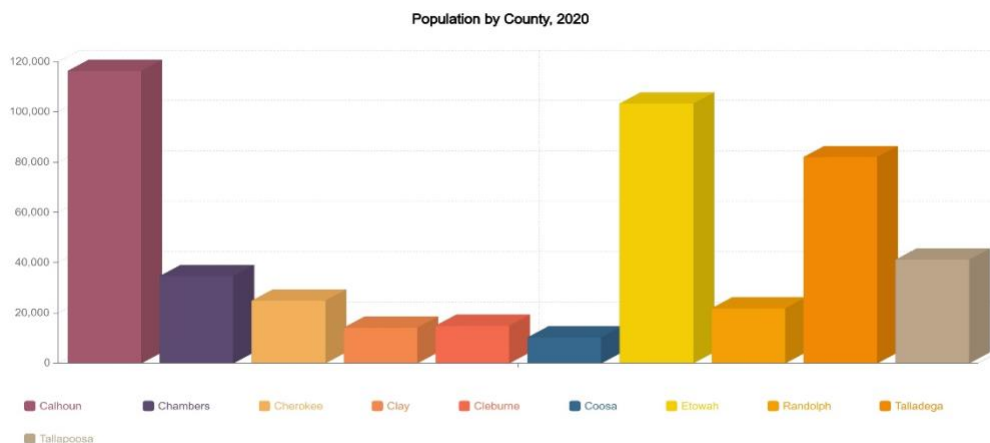
### Population

People are the most important part of the economic engine. People need goods and services, people need to make and provide the goods and services, and people need jobs to earn an income to buy the goods and services. The following sections describe general characteristics of the people living in the East Alabama Region.

#### Population Trends

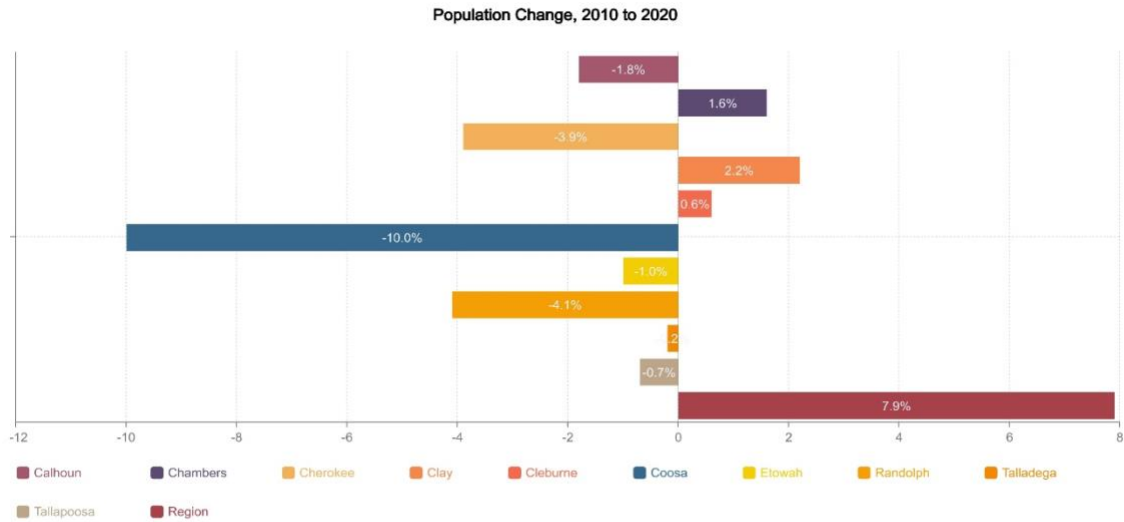
As of the 2020 Census, 464,726 people lived in the East Alabama region, a nearly 8% increase from 2010. Meanwhile, Alabama grew by 5.1% and the U.S. by 7.4%. A little over half of the region's population is concentrated in only 3 counties:

Calhoun, Etowah, and Talladega. Calhoun and Etowah Counties are the region's two metropolitan statistical areas, with Anniston and Gadsden as their core cities.





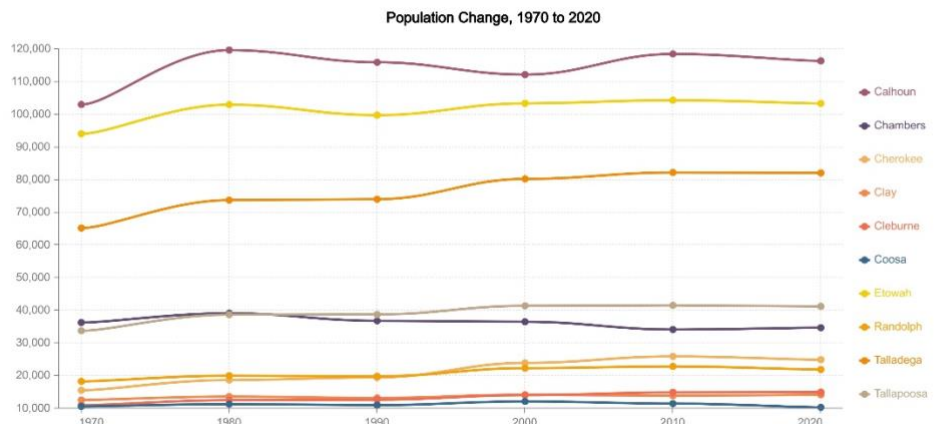
The region's three most populous counties were not necessarily the fastest growing counties, however. Instead, two of the more rural counties, Chambers and Clay, had the highest growth rates, followed by Cleburne County. The remaining counties in the region lost population from 2010 to 2020.



Cherokee, Cleburne, and Randolph Counties offer people working in metro areas (including Atlanta) scenic country and small-town living. Calhoun, Etowah, and Talladega Counties are employment centers traversed by Interstates. Chambers, Clay, Coosa and Tallapoosa Counties were significantly impacted by textile plant closings, although automotive plant suppliers have helped Tallapoosa County recover.

Long-range data show fluctuating population with a generally upward trend in eight of the region's counties. Fifty-year growth rates, calculated as percent change, ranged from 9.9% in Etowah County to 60% in Cherokee County.

Only Chambers County and Coosa County had a net population decrease, at -4.4% and -2.6%, respectively. Regionally, the greatest population gain occurred between 1970 and 1980, when all ten counties enjoyed growth. Over the 50-year period, East Alabama's growth rate was 25.9%, much lower than the state's 45.9% or the nation's 63% growth rates.



Municipality size in the East Alabama Region reflects the area’s rural nature. Of the 58 municipalities, nearly half were towns of less than 1,000 people in 2020. Just over a quarter had populations between 1,000 and 5,000, and nine cities had more than 10,000 residents. The largest city in the region, Gadsden, has been slightly dropping in population since 1990. Oxford, the second largest city, has been steadily increasing since 1990, seeing it’s largest rise of 56% from 1990 to 2000. From 2010 to 2020, Oxford overcame Anniston to become the region’s second largest city. Therefore, although half of the region’s ten counties—Calhoun, Chambers, Etowah, Talladega, and Tallapoosa—have more people living in incorporated cities and towns than in the unincorporated areas, rural and small-town life prevails.

Municipality Size, 2020



“City life” did gain popularity in six counties (Calhoun, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, and Talladega) between 2000 and 2010, however. From 2010-2020, of the region's 58 municipalities, 27 gained population, and eight grew by over 10%. Small towns saw the bulk of the major municipal population shifts, which may reflect a move away from cities and more crowded areas during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, more municipalities lost population than gained it from 2010-2020, and the major municipal population losses were also in rural municipalities.

**Major Municipal Population Shifts, 2010 - 2020**

Municipal Population Growth		Municipal Population Loss	
Bon Air	48.3%	Kellyton	-40.6%
Cusseta	23.6%	Rockford	-26.8%
Woodland	20.1%	Ridgeville	-25.9%
Gaylesville	18.1%	Five Points	-18.7%
Jacksonville	14.6%	Daviston	-18.7%
Southside	12.1%	Fruithurst	-17.3%
Walnut Grove	10.7%	Roanoke	-12.6%
Valley	10.6%	Goodwater	-12.5%

Although population loss was spread throughout the region, the rate of decline was higher in the rural areas than in cities and towns. Of the 31 municipalities that lost population, twelve suffered losses of more than 10%. As of 2010, Calhoun and Etowah Counties have the highest percentage of urban population in the East Alabama region, at 69.0% and 60.2% respectively. These counties are followed by Chambers County, at 50.2%, and Talladega County, at 44.5%. At the other end of the spectrum, Cherokee, Clay, and Cleburne Counties had no urban area whatsoever. In Coosa County, only 2.6% of the population lived in an urban area, and in Randolph County, 21.8% was considered to be urban.

## Map of the East Alabama Region



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The East Alabama region is experiencing a period of population decline, with the rate being considerably lower than that of the state or the nation. As stated previously, the East Alabama region had a -2.4% loss in population between 2010 and 2020 and a 13.9% population increase between 1970 and 2020. Comparatively, the population of the State of Alabama increased by 2.4% in the last ten years and 42.1% since 1970. The United States experienced a 5.8% increase in population between 2010 and 2020 and a 60.6% increase between 1970 and 2020.

In terms of physical size, the East Alabama region encompasses 11.8% of the land in the state. The proportion of the state's population residing within the East Alabama region continues to slowly decrease. In 1980, East Alabama was home to 12% of the state's residents. That number has slipped to 10.4% in 2000, and 8.6% in 2020. It was expected that the steady expansion of the Atlanta and Birmingham area commuter sheds, the retirees who have been attracted to the region's rural character and natural amenities, and those fleeing urban areas during the COVID-19 pandemic would be reflected in the regional perspective with the 2020 Census. Unfortunately, that is not the case. It does appear, however, that the influx of commuting residents and retirees has assisted in maintaining a somewhat stable population base.

## Population By Age Group

The movement of the Baby Boomers (people born from 1946 through 1964) into retirement age has been a national dialog for quite some time. Besides the potential impact of this generation's retirement on Social Security, there has been great concern about a shortage of employees to fill the void that will be left when these experienced workers retire. The Baby Boom was followed by a "baby bust," a sharp decline in birth rates that lasted through 1976. The birth rate did increase between 1976 and 1990 (sometimes called the "echo boom"), but the jobs the Baby Boomers vacate will have to be filled by increasingly younger—and less experienced—workers over time. Much discussion has ensued about means to entice Baby Boomers to remain in, or otherwise contribute to, the workforce longer. Additionally, since 2014, births in the U.S. have been declining, with 2021 seeing the first increase in birth rate since that time. Birth rates, overall, have been falling since 2007.

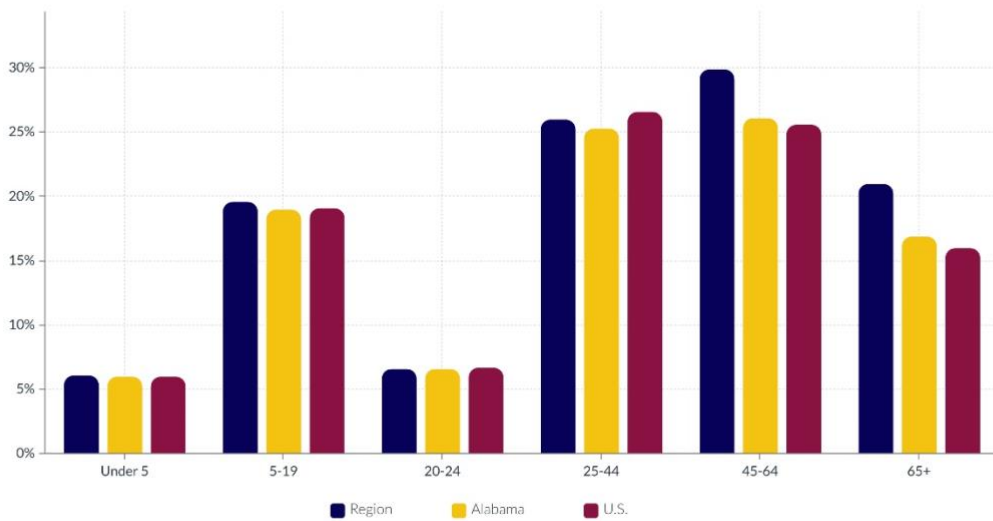
The effects of the boom-bust-echo, with declining birth rates since 2007, are evident in the pattern of change in age distribution between 1990 and 2020, with Generation Z becoming more prevalent as they were declared the largest generation as of 2021. People born during the first ten years of the Baby Boom have been moving into the 65+ age category during the past ten years, causing a very high rate of increase; every county in the region saw growth in this category from 2010-2020. Low growth and decline in the 25 to 44 and 20 to 24 age categories reflect the decline in births at the end of the Baby Boom and during the "baby bust". The negative change in Alabama's and the region's college age population also could indicate an increase in the number of young adults who chose to go to college, or get employment, out of state. The "echo boom" is evident in figures for the United States and less so for Alabama. The region appears to have missed out on the "echo boom". The decline in birth rates since 2007 is sharply felt across the region, state, and nation, as the under 5 and 5 to 19 categories saw decline, some substantial, across every geography.

East Alabama has been plagued by young adults leaving the region to attend college then obtaining jobs outside the region. This tendency exacerbated the effects of the "baby bust" and essentially negated the "echo boom". In 2020, the majority of geographies saw decline in 5-19 and 20-24 age categories, showing that this issue is not abating. Unless the exodus of young adults is halted then reversed, East Alabama businesses will have more difficulty filling positions vacated by retiring Baby Boomers than will businesses in other parts of

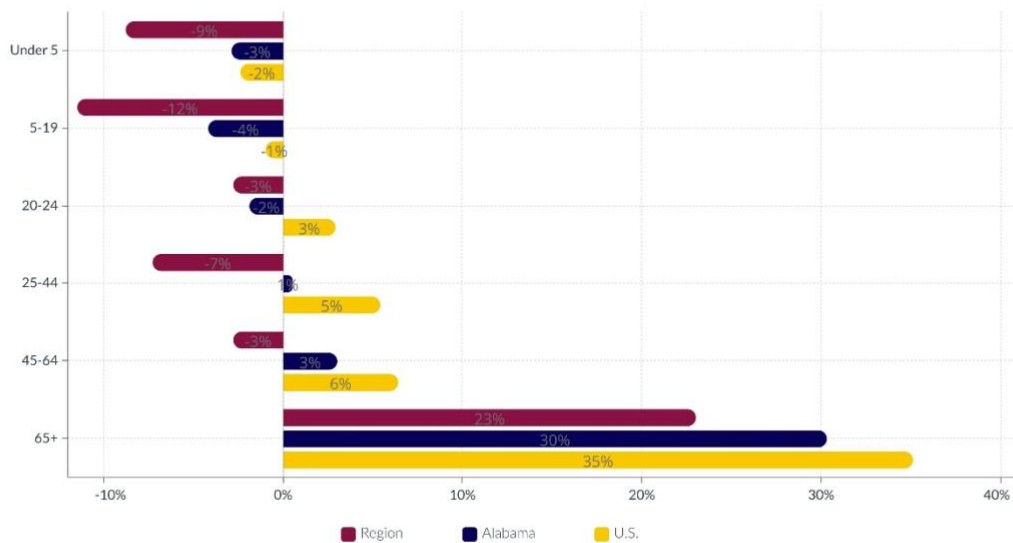


Alabama or the nation as a whole. The region has been attracting retirees and older workers, however. These people have been attracted to East Alabama because of the State’s low taxes and the region’s numerous lakes, Appalachian foothills, rural character, and easy access to larger urban areas.

Age Distribution, 2020



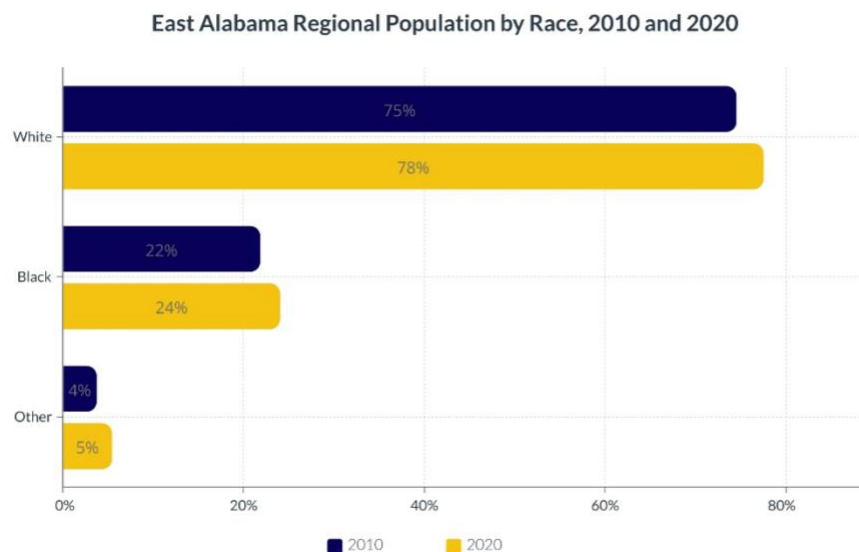
Population Change by Age Groups, 2010 to 2020



## Population by Race & Hispanic Origin

Across the East Alabama region, about three-fourths of the population was white and just under one-fourth was black or African American as of the 2020 Census. The remaining population, at 1.6 percent, was people who are of another race. Between 2010 and 2020, there was a -7% decrease in the white population and a -1.8% decrease in the black population. People of races other than white or black increased considerably by 30%. The percentage of Hispanic people grew by 22% over the 10-year span, with 3.6% of the population claiming to be of that ethnic origin in the 2020 Census. Hispanic or Latino origin is reported separately from race because people who are Hispanic or Latino share a common culture but may be of any race. At present, the number of people who may face language barriers when seeking employment is small. While this fact may seem to be beneficial for the region-in that most of the present and future workforce should have minimal communication problems-it is a detriment to foreign-born people who move into the region, as few resources exist to help them to acclimate. In addition, diversity is a proven contributor to economic growth, and should be fostered across the region.

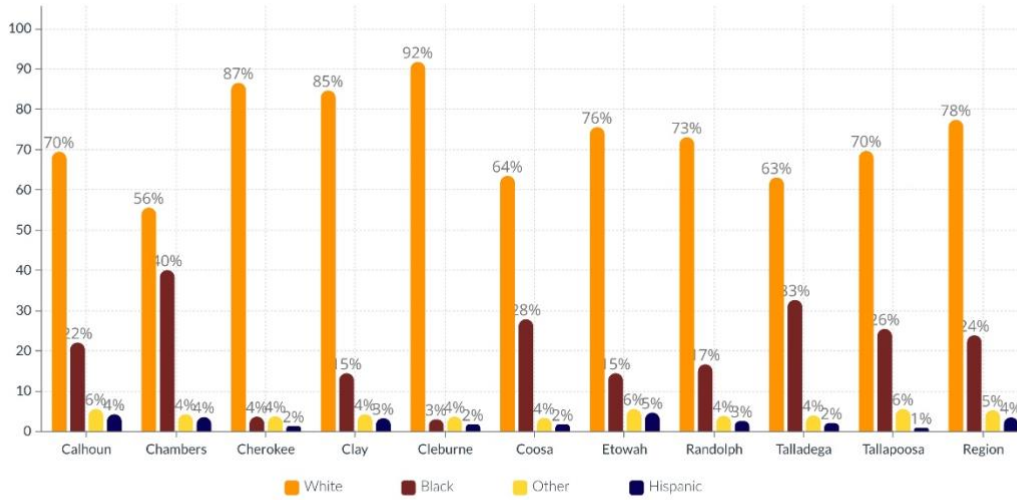
The increase in persons who are of other races or multi-racial is due not only to immigration but also to the continued efforts of the Census Bureau to document and count these persons as a separate race sector since the 2000 Census. For data management purposes, multi-racial persons (due to their relatively small numbers), other small, single race categories, and the “some other race” category were combined into “other”.



The three counties with the strongest minority presence are Chambers, Coosa, and Talladega Counties. Even in Chambers County, which has the highest minority representation, the black population only comprises 40% of the total population, and all minority races combined make up less than half of the population.

Cleburne and Cherokee Counties have the smallest concentrations of minority population, at 6.9% and 7.7%, respectively. Minority population in the remaining seven counties ranges from 19.0% to 36.9%. The Hispanic population is highest in Calhoun and Etowah Counties, each with approximately 4%. The smallest concentrations of Hispanic persons are found in Tallapoosa County, at 1.0% of the population, and Cherokee County, at 1.5%.

Population by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2020



## Workforce Development and Use

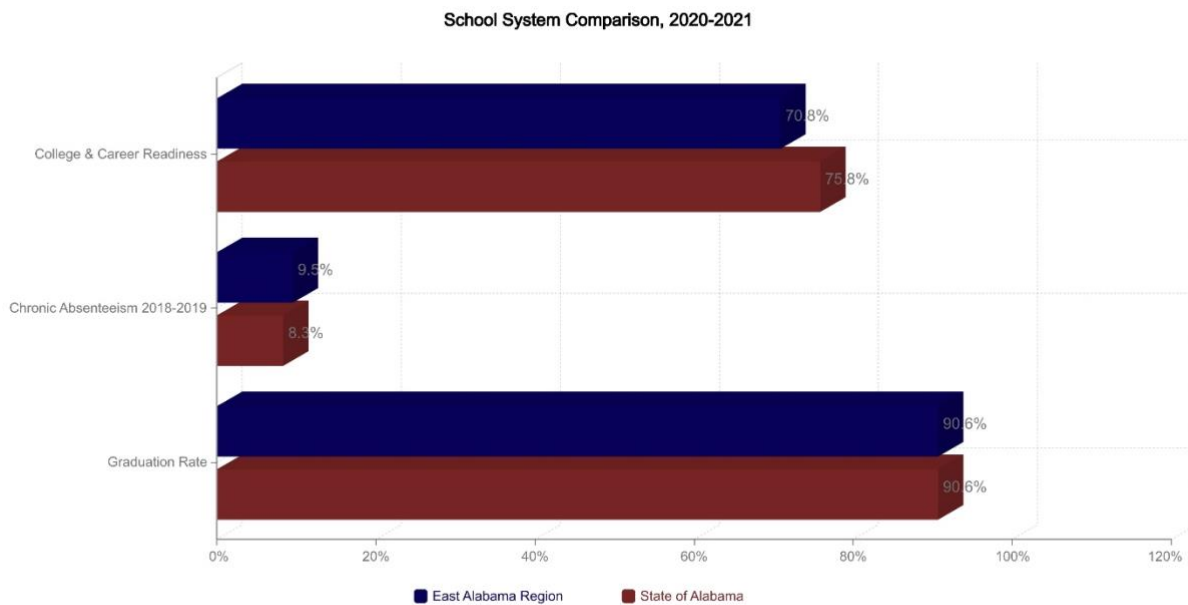
Even if a community has people to fill the jobs economic developers attract, those people must have the skills employers need. The following sections discuss educational and training opportunities available in East Alabama and examine indicators of present workforce preparedness for the ever-changing economy.

### Educational Facilities

Workforce development begins when we are children. In our youth, we learn the skills we need to survive—including skills to obtain and retain employment. We learn to read, to write, to perform mathematical calculations, and we begin to form ideas about what we want to be when we grow up. The East Alabama region has numerous educational facilities that help children and young adults prepare for entry into the working world.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) issued a waiver to Alabama on June 9, 2021, waiving the requirement of reporting accountability results for the 2020-2021 school year; therefore, for some metrics older statistics are used. As of the 2020-2021 school year, primary and secondary education is offered through 21 different city and county school systems, which collectively have 150 schools. According to 2019-2020 data, nearly two-thirds of the school children in the region are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, at 61.4 percent, as compared to approximately 50% statewide. Only five school systems have fewer than 59% of their students receiving meal assistance. And, in only two systems are there less than 50% of the students eligible for the free or reduced meal programs. Meal assistance is an indicator of poverty levels in the school systems, and children living in low-income households also may need other types of assistance to remain in school and be successful in their educational endeavors. The East Alabama region's high school graduation rate for 2020-2021, at 90.6 percent, is on par with the state, also at 90.6%. Over half (52 percent) of the region's school systems have a high school graduation rate that is equal to or higher than that of

the state. Ten school systems in East Alabama have a graduation rate that is lower than the state. According to the Alabama Department of Education school system report cards, the Anniston city school system had the lowest graduation rate, at 77 percent, followed by the Lanett City school system and the Coosa County school system, at 82.4% and 80.0%, respectively.



Of particular interest to those in economic development is the availability and quality of vocational education programs. All of the school systems have career and technical training programs. Many of the school systems appear to do a good job of informing students about career and technical education classes and of helping students find jobs in related fields or schools at which to continue their education.

Although students may continue their education in other parts of the state and country, they also have opportunities to receive training in a specific career or to attend college closer to home. Trade schools and similar professional training programs are too numerous to list. There are six main campus colleges and universities and five associated satellite centers in the East Alabama region, which are shown on the map on the opposite page and described in the following section.

Jacksonville State University, located in Jacksonville, was founded in 1883 as a teacher’s college. Since then, Jacksonville State (JSU) has grown to offer a wide range of majors within the Schools of Arts & Humanities, Business & Industry, Education, Health Professions & Wellness, Human Services & Social Sciences, and Science. Over 40 of JSU’s programs are accredited by their professional associations, including Art, Business, Communication, Computer Sciences and Computer Information Systems, Drama, Education, Music, Nursing, and Social Work. JSU offers seven bachelor’s degrees, nine master’s degrees, two doctoral degrees and an educational specialist degree. The University also offers basic engineering and pre-professional training for medicine, law, veterinary medicine, and pharmacy.

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The University of Alabama Gadsden Center offers masters and educational specialist degrees in the College of Education, a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies, and UA Early College, a program for college credit for high school students.

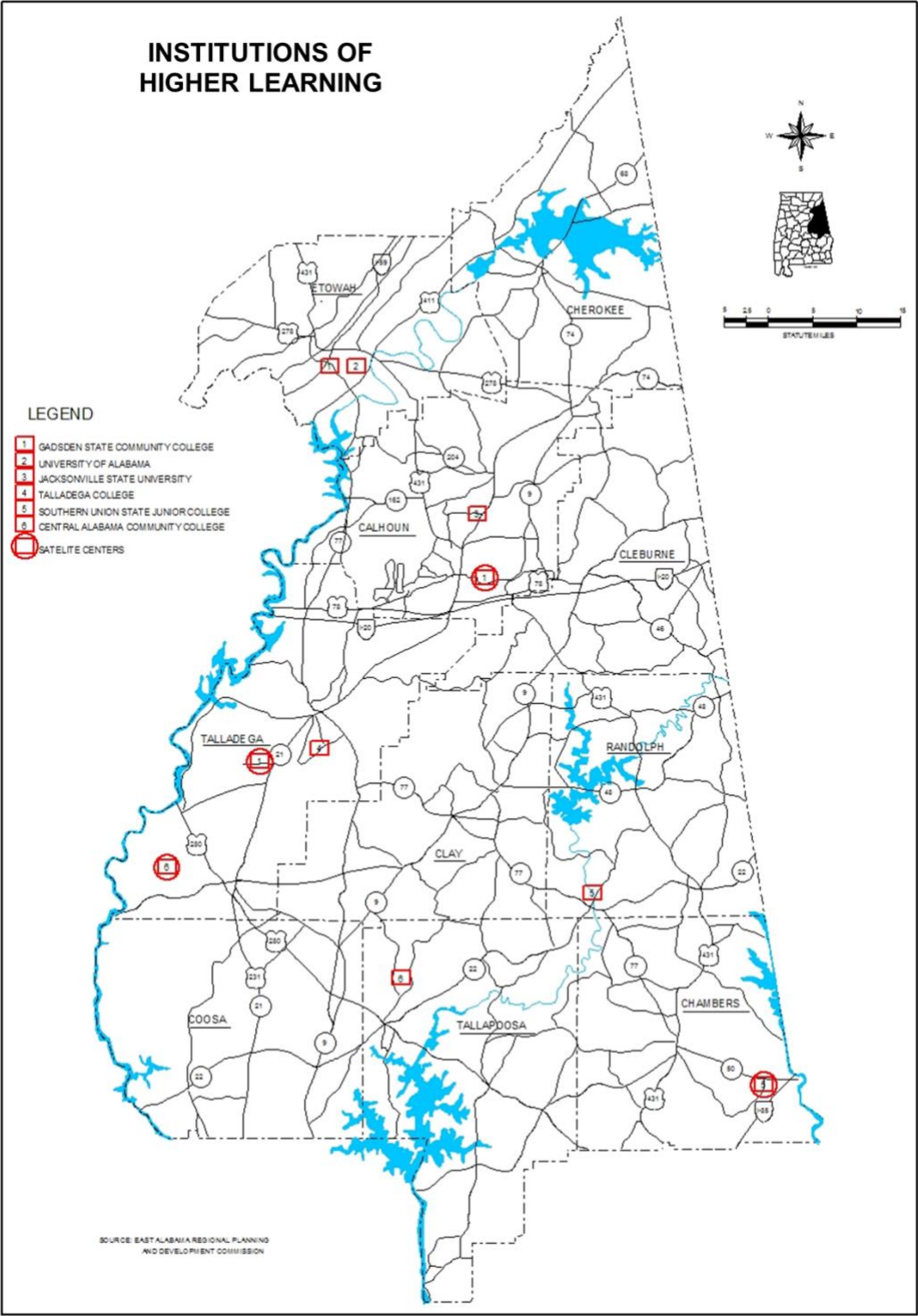
Talladega College, in the City of Talladega, is a private liberal arts college that confers the Bachelor of Arts degree in several disciplines under the Divisions of Business and Administration, Humanities and Fine Arts, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences and Education. Students in the Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics also can earn special degrees and certificates. Founded by former slaves William Savery and Thomas Tarrant in 1865 to educate the children of former slaves, and chartered in 1869, Talladega College remains dedicated to serving the educational needs of African Americans.

Central Alabama Community College (CACC) is a two-year institution with two main campuses—one in Alexander City and one in Childersburg. It serves Clay, Coosa, Talladega, and Tallapoosa Counties in East Alabama. CACC offers Associate degrees in Science, Applied Science, and Occupational Technology plus certificate programs. Degrees and certificates are offered in fifteen fields of study, including industrial engineering technology and manufacturing technology. Students can transfer core courses to four-year colleges and universities, and CACC has partnered with Capstone School of Nursing at The University of Alabama and with Faulkner University to enable CACC students to obtain Bachelor and Master degrees primarily through distance learning. CACC has also developed a Skills Training program to offer employment training to students not wishing to pursue a degree. CACC is fully accredited in its academic and technical programs of study.

Gadsden State Community College (GSCC) has three campuses in Gadsden, one campus in Centre, one campus in Anniston, one instructional center at McClellan, and instructional sites (in the region) at Piedmont High School and in Cleburne County. GSCC offers academic and technical programs. The academic division offers Associate in Science, Applied Science, and Arts degrees in over fifty majors in its two-year transfer/career program. The technical division offers Associate in Applied Sciences degrees and certificates in engineering technologies and applied technologies (e.g., automotive, cosmetology, welding). GSCC's Skills Training Center offers short-term, non-credit, competency-based training programs in air conditioning and refrigeration, machine trades, office careers, and welding. GSCC is fully accredited in its academic and technical programs of study. GSCC also recently partnered with Anniston Fire Department to offer an EMT class for senior who are dual enrolled at GSCC, and to provide them a scholarship. Upon graduation, and successfully completing the course, the students will be fully licensed EMT'S after turning 18 years old.

Southern Union State Community College (SUSCC) serves Randolph and Chambers Counties within the region, with campuses in Wadley and Valley. The two Opelika campuses also are convenient to those counties. The Academic Division offers an Associate in Science degree, and academic courses are transferable to other colleges and universities. The Health Sciences Division offers programs leading to certificates, awards of achievement, occupational certificates, and Associate in Applied Science degrees. Some of the courses in this division may be transferable to a four-year college or university. The Associate Degree Nursing, Emergency Medical Services, Nursing Assistant, Practical Nursing, Radiography, and Surgical Technology programs are accredited/approved by their professional associations. The Technical Division offers Tech-Prep and Dual Enrollment programs for high school students, Business and Industry programs to meet area employers' training needs, and Associate degree and certificate programs. The Cosmetology, Therapeutic Massage, and Automotive Collision Repair programs are accredited/approved by their professional associations. The Adult Education and Skills Training Division assists non-traditional college students in obtaining the basic and/or occupational skills necessary to obtain a job in the shortest period possible. SUSCC is fully accredited in its academic and technical programs of study.

# INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING





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## Professional Development Programs

The community colleges and JSU provide training and services to those who need to increase or update their work skills and to area businesses and industries. JSU's Small Business Development Center provides counseling and training to small businesses free-of-charge. The Small Business Development Center is housed in the Center for Economic Development (CED), which provides applied research in economic development to state and local government agencies and conducts business research for private commercial enterprises on contractual bases. The CED has conducted economic impact studies, marketing research, and business research. JSU-Gadsden houses a satellite office for both programs.

CACC's Alexander City campus is the only WorkKeys Certified Testing Center in the region. WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system measuring "real world" skills that employers believe are critical to job success. It assesses an individual's skills through a work-related problem-solving process. The Center then compares the individual's skills with skills required for particular positions within a business or industry and helps identify additional training that could help that individual achieve career goals. The Alabama Office of Workforce Development initiated this program to help job seekers and employers, who can use WorkKeys to gage a prospective employee's skill level.

East Alabama has two of the state's sixteen Alabama Technology Network (ATN) Centers, which is a partnership between two-year colleges, the University of Alabama system, Auburn University, and the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama. They are located at CACC and at GSCC. ATN helps businesses remain competitive by teaching employees the latest practices in the areas of health safety and environmental, human resources and organizational development, information technology, lean manufacturing, and quality systems. ATN members also provide technical assistance to businesses if needed, helping them identify existing or potential problems and possible solutions to those problems, plus resources to implement those solutions.

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs' Office of Workforce Development has 30 One-Stop Centers and 31 satellites throughout the state to provide jobseekers with information on job development, occupational and educational training, vocational rehabilitation, veterans services, and unemployment insurance. Employers work with local centers to locate employees with specific skills. Many centers are electronically linked with partner agencies, such as the Alabama Departments of Industrial Relations, Human Resources, Rehabilitation Services and Education, two-year colleges, and others. The Alabama Career Center System sites in the East Alabama region are the Cheaha Career Center (Anniston), Gadsden Career Center, Roanoke Career Center, and Talladega Career Center. Career Center partners in the region are Alexander City CareerLink (satellite), Anniston CareerLink, Gadsden CareerLink, the Sylacauga Re-employment Center, and Talladega CareerLink.

The Alabama College System's industrial training institute, AIDT, provides job-specific training free of charge to new and expanding industries. Alabama's influx of new automotive plants has drawn employees away from existing industries. The two-year colleges are offering a federally funded program to train workers to fill jobs vacated by those who found work in the expanding automotive industry. The program provides training and job placement services at 34 sites around the state, concentrating in areas around Alabama's automotive manufacturing plants. Existing industries seeking more workers include carpet, metals, and machinery manufacturers.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a source of employment training for job seekers who are at least 55 years old and who have a limited gross household income. The program prepares participants to re-enter the full- or part-time job market by providing paid, temporary part-time community service training in governmental or 501(c)(3) non-profit agencies. The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) administers the program, managing 98 authorized SCSEP slots. The EARPDC is a sub-grantee of Senior Service America, Inc. (a national contractor) and the Alabama Department of Senior Services. Many older workers have gained valuable on-the-job experience and self-sufficiency through this program.

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Locally initiated workforce development initiatives also abound. For instance, the Greater Valley Area Chamber of Commerce and the University of Georgia's Small Business Development Center offer local business owners and employees a series of five weekly classes called the MBA (Moving Business Ahead) Institute. Other program sponsors include local banks and the county's two newspapers. People who attend all five classes receive certificates of completion.

### **Programs for People with Special Training Needs**

Human service organizations, housing authorities, and businesses throughout the region have made efforts to provide worker training for populations that have difficulty finding and keeping employment, such as people who are homeless, who have low incomes or are on welfare, who are elderly, or who have disabilities.

Probably the most well-known facility serving people with disabilities is the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB) in Talladega, which was founded in 1858 by Dr. Joseph Henry Johnson as the Alabama School for the Deaf. Since then, AIDB has grown to become the world's most comprehensive education, rehabilitation, and service system, serving children and adults who are deaf, blind, and multi-disabled and their families. All AIDB services are available to Alabama residents at no charge. Out-of-state students are accepted in the residential programs when space is available. They pay tuition and room and board charges. In addition to providing services on campus, AIDB has eight Regional Centers that provide a wide range of services, from at-home visits for parents of infants who are sensory impaired to programs for seniors who may be experiencing hearing and/or vision loss late in life. AIDB's E.H. Gentry Technical Facility is an accredited two-year technical school which offers adults with sensory impairments aged 16 and up a program of evaluation, adjustment, and vocation training in thirteen different fields. Alabama Industries for the Blind is the state's largest employer of people who are blind or visually impaired, with two manufacturing plants, one retail store, and three stores on military bases in Alabama and Georgia. Employees at the Talladega facility and the Birmingham satellite make and distribute home and office products.

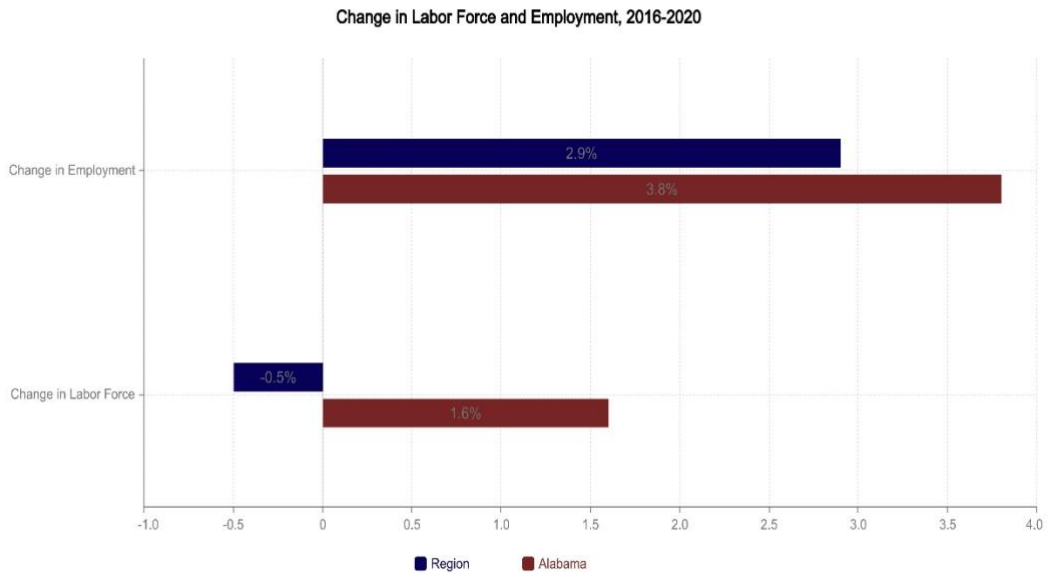
### **Fire Science Programs**

Fire Science programs are offered at high schools across the region. If a student is successful in passing all tests, and state certification, they will leave high school with a 160 or Volunteer Firefighter certification, that becomes active on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. If the student chooses to attend a 5-week bridge recruit school in the summer, after their senior year they will become a certified firefighter I/II; this enables work at a paid fire department anywhere in Alabama and close to 30 other states. The Fire College offers some scholarships for the bridge program, and a lot of individual fire departments offer scholarships as well.

Each county in our ten-county region has county school systems offering Fire Science programs for seniors in high school. The following city school systems also have high school Fire Science programs: Anniston, Gadsden, Oxford, and Piedmont.

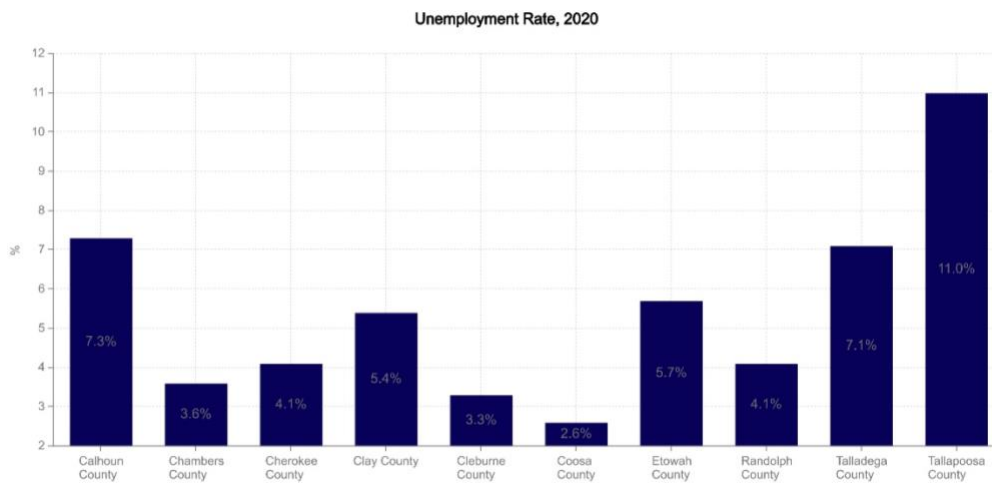
## The Present Workforce

According to the Census Bureau, East Alabama had a 2020 civilian labor force of over 200,000 persons, which is a -0.5% decrease since 2016. The labor force has declined by more than 1,000 people (net) during the past five years. Calhoun County lost the most people from the labor force, at 1,009 persons. Chambers, Coosa, Etowah, and Tallapoosa Counties saw slight gains in labor force, while the other counties experienced losses of fewer than 1,000 people.



Cleburne County, however, did experience a moderate labor force loss in terms of percentage of the labor force, at 3.5% (218 people). Clay County lost 2.8% of its workers during the five-year period, followed by Calhoun County at 1.9%. During the same time period, the state grew by 35,357 persons from the labor force, which equates to an overall increase of 1.6%.

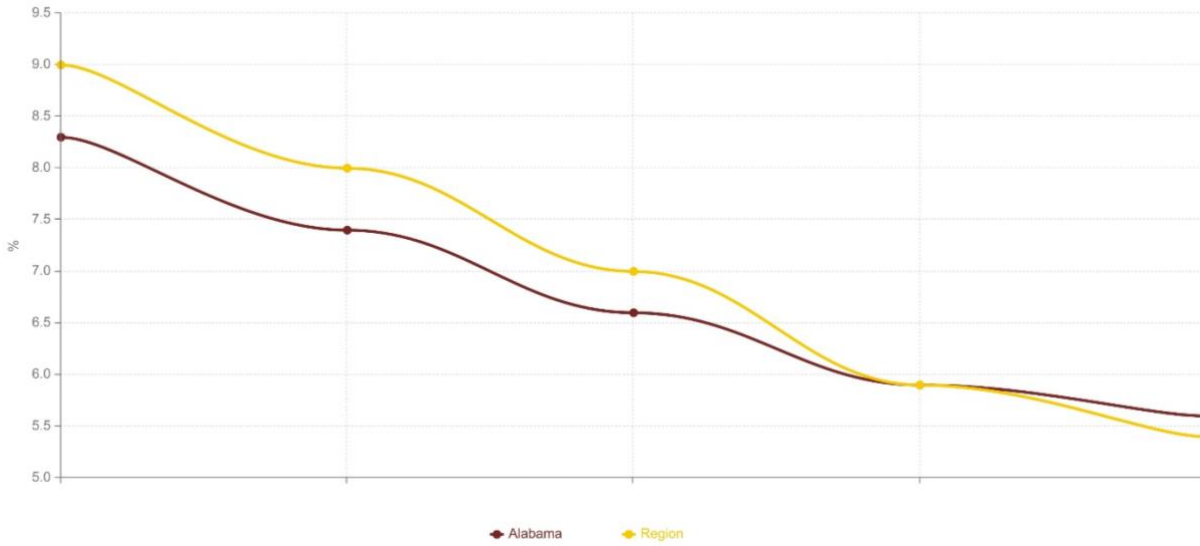
While the local labor force decreased slightly and the state labor force increased moderately from 2016 to 2020, the number of people who are unemployed dropped significantly during that period for both geographies. In East Alabama, unemployment decreased by more than 7,000 persons, or 35.5%. Likewise, the state saw a 31.3% decrease in unemployed persons. In addition, the region lost over 22,000 jobs (a 15% decrease), most of which located in Tallapoosa, Cleburne, and Etowah Counties. Statewide, businesses lost over 6,000 jobs, a -0.3% drop.



More than half of the region’s counties had an unemployment rate that equaled or was lower than the state’s rate of 5.6% in 2020. Coosa County had the lowest unemployment rate, at 2.6 percent, followed by Cleburne

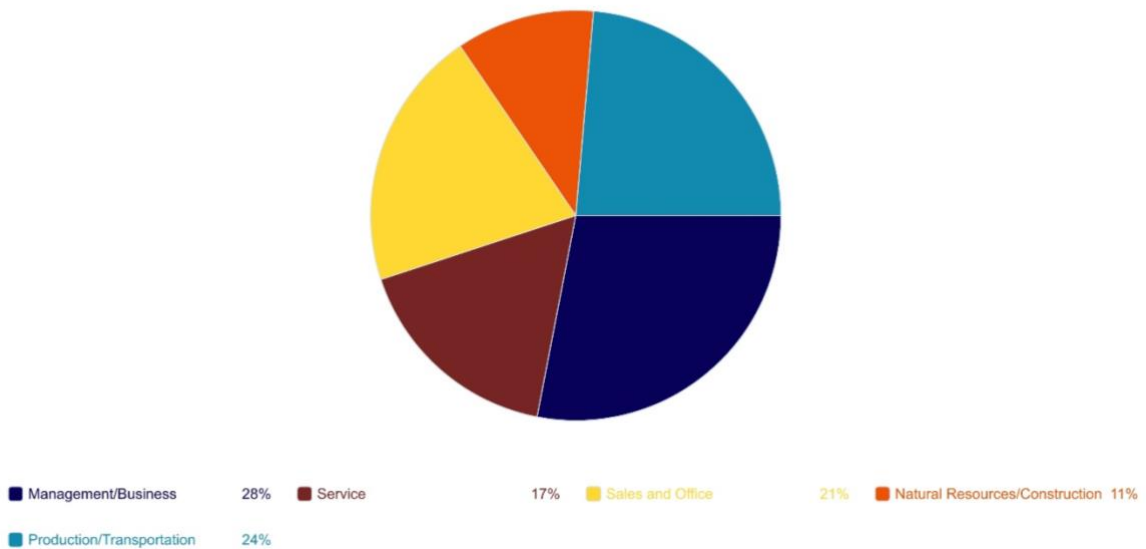
County, at 3.3 percent, and Chambers County, at 3.6%. The other seven counties had unemployment rates greater than 4.0%. Unemployment rates were highest in Tallapoosa County, at 11.0 percent, Calhoun County, at 7.3 percent, and Talladega County, at 7.1%. East Alabama’s unemployment rates have been improving since 2016 and have had a rate on par or lower than the state since 2019. The unemployment gap between the state and the region has been decreasing steadily since 2009. The overwhelming majority of East Alabama counties saw unemployment levels decline between 2016 and 2020. The most dramatic improvement occurred in Coosa County, which dropped from 12.6% to 2.6% in five years.

Unemployment Trends, 2016 to 2020



In the 2020 American Community Survey, the majority of East Alabama’s employed residents reported working in management or business, in spite of the number of manufacturing businesses based in the region. The “production and transportation” and “sales and office” occupations ranked a close second and third respectively. This shift toward management and professional jobs was recognized as early as the 2008-2012 American Community Survey. However, the East Alabama region has a moderately larger percentage of the labor force working in production and transportation at 23.6% than the state at 17.2%.

Employment by Occupation, 2020



As with unemployment, underemployment is prevalent in the East Alabama region. 2020 State of the Workforce Reports—produced by the University of Alabama's Center for Business and Economic Research—found that 22% of East Alabama’s workers are underemployed. This publication defines underemployed persons as “workers who believe that their education and training, skills, or experience (i) are not fully utilized

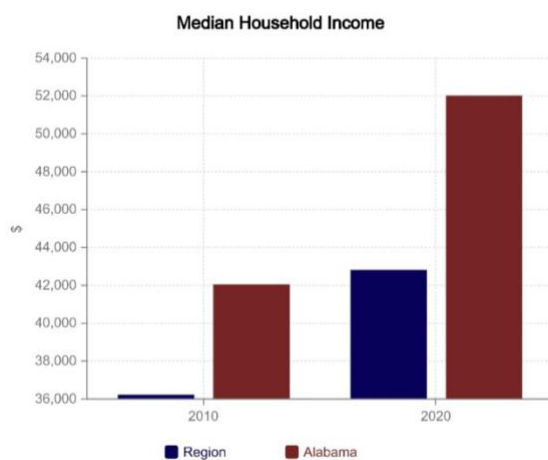
in their current jobs and (ii) qualify them for higher paying or more satisfying jobs for which they could leave their current positions.”

Although underemployment could lead workers to seek employment outside the region, the publication’s authors point out that underemployment can identify economic potential that is not being realized. Those who are underemployed would be likely to apply for new jobs that more closely match their skill levels, provided that the new job had better pay (or other incentives) than the current job. Furthermore, the positions these workers vacate would become available to others who are looking for a job or a career change. East Alabama experienced this phenomenon when Honda Manufacturing opened, and subsequently expanded, its plant in Talladega County.

In addition, and per the same reports, worker shortfall is projected to be 23,705 for the region for 2016 to 2030. Knowing there is expected worker shortfall projected through 2030, the report’s authors suggest prioritizing this issue to address shortfalls for critical occupations.

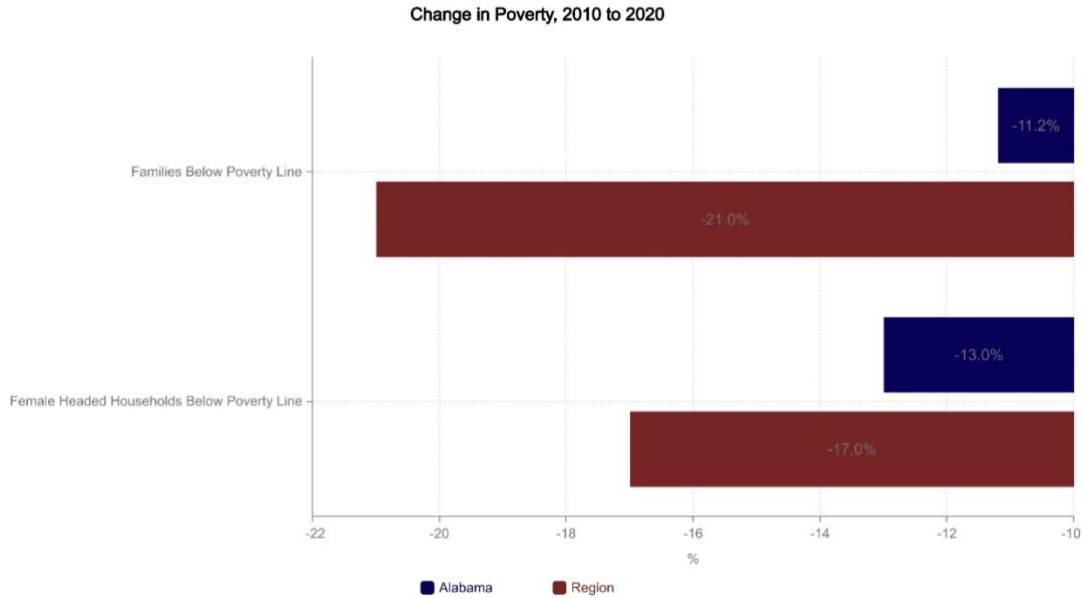
Median household incomes in many parts of the region have been below the State’s median for quite some time, so the relatively high-paying jobs at Honda drew thousands of applicants. Hopefully these and other higher-tech and manufacturing jobs that have followed in the years since will help stem the erosion of household incomes in East Alabama. The median household income did increase by nearly \$7,000 between 2010 and 2020. However, the regional median income slipped from 86% of the State’s median in 2010 to 82% in 2020.

The growing discrepancy between regional and state incomes occurred because the percentage of households earning below \$25,000 decreased more statewide than it did in East Alabama. On the other end of the spectrum, the State experienced a more robust gain in households earning \$75,000 or more than did the region. In addition, only the state kept pace with inflation. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Inflation Calculator, \$1.00 in 2010 had the same buying power as \$1.20 in 2020, or a 20% inflation rate. During that time, the median household income rose 24% statewide and 18% across the region.



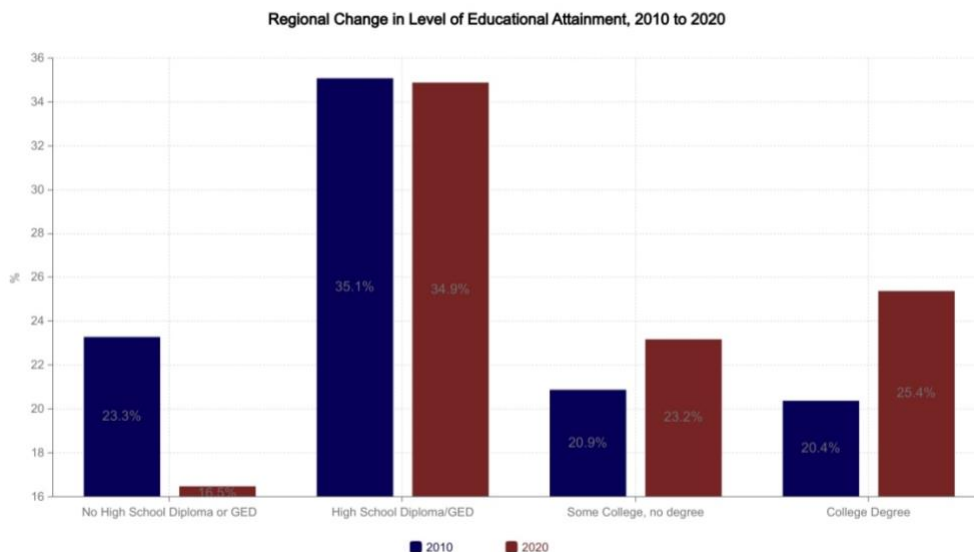
Another indicator of regional (and worker) prosperity is the poverty rate. The gap between regional and statewide poverty rates has been growing smaller, with both the region and state decreasing in population below the poverty line from 2010 to 2020. From 2010 to 2020, poverty rates declined in all but one county. Overall, the region held a higher portion of families below the poverty line and female-headed households than the state in 2020. Randolph and Tallapoosa Counties fared worse than the other counties, with a 9.0 percentage point increase in household poverty in Randolph County, and a minor -

3% decrease in Tallapoosa County. It should be noted that though the region holds a higher poverty rate, it also decreased at a higher rate than the state for both female-headed households and families from 2010-2020.



Households headed by a female tend to have higher poverty rates than those headed by a male or shared by a married couple. Conditions seemed to be improving for Alabama women who were heading a family household, as their poverty rate fell from 36.3% in 2010 to 32.1% in 2020. In East Alabama, the percentage of female-headed families with an income below the poverty level also decreased slightly, dropping from 40.4% in 2010 to 37.5% in 2020.

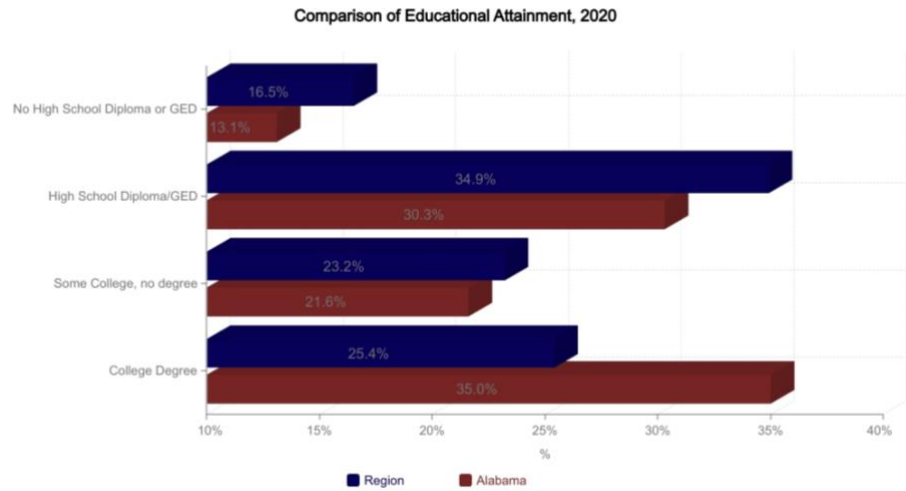
Income levels often correlate strongly with educational levels. Adult educational levels in East Alabama have been improving over time. More people aged 25 and over had completed high school and received at least some college education in 2020 than in 2010; in addition, the region has higher rates than the state in these 2 categories. Many factors may have contributed to this change, some of which are: the introduction of jobs requiring a better education; the infusion of Atlanta-area retirees and commuters, who tend to have relatively high incomes and high education levels; and the loss of some older long-time residents, who had been more likely to drop out of school to work in area industries.





Despite this progress, the region still lags the state in college educational attainment. This discrepancy probably is caused, in part, by East Alabama having a higher proportion of people in the older age categories than the state. Also, the region has a history of high school graduates going to college elsewhere, then looking for jobs that require higher skill levels and offer higher pay than they can find in East Alabama.

At this time, the automotive industry (manufacturing plants and their suppliers) is an opportunity for East Alabama’s future workforce needs. The Honda plant dramatically increased its production and employment since it began operations in 2001. This industry not only has brought more jobs to the



area but also has supported many smaller specialized businesses and spin-off industries in the region. Although not in East Alabama, the Kia plant near West Point, Georgia, has begun to have a similar effect on the region. Kia and Hyundai tend to share suppliers, and a Hyundai plant is located in Montgomery, positioning the region’s southern tier counties as competitors for automotive suppliers. The next chapter will discuss the region’s economy in more detail.

Changes are taking place in the occupational structure of East Alabama's labor market. Many new, complex, specialized job choices are appearing due to such factors as technological advances, changing lifestyles, governmental policies, and the offering of new goods and services to the public. Those engaging in workforce development need to ensure that training opportunities within the region keep pace with these changes. See below a community profile for the East Alabama region. Profiles for individual counties can be found in Appendix A.

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
10 Counties

461,546	-0.30%	2.38	49.0	42.8	\$50,691	\$142,103	\$106,930	19.8%	59%	96,232
Population Total	Population Growth	Average HH Size	Diversity Index	Median Age	Median HH Income	Median Home Value	Median Net Worth	Age <18	Age 18-64	Age 65+



14.7%  
Services

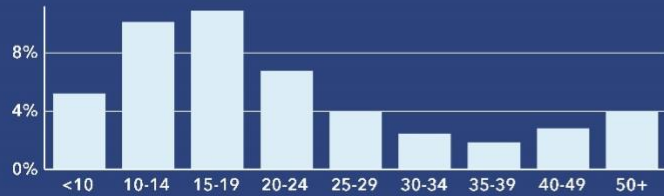


36.1%  
Blue Collar

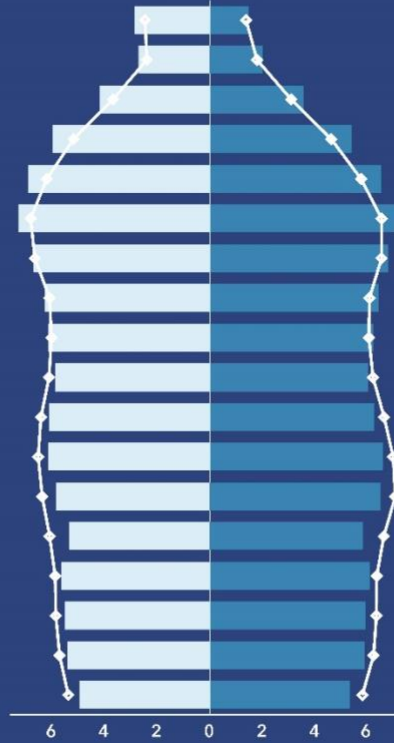


49.1%  
White Collar

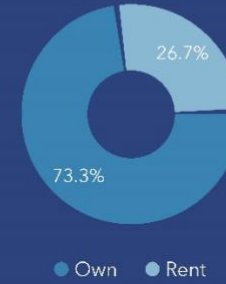
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



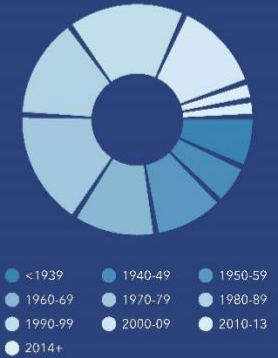
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



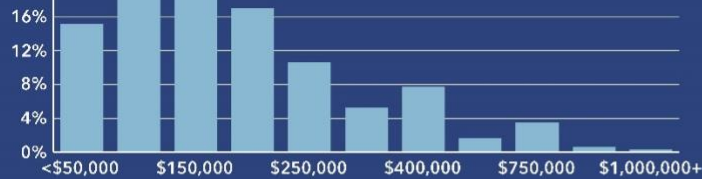
Home Ownership



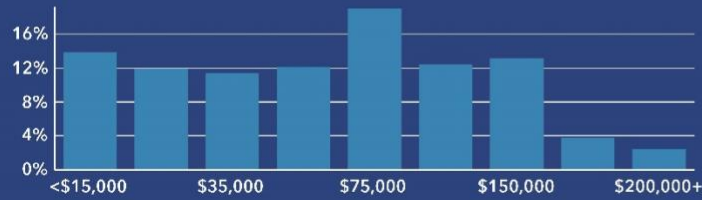
Housing: Year Built



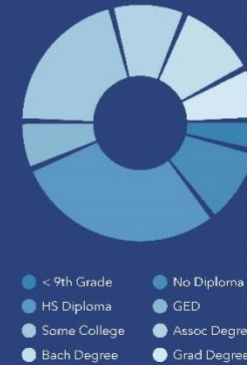
Home Value



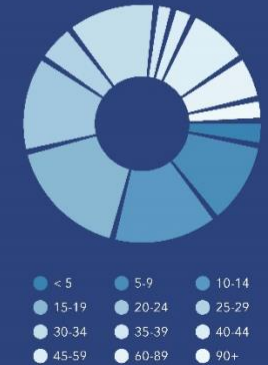
Household Income



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



Source: Esri, ACS  
Esri forecasts for 2022, 2016-2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

## The Regional Economy

Economic developers have a complex task: bringing jobs into their communities and capitalizing on economic clusters while promoting economic diversity. Although they are discussed in more detail later in this chapter, in general, economic clusters are interrelated businesses that are in close proximity to one another, such as automobile manufacturing plants, the companies that provide the plants with parts, and the companies that provide the parts plants with materials for their manufacturing processes. While communities should make efforts to create an economic synergy by bringing together interrelated businesses, they also need to foster multiple clusters of businesses that center around different types of industries. Doing so will help buffer the community from a potential downturn in one industry. The following sections examine the different components of East Alabama's economy.

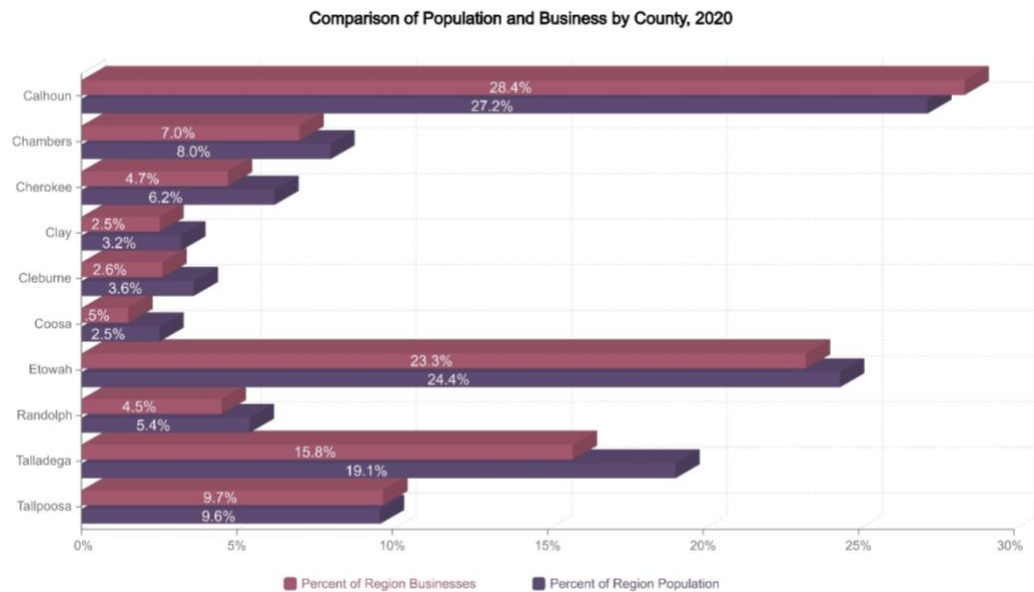
### Overview

The East Alabama region is home to approximately 9,004 businesses, which employ over 141,000 people. As would be anticipated, most of these businesses are located in the three counties that have the most people: Calhoun, Etowah, and Talladega Counties. In fact, the distribution of business throughout the region strongly correlates with the distribution of people throughout the region. Over two-thirds of the region's residents (71 percent) live in Calhoun, Etowah, and Talladega Counties, and just over two-thirds of the region's businesses (67 percent) have located in these three counties.

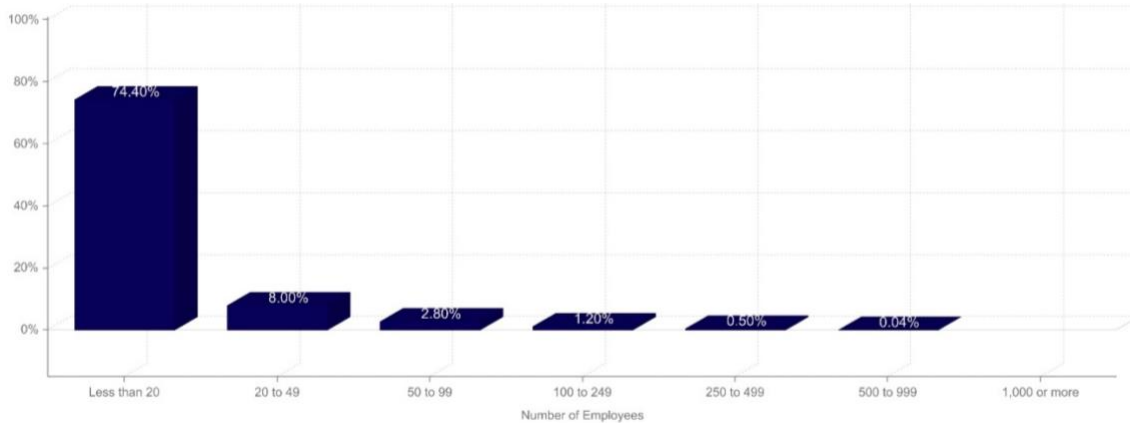
Although much emphasis is placed on an area's largest employers, the vast majority of East Alabama's businesses employ 20 or fewer people. Small businesses are just as prevalent throughout the state. In fact, in the region and across Alabama, less than 1% of all businesses have over 250 employees. However, these statistics should not

detract from the fact that an industrial plant that is located in a rural county and employs 350 people could eliminate most of the jobs in the county should it relocate or close. That county would lose not only that business and at least some of its resident workforce but also jobs in the businesses that supported that industry or that provided goods and services to that industry's employees.

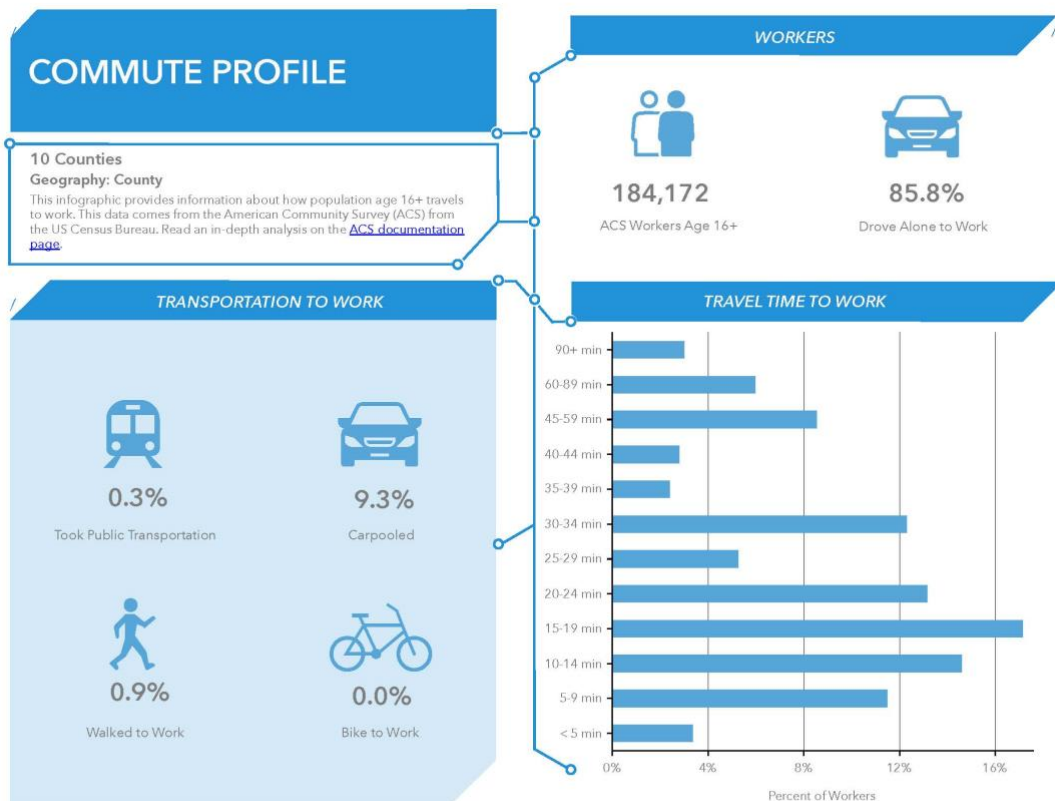
East Alabama's 9,000 businesses pumped over \$6 billion in pre-tax income into the area's economy in 2020. People who worked in the region averaged roughly \$38,363 in gross pay, which is \$13,847 below the average pay statewide. It is important to note that not all these people spent their money in East Alabama. Some workers commuted into the region, and some East Alabamians commuted to jobs outside the region. In 2020, 28.6% of the region's workforce aged 16 and older worked outside their county of residence, according to the American Community Survey.



Regional Percentage of Businesses by Number of Employees, 2020



At the county level, the 2016-2020 American Community Survey estimates that commuting patterns varied greatly throughout the region, with 77% of Coosa County’s workers driving to another county to work and 82% of Randolph County’s workers going to jobs within the county. Local residents traditionally have held most of the jobs in their county of residence, with the majority of counties in the region reporting less than 30% of workers aged 16 and older leaving the county to work in 2020. Interestingly, though Coosa County had the largest percentage of people leaving the county to go to work, it wasn’t in the top five counties with the highest mean travel time to work. Cleburne County had the highest average commute time at 33.7 minutes, and Chambers County had the lowest at 23.2 minutes. See below a regional commute profile; county commute profiles can be found in Appendix A.



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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Nearly one-fourth (22 percent) of the people working in East Alabama work in educational services, healthcare, and social assistance. This is the top employer in the region and in four of the region’s ten counties. Manufacturing closely follows as a major employer for the region, with 21% working in this sector, and ranking first in six of the ten counties. At least 12% of all East Alabama employees work in retail trade as the third most popular sector. Rounding out the top five employment sectors are “arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services” and “construction”.

East Alabama is more reliant on manufacturing than the state as a whole. Statewide, more people work in educational services, health care and social assistance, at 22.7 percent, than in manufacturing, at 14.2%. Retail trade is a close third, employing 11.6% of all workers throughout the state. Likewise, the State of Alabama is more reliant on manufacturing than the country as a whole. Nationwide, manufacturing only employs 10% of workers, behind educational services, health care, and social assistance, at 23.3 percent, professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services, at 11.7 percent, and retail trade, at 11.0%.

**Comparison of Employment by Major Industry Sectors, 2020**

	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale Trade	Retail Trade	Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	Information	Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	Educational services, and health care and social assistance	Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	Other services, except public administration	Public administration
Alabama	1.4%	6.7%	14.2%	2.5%	11.6%	5.5%	1.5%	5.6%	9.6%	22.7%	8.3%	4.9%	5.5%
Region	1.6%	6.8%	20.7%	2.2%	11.9%	5.3%	1.2%	3.8%	6.0%	21.9%	7.9%	5.0%	5.7%
Calhoun	1.3%	5.2%	18.1%	2.6%	13.2%	4.3%	1.3%	3.8%	6.9%	22.7%	8.5%	4.4%	7.7%
Chambers	2.3%	4.2%	30.4%	2.0%	8.7%	5.3%	2.2%	4.3%	7.8%	18.2%	6.6%	3.7%	4.3%
Cherokee	3.3%	9.3%	22.2%	1.2%	10.4%	5.8%	0.7%	3.5%	3.7%	23.4%	6.2%	5.0%	5.4%
Clay	2.4%	6.8%	30.0%	1.2%	13.8%	5.5%	0.6%	4.0%	4.4%	19.5%	4.5%	3.2%	4.0%
Cleburne	3.4%	12.2%	20.8%	4.1%	8.4%	5.0%	0.3%	4.1%	7.3%	18.0%	6.4%	4.1%	6.0%
Coosa	2.1%	8.4%	21.7%	1.8%	14.0%	6.8%	0.7%	3.4%	3.9%	19.9%	7.0%	5.2%	5.1%
Etowah	0.5%	6.9%	17.4%	2.2%	12.8%	4.6%	1.3%	3.0%	5.6%	24.0%	10.1%	6.4%	5.0%
Randolph	3.5%	7.2%	26.5%	1.2%	11.0%	5.8%	1.2%	4.9%	5.8%	20.6%	3.6%	4.3%	4.5%
Talladega	1.5%	7.1%	19.7%	2.1%	11.8%	7.2%	1.2%	4.3%	5.5%	21.0%	7.9%	4.8%	5.8%
Tallapoosa	1.8%	8.5%	23.1%	2.4%	10.4%	5.6%	0.5%	4.3%	5.9%	21.3%	6.9%	5.5%	3.9%

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## Economic Trends

Although the State of Alabama fared well in the early 2000s, those economic gains were diminished by industry and business down-sizing, consolidations, and closings in the latter part of the decade. During the 2016 through 2020 period, Alabama saw a net increase of 9,816 businesses—a 0.001% growth—and a modest loss of 6,161 jobs, a -0.3% decline rate. Average annual pay increased from \$44,832 in 2016 to \$52,210 in 2020—an increase of \$7,378 or 16.5%. East Alabama showed somewhat differing trends during that period. The region experienced the economic downturn much more severely than other parts of the state, with a net loss of nearly 23,000 jobs and 700 businesses. The average worker did receive an increase in annual pay, but that “raise” was lower than the state average by \$5,298, growing from \$36,284 in 2016 to \$38,363 in 2020.

East Alabama has lagged other areas of the state in attracting new residents, employers, and jobs for quite some time. The region contains 15% of Alabama’s counties (10 of 67) and 12% of the state’s land area. In 1980, 10.6% of Alabamians called East Alabama home, and the region claimed 9.9% of Alabama businesses and 10.4% of Alabama jobs. The economic figures declined slowly but steadily over the next 32 years, to 6.0% of the State's businesses and 6.5% of Alabama jobs by 2020. This trend should reverse as the Atlanta and Birmingham metropolitan areas continue to push outward, making East Alabama more attractive to metro-area workers who want a more rural lifestyle and, subsequently, to businesses. However, it would be prudent to determine which of East Alabama’s economic sectors have been strengthening and which have been weakening, so economic developers know how to target their efforts.

## Economic Clusters

Once upon a time, the textile industry permeated East Alabama—not just its economy, but also its communities. Textile companies built plants, they built housing for their workers around their plants, and sometimes they even built stores, schools, parks, and civic buildings. The companies provided all the necessities for residents of these mill villages. Gradually, the companies gave up ownership of the stores, the schools, the parks, the civic buildings, the houses. Worker wages and the cost of keeping up the plant equipment and facilities increased. Many of the companies started moving production to countries that could offer lower production costs. Some of the companies that attempted to remain in East Alabama were driven out of business by low-cost competition. Although it is still one of the region’s economic clusters, the once thriving textile industry has eroded precipitously over the past ten to 20 years.

According to a 2007 report produced by the Harvard Business School's Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, *Clusters and Cluster Development*, clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular field that are present in a nation or region. Clusters arise because they increase the productivity with which companies can compete. The development and upgrading of clusters is an important agenda for governments, companies, and other institutions. Cluster development initiatives are an important new direction in economic policy, building on earlier efforts in macroeconomic stabilization, privatization, market opening, and reducing the costs of doing business.

While the textile cluster has declined, other economic clusters have been rising. East Alabama sits in an area ripe with automobile manufacturing plants: Honda Manufacturing of Alabama, in Lincoln; Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama, in Montgomery; Mazda Toyota and Toyota Motor Manufacturing, in Huntsville; Mercedes Benz, in Vance; and Kia Motor Manufacturing Georgia, in West Point, Georgia. In addition to being the home of the Honda plant, the region reaped the benefits of Honda’s supplier network and has attracted Kia and Hyundai suppliers, as the two companies have the same parent company and share suppliers.

Wood products are another of the region’s clusters. This cluster originates in the region’s countless wooded acres. Timber growers. Timber harvesters. Timber trucking. Pulp mills. Paper mills. Lumber mills.



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Lumber stores. Cabinet makers. Wood preserving factories. Numerous individuals and companies engage in wood-related business in East Alabama.

Tourism is an under-emphasized cluster in East Alabama. Tourism revolving around outdoor recreational activities exists in abundance. Hikers in the Talladega National Forest purchase last-minute supplies, eat at local restaurants, and may want to stay one night in a hotel. People who float the canoe or kayak trails or go fishing may use a local outfitter, purchase supplies locally, eat at local restaurants, and sleep at local hotels. Area lakes are home to local, state, and national fishing tournaments that draw fishers to area hotels, campgrounds, restaurants, and stores. Rock climbers at Cherokee Rock Village may want to spend the night nearby, eat a meal or two, and purchase forgotten equipment. Visitors to the Little River Canyon National Preserve may wish to rent a cabin at DeSoto State Park or a hotel room in a nearby town. Cyclists on the Chief Ladiga Trail can stop for a drink or a meal, an overnight stay, or bicycle equipment or repairs. The City of Heflin's frisbee golf course has attracted visitors from other states. Heritage tourism has been increasing nationally as more places lose their historic flavor. Locally, many communities have brochures guiding visitors along historic sites walking or driving tours. The City of Talladega has an annual Pilgrimage. The City of Valley, made up of four former mill villages, has been a participant in a multi-state textile heritage trail. The City of Sylacauga holds an annual Marble Festival, showcasing the city's native white marble and drawing visitors from around the world. The City of Anniston holds the Annual Noble Street Festival and Sunny King Criterium, which has an international draw. Local assessments of natural, historical, and cultural assets and coordinated development and marketing efforts could help this economic cluster reach its full potential.

## **Geography, Environment, and Natural Resources**

The East Alabama region's ten counties encompass 6,164 square miles of land, making it the second largest of Alabama's 12 regions. These counties form a generally triangular region sandwiched between the Alabama/Georgia state line on the east and the Coosa River on the west. As would be expected in a region of this size, there is great natural diversity and an abundance of natural resources, giving the region great potential for expanding its economic base and realizing considerable economic growth.

### **Geographic Features**

Geographic features are major determinants of an area's physical potential. These features determine opportunities and constraints that shape land use patterns. They may also facilitate or impose restrictions on economic development activities. The East Alabama region is an area of distinct topographic contrast and is physically diverse and rich with natural resources. The northern two-thirds of the region is characterized by the mountainous terrain of the southern Appalachians, interspersed with broad, low-lying river valleys. The Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers flow southwest through this portion of the region, draining a large headwaters area in northwestern Georgia. The two rivers eventually converge in the Montgomery area to form the Alabama River. The main mountain ridges separating these two rivers possess the highest elevations in Alabama. The summits of Mount Cheaha, the State's highest point, Dugger Mountain, and Choccolocco Mountain are over 2,000 feet above mean sea level. The main mountainous ridges extending through Talladega, Calhoun, Cleburne, and Cherokee Counties constitute the heart of the Ridge and Valley geographic province. Small portions of Etowah and Cherokee Counties north and west of Lookout Mountain are in the Cumberland Plateau geologic province. The remaining southeastern half of the region is characterized by the rolling plains of the Piedmont geologic province, which extends east into Georgia and south to the Fall Line, extending roughly from Columbus, Georgia, to Montgomery.

### **Topographic Elements**



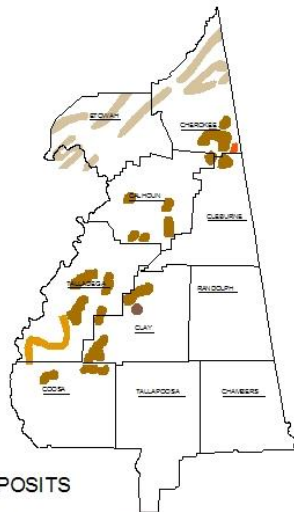
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Topographic information provides a quick overview of the characteristics of an area, such as hilly or flat areas, soil conditions, vegetated areas, and mineral collection areas. This information on the land may suggest the best sites for buildings, transportation access, and activity areas. Alternatively, imposing conventional development patterns on variable topography may result in hazardous conditions. Geological features in the region that may present major barriers to economic development are soil limitations and severe slopes.

There are many soil types in the region that may pose problems for various land use development. The greatest limitations imposed by these soil types are soils subject to frequent flooding and soils having shrink-swell characteristics and low strength. The Soil Conservation Service publishes reports periodically which can be used in determining the suitability of soils for various urban uses. By determining the suitability of soil and identifying problem areas, development may proceed and provide a safe and healthy environment. Severe or steep slopes also present limitations to urban development in the region. Slopes in excess of 25% may cause severe limitations for all types of development.

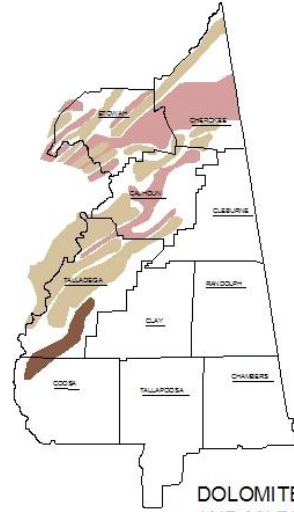
Various mineral collection areas are found in almost every county in the region. Only Chambers County in the southeastern corner of the region has virtually no mineral supply, with only a portion of a deposit of corundum/asbestos that extends eastward from Tallapoosa County into Chambers County. Although the other nine counties in the region all have mineral deposits to some degree, the most abundant mineral resources are in the northwestern half of the region.

# Mineral Deposits



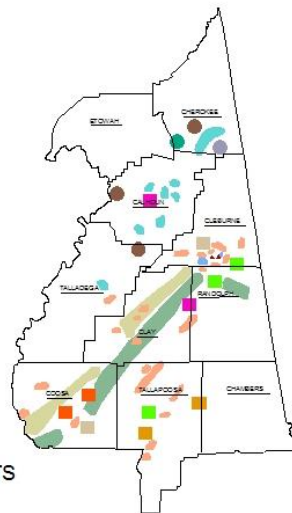
**IRON ORE DEPOSITS**

- RED IRON ORE, MORE THAN 2' THICK, GENERALLY
- GRAY IRON ORE
- MANGANIFEROUS IRON ORE
- BROWN IRON ORE
- PYRITE



**DOLOMITE, LIMESTONE AND MARBLE DEPOSITS**

- DOLOMITE
- LIMESTONE
- MARBLE



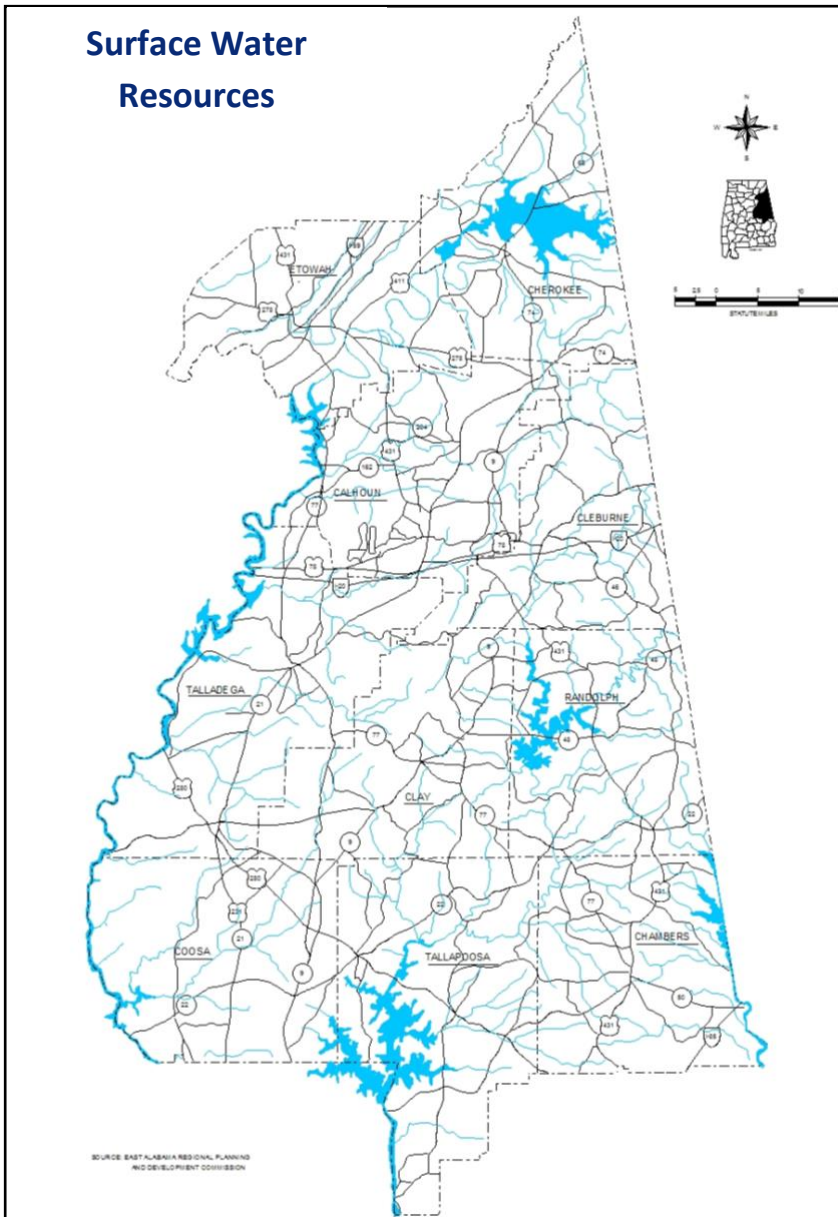
**MISCELLANEOUS MINERAL DEPOSITS**

- KAOLIN
- KYANITE
- CORUNDUM, ASBESTOS
- TIN
- LEAD, ARSENIC
- GLASS SAND, SILICA
- CLAY
- FLUORITE
- COPPER
- BARITE
- MICA
- GRAPHITE
- GOLD
- BAUXITE

SOURCE: GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF ALABAMA

## Hydrologic Resources

While the area's surface water system is the most obvious hydrologic feature, it is only one of the several hydrologic resources found in the East Alabama region. Other resources include groundwater resources, wetlands, flood plains and watershed protection. Since water is a basic requirement for all life, these hydrologic resources require special consideration and protection. The East Alabama region is home to an extensive surface water system that includes the main stems of three rivers: the Coosa River, the Tallapoosa River and a small portion of the Chattahoochee River. Flowing southwest from Georgia, the Coosa River flows through Cherokee and Etowah Counties before forming the western border of the region along Calhoun, Talladega and Coosa Counties. The Tallapoosa River also enters the state from Georgia and flows



through Cleburne, Randolph, Chambers and Tallapoosa Counties before merging with the Coosa River to form the Alabama River in Elmore County south of the East Alabama region. Finally, the Chattahoochee River flows from Georgia into Alabama in Chambers County and travels south forming the border between the two states.

The Tallapoosa River system includes Lake Wedowee (an impoundment of the R.L. Harris Dam) in Randolph County, Lake Martin in Tallapoosa County, and Yates Lake, also in Tallapoosa County. Lake Martin is the largest of the reservoirs that is wholly located within Alabama. The East Alabama Region also includes portions of two lakes on the Chattahoochee River system, both of which are partially located in Chambers County: West Point Lake and Lake Harding. The remainder of these lakes are in Georgia.

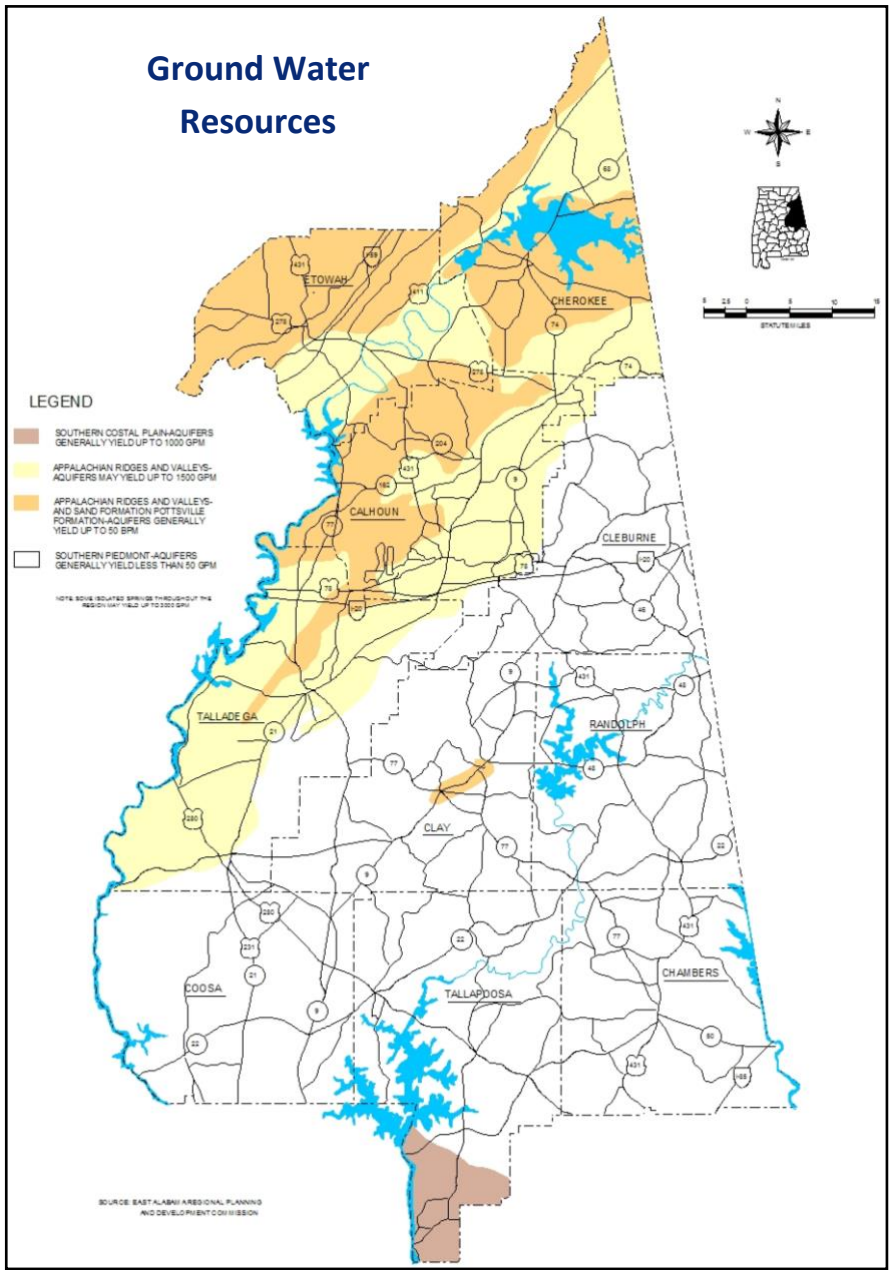
Equally as important as the surface water resources are the region's groundwater resources. Most of East Alabama's groundwater

resources are located in the northwestern part of the region that lies in the Appalachian Ridges and Valleys Formation. All or most of Calhoun, Cherokee, Etowah, and Talladega Counties are located in this formation. This area generally has high yield wells, at 150 gallons per minute (GPM) or more. In addition, the southern

part of Tallapoosa County, which lies in the Southern Coastal Plain Formation, also has high yield wells, at up to 1,000 gallons per minute. The remainder of the East Alabama region is located in the Southern Piedmont Formation, in which the aquifers generally yield less than 50 gallons per minute. These counties include Chambers, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Randolph, and Tallapoosa Counties.

Floodplains and wetlands are found throughout the region. Many of the region's municipalities and

counties participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Flood insurance rate maps for the participating jurisdictions are available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission. Several of the region's municipalities and counties have had special flood hazards identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) yet are not in the National Flood Insurance Program. Wetlands, such as bogs, swamps, and marshes, are now recognized as prime environmental features. The State SCS has recently completed a statewide inventory of the wetland locations utilizing infrared photography. Additional information concerning wetland locations is available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) and local SCS offices.



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## Endangered Species

Endangered species are those in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their range. Their prospects for continued survival and propagation are in immediate jeopardy. A list of rare and endangered species is available through the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Sport, Fisheries and Wildlife. The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has also compiled a database indicating at least 145 known native plants and animals from around 20 or fewer sites in the state. In an effort to protect endangered species, the United States government prohibits any action, including the removal of advantageous habitat that would endanger any of their numbers. Most construction that is viable to economic development reduces habitat acreage. Not only are land type species subject to these effects, but birds and aquatic life as well. Fish populations, for example, are seriously affected by channel changes, construction-generated pollution, and point and non-point discharges of pollution.

The single biggest problem affecting protected fish is sedimentation, which smothers fish eggs and habitat. Sedimentation results from agricultural and forestry practices and from bridge and road construction, all of which can cause erosion. Soil conservation measures, such as leaving buffer strips adjacent to streams when cutting timber on steep slopes, should be employed. Also, pesticides should not be sprayed near waterways. The best way to avoid impacts on fish is to closely follow Alabama's Best Management Practices for Forestry.

## Vegetation Resources

The East Alabama region has abundant vegetation resources, including several federal and state forest and park areas. These areas include two districts of the Talladega National Forest -- the Shoal Creek District and the Talladega District, the Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge, Cheaha State Park, and Wind Creek State Park. These forest areas provide a variety of recreational opportunities, as well as functioning as a conservation tool for the forest resources. Three types of forests are dominant throughout the region. Oak-Pine forests are found in the northern part of the region, primarily in Calhoun, Cherokee, Cleburne, and Randolph Counties. There are small forests of longleaf-slash pine in western Clay and Coosa Counties and eastern Talladega County. The predominant forest type is the loblolly-shortleaf pine forest, which is found in Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega, and Tallapoosa Counties. The region's forest resources are closely tied to its economic health, making it imperative that these resources be managed properly.

## Transportation Access and Other Development Resources

The region's infrastructure and other development resources are important in retaining and attracting both a population base and business and industrial base. In this section, the region's existing infrastructure is reviewed, including transportation systems and utility systems, along with the financial resources available to improve that infrastructure.

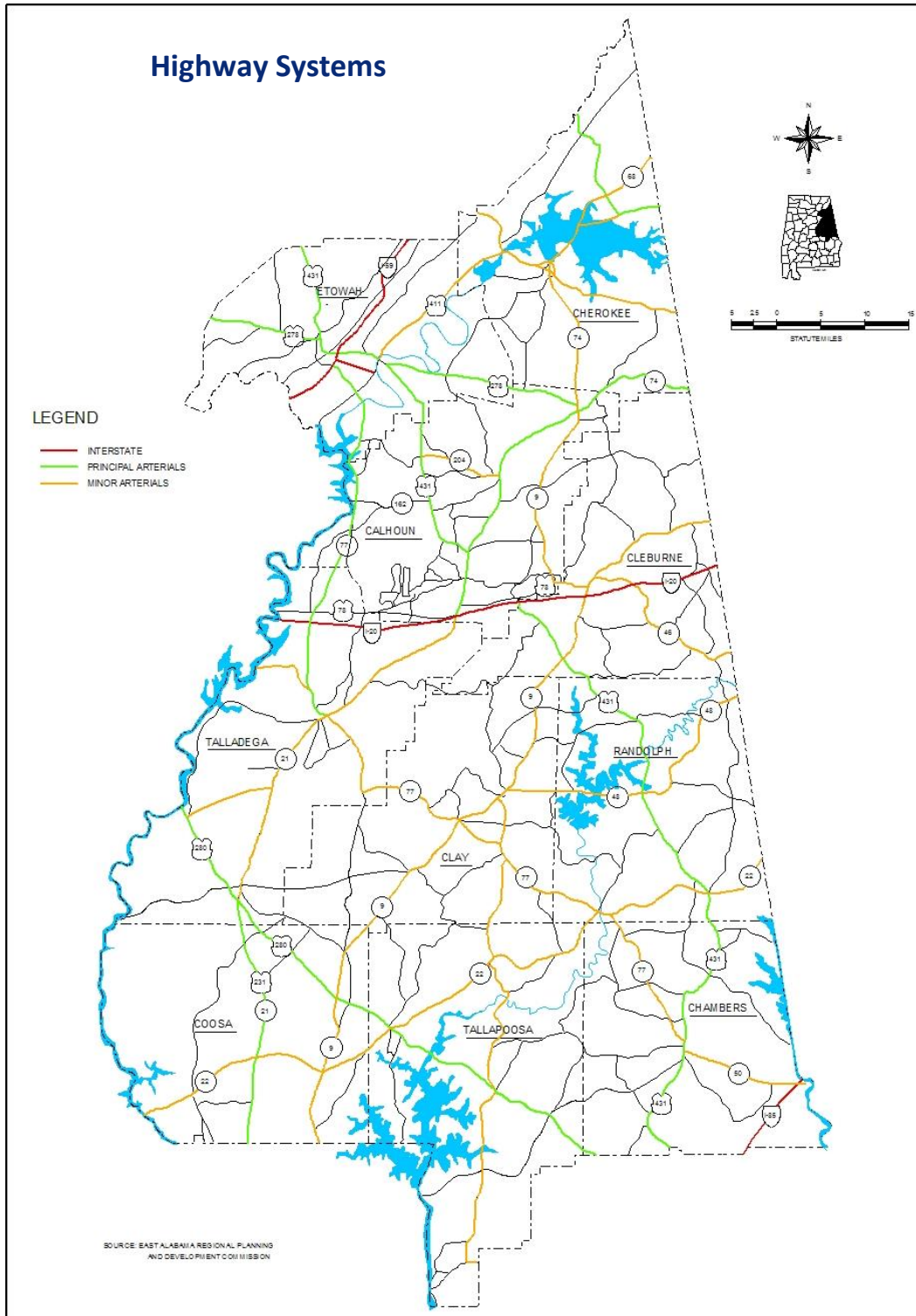
### Transportation Facilities

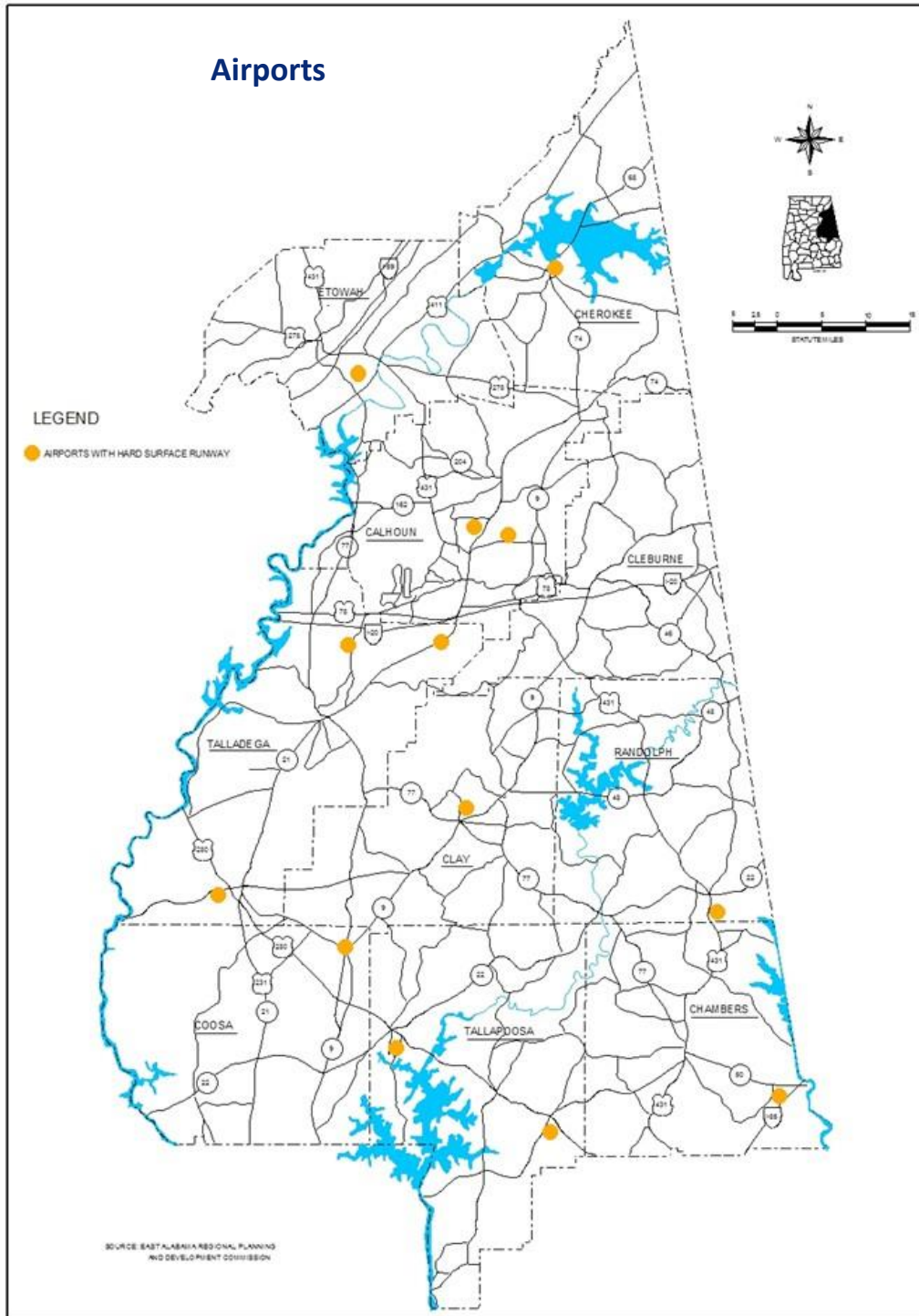
There are several means of transportation available in the ten-county region, which maximize accessibility for the essential movement of people and goods between linked activities. Due to the low population density of most of the region, travel demand is primarily served by the highway network. The East



Alabama Region has a good basic network of federal and state highways, and many miles of paved county roads, as shown on the map.

Almost all of the region's population growth centers and major employment hubs are accessible by one of the interstates or federal highways; there are, however, a few municipalities that have experienced population growth that are only accessible by a state highway.





There are 13 airports located throughout the region. The majority of these airports serve local residents who own small passenger planes. Anniston-Calhoun County Airport and Gadsden Municipal Airport are the only two airports in the region capable of supporting commercial air traffic, although regular airline service to both airports was suspended in 1996. Commercial air service, however, is available in nearby Birmingham.



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The major railroads that operate through the East Alabama Region are Norfolk-Southern Corp, CSX Transportation Incorporation, and Alabama & Tennessee Railway, LLC.

The region has numerous motor freight lines to provide freight service. The regular and frequent schedules, in addition to the good connections in nearby metropolitan areas, enable this area to be close to market centers across the nation.

There is one commercial bus line available in the ten-county region, Greyhound Bus Line. The City of Gadsden has a demand-response urbanized transportation system called Demand and Response Transportation (DART). The Cities of Goodwater, Childersburg, Oak Grove, Sylacauga, and Talladega operate a demand response service through the EARPCD's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS), serving northeaster Coosa County. The City of Lineville contracts to provide transportation services to residents along a fixed route. Calhoun County operates an urbanized fixed route transit system and complementary paratransit service, which serves Anniston, Oxford, Weaver, Jacksonville, and Hobson City. Rural area transportation services are available in all but Chambers, Randolph, and Talladega Counties.

### **Water and Sewer Facilities**

The provision of water supplies and sewage treatment facilities within the region is of utmost importance. The provision of these services also constitutes one of the primary determinants of land use intensity throughout the East Alabama Region. This is particularly true of water service areas. Individual wells often yield water in low quantities during certain periods of the year. Therefore, intense urban development must depend on public supplies. Water and sewer service areas are typically located within and adjacent to incorporated municipalities in the East Alabama Region. Most often the water is supplied by these municipalities, and in some cases public water authorities provide service to the unincorporated areas. Private wells are also used in isolated areas throughout the region. All sewage treatment plants in the area are owned by municipalities, except in areas where they are owned by governmental installations.

### **Public Utilities**

The Alabama Power Company serves an area in and around the Anniston, as well as all the counties within the region except for the northern portion of Cherokee County. The Cherokee Electric Cooperative provides for the electrical needs of those residing in Cherokee County and portions of Calhoun and Etowah Counties. In addition, several of the municipalities located throughout the region have their own electric systems. They buy power from either the Alabama Power Company or rural electric co-ops (REA) and distribute the electricity within the corporate limits through their own system.

Natural gas is provided by Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company in the southern portion of the region and by Southern Natural Gas company in the northern portion of the region. Although natural gas facilities are not available for every municipality in the region, most areas are served by natural gas facilities. Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company purchases natural gas in Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi and moves it across the continent, selling it principally to local utility companies and local gas distributing systems. Southern Natural Gas Company has transmission lines running through the northern portion of the East Alabama Region, with small lines to the individual cities. Alabama Gas Corporation serves as a natural gas distribution company and distributes the gas supplied by Southern Natural Gas Company to residential, commercial, and industrial customers in the area. In addition to Alabama Gas Corporation, there are many smaller municipal and private distribution systems serving various communities in our region. The natural gas transmission lines are located throughout the district so that natural gas facilities could be made available to nearby communities upon demand. Public utilities for the most part, are adequate for current needs and for foreseeable future demands of the district.

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## Opportunity Zones

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 designated opportunity zones to furnish tax investments for investors to develop in underdeveloped and lower income areas. The program gives investors the opportunity to defer and reduce capital gains taxes by reinvesting into businesses and projects within the opportunity zone. These powerful tax incentives can serve to make areas more attractive for investors to locate. According to the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), “Opportunity Zones are low-income census tracts with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent and a median family income of less than 80 percent of the statewide or area income.” There are twelve opportunity zones across the East Alabama Region. 52.3 million Americans live in economically distressed communities, making this an important endeavor for all localities. Each county contains at least one section, with Calhoun County containing the most with opportunity zones in two census tracts. Our infrastructure, existing business clusters, and rich historical and natural resources suited to tourism are economic assets to any investor looking to take advantage of the region’s opportunity zones. The critical infrastructure, which was discussed previously in this plan, makes East Alabama an attractive location for investment, when considering the connectivity of highways systems and nearby airports.

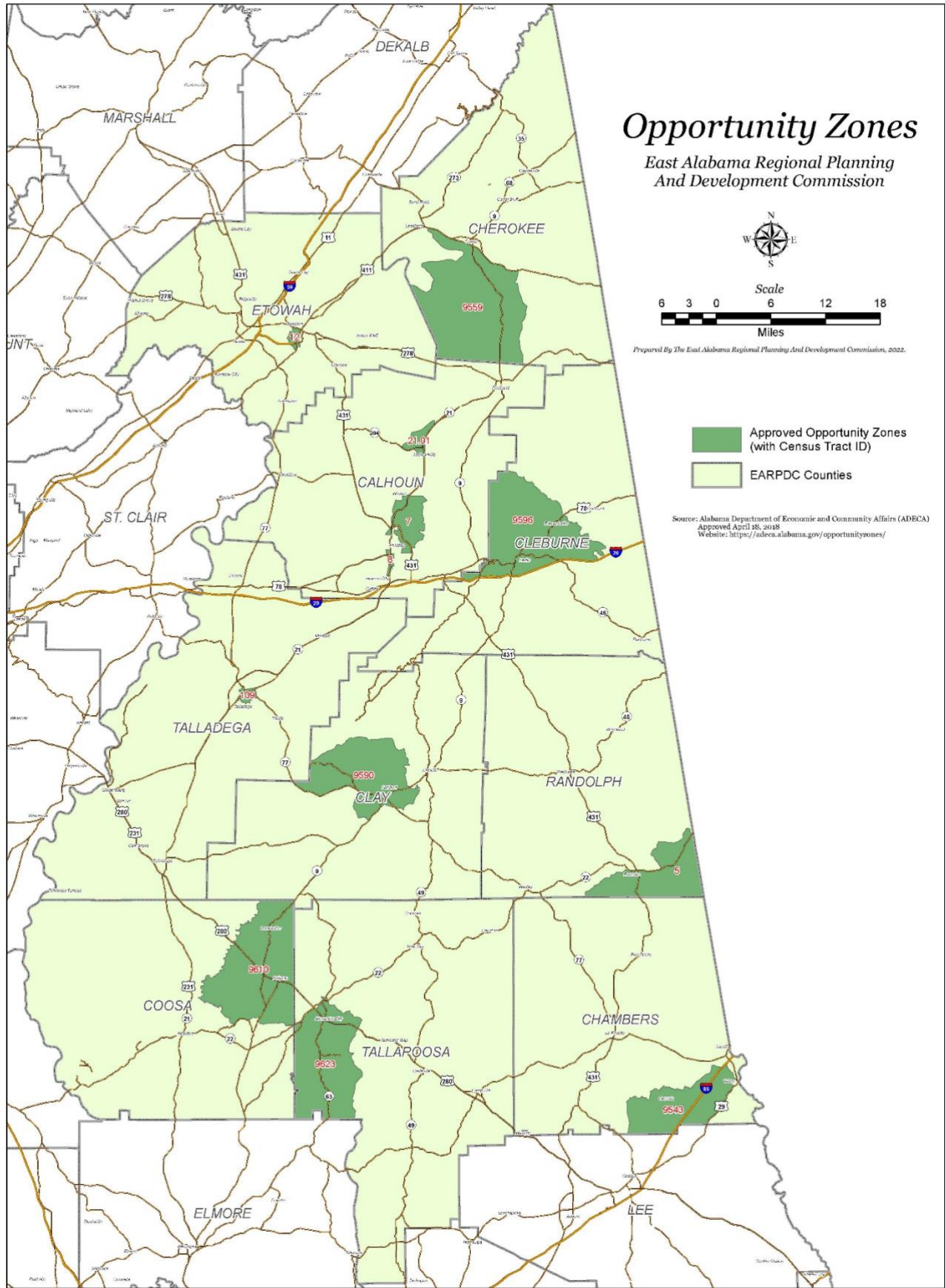
Established economic clusters, such as the automobile industry, provide opportunities for investors to come to opportunity zones and join this flourishing ecosystem. Educational services and healthcare, another abundant industry opportunity in the region, provide this same opportunity for expansion into an existing atmosphere. One underutilized economic activity for the region is tourism; with several tourism attractions present already, the region has the opening to expand, drawing more tourists to visit, and spend more time and money, in the East Alabama region.

East Alabama is also home to economic assets that can be leveraged for opportunity zones in the form of partnerships. Opportunity Alabama highlights several potential partners that can help the Opportunity Zone environment thrive, which includes “community foundations, economic development groups, incubators and accelerators, and colleges and universities”, to name a few.

Two business incubators are located in the region, including Northeast Alabama Entrepreneurial Center in Anniston, Calhoun County, and Lake Martin Innovation Center in Alexander City, Tallapoosa County. Additional incubators are in nearby Auburn, Bessemer, and Birmingham. Incubators can help generate capable businesses that may utilize opportunity zones in the coming years.

As mentioned earlier when discussing economic clusters, East Alabama’s education system is another great partner and asset to Opportunity Zones. The Educational Facilities section goes into depth on the many educational institutions and opportunities across the region, including colleges, universities, professional development programs, and programs for people with special training needs. These institutions present a great potential for partnership and connections for engagement on this subject.

Every county in the region, apart from Cleburne County, is also affiliated with an economic development group, and all counties have an active and engaged County Commission as well as Chambers of Commerce. Such groups include Calhoun County Economic Development Council, Chambers County Development Authority, Cherokee County Industrial Development Authority, Clay County Economic Development Council, Lake Martin Economic Development Alliance, Etowah County Economic Development, Gadsden-Etowah Industrial Development Authority, Randolph County Economic Development Authority, and Talladega County Economic Development Authority. Local groups such as these can have great impacts on opportunity zone funding throughout the region.



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## Resiliency Strategy

There are many variations of the definition of “resilience”, depending which dictionary or field of study you refer to, but resiliency all boils down to an entity’s ability to recover from hardship. Economic resiliency is a community’s ability to withstand and recover from rarely foreseen and often unforeseen economic shocks such as recession, natural disasters, and pandemics to just name a few.

Economic resilience cannot rest on one county, industry, business, or person alone. Interregional agility among government agencies, industries, businesses, and communities is necessary for economic resilience in a regional setting when assessing impacts on economic assets, anticipating risks, and boosting responsiveness. Local economic development professionals and organizations should think about their role in both preparing for future economic disruptions and recovery when addressing economic resilience. Planning and economic development approaches concentrating on enhancing economic development initiatives to satisfy new demands, enhance innovation and entrepreneurship, increase regional population, and reduce the gap between urban and rural areas, just to name a few, is imperative to increased regional economic resilience.

### Importance of Gauging Economic Resiliency through the Measure of Economic Diversity

According to Chmura JobsEQ, “economic diversity measures the degree to which a region utilizes a broad mix of economic activities.” For example, a region that relies predominantly on one sole industrial sector, such as poultry production, is not economically diverse, while another that possesses a vibrant manufacturing section and forestry sector in addition to poultry production is said to be more economically diverse.

For the purpose of this document, we are utilizing the Chmura JobsEQ economic diversity index. The methodology for Chmura’s economic diversity index is that this analysis “computes the Economic Diversity Index for every county and MSA at the 6-digit NAICS level even when employment suppression issues make it difficult to find data for all industries. While the Bureau of Labor Statistic’s county-level dataset is bound by non-disclosure rules, this analysis utilizes JobsEQ employment data which incorporates additional sources and methodologies to provide a complete employment dataset of all regions, making a thorough Economic Diversity Index calculation possible.”

This metric is crucial for determining how adaptable and stable an economy will likely be amid an unanticipated economic event. An effective tool for planning is a measure of economic variety. With COVID-19’s effects on economic circumstances being so pervasive lately, a more diversified economy is better able to withstand economic decline and job losses brought on by such shocks.

With a national index rating of 0.00, the United States is the region with the greatest economic diversity. When comparing two regions, a region with a comparatively lower index value is thought to be more economically diversified than one with a higher value. Index measures are presented as numerical values and percentage changes for this analysis. When compared to the national index standard, all index values for each county and region are more than 0.00, suggesting a lower level of economic variety. Positive numbers across periods (a negative percent change) indicate higher levels of economic variety throughout time. For the

EARPDC ten-county region, the economic diversity index is considered for 2011, 2016, and 2021 as index measurements and percent changes for each county, and region average.

### EARDPC 10- County Region Diversity Index

Region Code	Region Description	Diversity Index 2011	Diversity Index 2016	Diversity Index 2021	2011-2016 % Change	2016-2021 % Change	2011-2021 % Change
01015	Calhoun County, Alabama	73.93	73.46	75.38	-0.64%	2.61%	1.96%
01017	Chambers County, Alabama	99.91	103.87	99.37	3.96%	-4.33%	-0.54%
01019	Cherokee County, Alabama	106.72	108.01	107.04	1.21%	-0.90%	0.30%
01027	Clay County, Alabama	123.91	129.38	133.49	4.41%	3.18%	7.73%
01029	Cleburne County, Alabama	123.21	125.25	119.66	1.66%	-4.46%	-2.88%
01037	Coosa County, Alabama	147.05	142.2	132.09	-3.30%	-7.11%	-10.17%
01055	Etowah County, Alabama	74.88	76.95	76.93	2.76%	-0.03%	2.74%
01111	Randolph County, Alabama	106.16	107.53	112.06	1.29%	4.21%	5.56%
01123	Tallapoosa County, Alabama	90.42	92.52	93.96	2.32%	1.56%	3.92%
01121	Talladega County, Alabama	94.09	97.7	100.66	3.84%	3.03%	6.98%
	EARDPC Region Average	104.03	105.69	105.06	1.59%	-0.59%	1.00%

In relation to the EARPDC 10-county region, the counties of Calhoun and Etowah are more economically diverse with Diversity Index values ranging in the mid-70s for both counties. With these two counties exhibiting the lowest economic diversity index values and therefore the highest levels of economic diversity, points to the importance of economic dynamics in urbanized areas when firms locate to a region. Tallapoosa County is also more economically diverse with values in the mid-90s. Clay and Coosa Counties are the least economically diverse counties in the region with Diversity Index values in the mid-130s.

Diversity Index value changes from 2011-2016 were overall negative; eight of the ten counties experienced lower levels of diversity, while only two counties became more economically diversified. The biggest improvement in economic diversity was for Coosa County as its index value declined from 147.05 to 142.2, a -3.30% improvement. Clay County experienced the largest percent decline in economic diversity as its index value increased by 4.41% from 123.91 to 129.38.

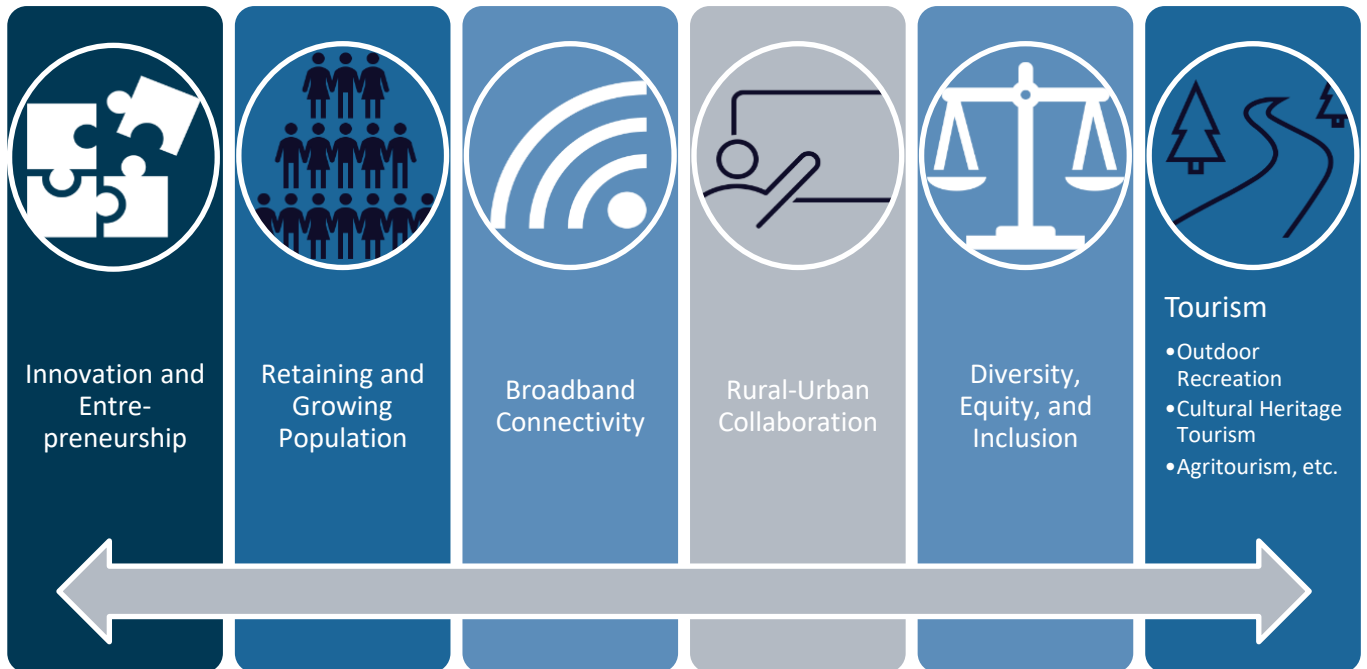
From 2016 to 2021, economic diversity conditions in the region improved with five of the counties experiencing more economic diversification and five counties experiencing lower levels of diversity. Only one county that improved from 2011 to 2016 also improved from 2016 to 2021 and that was Coosa County. The biggest improvement in economic diversity during this period was again for Coosa County as its index value continued to decline by -7.11% from 142.2 to 132.09. During the period, Randolph County experienced the largest decline as its index measurement worsened by 4.21%, 107.53 to 112.06. The ten-county EARPDC region increased in economic diversity as its index value declined by -0.59% from 105.59 to 105.06.

Perhaps the best measure for economic diversity is the change over a longer period that considers values before and during the economic shock of COVID-19. From 2011 to 2021, the largest percent change decline was 7.73% in Clay County with much of the decline occurring in the 2011-2016 time period. Coosa County experienced the most improvement in economic diversity as its index value declined by -10.17% over the period. For this ten-year period, the EARPDC ten-county region worsened in economic diversity by 1.00%.

**Source:** CHMURA Economics & Analytics <https://www.chmura.com/blog/chmura-economic-diversity>.



## Strategic Areas to Focus on to Increase Regional Economic Resiliency

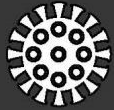


### Disaster Strategy

Each of the counties in the region is a part of a recently updated hazard mitigation plan, which are now done regionally and divided by Alabama Emergency Management Divisions. The Alabama Emergency Management Agency classifies them as follows: Division F includes Etowah and Cherokee Counties; Division G includes Calhoun, Cleburne, Clay, Randolph, and Talladega Counties; and Division D includes Chambers, Coosa, and Tallapoosa Counties. These plans go into detail describing emergency planning, disaster information, and response and recovery actions and plans for each county.

### COVID-19 Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic had a considerable economic impact on the East Alabama Region. Communities were unprepared in this unprecedented situation to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. Many businesses, institutions, and production and manufacturing companies were forced to shut down or implement work from home policies to protect the public from infection. This had a far-reaching impact on supply chains, school systems, and government budgets, just to name a few examples. A huge issue in the East Alabama region was the lack of internet availability and connectivity, which effected the capability of students to attend online classes, or employees to safely work from home. The COVID-19 pandemic made apparent many of the region's economic development issues, which were considered to determine regionally developed strategies to build capacity for economic development based on local business conditions and needs. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the East Alabama Region planning process considered recovery and resilience regarding all these matters during plan development. Please the impact planning and at-risk population reports below. Individual County reports can be found in Appendix A.



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

10 Counties

Geography: County



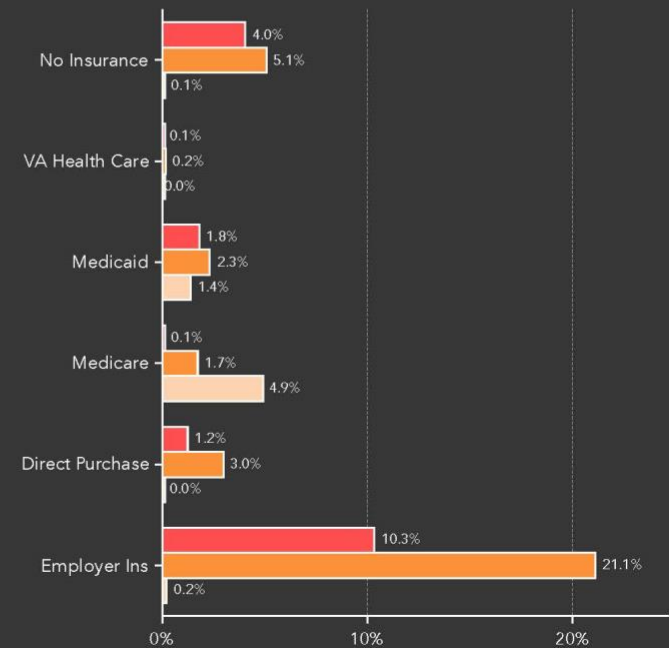
461,546	2.38	188,136	42.8	\$50,691	\$142,103	177	91%
Population	Avg Size Household	Households	Median Age	Median Household Income	Median Home Value	Housing Affordability	Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

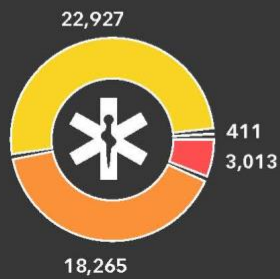


## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Pop 19-34 Pop 35-64 Pop 65+



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



0-18 19-34 35-64 Age 65+

## POVERTY



## AT RISK POPULATION



Sources: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020, Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Axle, ACS

Note: Medicaid values for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Axle, ACS



**LANGUAGE (ACS)**

	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
<b>English Only</b>	67,937	263,562	86,777	418,276
<b>Spanish</b>	2,756	7,104	542	10,402
Spanish & English Well	2,583	5,230	417	8,230
Spanish & English Not Well	167	1,380	72	1,619
<b>Indo-European</b>	295	1,461	498	2,254
Indo-European & English Well	234	1,251	440	1,925
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	61	152	52	265
<b>Asian-Pacific Island</b>	85	1,206	294	1,585
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Well	85	932	249	1,266
Asn-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	246	8	254
<b>Other Language</b>	177	448	95	720
Other Language & English Well	177	428	95	700
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	20	0	20



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

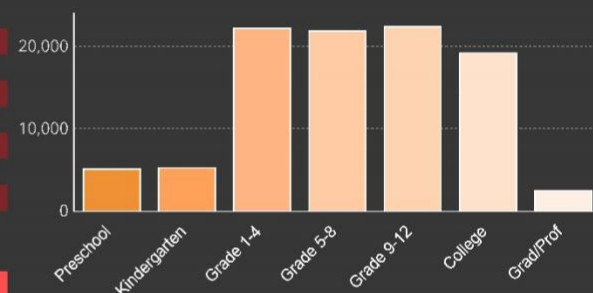
10 Counties

**461,546** Population    **2.38** Avg Size Household    **188,136** Households    **42.8** Median Age    **\$50,691** Median Household Income    **\$142,103** Median Home Value    **177** Housing Affordability    **91%** Internet at Home

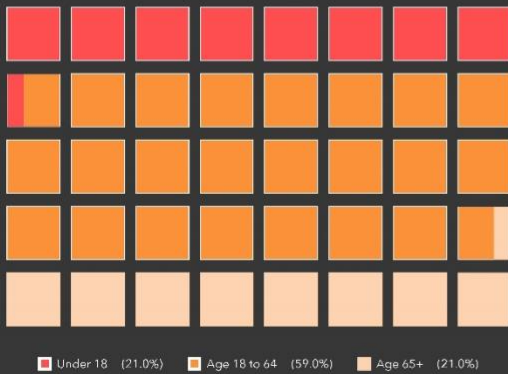
**POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)**

	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	447,979
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	29,801
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	42,339
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	28,360
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	23,245
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	39,294
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	14,322
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	270,618

**SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)**



**POPULATION BY AGE**



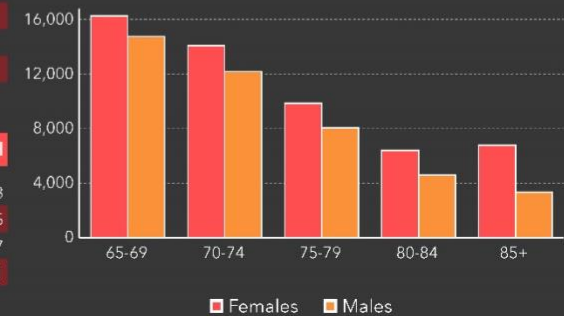
**POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)**

	Below	Above	Total
Total	30,424	149,090	179,514
Married Couple Families	4,709	80,078	84,787
Other Families w/Male Householder	1,226	7,054	8,280
Other Families w/Female Householder	8,732	17,342	26,074
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	6,133	21,413	27,546
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	9,624	23,203	32,827

**NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS) %**

	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.7%	3,013
Population Age 19-34	4.0%	18,265
Population Age 35-64	5.1%	22,927
Population Age 65+	0.1%	411

**SENIOR POPULATION**



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022-2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data /x/le, ACS

Version 1.13



# AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

## 10 Counties



Geography: County

**461,546** Population  
**188,136** Households  
**2.38** Avg Size Household  
**42.8** Median Age  
**\$50,691** Median Household Income  
**\$142,103** Median Home Value  
**56** Wealth Index  
**177** Housing Affordability  
**49** Diversity Index

### AT RISK POPULATION

**64,381** Households With Disability  
**96,232** Population 65+  
**10,698** Households Without Vehicle

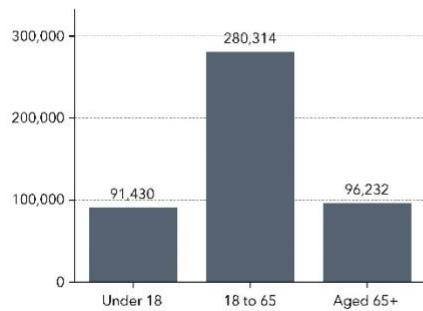
### POVERTY AND LANGUAGE

**17%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**30,424** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**53** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

### POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**436,896** Daytime Population  
**14,303** Total Businesses  
**158,878** Total Employees

### POPULATION BY AGE



Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	67,937	263,562	86,777	418,276
Spanish	2,756	7,104	542	10,402
Spanish & English Well	2,583	5,230	417	8,230
Spanish & English Not Well	167	1,380	72	1,619
Spanish & No English	6	494	53	553
Indo-European	295	1,461	498	2,254
Indo-European & English Well	234	1,251	440	1,925
Indo-European & English Not Well	61	152	52	265
Indo-European & No English	0	58	6	64
Asian-Pacific Island	85	1,206	294	1,585
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Well	85	932	249	1,266
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	246	8	254
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	28	37	65
Other Language	177	448	95	720
Other Language & English Well	177	428	95	700
Other Language & English Not Well	0	20	0	20
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0

Source: FPL ACS, FPL Data Table, U.S. Census Bureau 2022, 2021, 2016-2020

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## SWOT ANALYSIS

*A SWOT Analysis examines the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats facing the region and the regional economy. The CEDS Strategy Committee and the public were invited to contribute to the analysis. The results were utilized to inform the update process of the Development Strategies and Action Plan section.*

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SWOT Analysis components are defined by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) as follows:

- **Strengths** are a region's relative competitive advantages (e.g., industry supply chains and clusters, extensive port, rail, and broadband assets, specialized workforce skills, higher education levels, collaboration among stakeholders) and often are internal in nature;
- **Weaknesses** are a region's relative competitive disadvantages (e.g., a risk-averse or change-resistant regional culture), also often internal in nature;
- **Opportunities** are chances or occasions for regional improvement or progress (e.g., expansion of a biosciences research lab in the region), often external in nature; and
- **Threats** are chances or occasions for negative impacts on the region or regional decline (e.g., several companies in the region considering moving to lower-cost areas of the state), also often are external in nature.

Key SWOT issues for the East Alabama Region are identified below.

### Strengths

- Lake and River Areas Colleges and Universities
- Resources available to businesses and public in general
- Local agencies collaborate and promote one another
- Medical facilities Rural Area Personality Tourist attractions
- Easy access to highways Education system
- Local options for shopping
- Local trucking companies provide transportation opportunities for businesses
- Rich history
- Quality law enforcement
- Community spirit, courage, and determination whether it be sports, education, etc.
- Natural resources, environment, recreation value, agriculture, and tourism potential
- Cultural heritage Employment opportunities Cost of living and taxes
- Interstate highway connectivity
- Low crime rate
- Hospital and health clinics
- Elderly care facilities
- Willingness to collaborate as a region
- Land, natural resources, regional universities, and community colleges

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- Partnerships for economic incentives with the state
  - Airport connections
  - Close knit community who often stand together when individuals/entities are in peril
  - Solid education system
  - Comparatively reasonable land prices
  - Railroads
  - Quarries
  - Williams Pipeline Natural Gas
  - Growing industries
  - Strong economic development organization
  - Abundant water and sewer capacity
  - Multiple telecom and power providers (options)
  - Strong & diverse manufacturing/industrial base
  - Strong non-profit base
  - Increasing population
  - Abundance of land
  - Strong entrepreneurship presence
  - Strong relationships with state partners/agencies
  - Diverse employment opportunities

## Weaknesses

- Road Conditions
- Aging population
- Lack of public transportation systems
- Lack of childcare availability
- Distance between rural and urban areas
- Lack of cell phone reception
- Small reliable workforce pool
- Low wages
- Lack of local job opportunities with good benefits
- Local employers with archaic business practices (prejudiced, close-minded)
- Locals with “no outsiders” mindset
- Traffic congestion and wrecks
- Housing stock
- Insufficient broadband
- Infrastructure
- Entertainment for children of all ages
- Empty, deteriorating buildings
- Hotels and meeting centers
- Recreational facilities
- Technology access and an elevated need for broadband
- Housing for workers of business and industry

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- Lack of affordable housing
  - Lack of zoning and ordinances
  - Limited labor force
  - Shortage of industrial buildings
  - Lack of continuity and agreement on growth
  - Lack of affordable rental properties
  - Need for relocation of business professionals
  - School performance compared to greater Alabama
  - Lack of accountability for commission staff
  - Social media
  - Lack of walkability
  - Lack of young leaders
  - Need for more leadership education on economic growth
  - Split time zones
  - Lack of business/entrepreneurship support programs
  - Poverty, low HH income

## **Opportunities**

- Continued partnerships and collaborations
- Enhanced private & public sector partnerships
- A broad Ecotourism economy
- Room to expand
- Pull from larger areas' workforce pool
- Better internet service throughout the county
- Organic food options grown in the area
- Growth in tourism
- Possible food production for local landowners
- Housing developments
- Employment: Retail, restaurants, and industry to locate
- Infrastructure investment
- Developable land
- Talent retention
- Tie education & workforce development programs to business/industry targets
- Attract light, clean industry
- Rivers and lakes
- Farmland
- Architecturally significant downtowns
- Broadband access
- Progress: influx of individuals who are willing to invest
- School system
- Reasonably priced land
- Agritourism

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- Forest Industry
  - Museums
  - Rails to Trails
  - Lake and River areas
  - Walkable towns and micro-communities that are self-sustaining
  - Hiking Trails
  - Boating
  - Regional partnerships
  - Airports
  - Retaining and recruiting talent
  - Tech entrepreneurship growth (CORI Rural Innovation Initiative)
  - Education partnerships with secondary and post-secondary entities
  - Federal funding to improve infrastructure (water/sewer, roadways, broadband) Internship, co-op, and apprenticeship
  - Assisting with workforce development
  - Consolidated school system

## Threats

- Students finishing school then moving to another location
- Education not molding a qualified workforce
- Rural dis-connectivity with workforce
- Lack of resources and products for marketing the region
- Younger generations leaving lake area and being replaced with retirees
- Too much expansion will taint the rural character of the area
- Poverty and drugs
- Aging and decrease in population
- Exodus of young adult who cannot find a job locally
- Educational disparities
- Ignoring smart growth
- Downtowns in peril
- Lack of united front by mayors & councils to lobby state leaders
- Untrained or unavailable workforce Instability and conflict in the country and world
- Inflation
- Poverty Level
- Higher wages elsewhere
- Tax base decline
- Lack of motivation to change
- Disruptive citizen behavior
- Competition and lack of relationships between cities within counties and among counties
- Competition from neighboring larger communities
- Low wages for automotive jobs
- Decreased workforce participation



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- Lack of state support for recruitment and funding
  - Lack of funding to grow infrastructure and tax base
  - Division between school systems
  - Not enough participation in grant funding opportunities
  - Region has worst two performing MSAs in the state

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## PART II

### DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLAN

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*This final phase of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy entails devising program development strategies and determining which strategies will be most likely achieve the overall economic development goal for the region. The EARPDC's overall goal is to develop an expanded economic base within the East Alabama Region which utilizes the region's natural and human resources, provides full employment for the region's citizenry, facilitates economic resilience, and improves the area's quality of life. The following chapters translate this broad goal into a series of long-range goals and short-range objectives and establish ways to achieve those goals and objectives and to measure success.*

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This section summarizes the *CLEAR Plan 2030 Implementation Plan*, which was the culmination of an intensive two-year public engagement process. The *CLEAR Plan 2030* was also utilized in the previous 5-year CEDS update, and it was determined that due to the amount of research, effort, and public engagement that went into the plan, it was still a valuable resource to guide the 2022 CEDS.

The *Implementation Plan* presents rural and small urban communities (ranging in size from 55 to 37,000) and rural and small urban counties (ranging from 11,000 to 120,000 inhabitants) with potential means to attain the goals their residents identified as crucial to improving livability. The *Implementation Plan* considers feasibility and potential impacts of plan implementation, addressing the resources needed to carry out the proposed projects and providing case studies. Strategies are phased and potential challenges are addressed. The *Implementation Plan* is intended to aid in maximizing the potential for long-term success of these initiatives and to facilitate marketing the region to prospective investors and businesses. The full document is available in the online library at [www.earpdc.org](http://www.earpdc.org).

The *CLEAR Plan 2030* utilized eight livability principles to guide the planning process.

1. *Encourage Prosperity and Upward Mobility*
  - Recognize the potential to grow and create prosperity for all
  - Mobilize resources to encourage an inclusive, competitive, and satisfied workforce
  - Support inclusive, competitive, and satisfied workforces
  - Provide opportunities for young people (jobs, education, recreation) as reasons to stay
  
2. *Champion Valued Communities*
  - Encourage healthy lifestyles and strong families
  - Create safe environments for all residents
  - Support communities of faith
  - Address health of both mind and body
  
3. *Value and Protect the Region's Beauty and Natural Resources*

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- Support stewardship to ensure that natural resources meet the needs of present and future generations
  - Preserve the natural beauty and unique assets in the region
  - Provide open access to active and passive recreational pursuits
4. *Celebrate Heritage and Cultural Assets*
    - Express the region’s history, diversity, sense of place, accessibility, and vibrancy through high-quality urban design and historic preservation
    - Host ample and diverse arts and cultural resources that are available to all residents
  5. *Think Regionally, Act Locally*
    - Support diverse, accessible, and affordable transportation options that allow all people to be mobile
    - Take advantage of proximity to other cities and increase access, allowing for regional connectivity
    - Leverage political and economic resources together to solve problems
    - Capitalize on opportunities that cannot be handled within neighborhoods, towns, or cities
    - Create infrastructure that supports economic growth, cultural vitality, and environmental stability
  6. *Invest in Quality and Accessible Education*
    - Promote high-quality learning environments, along with opportunities for continued education for all age groups
    - Increase access to job skill training and other higher-level education opportunities
  7. *Promote a Sense of Place and a Pride of Ownership and Home*
    - Promote a love of home and hearth as community values
    - Value engaged, well-informed citizens whose voices influence government processes and who take pride and active interest in issues affecting their community
    - Support high quality, diverse, and affordable housing options that are available to all residents
  8. *Grow Local and Regional Leadership*
    - Be far-seeing enough, flexible enough, and wise enough not to undermine either physical or social support systems
    - Engage all members of a community to create more prosperous, convenient, equitable, healthy, and attractive places for present and future generations
    - Build visionary and entrepreneurial team-based leadership that invites public participation across all spectrums and works creatively to accomplish its goals
    - Address the interdependent economic, environmental, and social concerns of a community and region
    - Create linkages among all stakeholders and foster public/private partnerships

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### REGIONAL NEEDS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Engagement Livability Resource Team (LRT) identified the following regional needs:

- **There is a need for constant, consistent, long-term communication.**
  - Foster grassroots planning efforts through open and consistent messaging about project status and implementation, accompanied by constant acceptance of resident input.
  - Institute a long-term messaging process to keep the process “alive.”
- **The concept of *Regionalism* is foreign to many residents and should be promoted.**
  - Nurturing regionalism in elements such as tourism, commerce and transportation will make the concept familiar to residents and foster acceptance.
  - Building geographically on existing partnerships will expand the concept of regionalism.
- **There are populations that require specialized outreach.**
  - Some populations will require additional effort to engage in the planning and implementation processes. The effort is needed so that residents will have knowledge of and opportunities to provide input on proposed activities prior to implementation.
- **To truly engage residents throughout the region, the community engagement process must be in a constant state of evolution.**
  - The community engagement process should be expanded to reach out to all corners of the region and contain a truly representative sample of the region’s population.
- **Funding is vital to proper community engagement.**
  - A well thought out community engagement strategy should allow for some financial expenditure (e.g., professional facilitators, advertising, technology, meeting facilities).
  - Offering to cover transportation costs of residents attending public meetings in the extreme rural areas of the region would lessen the burden experienced by some.
  - Avenues for input, messaging, and information dissemination must be varied to accommodate those with no or limited access to the internet, radio, broadcast TV, and/or print media.

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

#### **Goal 1. Provide long-term communication avenues to inform stakeholders and the public of the status of livability throughout the region.**

##### **Objectives**

- Maintain a website with regional livability status and information.
- Publish and distribute periodicals with information regarding livability.
- Conduct an annual status update public meeting in locations varying year to year.

##### **Strategies**

- Partner with existing communication entities (media, internet providers, local governments, etc.)
- Identify entities throughout the region champion livability and promote communications.

##### **Metrics**

- Increase awareness of livability and resources available to livable communities. Measure using web counter hits, number of inquiries regarding livability, number of local governments incorporating livability principles in planning.
- Identify and train two (2) individuals willing to champion the concept of livability in each county in the region.

##### **Implementation Steps**

- Establish an organization to spearhead regional livability efforts.
- Develop a multi-faceted communications program.
  - Create an organization logo
  - Create an organization website
  - Develop a regularly-issued newsletter
  - Develop an annual report
  - Host regularly-scheduled public forums
  - Maintain on-going communications with the region's media outlets
  - Utilize social media to promote the organization and its mission

#### **Goal 2. Promote the concept and benefits of regionalism to local governments and the public.**

##### **Objectives**

- Increase support for regionalism by increasing the number of individuals promoting it.
- Increase the number of local governments incorporating regional partnerships in planning and economic development.



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## Barriers

- Time constraints on individuals capable of and willing to educate residents and promote the concept of regionalism.
- Competition for scarce resources (economic development, funding, etc.)

## Strategies

- Identify and train two (2) individuals willing to champion the concept of regionalism in each county in the region.
- Promote regionalism to show that, by combining resources, competition is not so aggressive and possibly detrimental to development, resource accumulation, etc.

## Metrics

- Identify and train two (2) individuals willing to champion the concept of regionalism in each county in the region.
- Educate local governments on the benefits of regionalism regarding resource sharing, economic development, etc.

## Implementation Steps

- Provide educational opportunities on regionalism.
  - Utilize educational forums on regionalism
  - Provide additional educational opportunities on regionalism
- Identify and utilize regionalism-oriented organizations.
  - Identify and utilize national-level organizations promoting regionalism
  - Identify and study regional-level model organizations promoting regionalism

## Goal 3. Identify and provide outreach to specialized populations.

### Objectives

- Provide convenient and meaningful access to input from all populations residing in the region.

### Barriers

- Diversity of needs throughout the region
- Rural nature of the region
- Funding

### Strategies

- Identify diverse needs and partner with entities already meeting the needs (for example, translating surveys into Braille by AIDB—a service they already provide).
- Provide outreach and one-on-one contact throughout the region in the most remote of places.
- Seek funding partnerships and collaboration with entities already meeting needs.

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## Metrics

- Increase in contacts made and input received, as well as awareness of livability and its principles.

## Implementation Steps

- Identify categories of relevant specialized populations
- Develop and implement an outreach strategy for each relevant group

## **Goal 4. Expand the LRT—or its successor—to include representation from local governments, private entities and residents throughout the region.**

### Objectives

- Identify and train one (1) individual in each county in the region who is willing to champion the concept of community engagement and livability.
- Identify one (1) local government in each county that is willing to champion the concept of livability.

### Barriers

- Lack of resources to inform residents and local governments about the importance of livability
- Apathy
- Time constraints on individuals

### Strategies

- Educate on the importance of livability to overcome apathy.
- Provide planned, long term schedule of events to fit into individuals' time schedules.

### Metrics

- Increase the number of LRT members to twenty (20) by 12/31/2027.
- Increase the diversity of LRT members to include representatives from each county in the region.

### Implementation Steps

- Recruit new members to the organization's committees.
  - Take advantage of public forums to identify and recruit new committee members
  - Contact local governments, chambers, businesses and other entities for committee recruits
- Provide an orientation program for new committee members

## **Goal 5. Design a sustainable funding stream to cover community engagement costs.**

### Objectives

- Provide incentives for residents of extreme rural regions to cover transportation costs to attend public meetings.
- Obtain funds to cover costs associated with community engagement.

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**Barriers**

- There is currently no identified entity to donate or manage funding.

**Strategies**

- Partner with local businesses to provide incentives.
- Identify funding source to provide funds (donations, foundation grants, fund raisers).

**Metrics**

- Obtain an annual budget of \$1,500 by 12/31/2027

**Implementation Steps**

- Conduct community engagement in a financially viable manner.
  - Establish a carpooling program for meetings
  - Pursue grants and foundation and corporate support for community engagement

**Goal 6. Improve technology access and availability to include broadband internet****Objectives**

- Improve interconnectivity of citizens via internet to interact with, learn more about, and contribute to public activities and projects
- Obtain funds to cover costs associated with internet technology infrastructure.

**Barriers**

- Internet connectivity and infrastructure is lacking or completely absent across the region.

**Strategies**

- Partner with local businesses to provide space with internet availability
- Identify funding source to provide funds (donations, foundation grants, fund raisers).

**Metrics**

- Improve internet access across the region by 20% by 2027

**Implementation Steps**

- Provide educational opportunities on internet access and usage

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## ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

### REGIONAL NEEDS FOR ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

The Economic Competitiveness Livability Resource Team (LRT) and the Education LRT held combined meetings due to the intertwining nature of workforce development, economic competitiveness, and education. Discussion centered on the following regional needs:

- **Need to diversify the regional economy.**
  - Currently the economy is concentrated on specific industries, i.e. the automotive industry, military, and education.
  - Region 5 and Region 8 Workforce Development Councils identified the target industries in the region. They include automated manufacturing, construction, healthcare, services, and tourism.
- **Apathy regarding cooperation among entities can be difficult.**
  - There is a need to motivate people to be involved in improving the economy and supporting their community and larger region.
- **Thinking regionally, but acting locally is necessary.**
  - However, doing so is a difficult concept to incorporate into everyday life.
  - Economics, natural resources, and tourism are especially important to a regional outlook and could be tied to the region.
  - Creating corridor plans connecting cities to one another would help tie together the region.
- **Define the regional advantages and how to market them.**
  - Identification of what makes the region unique and advantageous is integral to marketing it to national and international businesses, industries, and people looking for a new place to call home.
- **Enrich the support system for existing business and industries.**
  - Make sure people know they are appreciated and a vital part of the East Alabama economy.
  - Create a plan to help recruit businesses, industry, and people into small communities.
  - Infrastructure costs can be prohibitive to development and hinder progress; therefore, something needs to be done to address it.
- **Creation of “Leadership East Alabama” program.**
  - This program would facilitate an exchange of ideas and promote a more regional perspective.
- **Workforce development and coordination is vital to meeting industry needs.**
  - There is a need to link education and industry needs.
  - Connect community colleges and high schools with industries.
  - School funding for training in specific industrial techniques can be difficult to obtain and may be unpredictable.
- **Need to change the mindset regarding career tech education.**

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- There is a negative connotation associated with career tech and 2-year degrees. This mindset needs to be changed.
  - **Career coach and job shadowing.**
    - More job shadowing and career coach opportunities need to be offered to students so they can determine the best path for their future.
  - **Need to identify what skills already exist in the region and what skills are needed.**
    - Identify industry needs/skills gaps. Technological advances are changing labor force needs, specifically the number of people needed to do a specific task.

## ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, BARRIERS, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

#### Goal 1. Align needed skills with jobs.

##### Objectives

- Develop an effective collaborative environment between industry and education.
- Continually analyze employer needs and employment trends.
- Align education and training programs with actual needs.
- Provide learning opportunities through real life experiences.

##### Barriers

- Lack of knowledge of how to or desire to participate in an effective collaborative environment between industry and education.
- Lack of knowledge of available training for students and businesses.
- Financial costs associated with developing specific career aligned curriculum.
- Identifying specific employer needs can be problematic, time consuming, and ever changing.
- Limited involvement of local businesses and industries in workforce and economic development conversations, which are needed to further the region economically.

##### Strategies

- Work with the Region 5 and Region 8 Workforce Development Councils, EDAA, and AIDT to further communication between industry and education.
- Pursue low cost mechanisms and grant funding to identify needs and provide training and real life employment experiences.
- Provide workshops/training seminars on grant opportunities and how to write grant applications.
- Promote the ACT WorkKeys program, which utilizes the National Career Readiness Certificate, across the region.
- Create a database which lists all available training programs throughout the region.
- Utilize workforce apprenticeships or internships.

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## Metrics

- Increase the percentage of over 25 population with an associate's degree or higher to the State's average (currently 29%) over a five-year period. Measure using American Community Survey.
- Increase the number of ACT WorkKeys program schools and graduates obtaining a National Career Readiness Certificate by 2% over a five-year period. Measure using data from ACT.

## Implementation Steps

- Develop strong partnerships with private employers for training and education.
  - Coordinate with Region 5 and Region 8 Workforce Development Councils
  - Conduct direct personal outreach to existing private employers
  - Leverage private funding for scholarship programs
- Increase access to higher-education resources.
  - Maximize the use of scholarship programs
  - Work to enhance Jacksonville State University as the region's premier four-year institution of higher education
- Enhance communication and promotion of existing workforce programs.
  - Work with the Workforce Development Councils to promote the State's existing workforce training and education programs

## Goal 2. Increase the number of people prepared for high wage, high growth jobs.

### Objectives

- Market and promote the region to national and international industries.
- Increase awareness of career opportunities in local high growth sectors.
- Enhance and increase educational and training opportunities.

### Barriers

- Differentiating the region from the state and nation can be difficult
- Lack of desire to complete the necessary education to be prepared for the high wage, high growth jobs

### Strategies

- Develop a comprehensive marketing package to promote the region to the world.
- Provide informational packets in schools and online stating career paths and the steps to take to achieve the high wage, high growth jobs.
- Increase the number of career coaches promoting occupational options.

### Metrics

- Increase the number of ACT WorkKeys program schools and graduates obtaining a National Career Readiness Certificate by 2% over a five-year period. The data will come from ACT.



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## Implementation Steps

- Enhance and promote amenity value to retain businesses and educated workforce.
  - Work with the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama's member foundations to generate funding for enhancing community amenity assets
  - Promote community assets and amenities to existing and prospective businesses
  - Examine opportunities for regional amenity corridors
- Identify local economic development strengths and small-town targets.
  - Identify market opportunities in small towns and rural communities
  - Assist with implementation of economic development “readiness” projects and programs
- Promote fairs and trade shows to enhance networking
  - Promote the use of mobile job and training fairs
  - Promote larger cities in the region as sites for trade shows
- Engage students and prospective workers with technology training.
  - Promote the use of emerging technologies to increase interest in training and education
  - Work with area businesses to promote more apprenticeships and other hands-on training

## Goal 3. Provide training and job opportunities to enhance human capital.

### Objectives

- Communicate opportunities to special populations, training providers and employers.
- Identify and connect special populations to employment and training opportunities.
- Assist with training providers and employers in how to accommodate special populations.

### Barriers

- Identifying and communicating training and employment opportunities to special populations can be extremely difficult
- Financial cost and unpredictable nature of grants to fund training programs and the costs associated with marketing the programs are troublesome

### Strategies

- Work with social service and economic development agencies to communicate training and other opportunities to special populations and employers.
- Dovetail this work into as many other programs as possible to lower expenses.
- Utilize internship, co-op, and apprenticeship opportunities to assist with workforce development

### Metrics

- Increase the number of training events held each year by 2% over a five-year period.

### Implementation Steps

- Support the existing social service framework.
  - Work with existing social service and development agencies
- Engage and incentivize the private sector in special needs training and employment.

- 
- Engage with the private sector
  - Establish incentive programs
  - Enhance access to support systems to enable participation in training and employment programs.
    - Enable use of life skills training
    - Inventory and distribute information about existing services
    - Increase access to standard industry equipment and technology
    - Enhance volunteer recruitment
    - Enable child care services

#### **Goal 4. Support existing businesses and spur local entrepreneurship.**

##### **Objectives**

- Create a business incubator to provide resources to support entrepreneurs.
- Develop a marketing brand for the East Alabama region.
- Develop a strategy to enhance the tourism industry.
- Coordinate efforts to retain existing businesses and industries.
- Enhance financial incentives/opportunities for local existing business/industry.

##### **Barriers**

- Extensive collaboration and knowledge is required to create a business incubator
- Finding common ground can be difficult and prohibitive to the collaboration needed to develop a marketing brand, creating a strategy to enhance the tourism industry, and coordinating efforts to retain existing businesses and industries
- Financial burden associated with developing a business incubator and offering incentives/opportunities to local existing business/industry
- Geographic size of the region can be problematic when trying to promote collaboration throughout the region. Thinking regionally but acting locally is difficult.
- Technology deficit in the region. There is a lack of consistent, high-quality long distance and cell phone service, nor is there high-speed internet everywhere in the region.

##### **Strategies**

- Utilize existing educational resources—e.g., University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Development or Jacksonville State University Small Business Development Center—to provide knowledge to galvanize collaboration and development of a business incubator, marketing brand, tourism strategy, and retain existing business and industries.
- Pursue partnerships, grant-funding sources, and other resources to relieve the financial burden associated with developing a business incubator or offering incentives/opportunities to local existing business and industry.
- Utilize technology as much as possible to connect the region; for example, conference calls and web conferencing can bring people together.
- Collaborate with Connecting Alabama and other organizations to bring high-speed internet and other communication technology to as many people as possible in the region.

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## Metrics

- Increase the number of collaboration/planning meetings held each year by 2% over a five-year period.
- Increase participation in the Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE) program by 1% over a five-year period.

## Implementation Steps

- Establish a regional marketing program and brand.
  - Build on existing economic development resources
  - Work with existing industries to identify competitive strengths
  - Determine regional economic development branding concepts
  - Develop a regional economic development program
- Leverage tourism potential.
  - Develop a regional tourism development strategy
  - Establish tourism corridors and nodes
- Assess the feasibility of business incubator projects.
  - Work with universities to identify incubator concepts
  - Test the feasibility of incubators
- Promote the use of existing small business resources.
  - Take advantage of resources available through Made in Alabama organizations
  - Communicate with area businesses about assistance programs
- Focus on business retention and growth efforts.
  - Most new jobs will be created by businesses that already exist in the region
  - Enable the growth of existing businesses
- Enhance amenity value as a tool for economic development.
  - Costs and amenities drive location decisions
  - Link economic development and tourism efforts
- Focus financial and other incentives on growing local businesses.
  - Local businesses create jobs and create amenity value
  - Let the State handle incentives for out-of-state relocations

## Goal 5. Capitalize on existing downtown areas.

### Objectives

- Conduct a comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance review and update, if needed, to create appealing downtown areas which promote opportunities for mixed-use space.
- Develop a marketing plan to accentuate downtown areas.
- Establish and promote social, recreational, cultural, and commercial activities downtown.
- Design an effective and safe multimodal transportation plan to and within downtown.

### Barriers

- 
- Apathy regarding downtown areas, especially ones in complete disrepair
  - Time and fiscal constraints and apathy towards reviewing comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances
  - Establishing clear governance over downtown areas, including maintenance and ability to conduct activities, is needed
  - Prioritization of the personal motor vehicle over any other form of transportation is problematic when trying to promote biking and walking
  - Conflict between rural and urban counties regarding priorities and competition

### Strategies

- Organize small activities downtown to draw people to the area, building on the momentum to launch an aggressive program of events to draw people to the area, promote biking and walking.
- Acquire research that promotes downtowns and what can happen if a community focuses their efforts on their downtown.
- Work with the regional chamber of commerce programs to communicate the benefits of collaboration and identify the priorities of rural areas.

### Metrics

- Increase the number of communities that have a downtown association or equivalent program by 2% over a five-year period.
- Increase the number of communities that participate in the Main Street program by 2% over five-years (they are currently not accepting new applicants).

### Implementation Steps

- Establish a regional main street program and recruit downtowns.
  - Establish a regional main street program
  - Promote the merits of downtown revitalization
  - Identify candidate communities for a revitalization program
- Establish a local revitalization program (recommended for each community, adapted to meet their unique circumstances and needs).
  - Establish a downtown revitalization entity
  - Prepare a downtown revitalization plan
  - Implement the revitalization plan
- Establish a local historic preservation program.

## **Goal 6. Assist in the development of physical infrastructure and facilities; for example, utilizing or demolishing abandoned industrial and commercial sites.**

### Objectives

- Identify and seek funding sources to improve existing industrial and commercial sites and provide adequate community facilities and services.
- Repurpose or remediate existing properties.
- Designate and promote buildings comparable to the AdvantageSite program.

- 
- Provide best practices regarding the permitting process for construction and demolition of buildings.
  - Insure a safe, efficient and economic transportation system.
  - Provide safe, decent, and sanitary housing in a suitable living environment for all residents of the region.

### **Barriers**

- Environmental and regulatory concerns associated with reuse or demolishing of existing structures, especially former industrial sites
- Funding and collaboration is needed to create a program for buildings that is comparable to the AdvantageSite program
- Funding
- Current transportation practices
- Lack of affordable housing

### **Strategies**

- Develop partnerships for sharing best practices, identifying potential funding sources, and addressing regulatory and environmental concerns.
- Work with the existing AdvantageSite program to modify/adapt it for buildings.
- Work with transportation professionals to modernize transportation practices.
- Collaborate with housing providers to increase available affordable housing.

### **Metrics**

- Increase the number of reutilized industrial and commercial sites by 2% over a five-year period.
- Develop a program for buildings comparable to the AdvantageSite program and see the number of certifications increase each year over a five-year period.
- Increase the percentage of local governments with adequate community facilities and services by 2% over the next five years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Utilize programs for inventorying and marketing industrial properties.
  - Utilize the existing AdvantageSite program for industrial sites
  - Establish a program for buildings modeled after AdvantageSite
- Utilize programs for funding infrastructure and facilities.
  - Pursue funding from existing programs for infrastructure and facilities
  - Explore the potential for new programs for infrastructure and facilities funding
- Utilize existing environmental clean-up programs.

## **Goal 7. Develop and conserve the region's natural resources by utilizing land use and growth management policies.**

### **Objectives**

- Provide optimal development of communities' agriculture and timberland.

- 
- Provide optimal development and control of water resources and address flood hazard issues in the region.
  - Protect and preserve valuable environmental and historic resources.
  - Promote the efficient use of energy.

### **Barriers**

- There is a delicate balance between development and conservation, which can be problematic for agricultural land, timberland, water resources, flood hazard areas, and historic resources.
- Lack of knowledge of land use and growth management practices.
- There is a cost associated with implementing energy conservation methods, which may deter people from implementing the measures that would be cost saving in the future.

### **Strategies**

- Providing educational materials clearly explaining development constraints and optimal conditions for development.
- Educate on the benefits of land use and growth management practices.
- Identify funding sources for implementing energy conservation methods.

### **Metrics**

- Increase the percentage of reused properties by 2% over a five-year period.
- Decrease the percentage of vacant commercial structures by 2% over a five-year period.
- Increase the number of local governments with land use and/or growth management policies by 2% over the next five-years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Provide educational opportunities on land use and growth management.
  - Utilize educational forums on sound land use and growth management practices
  - Utilize educational forums on comprehensive planning and zoning
  - Provide additional educational opportunities on comprehensive planning and zoning
- Assist communities with planning and zoning initiatives.
  - Initiate comprehensive plans
  - Initiate new zoning and development regulations
- Educate the public on energy efficiency measures and encourage action.
  - Promote the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star Program
  - Encourage action from potential Energy Star program participants
- Promote other existing energy programs

## **Goal 8. Assist in the development of internet infrastructure and facilities**

### **Objectives**

- Identify and seek funding sources to improve existing internet infrastructure and provide adequate community facilities and services.

- 
- Designate and promote buildings to serve as co-working space for remote workers
  - Create opportunities for more residents to utilize remote work
  - Insure an efficient and economic technology system to promote local businesses
  - Foster an environment for digital economies to thrive

### **Barriers**

- Lack of access to internet can restrict access to jobs or business location
- Internet infrastructure is missing or lacking across the region
- Funding
- Learning curve of newer technology

### **Strategies**

- Develop partnerships for sharing best practices and identifying potential funding sources
- Work with technology professionals to modernize infrastructure and practices.
- Collaborate to increase available internet connectivity.

### **Metrics**

- Increase the percentage of local governments with adequate internet connectivity by 2% over the next five years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Utilize programs for funding infrastructure and facilities.
  - Pursue funding from existing programs for infrastructure and facilities
  - Explore the potential for new programs for infrastructure and facilities funding
- Promote technology improvements



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## TRANSPORTATION

### REGIONAL NEEDS FOR TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation Livability Resource Team (LRT) identified the following regional needs:

#### Urban Transit

- **Steady funding for transit**
  - The only funding sources for local transit in the region are from federal sources, matched with required local government support.
  - There are no State contributions for transit.
  - There are no private partnerships for funding transit throughout the region.
- **Reduction in headways for existing fixed route transit systems**
  - Established fixed route transit systems currently have one-hour headways. This situation makes for ineffective and unreliable transportation for employment purposes.
- **Improved, less fragmented transit routes**
  - Existing land use patterns prohibit compact development and promote sprawl, reducing the effectiveness of the existing transit systems.
- **Promotional options are limited because promotion will not reduce headway and make the system more attractive to new users.**
  - Many potential users have the perception that the system is only available to specialized populations.
  - Sprawl prevents residents from accessing services.
  - The existing service routes do not support all ranges of housing costs (primarily convenient for low-income housing).
- **There is a need for better coordination among transit providers and expanded funding sources.**
  - There is no interconnected transit across county lines. The existing fixed route transit systems rarely cross municipal boundaries.

#### Rural Transit

- **In various areas throughout the region, transit options are non-existent.**
- **There is a lack of State and local financial contributions to rural transit systems.**
  - Existing transit systems operate on federal grants with only required matching funds submitted by local governments.
- **Continued residential dispersion creates challenges for transit.**
  - Land use patterns do not discourage sprawl; in fact, in some cases it is encouraged.
  - Zoning practices segregate land uses and discourage compact development.
- **Potential users view transportation services as being limited.**

- 
- Many potential users have the perception that the system is only available to specialized populations.
  - Sprawl prevents residents from readily accessing services.

### **Urban Roads and Highways**

- **There is unchecked low-density sprawl throughout the region. Focus should occur on reuse and redevelopment.**
  - Sprawl results in limited resources being spread even thinner to maintain existing and extend new infrastructure in far flung developments.
  - Alternatives to strict Euclidian zoning should be instituted. Compatible, mixed-use zoning should be considered, promoted and adopted.
  - Public schools located outside of neighborhoods create new traffic congestion and the perceived need to transport students by private automobile. Additionally, those who use transport services provided by the school system are forced to endure long transit times on the school buses.
  - Obsolete height restrictions in the Central Business Districts discourage higher densities and mixed-use multi-story structures.
- **There is too much dependence on federal money and sales tax to support road maintenance.**
  - A reliable, steady funding stream is needed to properly maintain the existing road network.
- **Best management practices should be used for access management. There is currently a lack of access management regulation and interagency planning/collaboration.**
- **Alternative transportation access is extremely limited.**
  - There is little emphasis on sidewalks, bike lanes and bike paths.
  - There is little connectivity between land uses.
  - Most municipalities are over-zoned for highway commercial. Limit highway commercial zoning to key intersections only.

### **Rural Roads and Highways**

- **Low-density sprawl in rural areas places extreme financial burdens on local governments and residents associated with the large number of road miles that must be maintained using limited revenue sources.**
  - Infill development is not encouraged in rural communities.
  - Walkable, compact design should be practiced in existing rural communities.
- **Rural areas in Alabama tend to have weak land use controls, with no zoning authority in the unincorporated areas.**
- **There is limited funding for necessary maintenance and bridge replacement.**
  - A steady, predictable, adequate funding stream is required for proper maintenance of roads and bridges.

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## TRANSPORTATION

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, BARRIERS, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

#### **Goal 1. Promote public and private partnerships for funding both transportation and transit.**

##### **Objectives**

- Identify non-traditional, steady funding alternatives for transportation and transit in both the urbanized and rural areas of the region.
- Encourage Best Management Practices and investigate new uses of emerging technologies for transit and transportation maintenance.

##### **Barriers**

- Dependence on federal money and existing state tax structure.
- Lack of State contributions to transit.
- Reduced local government contributions to transit and transportation.
- Lack of coordination among public and private entities to fund transit and maintain transportation facilities.

##### **Strategies**

- Work with legislators to identify revenues to enable municipal and county resurfacing projects (not capacity building) and investment in transit as needed.
- Work with Legislature and State DoT to begin contributions to supplement transit funding.
- Engage the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Transit Advisory Board in multi-modal transportation planning activities.

##### **Metrics**

- Improved tax structure to allow for funding to maintain existing transportation infrastructure.
- Begin State contributions to fund transit by 2027.
- Keep a running inventory of invested funds for transportation projects. MPO, RPO, TAP, RTP, grants, etc. for the region.

##### **Implementation Steps**

- Promote public and private partnerships for transportation funding.
  - Pursue creative funding approaches to general transportation initiatives.
  - Pursue new strategies and partnerships to provide transit throughout the region.

#### **Goal 2. Promote compact development, land/structure reuse and infill development to avoid sprawl and low-density land use.**

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## Objectives

- Encourage compatible mixed-use developments where feasible; where not feasible, promote higher residential densities that make transit and pedestrian trips feasible. Coordinate these policies in regional and local transportation plans.
- Reduce minimum parking space requirements for retail and commercial uses.
- Encourage mixed-use urban development that includes mixed-income and elderly residential facilities. Develop affordable housing and housing needs assessment approaches.
- Promote alternative transportation and reduction of Daily Vehicle Miles Travelled.
- Promote and encourage municipalities and counties to utilize Best Management Practices in access management.
- Promote sidewalks, trails and bike paths (interior connections) between adjacent land uses. Establish practices and policies in comprehensive plans and subdivision regulations.

## Barriers

- Unchecked low-density sprawl both in urban and rural areas.
- Lack of access management compliance and consistency.
- Lack of infill development, reuse of existing structures and land for redevelopment.

## Strategies

- Encourage mixed-use development with flexible parking and height allowances.
- Seek investment sources for land and structure redevelopment.

## Metrics

- Increase the number of local governments practicing mixed use zoning to five (5) throughout the region by 2027.
- Inventory the region for adopted policies and types that address mixed use or form-based zoning for compatibility.

## Implementation Steps

- Pursue goals 5 and 7 within "Section B: Economic Competitiveness".
  - Capitalize on existing downtown areas and Main Street initiatives.
  - Utilize land use and growth management policies
- Emphasize compact land use and development patterns in appropriate locations.

## Goal 3. Promote Complete Streets Concepts, to include Public Transit

### Objectives

- Encourage and facilitate walkability and bicycling
- Encourage public transit development
- Ensure quality and capacity of existing infrastructure systems
- Increase transportation options

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**Barriers**

- Weak land use control and lack of zoning power.
- Urban and rural sprawl.

**Strategies**

- Promote the practice of, and educate the public and officials on, the benefits of complete streets

**Metrics**

- Use of complete streets in three (3) municipalities.
- Capture development patterns and map the areas for future connectivity and transportation connection planning

**Implementation Steps**

- Emphasize concepts such as bicycle facilities, sidewalks, crossing opportunities, and transit to provide safe, accessible streets for all users

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# HOUSING

## REGIONAL NEEDS FOR HOUSING

The Housing Livability Resource Team (LRT) identified the following regional needs:

- **Increase the affordable housing stock.**
- **Aging in place services.**
  - According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “aging in place is the ability to live in one’s own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level.” Aging in place services allow people to stay in their homes rather than moving to a nursing home, which can be costly and removes people from mainstream society. Therefore, ADA accessible housing and supportive housing services are needed for the growing over-60 population in East Alabama.
- **More transitional housing is needed for several populations.**
  - Homeless programs are needed in East Alabama. Many people do not realize the high level of homelessness in the Region. Long-term transitional housing is needed, as transitional housing is typically for a limited period. Additionally, quick sources of housing are needed for people in times of need, especially during a natural disaster or personal financial emergency.
- **Better utilization of existing housing and empty properties.**
  - Vacant properties attract mischief and lower the visual appeal of a neighborhood. Utilizing empty properties and houses could provide sources of housing for people who need it most and improve the community as a whole. However, financial resources are needed to rehabilitate properties.
- **Public housing needs to look more inviting.**
  - Public housing does not have to look unattractive. It can be appealing looking, which would boost the morale of residents.
  - Unappealing structures may cause residents to not want to live there, even if it may be a better situation than their current living arrangements.
- **More deeply subsidized housing is needed.**
  - Subsidized housing includes public housing authorities (which typically have a 2-3 year wait list), Housing Choice Vouchers, and other housing assistance programs. Housing Choice Vouchers allow residents to live in housing that is not located at the public housing authority but is subsidized through a voucher. Therefore, the tenant pays a set amount of the rent based on a percentage of their income and the government pays for the rest of the rent not covered by the tenant. However, as government funding is tightened, fewer Housing Choice Vouchers are available.
- **Mixed-use and mixed-income developments are desired.**
  - Mixed-use refers to neighborhoods, which have residences, businesses, offices, churches, and shopping within the same area. This approach promotes accessibility through walking and provides people without transportation the opportunity to utilize the various functions with ease.

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Furthermore, healthy food and employment are also needed in proximity to housing and would be ideally placed in a mixed-use development.

- **Financial resources for mobile home purchases and rent-to-own/lease purchases are needed.**
  - There is a lack of financing options for people wishing to purchase a mobile home (which may be the most affordable option). Some rehabilitation programs require applicants to own their home, which is problematic for long-term renters. Therefore, a rent-to-own program is needed.
  
- **Weatherization and improvement of substandard housing is greatly needed.**
  - Improvements to existing housing are needed throughout the region. People may lack the knowledge or resources to weatherize their homes. In addition, improvement of substandard housing is needed. These homes may have a tree caving in their roof or an extremely cracked foundation and need assistance to fix it.



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## HOUSING

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, BARRIERS, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

**Goal 1. Every Alabama resident should have the opportunity for safe, decent, affordable housing regardless of income level.**

#### Objectives

- Housing assistance providers complete an assessment of services provided to eliminate redundancies or duplication of efforts.
- Increase the number of affordable housing units available in East Alabama.
- Increase awareness of the lack of housing affordability in the region.
- Leverage Opportunity Zones in East Alabama

#### Barriers

- Funding is needed to complete an assessment, increase the number of affordable housing units, and create materials to increase awareness
- Reluctance and difficulty in collaborating to reduce overlap and the development of affordable units
- Lack of awareness of the issues regarding affordable housing
- Perceived risks to investing
- Lack of affordable rentals and middle housing.

#### Strategies

- Identify and apply for assistance to complete an assessment, increase affordable housing units, and create materials to increase awareness.
- Explain the need for affordable housing units and form partnerships to develop it.
- Encourage redevelopment in areas suffering from disinvestment.
- Overall assessment of developable land on a regional level.
- Promote middle housing.
- Address blight to promote additional housing.

#### Metrics

- Develop a comprehensive list of housing assistance providers throughout the region with a list of services they offer.
- Collaborate with local government, non- profits, and developers to increase the number of affordable and available units in the region by 20 units in five years.
- Show a 2% decrease in the number of people spending over 30% of their income on housing within the next five years. (This indicates affordability.)
- Show a 2% in Opportunity Zone development across the region

#### Implementation Steps

- Develop strong partnerships with housing-related real estate, construction, finance, and retail businesses.
  - Establish a housing committee of the proposed east Alabama partnership (eap) to assess affordable housing needs
  - Conduct comprehensive housing conditions assessments
  - Develop model house, fundraising, and awareness programs

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- Enhance coordination and service delivery among existing housing providers.
    - Inventory and assess existing housing service provider base
    - Develop targeted resources for reducing gaps or problems in existing service delivery
  - Utilize a “carrot and stick” approach to encourage the rehabilitation of rental housing.
    - Inventory rental housing resources and conditions
    - Encourage local governments to provide incentives for rental housing construction and improvements
    - Match incentive “carrots” with regulatory “sticks” where necessary

## **Goal 2. Increase awareness and availability of accessible housing in the East Alabama Region.**

### **Objectives**

- Identify and promote ADA compliance measures so existing housing can be rehabilitated to meet access needs.
- Locate funding sources for modifying homes to be more ADA accessible.

### **Barriers**

- Funding to increase awareness and make modifications to homes
- Lack of knowledge regarding federal regulations requiring accessibility

### **Strategies**

- Identify and obtain funding resources
- Create educational materials about ADA accessibility requirements and possible modifications

### **Metrics**

- Collect the number of clients with newly accessible elements due to awareness and programs over five years.
- Collect the number of grants funded for modifying homes to make them more accessible by nonprofits and the Partnership over five years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Help maximize the region’s share of available accessibility grant funding and volunteer support
  - Identify and track grants, volunteers and other resources for enhancing accessibility
- Establish housing accessibility programs through area hospitals or associated providers
  - Develop Collaborations with Area Hospitals
  - Assist in Producing Information Packets

## **Goal 3. Increase the number of transitional programs, including services for the homeless and victims of abuse.**

### **Objectives**

- Increase available occupancy at existing and new shelters.
- Decrease the number of homeless in the region by providing long-term transitional housing.

### **Barriers**

- Funding for programs
- “Not in my back yard” (NIMBY) issues: People may not want these programs located in their neighborhood

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### Strategies

- Raise awareness of the needs that the general population is not aware exists, i.e. homelessness, the need for affordable housing, and services for victims of abuse, through educational programs.
- Pursue grant funding to provide transitional housing programs.

### Metrics

- Increase the number of available occupancies at shelters by 2% over five years.
- Decrease the number of homeless in the region by 2% over five years.

### Implementation Steps

- Raise awareness of homelessness and target affordable housing for the homeless.
  - Encourage use of “housing first” models.
- Target hands-on support services and training and work initiatives to homeless.
  - Initiate homeless work initiatives.

## **Goal 4. Increase awareness of housing assistance programs and the discrimination reporting processes.**

### Objectives

- Develop targeted marketing strategies to reach the population in need.
- Many are unaware of problems in affordability. Make people aware through education.
- Develop educational materials and presentation kits regarding affordable and fair housing.
- Collect data on discrimination occurring throughout the region.

### Barriers

- Awareness of options. Many people do not know what to do when facing discrimination or need housing assistance.
- False perception that needs are being met.
- There is an overwhelming need; however, there are not enough resources to meet the need.

### Strategies

- Provide funding for fair housing initiatives program grant, which will provide funding for education regarding discrimination.
- Promote providers of housing assistance and their programs.
- East Alabama Partnership for Livability should create a list, identifying the population in need of resources over the next five years.

### Metrics

- **The East Alabama Partnership for Livability should increase the number of educational materials and presentation kits to three over the next five years.**

### Implementation Steps

- Increase awareness of housing assistance opportunities and options.
  - Work with fair housing centers to develop model homes, awareness and fundraising campaigns

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## **Goal 5. Fill data gaps related to housing needs and discrimination.**

### **Objectives**

- Collaborate with providers of housing assistance to determine existing data related to livability.
- Collaborate with Fair Housing Centers to expand services and education throughout the East Alabama Region regarding housing discrimination education and appropriate reporting methods.

### **Barriers**

- Funding
- Fears of reporting discrimination due to retaliation
- Entities that provide housing assistance do not have the staff or manpower to create the needed data

### **Strategies**

- Identify and obtain funding resources.
- Promote the benefits of reporting discrimination through the appropriate channels, which will deter the practice in the future.
- Establish and implement a volunteer program that consists of properly training volunteers to ferret out data resources and speak to clients about discrimination

### **Metrics**

- Collect data, which did not exist before, regarding housing needs over the next five years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Utilize university and community college resources for data collection.
  - Work with area universities and community colleges to establish a joint health and housing research center
  - Generate baseline and regular data for use by area housing agencies and planners
- Work with the fair housing centers to strengthen their capacity.
  - Integrate data collection into needs assessments and use data to inform program design
  - Help strengthen programs to prevent and address discriminatory practices in the housing sector
  - Help communicate and advocate for affordable housing resources for the region

## **Goal 6. Promote developing suitable housing to increase availability**

### **Objectives**

- Collaborate with local governments, non-profits, developers, and local businesses to provide housing options in high opportunity downtown neighborhoods, which would allow people easy access to employment, shopping, and other services.
- Partner with local governments, non-profits, and developers to incorporate housing into existing neighborhoods.
- Advance availability of affordable and quality housing for all ages, incomes, and abilities.

### **Barriers**

- Cost prohibitive expenses associated with retrofitting space above businesses to residences.
- Business owners and developers requiring too large of rent payments.

- 
- It can be less expensive to develop a "greenfield" rather than use a vacant lot in an existing neighborhood.

### **Strategies**

- Provide training and education on how to retrofit space above businesses for residents and the appropriate costs associated with the space.
- Pursue grant funding to supplement the cost associated with retrofitting space.
- Encourage utilization of vacant lots by offering incentives to developers.
- Rehabilitate & maintain existing housing stock.
- Promote incentive program for suitable housing and housing assistance

### **Metrics**

- Increase the percentage of available housing by 2% over a five-year period.
- Decrease the percentage of vacant lots within cities by 5% over a five-year period.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Use housing market analyses to recruit downtown development.
  - Commission housing market analyses
  - Integrate housing market studies into broader downtown master planning efforts.
- Encourage local voluntary site assembly equity partnerships with property owners.
  - Encourage voluntary site assembly strategies
  - Facilitate "matchmaking" between private property owners and potential developers
- Encourage integration of mixed-income or affordable housing.
  - Work with local governments to enable incentives for inclusion of affordable units in downtown housing.
- Help create incentives for downtown building rehabilitation.
  - Help create and promote a package of incentives for building rehab
  - Help promote downtown building rehabilitation and communicate success stories

## **Goal 7. Increase availability of broadband internet in both residential and rural areas**

### **Objectives**

- Develop vital infrastructure to reach residences in need across the region
- Many are unaware of opportunities to increase connectivity. Make people aware through education.
- Enable remote work and e-learning opportunities for all residents
- Decrease regional residential internet access disparity

### **Barriers**

- Awareness of options.
- False perception that needs are being met.
- There is an overwhelming need; however, there are not enough resources to meet the need.
- Lack of existing infrastructure

### **Strategies**

- Pursue grant funding to supplement the cost of creating and/or improving infrastructure
- Seek partnerships to provide areas with free, public internet access

### **Metrics**

- Residential internet access should see a 5% increase over the next 5 years.

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**Implementation Steps**

- Increase awareness of internet access disparities across the region.
- Collaborate with regional partners to increase access and availability of broadband internet

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## EDUCATION

### REGIONAL NEEDS FOR EDUCATION

The Education Livability Resource Team (LRT) and the Economic Competitiveness LRT held combined meetings due to the intertwining nature of workforce development, economic competitiveness, and education. Discussion centered on the following regional needs:

#### **Begin career exploration early.**

- Career exploration and mentorship (including businesses and industry) for elementary age and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with examples of successful people and what they had to do to get to their position.
- Give students examples of how schooling fits into “real” life.

#### **Early childhood education is an economic competitiveness driver and needs to be improved.**

- Quality early childhood education is vitally important to attract people to the region and as an economic driver.
- In addition to writing, reading, math, and science, early childhood education curricula should include teamwork and problem solving.

#### **Accessibility**

- In some areas, internet access—even at schools—can be inaccessible and unaffordable.
- The community colleges and universities are limited in their geographic area.

#### **Students need to be taught how to be successful in life.**

- Students need to be educated with basic skills to succeed in life such as work ethic, decision-making consequences, personal finance, budgeting, entrepreneurship, fiscal responsibility, balancing a checkbook, credit worthiness.
- The ACT Ready to Work Initiative and WorkKeys program teach many of the basic life skills.

#### **Promote alternatives to a 4-year college degree.**

- There is a need for more work study programs in high schools so students can understand the work place and why it is important.
- The negative mindset toward two-year schools needs to be changed.



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## EDUCATION

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, BARRIERS, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

**Goal 1. Increase educational attainment by beginning with early education and giving people the opportunity to advance their education.**

#### Objectives

- Increase percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds in school throughout region to at least 50%.
- Increase the number of people graduating from high school.
- Increase the number of people with an associate degree or higher.

#### Barriers

- Financial costs associated with developing an increased number of preschools.
- Transportation to and from school can be problematic.
- Apathy towards educational attainment.

#### Strategies

- Each community develops their own planning strategies to address the issue.
- Provide information about how people who graduate from high school or obtain a GED generally have higher income than people who do not.
- Education partnerships with secondary and post-secondary institutions

#### Metrics

- Increase the percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds in school to at least 50% over a five-year period. Utilize data from the American Community Survey.
- Increase the percentage of on-time high school graduation (% of freshmen who graduate in 4 years) to over 80% in a five-year period. Utilize data from [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org).
- Increase the percentage of the over-25 population with an associate degree or higher to at least the State's average over a five-year period. Utilize data from the American Community Survey.

#### Implementation Steps

- Develop measures to recruit and support early childcare facilities throughout the region.
  - Establish an Education Committee to develop measures for recruitment and support of early childcare facilities.
  - Determine funding sources.
- Develop and distribute information to parents on the importance of pre-k education.
  - Provide educational materials to parents on the value of early childhood education.

**Goal 2. Decrease dropout rate with specific tasks, programs, and ideas for how to accomplish this.**

#### Objectives

- Career exploration for elementary/middle school age students.

- 
- Before and after-school programs and mentorships.

#### **Barriers**

- Availability of businesses to partner with for mentorships, especially in rural areas.
- Identifying resources can be an issue.
- Transportation to and from school and programs.
- Financial cost associated with specific tasks and programs.

#### **Strategies**

- Involve local business and industry to introduce careers.
- Identify mentors, programs through YMCA, churches, after school programs, recreation departments.
- Wi-Fi at public places, such as recreation departments, so students have access to the internet.
- Utilize grant funding for tasks and programs.

#### **Metrics**

- Decrease the dropout rate to less than 1% over the next five years. Conduct an annual review using State of Alabama data.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Have the education committee work with local schools to develop career exploration resources and programs.
  - Build a basic website template for career exploration that can be modified to suit individual schools' needs.
  - Develop a Career Day at schools or a Workplace "Shadowing" Program for older students.
- Work to establish mentoring programs in high schools.
  - Develop guidelines for establishing mentoring programs for high school students

### **Goal 3. Work together to use resources.**

#### **Objectives**

- Identify resources, including monetary and human.
- Find ways to increase communication and update others about educational successes.

#### **Barriers**

- The lack of a formal communication network with established education agencies makes it difficult to collaborate effectively.
- High speed internet is not available everywhere, which can make collaboration difficult.

#### **Strategies**

- Share successes and new initiatives across the region.
- Share faculty/resources to expand offerings, using virtual education.

- 
- Develop and expand regular communication between all groups, especially universities, K-12, and pertinent agencies such as the Alabama Virtual Library.
  - Involve Connecting Alabama in future discussions regarding resources.

### **Metrics**

- Increase the number of meetings and communication within education leadership to at least two meetings a year over the next five years. Collect the meeting information.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Increase programing in public libraries.
  - Work with the region’s public libraries to increase programming and ensure as many as possible are actively participating in the Alabama Virtual Library.
- Develop and expand communication and information networks and enhance existing facilities.
  - Develop alternative public information avenues to showcase educational successes and initiatives.
  - Seek assistance with expanding internet capabilities to those areas with limited or no service.
  - Enhance and upgrade existing education infrastructure.

## **Goal 4. Collaborate with regional workforce development councils to link industry needs with training and education.**

### **Objectives**

- Identify needs for training by working with the economic development agencies in the region.
- Training at 2-year schools, such as Gadsden State and Southern Union, and vo-tech education should be aligned with needs.

### **Barriers**

- Fewer resources are available now than in the past.
- Few life coach opportunities and career exploration programs are available.
- Overall lack of knowledge about training available within the region.

### **Strategies**

- Involve AIDT in the effort to link industry needs with training and education.
- Meet with large employers/industries, including automotive and health care, to identify needs.
- Coordinate with existing effective career exploration programs, like the Boy Scouts of America Explorer Program, to provide resources for students.
- Work with the Workforce Development Councils to identify sustainable funding sources and employers/industries to be involved in career days, job shadowing, and other programs.
- Promote “on the job” videos with local businesses.

### **Metrics**

- 
- Increase collaboration between industry, business, and K-12 in providing training and workforce development over a five-year period. Document the number of meetings.
  - Increase membership in the Region 5 and 8 Workforce Development Councils by 2% over five years. The Region 5 and 8 Workforce Development Councils will document members.
  - Decrease the regional unemployment rate to fewer than 4% over the next five years. Use Alabama Department of Labor data.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Increase awareness of job training opportunities.
  - Develop additional forms of outreach to increase citizen awareness of available job training within the region.
- Strengthen the region's voice on statewide boards and establish additional career development centers in the region.
  - Increase the region's presence on Workforce Development Boards and in Career Development Centers.
- Encourage county participation in the ACT® Certified Work Ready Communities Program.
  - Promote the ACT® Certified Work Ready Communities Program.

### **Goal 5. Work with state agencies to obtain grants to support training and education.**

#### **Objectives**

- Increase the number of grants successfully funded across the region.
- Provide training in how to write grants.

#### **Barriers**

- Identification of grant writers who are willing to provide their services.
- Availability of grant funding.

#### **Strategies**

- Workshops/training seminars on grant opportunities and how to write grant applications.

#### **Metrics**

- Increase the number of grants reported over the next five years. Gather the data through a survey process or other methods.
- Increase number of grants successfully funded over the next five years. Gather the data through a survey process or other methods.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Form a consortium of educators, non-profits and public agencies to develop and hold grant writing workshops.
  - Work with the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) to identify and coordinate appropriate entities to provide grant writing training.

---

**Goal 6. That school systems use the "Best Practices," data, studies, trends and resources of the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA), as well as other educational resources, in development, implementation and assessment of their school system's goals and objectives.**

**Objectives**

- Use best practices in school systems to reach goals and objectives.
- Use PARCA to provide best practices data in higher achievement measures, which would indicate success in applying best practices.

**Barriers**

- Financial barriers associated with gathering data and best practices.

**Strategies**

- Provide programs to assist with data and best practices collection.

**Metrics**

- Increased use of best practices used to reach school systems' goals and objectives over a five-year period. Collect data on school systems using best practices.
- Increase the number of school systems reaching their goals and objectives over a five-year span. Collect data on school systems reaching their goals and objectives.

**Implementation Steps**

- Develop a best practices model.
  - Develop a model "Best Practices" Plan that can be used by all schools in the region to develop and track goals and objectives.
- Develop a strategic plan for education in the region.
  - Establish a collaborate effort, that includes education professionals, to develop a Model Strategic Plan for Education.
  - Identify a school or schools to participate in a Strategic Planning Pilot Program.

**Goal 7. Increase broadband internet available for educational purposes.**

**Objectives**

- Increase the number of schools able to fully implement e-learning
- Decrease internet access disparity among students and schools
- Expand access to technology and facilities that increase educational opportunities

**Barriers**

- Rural areas and smaller municipalities lack funding and infrastructure.
- Availability of funding.
- Technology disparities based on school budgets

---

**Strategies**

- Build partnerships to expand internet availability
- Seek funding to improve and expand infrastructure

**Metrics**

- Increase the number of students able to utilize e-learning opportunities. Gather the data through a survey process or other methods.

**Implementation Steps**

- Hold speaker series and/or workshops to educate the public on technology opportunities
- Develop and expand broadband internet networks

---

## HEALTH

### REGIONAL NEEDS FOR HEALTH

The Health Livability Resource Team identified the following regional needs:

**To promote effectiveness of health care systems, an all-inclusive collection of data should be conducted.**

- Social aspects of users
- Payers
- Federal access to hospitals

**There is a need to improve connectivity.**

- How residents can connect to proper health care resources and services.
- How professionals can connect with residents and health care maintenance information.

#### **Public Education**

- There is a need to educate the public on existing health care and resources within the region.

## HEALTH

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, BARRIERS, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

**Goal 1. Make East Alabama the healthiest region in the State.**

#### **Objectives**

- Encourage programs that provide health care to the uninsured.
- Educate the public on self-management of health issues
- Educate the public on healthy life styles at an early age.

#### **Barriers**

- Lack of financial resources/insurance, which leads to escalation of existing ailments.

#### **Strategies**

- Seek investment to educate the public on self-care and healthy life styles.
- Encourage the development of programs to provide services to those with no insurance.

#### **Metrics**

- Lower rates of the most common preventable diseases by 2% in 10 years.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Develop a healthy lifestyles program for youths.
  - Develop programs to educate youth on healthy lifestyles and making healthy choices.
- Develop a health, prevention and wellness program.



- 
- Develop a Health, Prevention and Wellness Program starting with senior citizens and expanding over time to include all adults in the region.
  - Establish a Food Policy Council in the East Alabama region.
    - Establish a Food Policy Council within the East Alabama region to promote and develop Healthy Eating and Health, Prevention and Wellness Programs.

## **Goal 2. Decrease non-life-threatening emergency room visits.**

### **Objectives**

- Encourage programs that provide health care to the uninsured.
- Educate the public on the proper use of the health care system.

### **Barriers**

- Lack of programs to educate the public.
- Lack of transportation network, which leads to the improper use of ambulance services and emergency services.

### **Strategies**

- Public education to inform residents of existing resources and alternatives.

### **Metrics**

- Reduction in non-life-threatening emergency transport and services by 2% in 10 years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Broaden access to alternative care services.
  - Broaden access to alternative care services.
  - Encourage emergency rooms to provide Ambulatory Care Units on-site for frequent ER users.
- Address other barriers to alternative health care options.
  - Evaluate transportation services in rural areas to determine the level of services provided.

## **Goal 3. Increase awareness of existing health programs and services in the East Alabama region.**

### **Objectives**

- Provide an easily accessible comprehensive list of existing resources and services throughout the region to all residents.
- Provide outreach and education through existing partnerships (such as school/County Extension) on health resources.
- Improve and expand internet access to increase access to information and resources, such as telemedicine

### **Barriers**

- Funding to compose a resource guide

- 
- Champions for outreach
  - Lack of internet access

#### **Strategies**

- Promote partnerships of existing health care and resource centers to create a resource guide.
- Identify an entity to champion the process.
- Improve and expand internet infrastructure

#### **Metrics**

- Decrease in non-essential ER visits.
- Decrease in relapse or repeated admission for the same reasons.
- Increase in telemedicine visits.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Develop a healthcare and transportation resource directory.
  - Develop public information on healthcare and transportation services

### **Goal 4. Quality after-care management**

#### **Objectives**

- Create a specialized call center for the medical community that would be a regional cooperative among care providers manage patient care (especially important for after-care management).

#### **Barriers**

- Financial resources

#### **Strategies**

- Garner investment and funding from local governments, non-profit and private entities for the creation and management of such a call center.

#### **Metrics**

- Decrease in non-essential ER visits.
- Decrease in relapse or repeated admission for the same reasons.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Investigate the viability of creating a call center for the management and informing of patient care
  - Investigate the viability (cost, responsible operating party, location, etc.) of creating a call center.

### **Goal 5. Promote the development of medical facilities to be available equally across the region**

#### **Objectives**

- 
- Increase the number of medical facilities available in the region
  - Address current needs, such as mental health and opioid abuse

**Barriers**

- Financial resources
- False perceptions about needs to be met

**Strategies**

- Explains need for a range of medical offerings
- Encourage development for medical facilities
- Promote partnerships of existing medical facilities
- Expand and improve the condition of existing medical systems
- Promote telemedicine

**Metrics**

- Increase in medical facilities
- Decrease in average travel time to receive treatment

**Implementation Step**

- Conduct feasibility study for additional facilities and recruit new facilities and companies, and enhance existing infrastructure
- Enhance broadband internet capabilities

---

## Implementation Matrix

The following three pages feature a plan Implementation Matrix that summarizes the key recommendations of this plan, as follows:

### Subject Category

The matrix is organized to reflect the following six subject categories:

- A. Community Engagement
- B. Economic Competitiveness
- C. Transportation
- D. Housing
- E. Education
- F. Health

### Alphanumeric Designation

Each subject category has been assigned a sequential letter and each primary plan recommendation has been given a sequential number. The category letter and recommendation number are combined for an alphanumeric designation for easy referencing.

### Page Number

This column indicates the plan page numbers that explain the recommendation in detail.

### Responsible Party

This column indicates the recommended party (or parties) to spearhead implementation in order of their level of responsibility.

### Timeframe

This section sequences implementation into Ongoing (Year 1), Mid Term (Years 2-3) and Long Term (Years 4-5) categories.

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Community Engagement</b>				
A-1-1	Establish an organization to spearhead regional livability efforts.	52	Long term	EAP-EARPDC
A-1-2	Develop a multi-faceted communications program.	52	Long term	EAP-Community Engagement
A-2-1	Provide Educational Opportunities on regionalism.	52	Mid-term	EAP-Community Engagement
A-2-2	Identify and utilize regionalism-oriented organizations.	52	Ongoing	EAP-Community Engagement
A-3-1	Identify categories of relevant specialized populations.	53	Ongoing	EAP-Community Engagement
A-3-2	Develop and implement an outreach strategy for each relevant group.	53	Mid-term	EAP-Community Engagement
A-4-1	Recruit new members to the organization's committees	54	Mid-term	EAP-Community Engagement
A-4-2	Provide an orientation program for new committee members	54	Long-term	EAP-Staff
A-5-1	Conduct community engagement in a financially viable manner	54	Ongoing	EAP-Community Engagement
A-6-1	Provide educational opportunities on internet access and usage	55	Mid-term	Local ED Agencies, JSU
<b>Economic Competitiveness</b>				
B-1-1	Develop strong partnerships with private employers for training and education.	57	Ongoing	EAP, WDCs, Local ED Agencies
B-1-2	Increase access to higher-education resources.	57	Ongoing	EAP - Workforce Committee, Colleges
B-1-3	Enhance communication and promotion of existing workforce programs.	57	Ongoing	EAP - Workforce Committee, WDCs
B-2-1	Enhance and promote amenity value to retain businesses and educated workforce.	58	Ongoing	EAP, Local ED Agencies, Chambers, CFNEA

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
B-2-2	Identify local economic development strengths and small-town targets	58	Mid-term	EAP - ED Committee, EARPCD
B-2-3	Promote fairs and trade shows to enhance networking.	58	Ongoing	EAP - Workforce & ED Committees
B-2-4	Engage students and prospective workers with technology training.	58	Mid-term	EAP - Workforce Comm., Schools
B-3-1	Support the existing social service network.	59	Ongoing	EAP - Workforce Comm., Service Orgs.
B-3-2	Engage and incentivize the private sector in special needs training and employment.	59	Long-term	EAP - Wkfrce & ED Comms. / Special Pop.
B-3-3	Enhance access to support systems to enable participation in training and employment programs.	59	Ongoing	EAP - Workforce Comm., Service Orgs.
B-4-1	Establish a regional marketing program and brand.	60	Long-term	EAP - ED Comm., ED Orgs, Chambers, Inds.
B-4-2	Leverage tourism potential.	60	Ongoing	EAP - ED Comm., ED Orgs, CVBs
B-4-3	Assess the feasibility of business incubator projects.	60	Long-term	EAP - ED Comm., JSU / Colleges
B-4-4	Promote the use of existing small business resources.	60	Ongoing	EAP - ED Comm., ED Orgs, State
B-4-5	Focus on business retention and growth efforts.	60	Ongoing	EAP - ED Comm., Local Govts.
B-4-6	Enhance amenity value as a tool for economic development.	60	Mid-term	EARPCD
B-4-7	Focus financial and other incentives on growing local businesses.	60	Ongoing	EAP - ED Comm., Local Govts.

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
B-5-1	Establish a regional main street program and recruit downtowns	61	Ongoing	EAP, EARPDC, Alabama Main St. Program
B-5-2	Establish a local revitalization program (recommended for each community, adapted to meet their unique circumstances, and needs).	61	Long-term	EAP, EARPDC, Alabama Main St. Program
B-5-3	Establish a local historic preservation program.	61	Long-term	Local Gov'ts, ADAH, EAP
B-6-1	Utilize programs for inventorying and marketing industrial properties.	62	Ongoing	Econ. Develop. Orgs., EAP
B-6-2	Utilize programs for funding infrastructure and facilities.	62	Ongoing	Econ. Develop. Orgs., EAP
B-6-3	Utilize existing environmental clean-up programs.	62	Ongoing	Econ. Develop. Orgs., EAP
B-7-1	Provide educational opportunities on land use and growth management.	63	Mid-term	EAP, EARPDC
B-7-2	Assist communities with planning and zoning initiatives.	63	Ongoing	EAP, EARPDC
B-7-3	Educate the public on energy efficiency measures and encourage action.	63	Ongoing	EAP, EPA / HUD / DOE
B-7-4	Promote other existing energy programs.	63	Ongoing	EAP, EARPDC, Local Govt.
B-8-1	Utilize programs for funding infrastructures and facilities.	64	Mid-term	Local Govt.
B-8-2	Promote technology improvements.	64	Ongoing	Local Govt., Colleges, JSU
<b>Transportation</b>				
C-1-1	Promote public and private partnerships for transportation funding.	68	Ongoing	EAP-EARPDC
C-2-1	Pursue Goals 5 & 7 within "Section B: Economic Competitiveness".	68	Mid-term	See Section B Above

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
C-2-2	Emphasize compact land use and development patterns in appropriate locations.	68	Ongoing	EAP-EARPDC
C-3-1	Emphasize concepts such as bicycle facilities, sidewalks, crossing opportunities, and transit to provide safe, accessible streets for all users.	69	Ongoing	ALDOT, Local Govt., EARPDC
<b>Housing</b>				
D-1-1	Develop strong partnerships with housing-related real estate, construction, finance, and retail businesses.	73	Mid-term	EAP - Hsg Comm., JSU, CFNEA, providers
D-1-2	Enhance coordination and service delivery among existing housing providers.	73	Ongoing	EAP - Hsg Comm., EARPDC
D-1-3	Utilize a “carrot and stick” approach to encourage the rehabilitation of rental housing.	73	Mid-term	EAP - Hsg Comm., Local Govts, EARPDC
D-2-1	Help maximize the region’s share of available accessibility grant funding and volunteer support.	74	Ongoing	EAP-Hsg. Comm.
D-2-2	Establish housing accessibility programs through area hospitals or associated providers.	74	Long-term	EAP - Hsg Comm., Hosp., Retail, Serv. Prov.
D-3-1	Raise awareness of homelessness and target affordable housing for the homeless.	74	Mid-term	EAP - Hsg Comm., Fair Housing Centers
D-3-2	Target hands-on support services and training and work initiatives to homeless.	74	Mid-term	EAP - Hsg Comm. / Wrkfrc Comm., Colleges
D-4-1	Increase awareness of housing assistance and options.	75	Ongoing	FHCs, Local govt., HUD
D-5-1	Utilize university and community college resources for data collection.	76	Ongoing	Colleges (JSU), EARPDC



#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
D-5-2	Work with fair housing centers to strengthen their capacity.	76	Mid-term	EAP - Hsg Comm., JSU, FHCs, Banks
D-6-1	Use housing market analyses to recruit downtown development	76	Mid-term	EARPDC, Main St. Orgs, Local Govts
D-6-2	Encourage local voluntary site assembly equity partnerships with property owners.	76	Ongoing	EARPDC, MS Orgs, EAP-ED Com., Loc Govs
D-6-3	Encourage integration of mixed-income or affordable housing.	76	Ongoing	EARPDC, Main Street Orgs, Local Govts
D-6-4	Help create incentives for downtown building rehabilitation.	76	Mid-term	EARPDC, Main Street Orgs, Local Govts
D-7-1	Increase awareness of internet access disparities across the region.	77	Ongoing	EARPDC, Chambers, Local govts.
D-7-2	Collaborate with regional partners to increase access and availability of broadband internet.	77	Long-term	Local govts., County Commissions, Colleges (JSU)
<b>Education</b>				
E-1-1	Develop measures to recruit and support early childcare facilities throughout the region.	80	Long-term	EAP, Education Administration
E-1-2	Develop and distribute information to parents on the importance of pre-k education.	80	Mid-term	EAP - DOE
E-2-1	Have the education committee work with local schools to develop career exploration resources and programs.	80	Long-term	EAP - Education Comm., Schools, Colleges
E-2-2	Work to establish mentoring programs in high schools	80	Long-term	EAP - Ed. Com., Schools/Colleges, EARPDC
E-3-1	Increase programing in public libraries.	81	Ongoing	EARPDC, Library Boards, Local Gov'ts.

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
E-3-2	Develop and expand communication and information networks and enhance existing facilities.	81	Mid-term	EARPDC-EAP
E-4-1	Increase awareness of job training opportunities.	82	Ongoing	EARPDC, Workforce Dev. Councils
E-4-2	Strengthen the region's voice on statewide boards and establish additional career development centers in the region.	82	Long-term	EARPDC, City and County Leaders
E-4-3	Encourage county participation in the ACT Work Ready Communities Program.	82	Ongoing	EARPDC, Local Leaders, Businesses
E-5-1	Form a consortium of educators, non-profits, and public agencies to develop and hold grant writing workshops.	83	Long-term	EARPDC, Chambers of Commerce
E-6-1	Develop a best practices model.	84	Mid-term	EAP-Schools, Colleges
E-6-2	Develop a strategic plan for education in the region.	84	Long-term	EAP-Schools, DOE
E-7-1	Hold speaker series and/or workshops to educate the public on technology opportunities.	84	Long-term	Schools, Colleges, Local govts.
E-7-2	Develop and expand broadband internet networks.	84	Ongoing	Local govt., schools, Local leaders
<b>Health</b>				
F-1-1	Develop a healthy lifestyles program for youth.	86	Long-term	EAP, EARPDC, Local health depts.
F-1-2	Develop a health, prevention, and wellness program.	86	Long-term	Local health depts, EARPDC-Area Agency on Aging
F-1-3	Establish a Food Policy Council in the East Alabama Region.	86	Mid-term	EARPDC, EACPA, Schools, Local Govt.
F-2-1	Broaden access to alternative care services.	87	Ongoing	EAP, EARPDC, Chambers of Commerce

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
F-2-2	Address other barriers to alternative health care options.	87	Mid-term	EARPDC
F-3-1	Develop a healthcare and transportation resource directory.	87	Long-term	EARPDC, Colleges, Local health depts.
F-4-1	Investigate the viability of creating a call center for the management and informing of patient care.	88	Long-term	EAP, EARPDC, Local leaders
F-5-1	Conduct feasibility study for additional facilities, recruit new facilities and companies, and enhance existing infrastructure	88	Long-term	Local businesses, local leaders, EARPDC, Chambers of Commerce
F-5-2	Enhance broadband internet capabilities	88	Ongoing	Local leaders, local govts, Ec Dev Orgs

## **Appendix A: CEDS Planning Survey Results**



# CEDS Planning Survey Results

CEDS Strategy Committee Meeting | 3/29/2022

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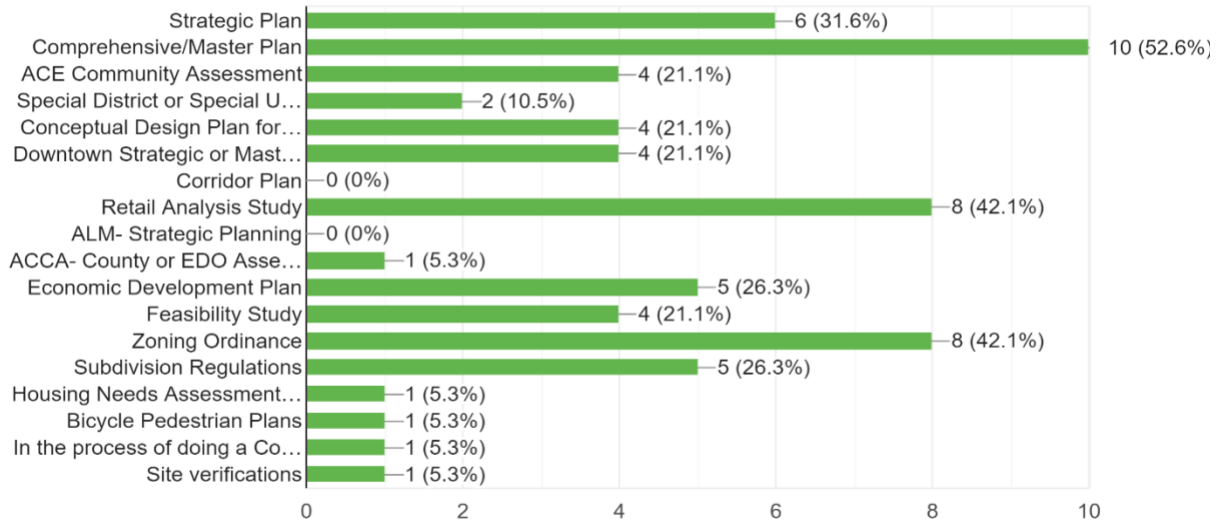
## Responses

- Calhoun County
  - City of Anniston
  - City of Jacksonville
- Chambers County
  - Town of Waverly
  - Chambers County Development Authority
  - City of Valley
  - Chambers County Commission
  - Chambers County Development Authority
- Cherokee County
  - Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce and Tourism
- Clay County
  - Clay County Economic Development Council
- Cleburne County
  - Town of Ranburne
- Coosa County
  - Town of Kellyton
- Etowah County
  - Etowah Chamber
  - Gadsden-Etowah Industrial Development Association
- Randolph County
  - Randolph County Economic Development Authority
  - Town of Wadley
- Talladega County
  - City of Talladega
- Tallapoosa County
  - City of Alexander City
  - Town of New Site

## Plans Utilized

Please choose which plan or plans your organization has conducted:

19 responses



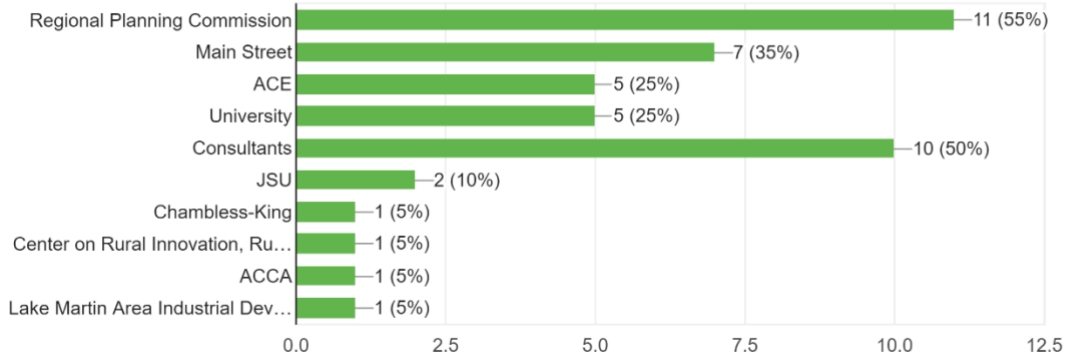
Top 3 planning methods:

1. Comprehensive/Master Plan
2. Retail Analysis Study
3. Zoning Ordinance

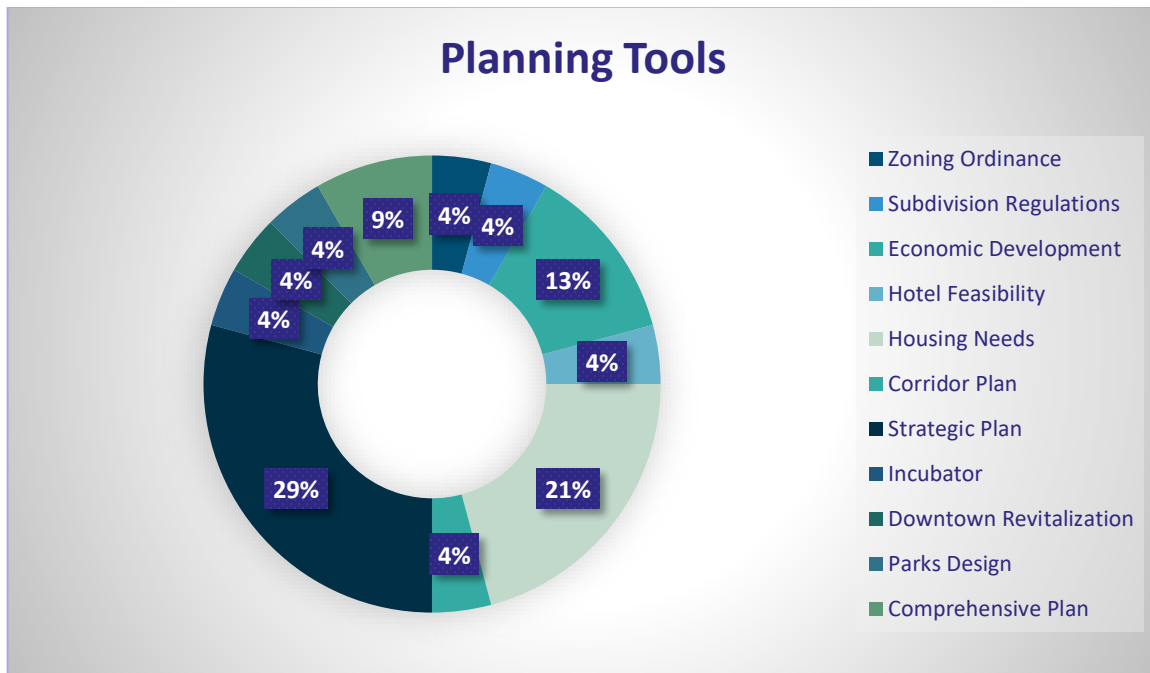
## Planning Partners

Who have you worked with in your planning process? (if a University, please specify under "other")

20 responses



## Future Planning Goals





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## Increase Community Engagement

Actual Plan Implementation	Increasing surveillance to mitigate crime	Increased retail
Comprehensive Master Plan	Regional Conferences	Tourism points-of-interest
Senior Centers/Joint Activities	Regional Meetings	In-house technical assistance

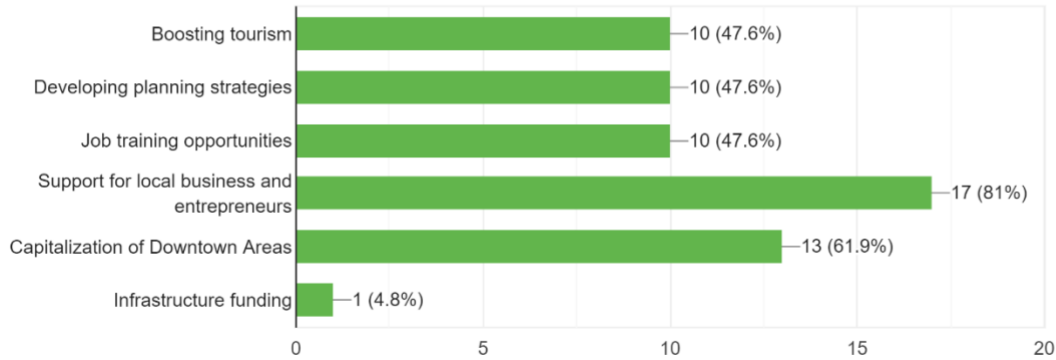
## Transportation Challenges

- Bike Access
- Public Transportation
- Disabled Transportation
- Elderly/Senior Transportation
- Pedestrian Access
- Medical/pharmaceutical needs
- Daycare Transportation
- Bus System
- Truckers

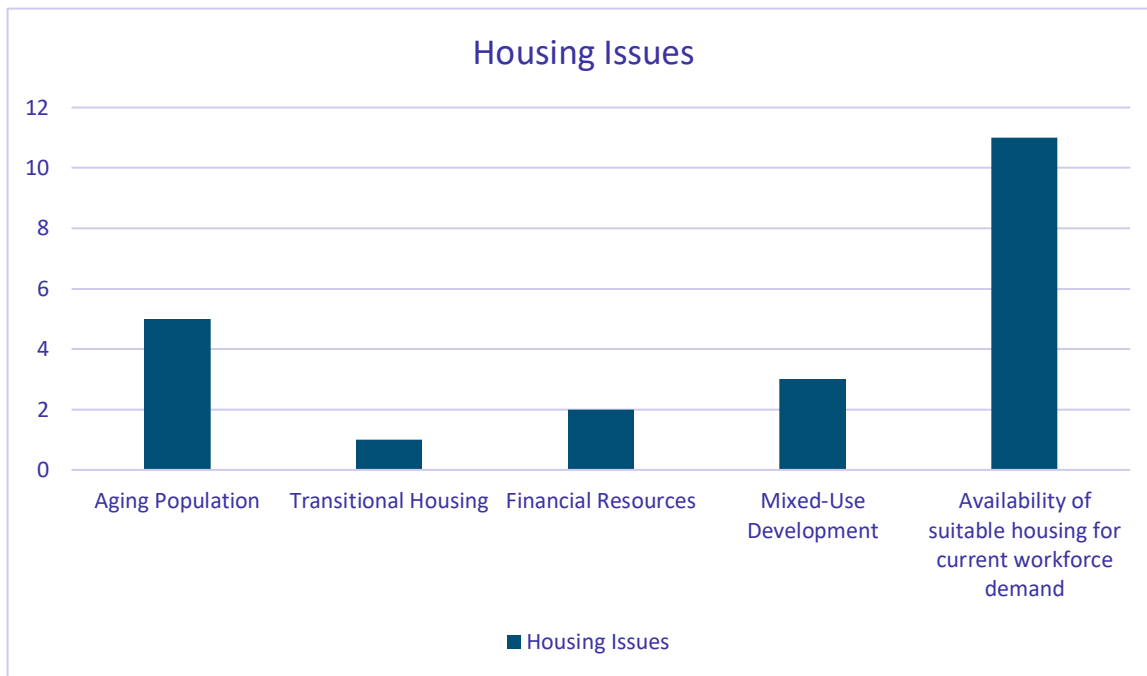
## Economic Competitiveness

Which could potentially offer the best economic competitiveness benefits to your area?

21 responses

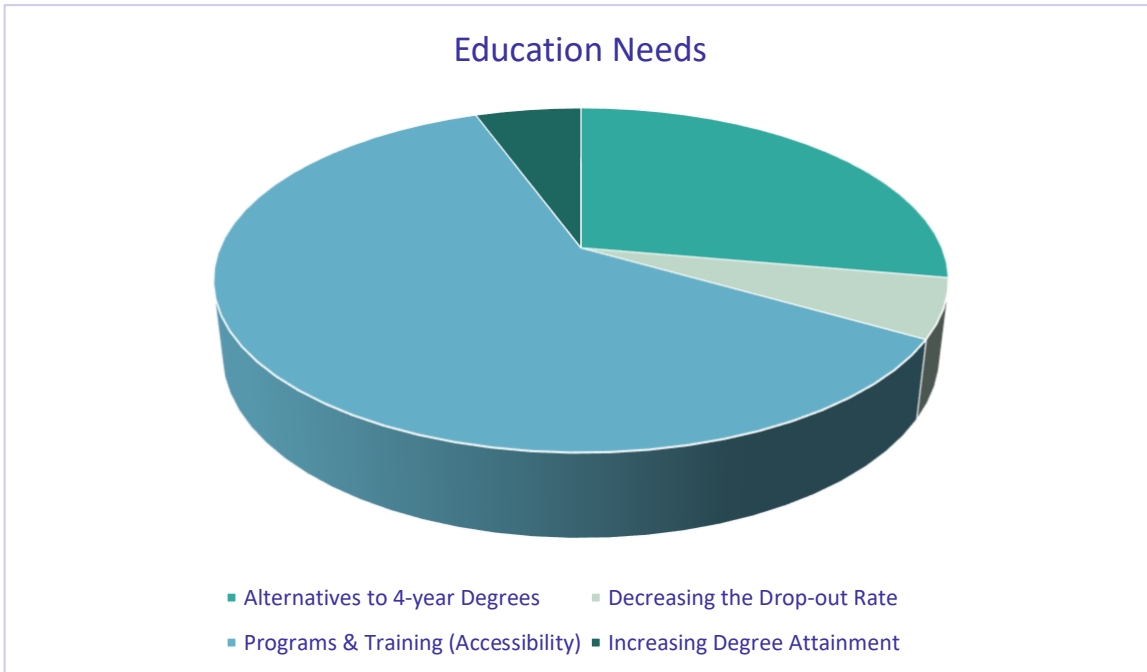


## Housing Issues



Other housing issues discussed in responses included the need for affordable housing for college students, and lack of room for new development.

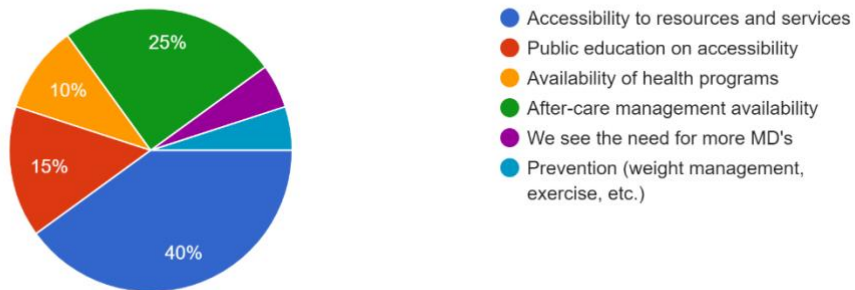
## Education



## Health

What health concern is there the most notable lack of in your area?

20 responses

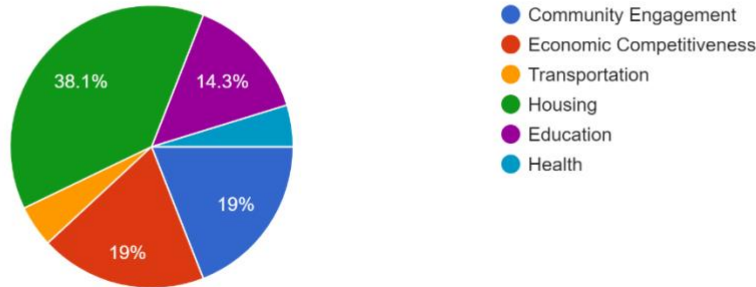


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## CEDS Goals Ranked

Of our CEDS goal sections, which presents the biggest challenge to your area?

21 responses



## CEDS Goals Challenges

Availability and access

COVID-19, the political climate, and lack of retail areas to congregate

Connections from existing transportation services to industry

Supply unable to meet demand (causing population loss)

Unused industrial sites and buildings need occupation

Lack of Housing

Lack of Emergency Medical Facilities

School System Student Retainment

Lack of General Education

Lack of Community Involvement

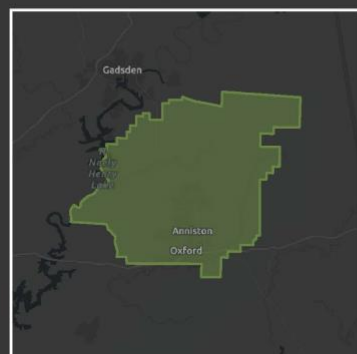
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**Appendix B: COVID Impact Reports, Community Profiles,  
Commute Profiles, and At-Risk Populations by County**



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Calhoun County, AL  
Geography: County



**115,233** Population  
**2.38** Avg Size Household  
**46,031** Households  
**39.9** Median Age  
**\$52,358** Median Household Income  
**\$142,133** Median Home Value  
**181** Housing Affordability  
**92%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**115,953** Daytime Population  
**3,802** Total Businesses  
**45,987** Total Employees

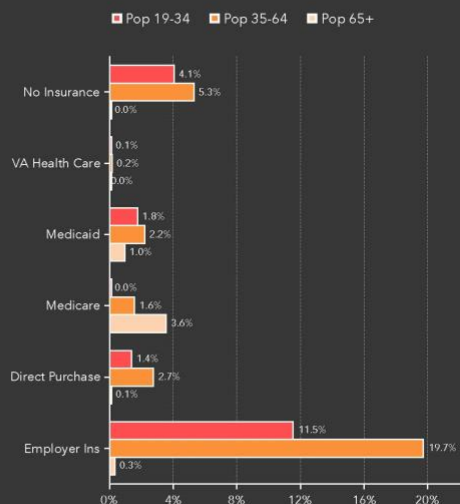
## POVERTY

**7,351** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**7,058** Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

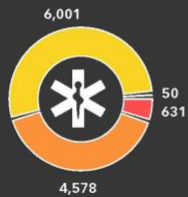
## AT RISK POPULATION

**16,413** Households With Disability  
**22,078** Population 65+  
**2,270** Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Legend: 0-18, 19-34, 35-64, Age 65+



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source: Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	17,275	66,559	19,703	103,528
Spanish	759	1,958	245	2,960
Spanish & English Well	688	1,378	154	2,370
Spanish & English Not Well	71	319	46	436
Indo-European	35	311	155	501
Indo-European & English Well	35	307	155	497
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	4	0	4
Asian-Pacific Island	38	434	142	614
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	38	311	105	454
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	123	37	160
Other Language	0	59	0	59
Other Language & English Well	0	59	0	59
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

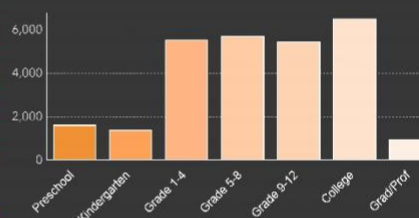
Calhoun County, AL

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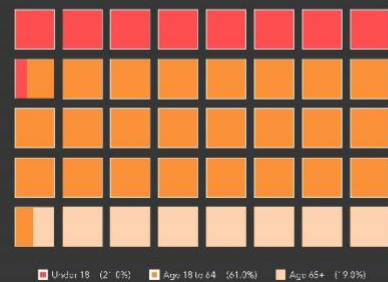
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	111,229
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	7,486
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	10,070
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	7,737
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	5,030
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	9,096
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	2,777
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	69,033

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



Legend: Under 18 (2.0%), Age 18 to 64 (61.0%), Age 65+ (37.0%)

## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

	Below	Above	Total
Total	7,351	37,221	44,572
Married Couple Families	946	19,734	20,680
Other Families w/Male Householder	215	1,776	1,991
Other Families w/Female Householder	1,949	4,500	6,449
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	1,663	5,247	6,910
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	2,578	5,964	8,542

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Population	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.6%	631
Population Age 19-34	4.1%	4,578
Population Age 35-64	5.3%	6,001
Population Age 65+	0.0%	50

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.2



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Chambers County, AL  
Geography: County



34,619 Population    2.37 Avg Size Household    14,215 Households    43.7 Median Age    \$50,870 Median Household Income    \$126,417 Median Home Value    199 Housing Affordability    88% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

29,013 Daytime Population    976 Total Businesses    8,957 Total Employees

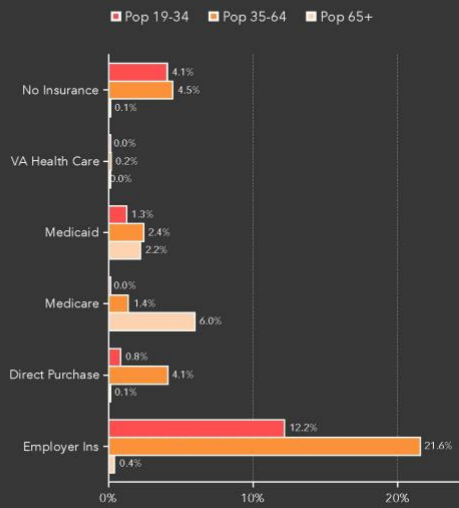
## POVERTY

2,212 Households Below the Poverty Level    2,188 Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

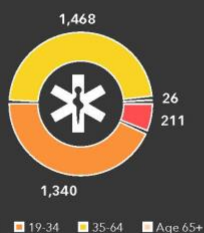
## AT RISK POPULATION

4,865 Households With Disability    7,505 Population 65+    1,000 Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)

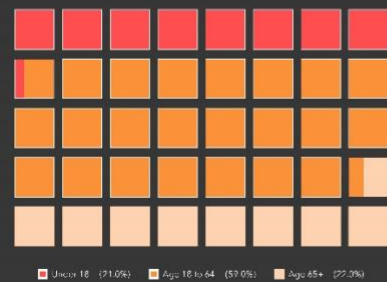


Sources: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020, Esri, Esri-MRIS-Simmons, Esri-Data Analysts, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRIS-Simmons, Esri-Data Analysts, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	4,872	19,244	6,452	30,568
Spanish	80	333	3	416
Spanish & English Well	80	258	3	341
Spanish & English Not Well	0	75	0	75
Indo-European	0	147	37	184
Indo-European & English Well	0	74	10	157
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	21	21
Asian-Pacific Island	0	227	38	265
Asian-Pacific Island & English Well	0	218	38	256
Asian-Pacific Island & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language	10	0	0	10
Other Language & English Well	10	0	0	10
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0

## POPULATION BY AGE



Under 18 (21.0%)    Age 18 to 64 (59.0%)    Age 65+ (22.0%)



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

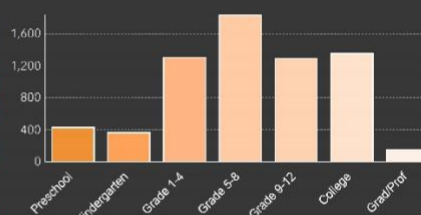
Chambers County, AL

34,619 Population    2.37 Avg Size Household    14,215 Households    43.7 Median Age    \$50,870 Median Household Income    \$126,417 Median Home Value    199 Housing Affordability    88% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Category	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	32,875
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	1,628
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	3,434
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	2,232
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	1,983
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	3,504
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	1,388
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	18,706

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



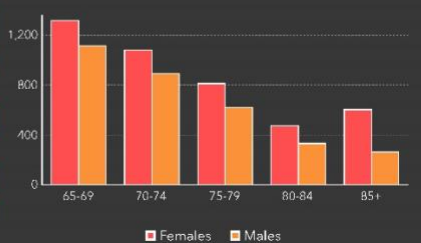
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	2,212	11,370	13,582
Married Couple Families	251	5,710	5,961
Other Families w/Male Householder	79	886	965
Other Families w/Female Householder	635	1,560	2,195
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	504	1,575	2,079
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	743	1,639	2,382

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Category	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.6%	211
Population Age 19-34	4.1%	1,340
Population Age 35-64	4.5%	1,468
Population Age 65+	0.1%	26

## SENIOR POPULATION



Sources: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020, Esri, Esri-MRIS-Simmons, Esri-Data Analysts, ACS

Version 11





# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Cherokee County, AL  
Geography: County



**24,634** Population  
**2.36** Avg Size Household  
**10,303** Households  
**46.7** Median Age  
**\$49,390** Median Household Income  
**\$144,919** Median Home Value  
**169** Housing Affordability  
**90%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**20,833** Daytime Population  
**698** Total Businesses  
**5,167** Total Employees

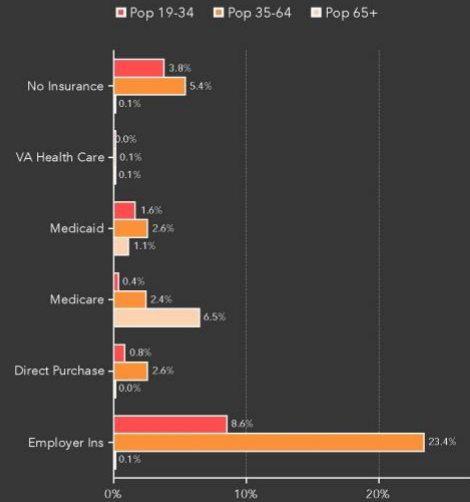
## POVERTY

**1,688** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**1,455** Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

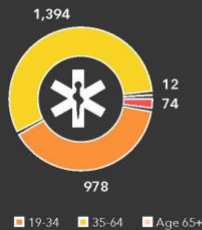
## AT RISK POPULATION

**3,295** Households With Disability  
**5,732** Population 65+  
**343** Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Aisle, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Aisle, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
<b>English Only</b>	3,748	14,567	5,911	24,226
<b>Spanish</b>	101	407	39	537
Spanish & English Well	75	70	29	274
Spanish & English Not Well	26	63	0	189
<b>Indo-European</b>	0	42	13	55
Indo-European & English Well	0	42	1	43
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	12	12
<b>Asian-Pacific Island</b>	0	35	16	51
Asian-Pacific & English Well	0	35	16	51
Asian-Pacific & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
<b>Other Language</b>	26	12	0	38
Other Language & English Well	26	12	0	38
Other Ling. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

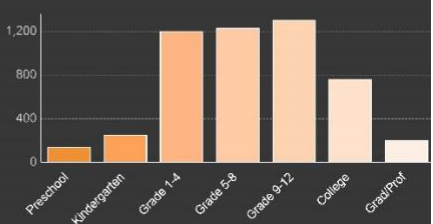
Cherokee County, AL

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**2.36** Avg Size Household  
**10,303** Households  
**46.7** Median Age  
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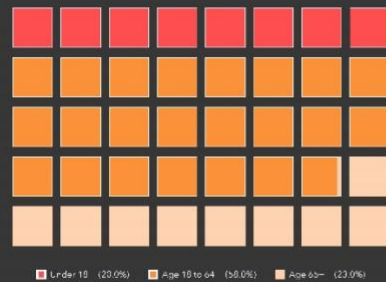
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Category	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	25,680
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	973
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	2,349
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	2,102
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	1,238
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	2,470
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	666
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	15,882

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



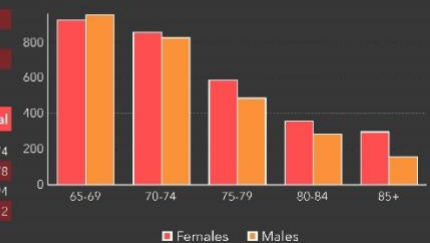
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	1,688	9,148	10,836
Married Couple Families	544	5,552	6,096
Other Families w/Male Householder	9	403	412
Other Families w/Female Householder	306	571	877
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	498	1,367	1,865
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	331	1,255	1,586

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS) %

Category	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.3%	74
Population Age 19-34	3.8%	978
Population Age 35-64	5.4%	1,394
Population Age 65+	0.1%	12

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Aisle, ACS

Version 1.12





# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Clay County, AL  
Geography: County



14,295 Population    2.35 Avg Size Household    5,972 Households    44.8 Median Age    \$44,986 Median Household Income    \$129,000 Median Home Value    177 Housing Affordability    87% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

12,971 Daytime Population    313 Total Businesses    4,521 Total Employees

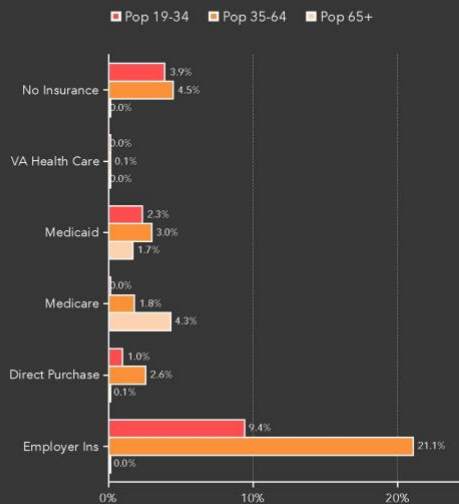
## POVERTY

942 Households Below the Poverty Level    619 Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

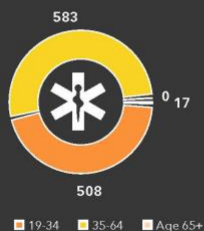
## AT RISK POPULATION

1,953 Households With Disability    3,140 Population 65+    287 Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source: Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	1,939	7,619	2,694	12,272
Spanish	54	222	12	288
Spanish & English Well	51	213	12	279
Spanish & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Indo-European	0	3	0	3
Indo-European & English Well	0	3	0	3
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

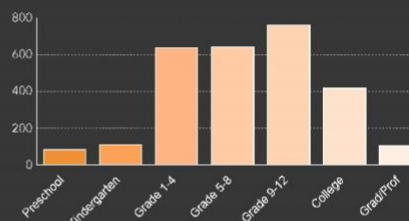
Clay County, AL

14,295 Population    2.35 Avg Size Household    5,972 Households    44.8 Median Age    \$44,986 Median Household Income    \$129,000 Median Home Value    177 Housing Affordability    87% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Category	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	13,002
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	631
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	1,387
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	727
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	940
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	1,390
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	500
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	7,427

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



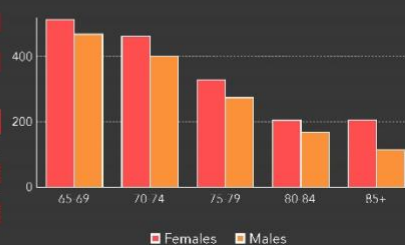
## POPULATION BY AGE



## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	942	4,211	5,153
Married Couple Families	123	2,621	2,744
Other Families w/Male Householder	46	175	221
Other Families w/Female Householder	293	420	713
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	167	501	668
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	313	494	807

## SENIOR POPULATION



## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Category	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.1%	17
Population Age 19-34	3.9%	508
Population Age 35-64	4.5%	583
Population Age 65+	0.0%	0



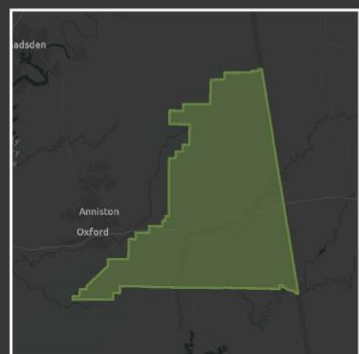
Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.1



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Cleburne County, AL  
Geography: County



**15,013** Population    **2.45** Avg Size Household    **6,058** Households    **42.8** Median Age    **\$48,426** Median Household Income    **\$136,660** Median Home Value    **177** Housing Affordability    **90%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**11,886** Daytime Population    **345** Total Businesses    **2,709** Total Employees

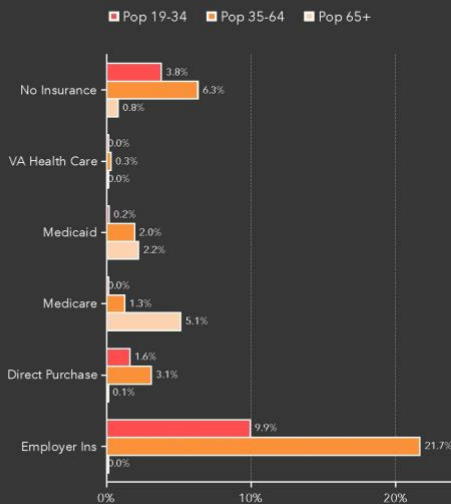
## POVERTY

**1,061** Households Below the Poverty Level    **738** Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

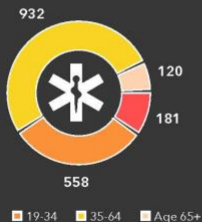
## AT RISK POPULATION

**2,280** Households With Disability    **3,087** Population 65+    **354** Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source: Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	2,405	8,284	3,957	13,746
Spanish	77	187	14	278
Spanish & English Well	71	172	14	197
Spanish & English Not Well	0	65	0	68
Indo-European	0	37	3	40
Indo-European & English Well	0	37	3	40
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

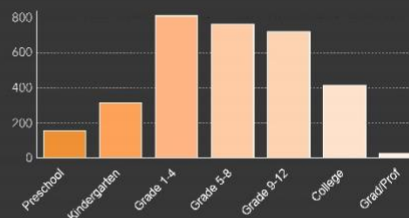
Cleburne County, AL

**15,013** Population    **2.45** Avg Size Household    **6,058** Households    **42.8** Median Age    **\$48,426** Median Household Income    **\$136,660** Median Home Value    **177** Housing Affordability    **90%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Category	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	14,736
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	689
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	1,606
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	711
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	1,011
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	1,361
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	363
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	8,995

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



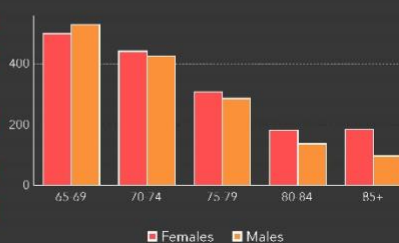
## POPULATION BY AGE



## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	1,061	4,774	5,835
Married Couple Families	168	2,887	3,055
Other Families w/Male Householder	33	102	135
Other Families w/Female Householder	125	475	600
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	149	534	683
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	586	776	1,362

## SENIOR POPULATION



## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Category	(ACS)	%	Total
Population <19	1.2%	181	
Population Age 19-34	3.8%	558	
Population Age 35-64	6.3%	932	
Population Age 65+	0.8%	120	



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.2



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Coosa County, AL  
Geography: County



10,106 Population    2.25 Avg Size Household    4,357 Households    47.5 Median Age    \$45,722 Median Household Income    \$106,429 Median Home Value    217 Housing Affordability    88% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

7,501 Daytime Population    204 Total Businesses    1,689 Total Employees

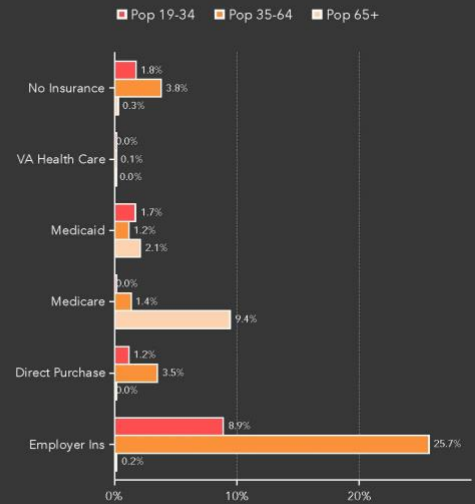
## POVERTY

518 Households Below the Poverty Level    415 Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

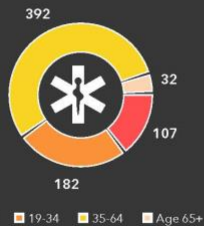
## AT RISK POPULATION

1,602 Households With Disability    2,354 Population 65+    90 Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)

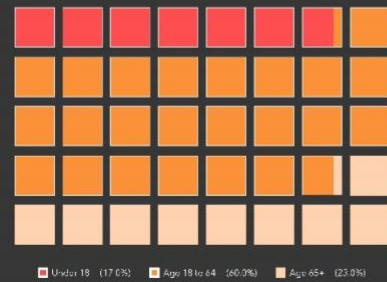


Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source: Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	1,299	6,312	2,490	10,101
Spanish	0	71	7	78
Spanish & English Well	0	31	7	38
Spanish & English Not Well	0	40	0	40
Indo-European	0	9	0	9
Indo-European & English Well	0	9	0	9
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	44	0	44
Other Language & English Well	0	44	0	44
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0

## POPULATION BY AGE



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

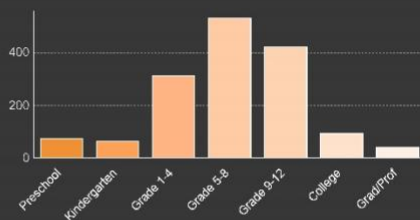
Coosa County, AL

10,106 Population    2.25 Avg Size Household    4,357 Households    47.5 Median Age    \$45,722 Median Household Income    \$106,429 Median Home Value    217 Housing Affordability    88% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	10,267
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	500
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	783
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	538
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	657
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	989
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	305
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	6,495

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



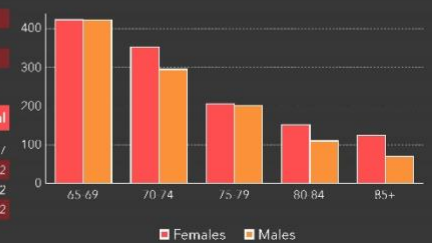
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	518	3,498	4,016
Married Couple Families	81	1,912	1,993
Other Families w/Male Householder	21	145	166
Other Families w/Female Householder	116	329	445
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	116	631	747
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	184	481	665

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Population	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	1.0%	107
Population Age 19-34	1.8%	182
Population Age 35-64	3.8%	392
Population Age 65+	0.3%	32

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

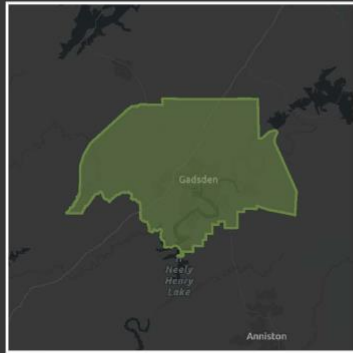
Version: 1.2





# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Etowah County, AL  
Geography: County



102,879 Population    2.42 Avg Size Household    41,800 Households    43.5 Median Age    \$45,103 Median Household Income    \$155,433 Median Home Value    143 Housing Affordability    92% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

99,752 Daytime Population    3,464 Total Businesses    39,893 Total Employees

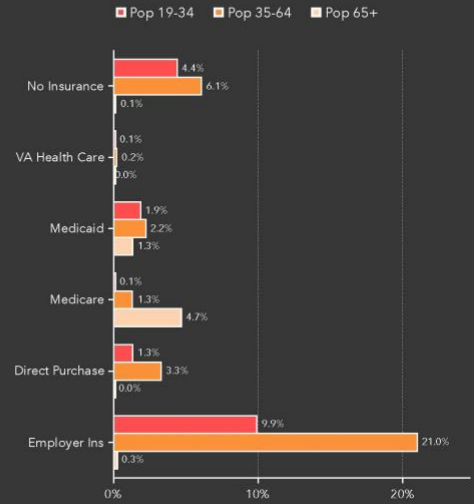
## POVERTY

6,333 Households Below the Poverty Level    5,537 Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

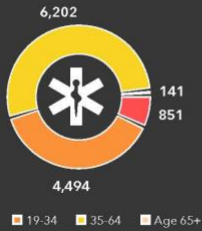
## AT RISK POPULATION

12,705 Households With Disability    22,262 Population 65+    2,234 Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)

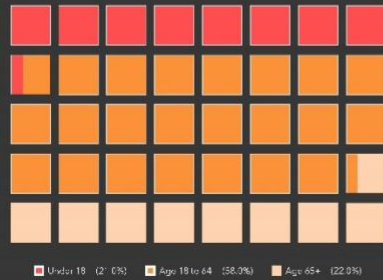


Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRIS/Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRIS/Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	15,099	53,222	19,132	92,469
Spanish	762	1,959	168	2,889
Spanish & English Well	753	1,343	134	2,230
Spanish & English Not Well	9	410	26	445
Indo-European	98	367	142	605
Indo-European & English Well	35	241	142	418
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	61	68	0	129
Asian-Pacific Island	35	338	71	444
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	35	297	71	383
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	62	0	62
Other Language	141	191	0	332
Other Language & English Well	141	181	0	322
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	10	0	10

## POPULATION BY AGE



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

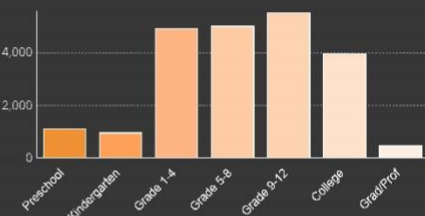
Etowah County, AL

102,879 Population    2.42 Avg Size Household    41,800 Households    43.5 Median Age    \$45,103 Median Household Income    \$155,433 Median Home Value    143 Housing Affordability    92% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	101,456
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	6,589
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	9,610
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	6,063
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	4,475
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	8,103
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	3,156
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	63,460

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



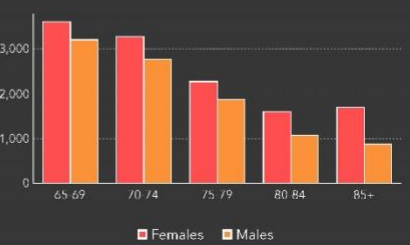
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	6,333	32,432	38,765
Married Couple Families	1,041	17,041	18,082
Other Families w/Male Householder	265	1,164	1,429
Other Families w/Female Householder	1,920	3,952	5,872
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	1,092	4,712	5,804
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	2,015	5,563	7,578

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Category	(ACS)	%	Total
Population <19	0.8%	851	
Population Age 19-34	4.4%	4,494	
Population Age 35-64	6.1%	6,202	
Population Age 65+	0.1%	141	

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRIS/Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.0



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Randolph County, AL  
Geography: County



**21,756** Population  
**2.41** Avg Size Household  
**8,873** Households  
**43.4** Median Age  
**\$48,449** Median Household Income  
**\$129,610** Median Home Value  
**188** Housing Affordability  
**89%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**19,304** Daytime Population  
**694** Total Businesses  
**5,641** Total Employees

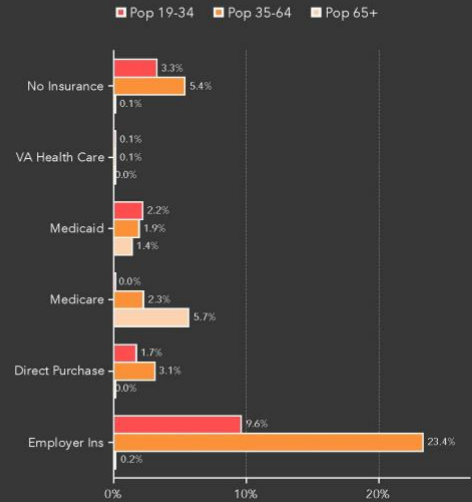
## POVERTY

**1,765** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**1,422** Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

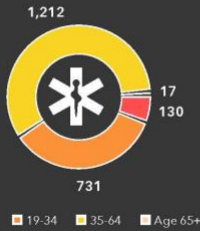
## AT RISK POPULATION

**2,839** Households With Disability  
**4,655** Population 65+  
**406** Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	3,303	12,899	4,643	20,845
Spanish	159	219	34	412
Spanish & English Well	159	191	34	384
Spanish & English Not Well	0	28	0	28
Indo-European	38	117	13	168
Indo-European & English Well	38	107	3	148
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	10	10	20
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

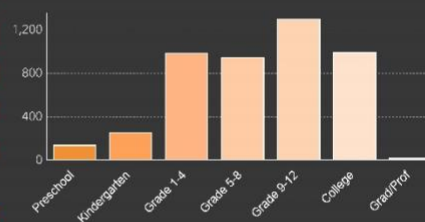
Randolph County, AL

**21,756** Population  
**2.41** Avg Size Household  
**8,873** Households  
**43.4** Median Age  
**\$48,449** Median Household Income  
**\$129,610** Median Home Value  
**188** Housing Affordability  
**89%** Internet at Home

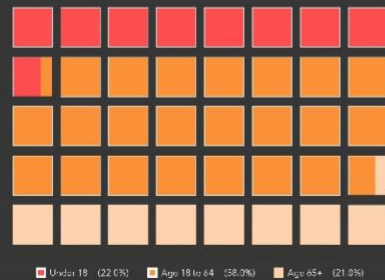
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	22,180
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	1,899
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	2,266
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	774
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	771
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	2,324
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	884
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	13,262

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



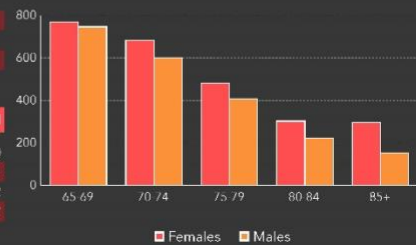
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	1,765	6,890	8,655
Married Couple Families	394	4,064	4,458
Other Families w/Male Householder	139	326	465
Other Families w/Female Householder	409	797	1,206
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	278	972	1,250
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	545	731	1,276

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Age Group	Percentage	Total
Population <19	0.6%	130
Population Age 19-34	3.3%	731
Population Age 35-64	5.4%	1,212
Population Age 65+	0.1%	17

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.1



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Talladega County, AL  
Geography: County



81,857 Population    2.37 Avg Size Household    33,142 Households    41.9 Median Age    \$54,540 Median Household Income    \$137,192 Median Home Value    197 Housing Affordability    89% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES



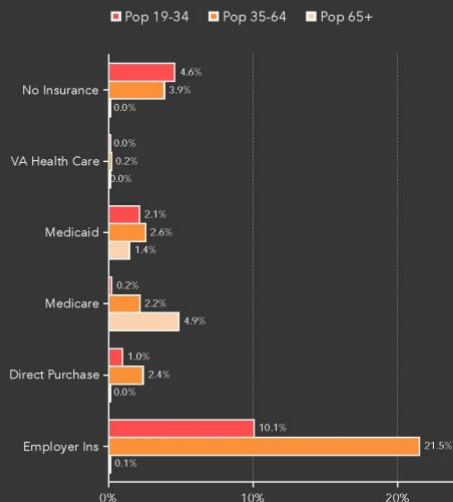
## POVERTY



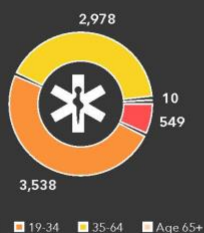
## AT RISK POPULATION



## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	12,152	47,069	14,113	73,323
Spanish	424	1,259	34	1,707
Spanish & English Well	403	1,024	24	1,451
Spanish & English Not Well	21	187	0	208
Indo-European	126	365	47	538
Indo-European & English Well	126	304	38	468
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	61	9	70
Asian-Pacific Island	0	134	26	160
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	79	18	97
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	55	8	63
Other Language	0	130	95	225
Other Language & English Well	0	120	95	215
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	10	0	10



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

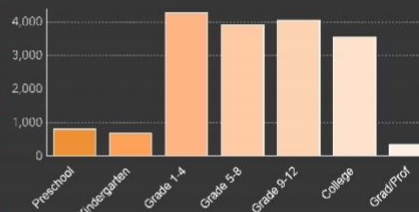
Talladega County, AL

81,857 Population    2.37 Avg Size Household    33,142 Households    41.9 Median Age    \$54,540 Median Household Income    \$137,192 Median Home Value    197 Housing Affordability    89% Internet at Home

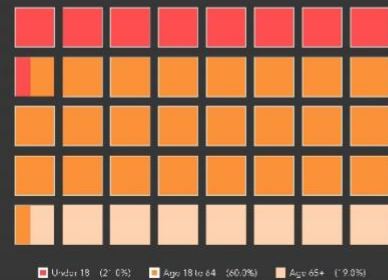
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	76,675
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	6,364
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	7,314
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	5,101
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	5,020
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	6,430
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	2,632
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	43,024

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	5,869	25,872	31,741
Married Couple Families	829	13,243	14,072
Other Families w/Male Householder	272	1,310	1,582
Other Families w/Female Householder	1,979	3,260	5,239
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	1,151	4,117	5,268
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	1,638	3,942	5,580

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Population	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.7%	549
Population Age 19-34	4.6%	3,538
Population Age 35-64	3.9%	2,978
Population Age 65+	0.0%	10

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.3





# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Tallapoosa County, AL  
Geography: County



**41,154** Population    **2.33** Avg Size Household    **17,385** Households    **45.8** Median Age    **\$53,492** Median Household Income    **\$148,523** Median Home Value    **180** Housing Affordability    **90%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**39,716** Daytime Population    **1,459** Total Businesses    **13,922** Total Employees

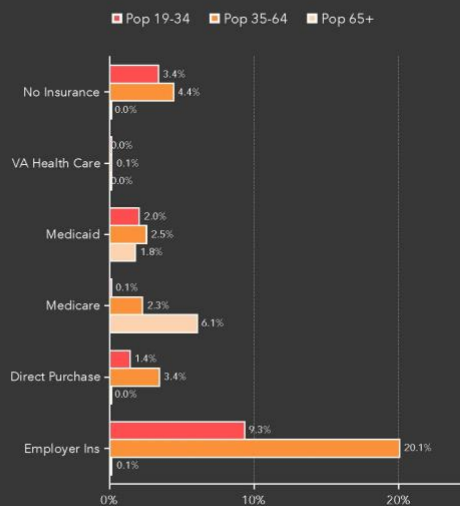
## POVERTY

**2,685** Households Below the Poverty Level    **2,956** Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

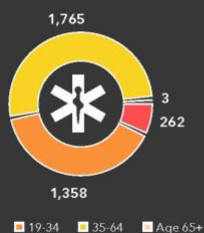
## AT RISK POPULATION

**6,273** Households With Disability    **9,567** Population 65+    **1,296** Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
<b>English Only</b>	5,836	22,814	8,555	37,203
<b>Spanish</b>	340	491	6	837
Spanish & English Well	300	360	6	666
Spanish & English Not Well	40	90	0	130
<b>Indo-European</b>	0	63	88	151
Indo-European & English Well	0	54	85	142
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	9	0	9
<b>Asian-Pacific Island</b>	12	38	1	51
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	12	32	1	45
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	6	0	6
<b>Other Language</b>	0	12	0	12
Other Language & English Well	0	12	0	12
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

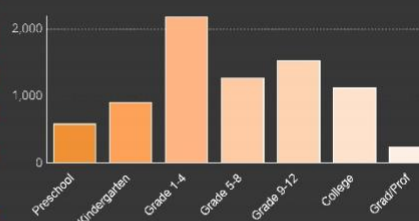
Tallapoosa County, AL

**41,154** Population    **2.33** Avg Size Household    **17,385** Households    **45.8** Median Age    **\$53,492** Median Household Income    **\$148,523** Median Home Value    **180** Housing Affordability    **90%** Internet at Home

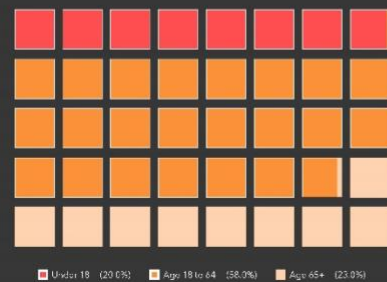
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	39,879
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	3,052
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	3,520
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	2,375
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	2,120
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	3,627
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	1,651
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	23,534

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



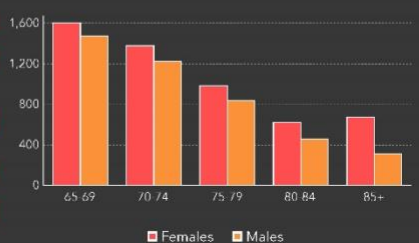
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	2,685	13,674	16,359
Married Couple Families	332	7,314	7,646
Other Families w/Male Householder	147	167	314
Other Families w/Female Householder	1,000	1,478	2,478
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	515	1,757	2,272
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	691	2,358	3,049

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Population	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.7%	262
Population Age 19-34	3.4%	1,358
Population Age 35-64	4.4%	1,765
Population Age 65+	0.0%	3

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.3

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Calhoun County, AL

115,233 -0.46% 2.38 51.9 39.9 \$52,358 \$142,133 \$103,988 19.8% 61% 22,078  
Population Total Population Growth Average HH Size Diversity Index Median Age Median HH Income Median Home Value Median Net Worth Age <18 Age 18-64 Age 65+



16.2%  
Services

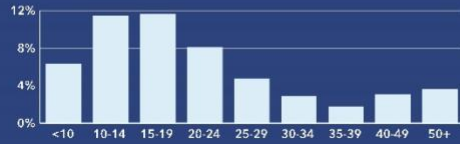


31.6%  
Blue Collar



52.2%  
White Collar

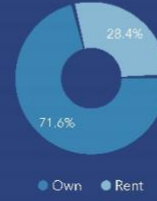
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



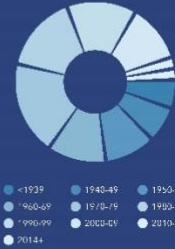
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



Housing: Year Built



Home Value



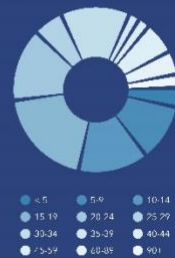
Household Income



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT WE KNOW  
Sources: Esri, ACI  
Est. forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Chambers County, AL

34,619 -0.20% 2.37 58.8 43.7 \$50,870 \$126,417 \$93,462 19.5% 59% 7,505  
Population Total Population Growth Average HH Size Diversity Index Median Age Median HH Income Median Home Value Median Net Worth Age <18 Age 18-64 Age 65+



11.9%  
Services

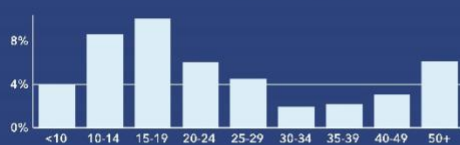


42.4%  
Blue Collar

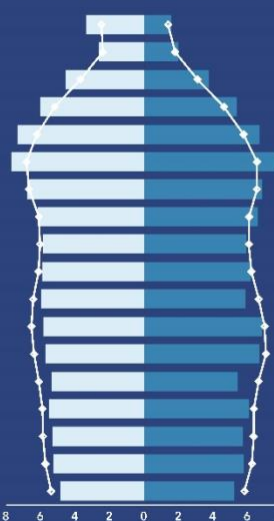


45.7%  
White Collar

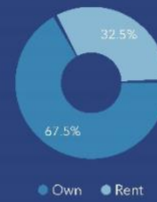
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



Housing: Year Built



Home Value



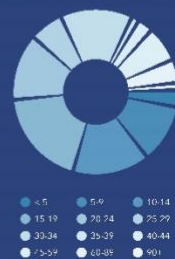
Household Income



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT WE KNOW  
Sources: Esri, ACI  
Est. forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama



# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Cherokee County, AL

24,634   -0.60%   2.36   20.0   46.7   \$49,390   \$144,919   \$132,816   18.7%   58%   5,732  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



12.6%  
Services

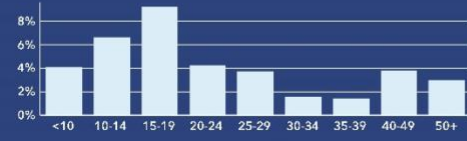


41.0%  
Blue Collar

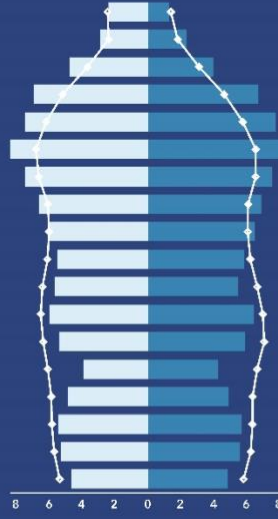


46.4%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



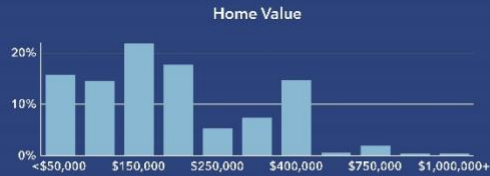
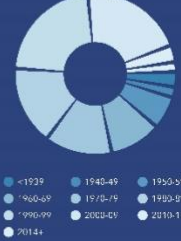
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



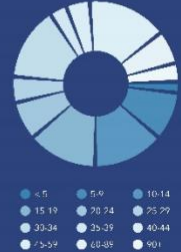
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WATER  
 Sources: Esri, ACI  
 Esri forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Clay County, AL

14,295   0.18%   2.35   38.5   44.8   \$44,986   \$129,000   \$110,391   19.2%   59%   3,140  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



11.6%  
Services

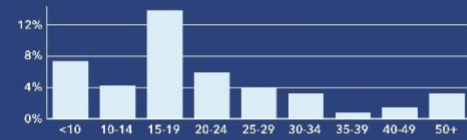


48.5%  
Blue Collar

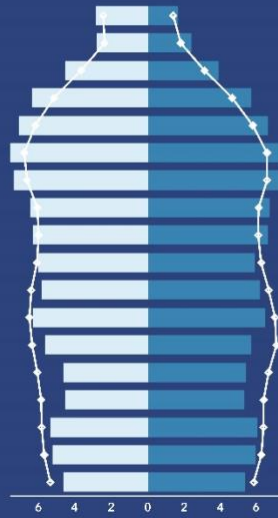


39.9%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



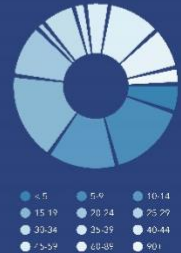
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WATER  
 Sources: Esri, ACI  
 Esri forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Cleburne County, AL

15,013   -0.13%   2.45   19.1   42.8   \$48,426   \$136,660   \$116,875   21.2%   58%   3,087  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



10.3%  
Services

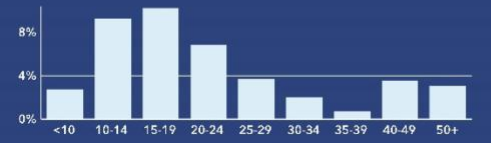


40.3%  
Blue Collar

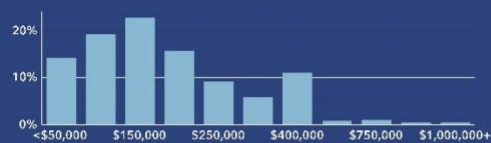


49.4%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



Home Value



Household Income



Age Profile: 5 Year Increments

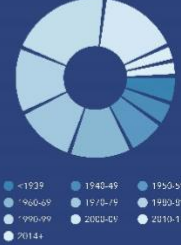


Dots show comparison to Alabama

Home Ownership



Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE  
 Sources: Esri, AEC  
 File: forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Coosa County, AL

10,106   -1.21%   2.25   50.7   47.5   \$45,722   \$106,429   \$127,858   16.5%   60%   2,354  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



18.4%  
Services

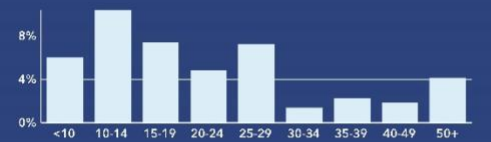


41.1%  
Blue Collar

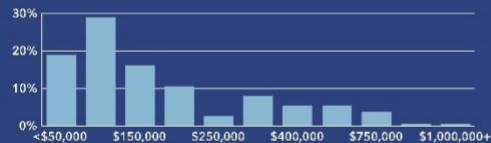


40.4%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



Home Value



Household Income



Age Profile: 5 Year Increments

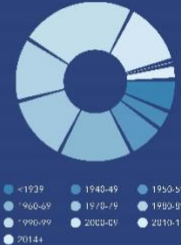


Dots show comparison to Alabama

Home Ownership



Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE  
 Sources: Esri, AEC  
 File: forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Etowah County, AL

102,879 -0.24% 2.42 45.9 43.5 \$45,103 \$155,433 \$101,562 20.1% 58% 22,262  
Population Total Population Growth Average HH Size Diversity Index Median Age Median HH Income Median Home Value Median Net Worth Age <18 Age 18-64 Age 65+



17.2%  
Services

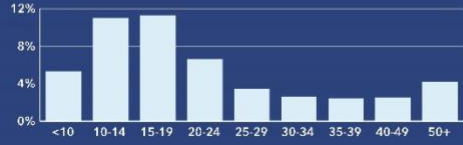


31.8%  
Blue Collar

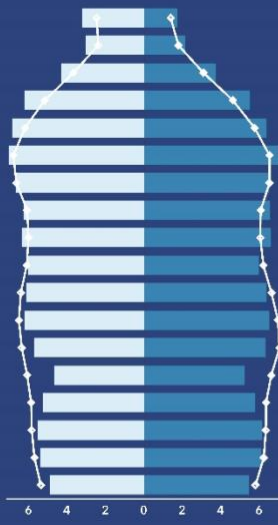


51.0%  
White Collar

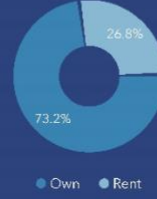
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



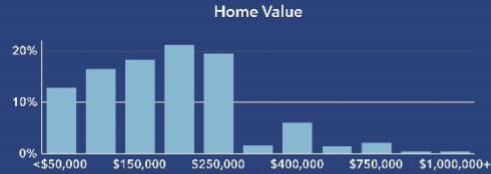
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



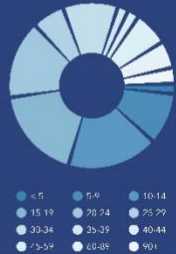
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE  
Sources: Esri, ACI  
Est. forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Randolph County, AL

21,756 -0.43% 2.41 42.2 43.4 \$48,449 \$129,610 \$107,130 20.6% 58% 4,655  
Population Total Population Growth Average HH Size Diversity Index Median Age Median HH Income Median Home Value Median Net Worth Age <18 Age 18-64 Age 65+



12.0%  
Services

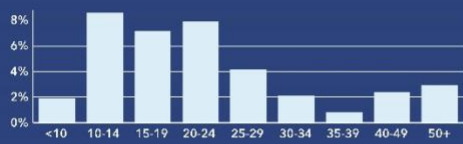


44.4%  
Blue Collar

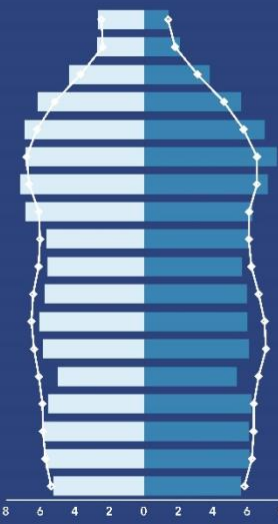


43.6%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



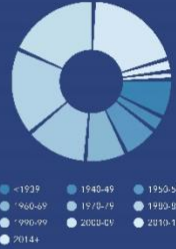
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



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Sources: Esri, ACI  
Est. forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama



# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Talladega County, AL

81,857   -0.16%   2.37   53.0   41.9   \$54,540   \$137,192   \$103,467   20.3%   60%   15,852  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



14.1%  
Services

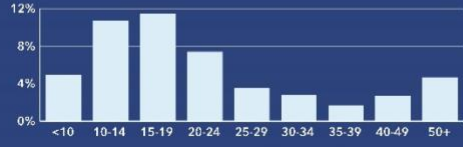


36.4%  
Blue Collar

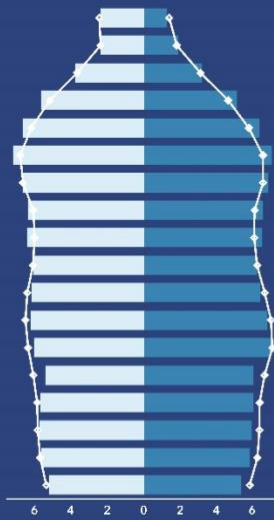


49.5%  
White Collar

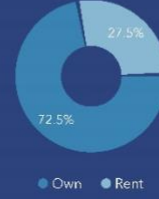
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



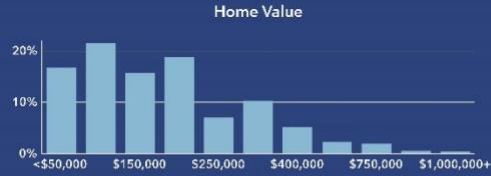
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



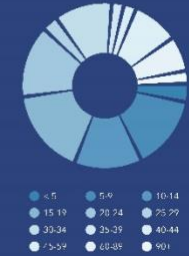
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE  
 Sources: Esri, AEC  
 Esri forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Tallapoosa County, AL

41,154   -0.17%   2.33   49.2   45.8   \$53,492   \$148,523   \$123,344   18.9%   58%   9,567  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



13.1%  
Services

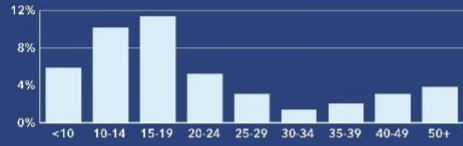


38.8%  
Blue Collar



48.1%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



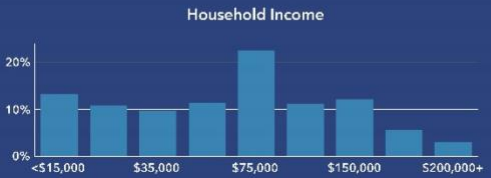
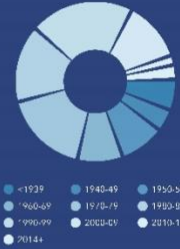
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



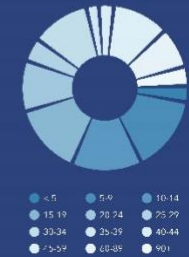
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE  
 Sources: Esri, AEC  
 Esri forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

# COMMUTE PROFILE

Calhoun County, AL  
 Geography: County

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



47,349

ACS Workers Age 16+



84.6%

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



0.6%

Took Public Transportation



10.4%

Carpooled



1.2%

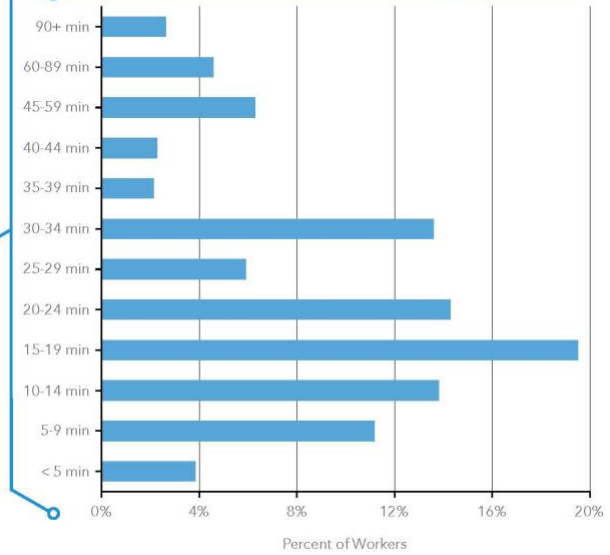
Walked to Work



0.0%

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

**Chambers County, AL**  
**Geography: County**

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



**14,187**

ACS Workers Age 16+



**87.4%**

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



**0.2%**

Took Public Transportation



**9.1%**

Carpooled



**0.8%**

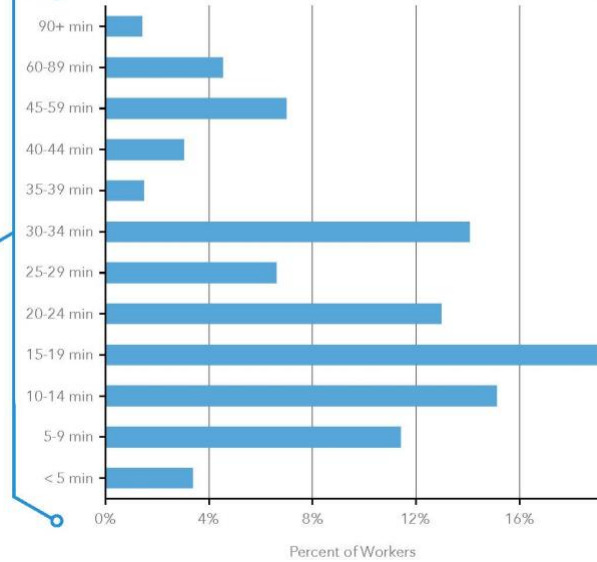
Walked to Work



**0.0%**

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

**Cherokee County, AL**  
**Geography: County**

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



**10,206**

ACS Workers Age 16+



**86.0%**

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



**0.2%**

Took Public Transportation



**9.8%**

Carpooled



**0.6%**

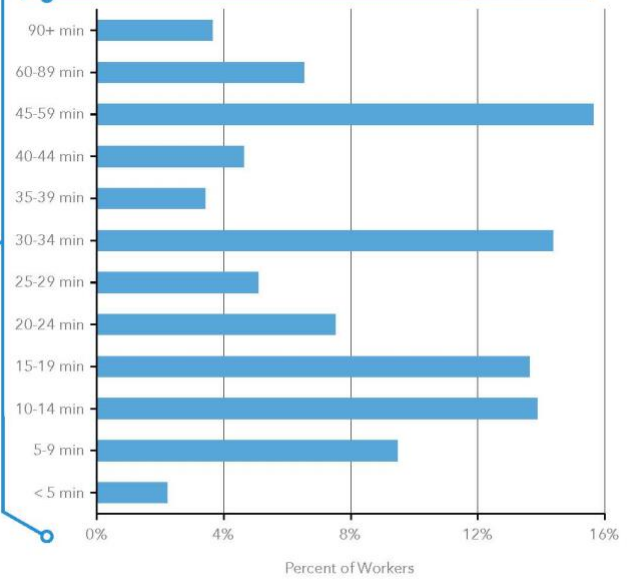
Walked to Work



**0.0%**

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

Clay County, AL  
 Geography: County

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



5,285

ACS Workers Age 16+



89.4%

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



0.0%

Took Public Transportation



4.7%

Carpooled



0.7%

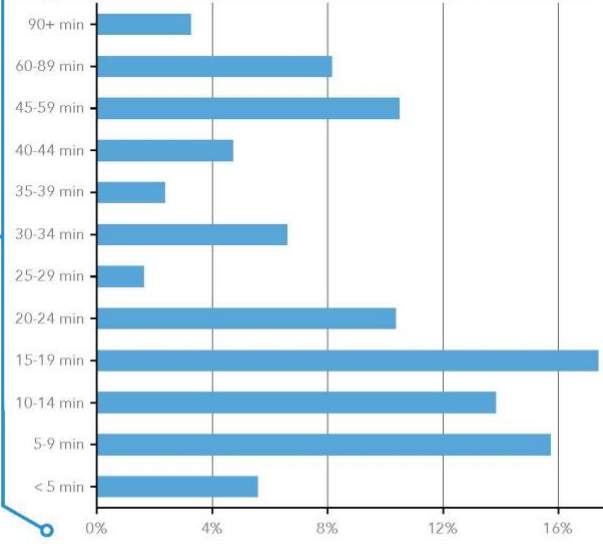
Walked to Work



0.0%

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



Percent of Workers

This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

Cleburne County, AL  
 Geography: County

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



5,697

ACS Workers Age 16+



86.2%

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



0.0%

Took Public Transportation



9.8%

Carpooled



0.7%

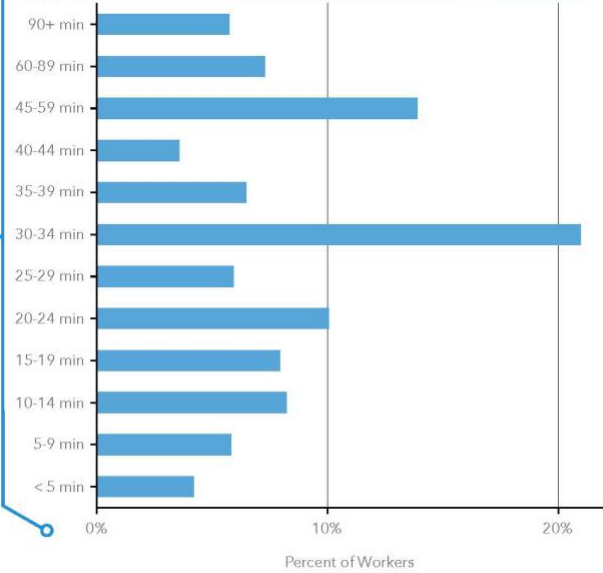
Walked to Work



0.0%

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

**Coosa County, AL**  
**Geography: County**

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



**4,077**

ACS Workers Age 16+



**79.4%**

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



**0.0%**

Took Public Transportation



**12.3%**

Carpooled



**1.6%**

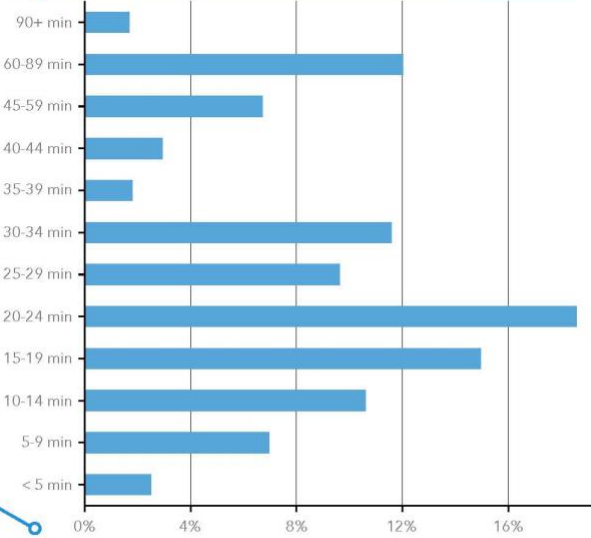
Walked to Work



**0.0%**

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



Percent of Workers

This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

**Etowah County, AL**  
**Geography: County**

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



**42,147**

ACS Workers Age 16+



**88.0%**

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



**0.1%**

Took Public Transportation



**7.6%**

Carpooled



**0.8%**

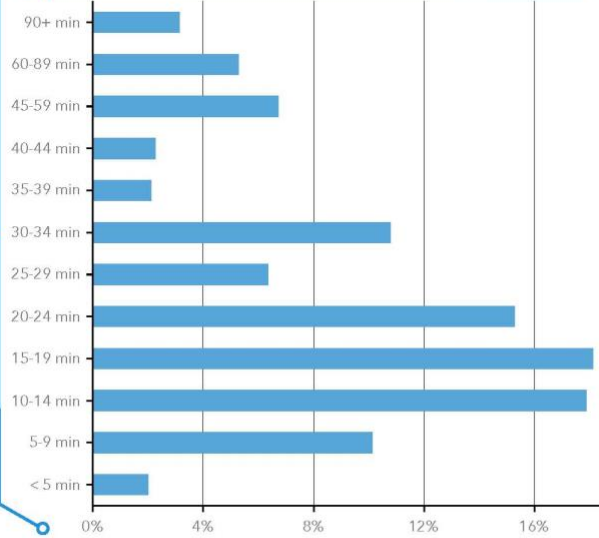
Walked to Work



**0.0%**

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



Percent of Workers

This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

**Randolph County, AL**  
**Geography: County**

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



**8,698**

ACS Workers Age 16+



**87.1%**

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



**1.4%**

Took Public Transportation



**7.2%**

Carpooled



**0.4%**

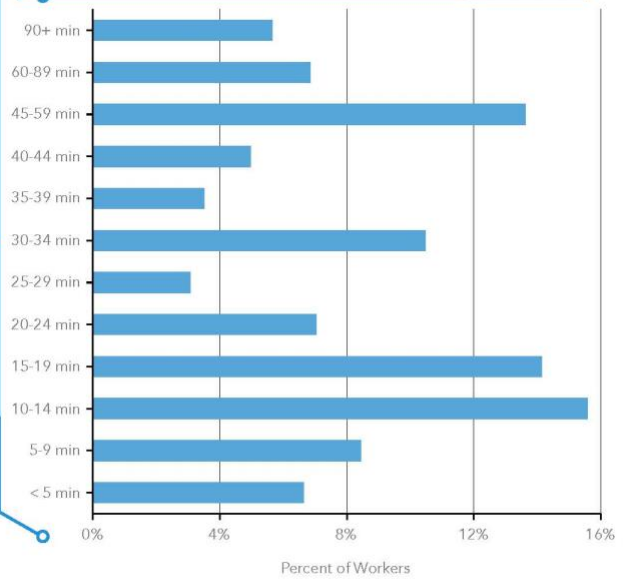
Walked to Work



**0.0%**

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

Talladega County, AL  
 Geography: County

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



31,257

ACS Workers Age 16+



84.0%

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



0.2%

Took Public Transportation



10.3%

Carpooled



1.1%

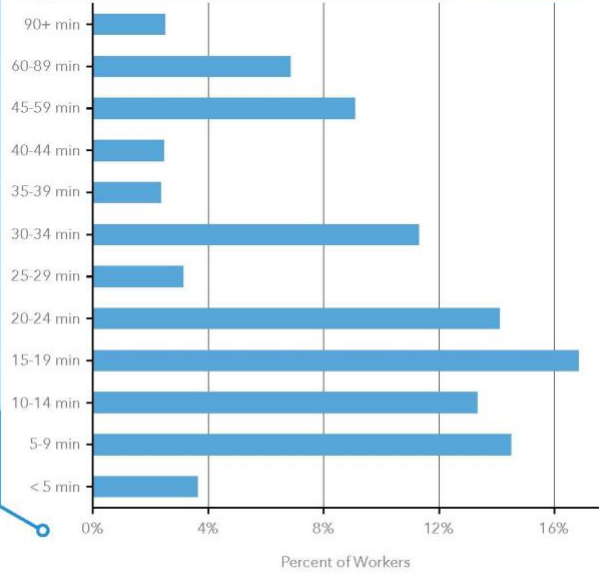
Walked to Work



0.1%

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

Tallapoosa County, AL  
 Geography: County

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



15,269

ACS Workers Age 16+



84.5%

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



0.3%

Took Public Transportation



10.7%

Carpoled



0.9%

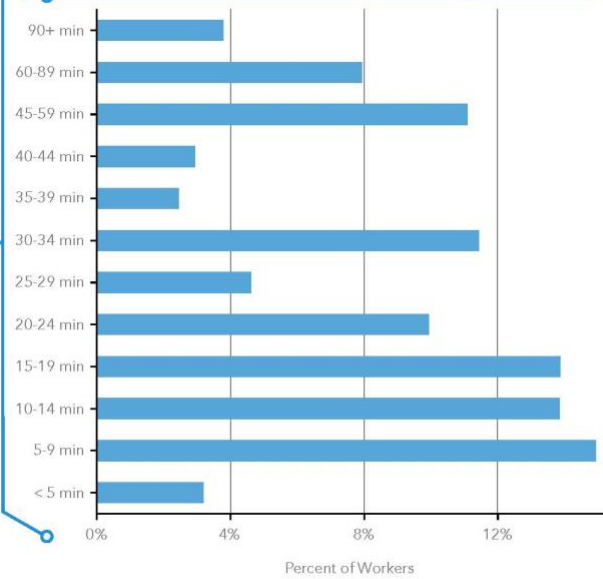
Walked to Work



0.0%

Bike to Work

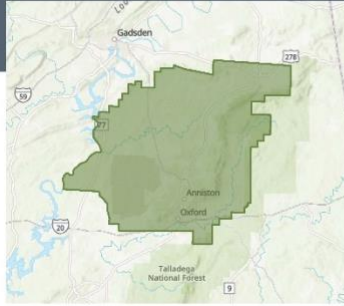
## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Calhoun County, AL



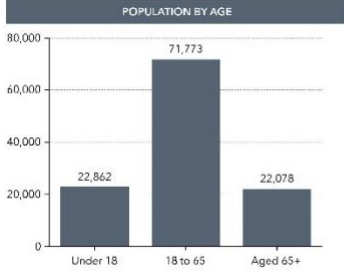
Geography: County

**115,233** Population  
**46,031** Households  
**2.38** Avg Size Household  
**39.9** Median Age  
**\$52,358** Median Household Income  
**\$142,133** Median Home Value  
**57** Wealth Index  
**181** Housing Affordability  
**52** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**16,413** Households With Disability  
**22,078** Population 65+  
**2,270** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	17,275	66,550	19,703	103,528
Spanish	759	1,956	245	2,960
Spanish & English Well	688	1,578	154	2,370
Spanish & English Not Well	71	319	46	436
Spanish & No English	0	109	45	154
Indo-European	35	311	155	501
Indo-European & English Well	35	307	155	497
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	4	0	4
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	38	434	142	614
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	38	311	105	454
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	123	0	123
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	37	37
Other Language	0	59	0	59
Other Language & English Well	0	59	0	59
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**16%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**7,351** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**45** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**115,953** Daytime Population  
**3,802** Total Businesses  
**45,987** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AACS, US Census Bureau, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Chambers County, AL



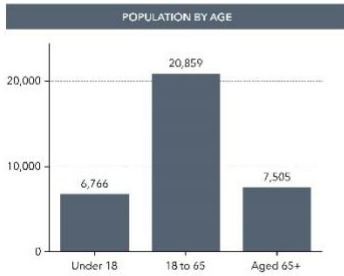
Geography: County

**34,619** Population  
**14,215** Households  
**2.37** Avg Size Household  
**43.7** Median Age  
**\$50,870** Median Household Income  
**\$126,417** Median Home Value  
**46** Wealth Index  
**199** Housing Affordability  
**59** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**4,865** Households With Disability  
**7,505** Population 65+  
**1,000** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	4,872	19,244	6,452	30,568
Spanish	80	333	3	416
Spanish & English Well	80	258	3	341
Spanish & English Not Well	0	75	0	75
Spanish & No English	0	0	0	0
Indo-European	0	147	37	184
Indo-European & English Well	0	147	10	157
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	21	21
Indo-European & No English	0	0	6	6
Asian-Pacific Island	0	227	38	265
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	218	38	256
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	9	0	9
Other Language	10	0	0	10
Other Language & English Well	10	0	0	10
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

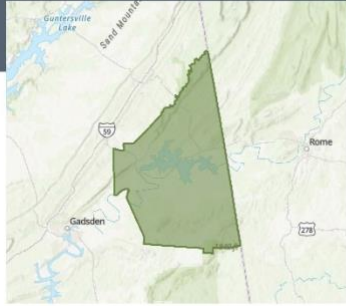
**16%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**2,212** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**29,013** Daytime Population  
**976** Total Businesses  
**8,957** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AACS, US Census Bureau, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Cherokee County, AL



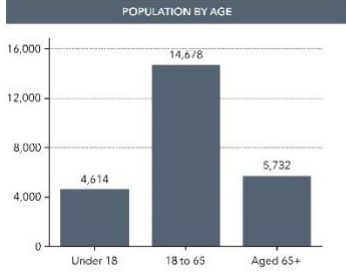
Geography: County

**24,634** Population  
**10,303** Households  
**2.36** Avg Size Household  
**46.7** Median Age  
**\$49,390** Median Household Income  
**\$144,919** Median Home Value  
**57** Wealth Index  
**169** Housing Affordability  
**20** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**3,295** Households With Disability  
**5,732** Population 65+  
**343** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	3,748	14,567	5,911	24,226
Spanish	101	407	29	537
Spanish & English Well	75	170	29	274
Spanish & English Not Well	26	163	0	189
Spanish & No English	0	74	0	74
Indo-European	0	42	13	55
Indo-European & English Well	0	42	1	43
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	12	12
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	35	16	51
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	35	16	51
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	26	12	0	38
Other Language & English Well	26	12	0	38
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**16%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**1,688** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**20,833** Daytime Population  
**698** Total Businesses  
**5,167** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AACS, Ctr. Data, Pop. 65+, Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Clay County, AL



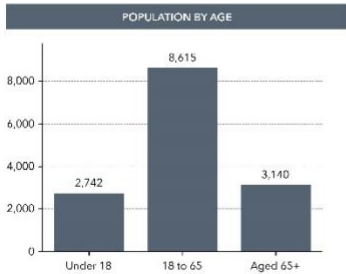
Geography: County

**14,295** Population  
**5,972** Households  
**2.35** Avg Size Household  
**44.8** Median Age  
**\$44,986** Median Household Income  
**\$129,000** Median Home Value  
**54** Wealth Index  
**177** Housing Affordability  
**39** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**1,953** Households With Disability  
**3,140** Population 65+  
**287** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	1,959	7,619	2,694	12,272
Spanish	54	222	12	288
Spanish & English Well	54	213	12	279
Spanish & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Spanish & No English	0	9	0	9
Indo-European	0	3	0	3
Indo-European & English Well	0	3	0	3
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**18%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**942** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**12,971** Daytime Population  
**313** Total Businesses  
**4,521** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AACS, Ctr. Data, Pop. 65+, Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE Cleburne County, AL



Geography: County

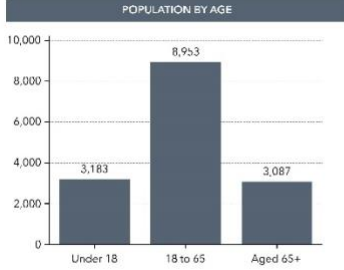
**15,013** Population  
**6,058** Households  
**2.45** Avg Size Household  
**42.8** Median Age  
**\$48,426** Median Household Income  
**\$136,660** Median Home Value  
**50** Wealth Index  
**177** Housing Affordability  
**19** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**  
**2,280** Households With Disability  
**3,087** Population 65+  
**354** Households Without Vehicle

**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**  
**18%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**1,061** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**  
**11,886** Daytime Population  
**345** Total Businesses  
**2,709** Total Employees

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	2,405	8,284	3,057	13,746
Spanish	77	187	14	278
Spanish & English Well	7	112	14	197
Spanish & English Not Well	0	68	0	68
Spanish & No English	6	7	0	13
Indo-European	0	37	3	40
Indo-European & English Well	0	37	3	40
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



Sources: Esri/AACS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE Coosa County, AL



Geography: County

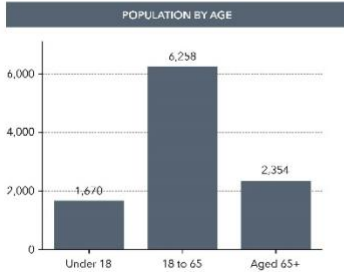
**10,106** Population  
**4,357** Households  
**2.25** Avg Size Household  
**47.5** Median Age  
**\$45,722** Median Household Income  
**\$106,429** Median Home Value  
**56** Wealth Index  
**217** Housing Affordability  
**51** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**  
**1,602** Households With Disability  
**2,354** Population 65+  
**90** Households Without Vehicle

**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**  
**13%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**518** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

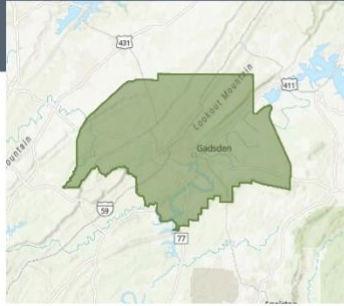
**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**  
**7,501** Daytime Population  
**204** Total Businesses  
**1,689** Total Employees

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	1,299	6,312	2,490	10,101
Spanish	0	71	7	78
Spanish & English Well	0	31	7	38
Spanish & English Not Well	0	40	0	40
Spanish & No English	0	0	0	0
Indo-European	0	9	0	9
Indo-European & English Well	0	9	0	9
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	44	0	44
Other Language & English Well	0	44	0	44
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



Sources: Esri/AACS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Etowah County, AL



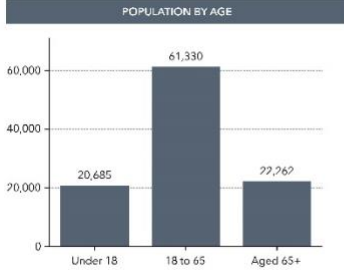
Geography: County

**102,879** Population  
**41,800** Households  
**2.42** Avg Size Household  
**43.5** Median Age  
**\$45,103** Median Household Income  
**\$155,433** Median Home Value  
**56** Wealth Index  
**143** Housing Affordability  
**46** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**12,705** Households With Disability  
**22,262** Population 65+  
**2,234** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	15,090	58,222	19,157	92,469
Spanish	762	1,959	168	2,889
Spanish & English Well	753	1,343	134	2,230
Spanish & English Not Well	9	410	26	445
Spanish & No English	0	206	8	214
Indo-European	96	367	142	605
Indo-European & English Well	35	241	142	418
Indo-European & English Not Well	61	68	0	129
Indo-European & No English	0	58	0	58
Asian-Pacific Island	35	338	71	444
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	35	257	71	363
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	62	0	62
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	19	0	19
Other Language	141	191	0	332
Other Language & English Well	141	181	0	322
Other Language & English Not Well	0	10	0	10
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**16%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**6,333** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**8** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**99,752** Daytime Population  
**3,464** Total Businesses  
**39,893** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/ArcGIS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.



## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Randolph County, AL



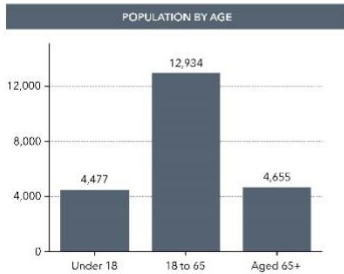
Geography: County

**21,756** Population  
**8,873** Households  
**2.41** Avg Size Household  
**43.4** Median Age  
**\$48,449** Median Household Income  
**\$129,610** Median Home Value  
**55** Wealth Index  
**188** Housing Affordability  
**42** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**2,839** Households With Disability  
**4,655** Population 65+  
**406** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	3,303	12,890	4,645	20,838
Spanish	159	219	34	412
Spanish & English Well	159	191	34	384
Spanish & English Not Well	0	28	0	28
Spanish & No English	0	0	0	0
Indo-European	38	117	13	168
Indo-European & English Well	38	107	3	148
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	10	10	20
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**20%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**1,765** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**19,304** Daytime Population  
**694** Total Businesses  
**5,641** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/ArcGIS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.





## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Talladega County, AL



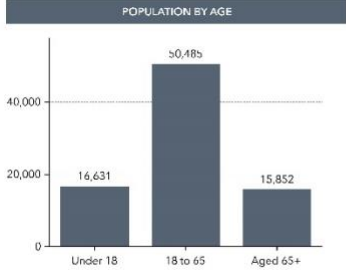
Geography: County

**81,857** Population  
**33,142** Households  
**2.37** Avg Size Household  
**41.9** Median Age  
**\$54,540** Median Household Income  
**\$137,192** Median Home Value  
**55** Wealth Index  
**197** Housing Affordability  
**53** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**12,156** Households With Disability  
**15,852** Population 65+  
**2,418** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	12,152	47,060	14,113	73,325
Spanish	424	1,259	24	1,707
Spanish & English Well	403	1,024	24	1,451
Spanish & English Not Well	21	187	0	208
Spanish & No English	0	48	0	48
Indo-European	126	365	47	538
Indo-European & English Well	126	304	38	468
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	61	9	70
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	134	26	160
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	79	18	97
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	55	8	63
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	130	95	225
Other Language & English Well	0	120	95	215
Other Language & English Not Well	0	10	0	10
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

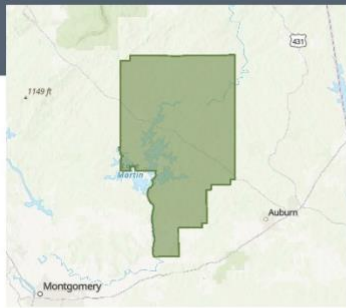
**18%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**5,869** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**79,967** Daytime Population  
**2,348** Total Businesses  
**30,392** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AECOS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Tallapoosa County, AL



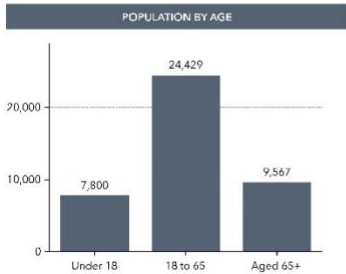
Geography: County

**41,154** Population  
**17,385** Households  
**2.33** Avg Size Household  
**45.8** Median Age  
**\$53,492** Median Household Income  
**\$148,523** Median Home Value  
**66** Wealth Index  
**180** Housing Affordability  
**49** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**6,273** Households With Disability  
**9,567** Population 65+  
**1,296** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	5,834	22,814	8,555	37,203
Spanish	340	491	6	837
Spanish & English Well	300	360	6	666
Spanish & English Not Well	40	90	0	130
Spanish & No English	0	41	0	41
Indo-European	0	63	88	151
Indo-European & English Well	0	54	88	142
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	9	0	9
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	12	38	1	51
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	12	32	1	45
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	6	0	6
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	12	0	12
Other Language & English Well	0	12	0	12
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**16%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**2,685** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**39,716** Daytime Population  
**1,459** Total Businesses  
**13,922** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AECOS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.

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## **Appendix C: Support Resolutions**

**RESOLUTION 22-R-29**

**A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022 (CEDS)**

**MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SUPPORT**

WHEREAS; the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

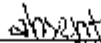
WHEREAS; the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (LDD) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment,

WHEREAS; the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance,


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Anniston, Alabama, hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

**PASSED and ADOPTED** this the 7<sup>th</sup> day of **June, 2022**.


CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
ANNISTON, ALABAMA

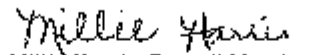


Jack Draper, Mayor

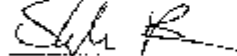
  
Jay Jenkins, Council Member

  
Demetric Roberts, Council Member

  
Ciara Smith, Council Member

  
Millie Harris, Council Member

ATTEST:

  
Skylar Bass, City Clerk



RESOLUTION No. R-2138-22

A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION'S  
2022 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

**WHEREAS**, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) serves a ten county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit, and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The EARPDC serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO); and

**WHEREAS**, the EARPDC represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the local development district's community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The CEDS document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks, and other milestones to positively impact economic development within the region in support of EDA grant investments; and

**WHEREAS**, the EARPDC will be working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach in the development of the 2022 CEDS document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs, economic policies, and address economic potential and prosperity.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE, ALABAMA THAT:** The City Council of the City of Jacksonville, Alabama hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages regional participation for the identification of job creating and business development investments.


**PASSED AND ADOPTED** this 11<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2022.

  
Approved by Mayor Johnny L. Smith



  
Brenda Long, City Clerk

  
Council President Tony K. Taylor

  
Council Member Coty Galloway

  
Council Member Andrew Green

  
Council Member Terry Wilson

Absent  
Council Member Sherry Laster

RESOLUTION NO. 22-05-24  
EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022 (CEDS)

MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SUPPORT

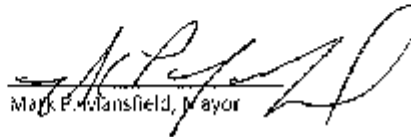
WHEREAS; the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

WHEREAS; the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (LDD) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment;

WHEREAS; the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance;

THEREFORE; the City of Centre hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

HEREBY resolved on May 24, 2022.

  
Mark P. Evansfield, Mayor

Attest:  
  
Sherrie Chandler, City Clerk

**RESOLUTION  
EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022 (CEDS)**

**MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SUPPORT**

**WHEREAS;** the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

**WHEREAS;** the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (EDA) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment.

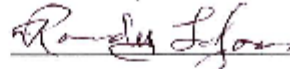
**WHEREAS;** the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE CHEROKEE COUNTY COMMISSION** endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

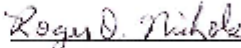
**IN WITNESS WHEREOF,** the Cherokee County Commission has caused this Resolution to be executed in its name on this the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of May, 2022.



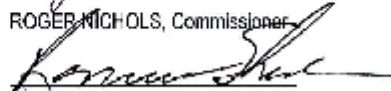
TIM BURGESS, Chairman



RANDY JONES, Commissioner



ROGER NICHOLS, Commissioner



RONNIE SHAW, Commissioner



CARLTON TEAGUE, Commissioner

  
ATTEST

2022/305

RESOLUTION NO. R-235-22

**Endorsing the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission  
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2022 (CEDS)**

WHEREAS, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO); and

WHEREAS, the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (LDD) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment; and

WHEREAS, the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Gadsden, Alabama, hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

I hereby certify that the above and foregoing was duly adopted by the City Council of Gadsden, Alabama, at a meeting held on August 16, 2022.

  
Iva Nelson, City Clerk

Rick Nash, Mayor  
Teresa Hutchens, Clerk

**TOWN OF ALTOONA**  
**ALTOONA ALA**

P.O. BOX 279 Altoona, Alabama 35952  
PH: 205.589.2311 FX: 205.589.6006  
altoonaclerk@yahoo.com

**COUNCILMEN:**  
Matt Anderson  
Sylvester Catling  
Lisa Dover  
Dan Hopper  
Angie Lambert

RESOLUTION - 22-0607

**EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022 (CEDS)**

**MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SUPPORT**

WHEREAS; the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO),

WHEREAS; the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (EDA) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment,

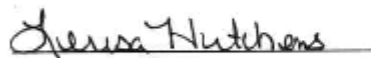
WHEREAS; the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance,

THEREFORE: the Town of Altoona hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

HEREBY resolved on June 7, 2022



Richard Nash, Mayor



Teresa Hutchens, Clerk



"A Town Born From Coal With A Heart Of Gold"

RESOLUTION NO. 22-07

EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022 (CEDS)

MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SUPPORT

**WHEREAS**, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO),

**WHEREAS**, the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (LDD) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment,

**WHEREAS**, the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the City of Rainbow City, Alabama hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.


**APPROVED AND ADOPTED** this the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of May, 2022.

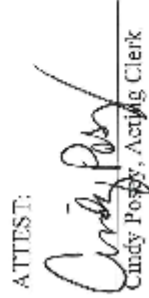
  
Anita Bedwell, Council member

  
Randy Vise, Council member

  
Jeff Prince, Council member

  
Jameson Jenkins, Council member

  
Clark Hopper, Council member

ATTEST:  
  
Cindy Post, Acting Clerk

  
Joe Gray, Mayor

**Labor Force Participation and Unemployment, East Alabama Region 2016-2020**

Geography	Labor Force			# Employed			2016
	2016	2020	% Change	2016	2020	% Change	
Calhoun County	53,228	47,349	-11%	47,010	47,896	2%	6,218
Chambers County	15,167	15,499	2%	14,031	14,877	6%	1,136
Cherokee County	10,827	10,443	-4%	10,193	9,980	-2%	634
Clay County	5,856	5,843	0%	5,470	5,527	1%	386
Cleburne County	6,273	6,088	-3%	5,823	5,707	-2%	450
Coosa County	4,286	4,355	2%	3,747	4,202	12%	539
Etowah County	45,377	45,161	0%	41,540	42,650	3%	3,837
Randolph County	9,212	9,151	-1%	8,477	8,764	3%	735
Talladega County	35,077	34,100	-3%	30,853	31,166	1%	4,224
Tallapoosa County	16,739	16,775	0%	15,098	15,119	0%	1,641
Region Total	202,042	194,764	-4%	182,242	185,888	2%	19,800
Alabama	2,226,504	2,261,860	1.59%	2,042,025	2,097,384	3%	184,479



<b># Unemployed</b>		<b>Unemployment Rate</b>		
<b>2020</b>	<b>% Change</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>% Change</b>
4,210	-32%	11.70%	8.10%	-31%
610	-46%	7.50%	3.90%	-48%
463	-27%	5.90%	4.40%	-25%
316	-18%	6.60%	5.40%	-18%
361	-20%	7.20%	5.90%	-18%
124	-77%	12.60%	2.90%	-77%
2,499	-35%	8.50%	5.50%	-35%
380	-48%	8.00%	4.20%	-48%
2,893	-32%	12.00%	8.50%	-29%
1,656	1%	9.00%	9.90%	10%
13,512	-32%	N/A	N/A	N/A
132,095	-28%	8.30%	5.90%	-29%

**Annual Average Labor Force Estimates, 2016-2020**

County	Civilian Labor Force					Change 2016-2020	
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Number	Percent
Calhoun	53,228	52,701	52,785	52,106	52,219	-1,009	-1.90%
Chambers	15,167	15,521	15,559	15,487	15,271	104	0.70%
Cherokee	10,827	10,436	10,386	10,443	10,757	-70	-0.60%
Clay	5,856	5,888	5,920	5,843	5,690	-166	-2.80%
Cleburne	6,273	6,232	6,086	6,068	6,055	-218	-3.50%
Coosa	4,286	4,395	4,363	4,326	4,302	16	0.40%
Etowah	45,377	44,818	45,312	45,149	45,631	254	0.60%
Randolph	9,212	9,095	9,079	9,144	9,169	-43	-0.50%
Talladega	35,077	34,377	34,086	34,059	34,570	-507	-1.40%
Tallapoosa	16,739	16,864	16,838	16,779	17,369	630	3.80%
Region	202,042	200,327	200,414	199,404	201,033	-1,009	-0.50%
Alabama	2,226,504	2,220,900	2,224,606	2,229,479	2,261,861	35,357	1.59%

County	Employment					Change 2016-2020	
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Number	Percent
Calhoun	47,010	47,392	48,157	47,896	47,867	857	1.80%
Chambers	14,031	14,527	14,786	14,877	14,726	695	5.00%
Cherokee	10,193	9,879	9,805	9,980	10,301	108	1.10%
Clay	5,470	5,509	5,542	5,527	5,385	-85	-1.60%
Cleburne	5,823	5,743	5,628	5,707	5,816	-7	-0.10%
Coosa	3,747	3,897	4,110	4,202	4,165	418	11.20%
Etowah	41,540	41,412	42,367	42,650	42,971	1,431	3.40%
Randolph	8,477	8,565	8,628	8,764	8,802	325	3.80%
Talladega	30,853	30,937	31,082	31,166	32,086	1,233	4.00%
Tallapoosa	15,098	15,317	15,083	15,119	15,450	352	2.30%
Region	182,242	183,178	185,188	185,888	187,569	5,327	2.90%
Alabama	2,042,025	2,055,509	2,076,708	2,097,384	2,120,495	78,470	3.80%

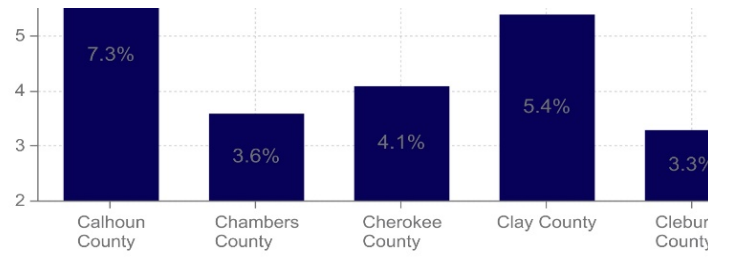
County	Unemployment					Change 2016-2020	
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Number	Percent
Calhoun	6,218	5,309	5,309	4,210	3,812	-2,406	-38.70%
Chambers	1,136	994	994	610	550	-586	-51.60%
Cherokee	634	557	557	463	441	-193	-30.40%
Clay	386	379	379	316	307	-79	-20.40%
Cleburne	450	489	489	361	200	-250	-55.60%
Coosa	539	498	498	124	112	-427	-79.30%
Etowah	3,837	3,406	3,406	2,499	2,601	-1,236	-32.20%
Randolph	735	530	530	380	376	-359	-48.90%

Talladega	4,224	3,440	3,440	2,893	2,454	-1,770	-41.90%
Tallapoosa	1,641	1,547	1,547	1,656	1,911	270	16.40%
Region	19,800	17,149	17,149	13,512	12,764	-7,036	-35.50%
Alabama	184,479	165,391	147,898	132,095	126,664	-57,815	-31.30%

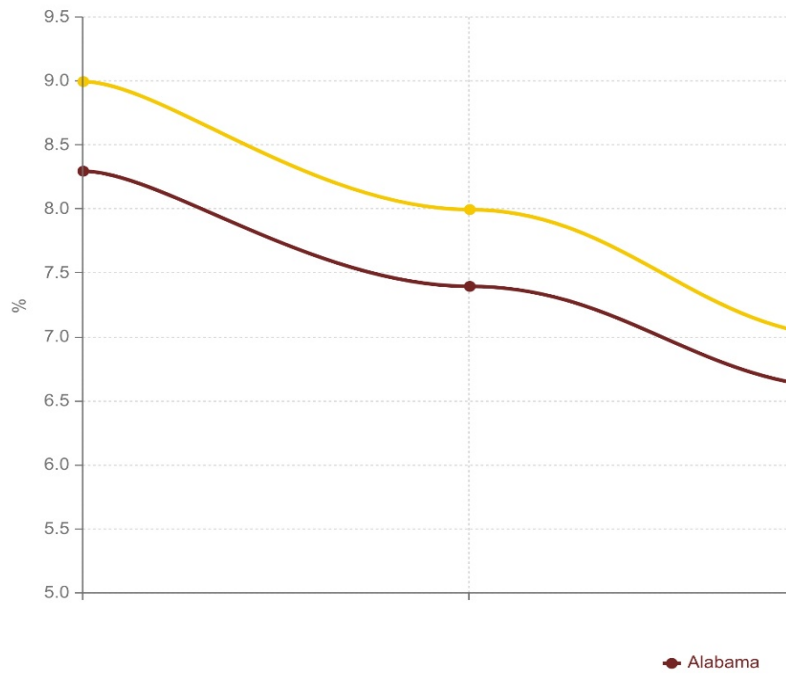
County	Unemployment Rate (%)					Change 2016-2020	
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Number	Percent
Calhoun	11.70%	10.10%	8.80%	8.10%	7.30%	-4.40%	-37.60%
Chambers	7.50%	6.40%	5.00%	3.90%	3.60%	-3.90%	-52.00%
Cherokee	5.90%	5.30%	5.60%	4.40%	4.10%	-1.80%	-30.50%
Clay	6.60%	6.40%	6.40%	5.40%	5.40%	-1.20%	-18.20%
Cleburne	7.20%	7.80%	7.50%	5.90%	3.30%	-3.90%	-54.20%
Coosa	12.60%	11.30%	5.80%	2.90%	2.60%	-10.00%	-79.40%
Etowah	8.50%	7.60%	6.50%	5.50%	5.70%	-2.80%	-32.90%
Randolph	8.00%	5.80%	5.00%	4.20%	4.10%	-3.90%	-48.80%
Talladega	12.00%	10.00%	8.80%	8.50%	7.10%	-4.90%	-40.80%
Tallapoosa	9.80%	9.20%	10.40%	9.90%	11.00%	1.20%	12.20%
Region (Average)	9.00%	8.00%	7.00%	5.90%	5.40%	-3.60%	-39.60%
Alabama	8.30%	7.40%	6.60%	5.90%	5.60%	-2.70%	-32.50%

County	Labor Force Participation Rate (%)					Change 2016-2020	
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Number	Percent
Calhoun	57.40%	56.90%	57.10%	56.70%	56.40%	-1.00%	-1.70%
Chambers	55.30%	56.60%	56.30%	56.60%	56.00%	0.70%	1.30%
Cherokee	51.00%	48.80%	48.60%	48.80%	49.50%	-1.50%	-2.90%
Clay	53.60%	54.10%	54.60%	53.90%	52.20%	-1.40%	-2.60%
Cleburne	53.30%	52.90%	51.60%	51.00%	50.60%	-2.70%	-5.10%
Coosa	46.90%	47.30%	47.30%	47.60%	47.40%	0.50%	1.10%
Etowah	54.40%	53.80%	54.40%	54.30%	54.90%	0.50%	0.90%
Randolph	50.70%	50.20%	49.80%	50.00%	49.90%	-0.80%	-1.60%
Talladega	53.90%	52.70%	52.20%	52.30%	52.90%	-1.00%	-1.90%
Tallapoosa	50.60%	51.10%	51.00%	50.80%	52.50%	1.90%	3.80%
Region (Average)	52.70%	52.40%	52.30%	52.20%	52.20%	-0.50%	-0.90%
Alabama	58.30%	57.90%	57.60%	57.40%	57.60%	-0.70%	-1.20%

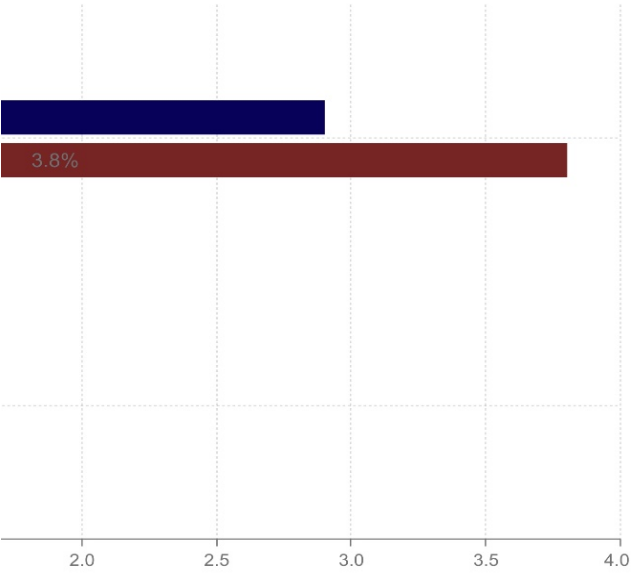




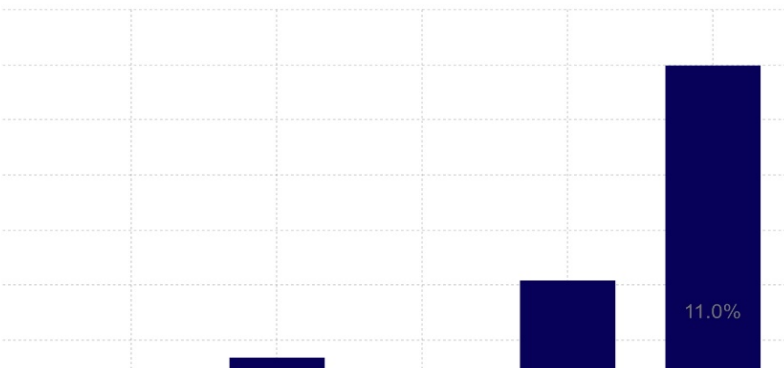
**Unemployment**




**2016-2020**




**ment Rate, 2020**



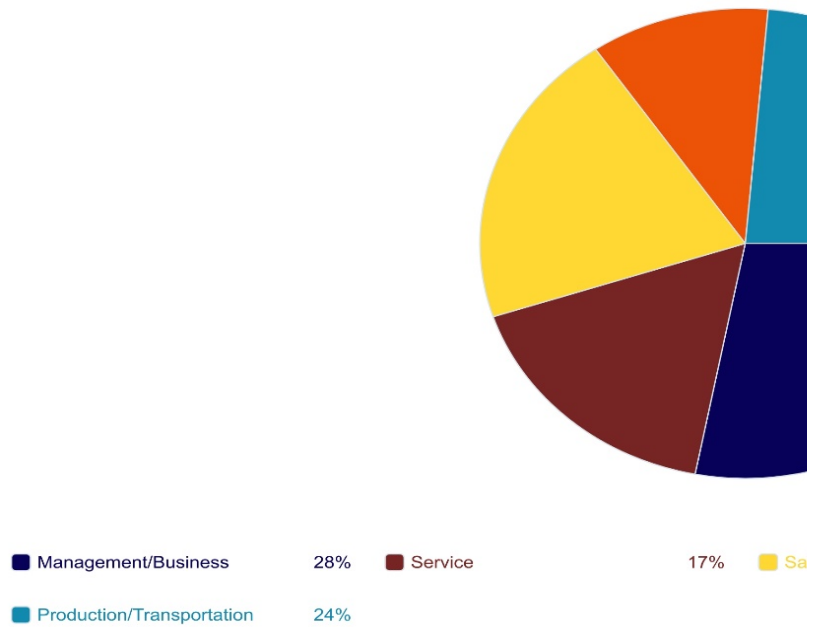




**Occupational Status, East Alabama Region 2020**

Geography	Management/Business	% of Total	Service	% of Total	Sales and Office
Calhoun County	14,563	30.40%	8,075	16.90%	10,653
Chambers County	3,582	24.30%	2,314	15.70%	2,896
Cherokee County	3,275	31.80%	1,603	15.50%	1,511
Clay County	1,416	26.30%	718	13.30%	883
Cleburne County	1,665	28.60%	725	12.50%	1,239
Coosa County	948	22.80%	687	16.50%	1,085
Etowah County	12,104	28.10%	8,467	19.70%	9,035
Randolph County	2,432	27.70%	1,109	12.60%	1,646
Talladega County	8,627	26.90%	5,372	16.80%	6,235
Tallapoosa County	3,975	25.70%	2,625	17.00%	3,343
Region Total	52,587	28.00%	31,695	16.90%	38,526
Alabama	756,013	35.70%	341,826	16.10%	456,424

**Employment by Occup**







Median Household Income, East Alabama Region		
Geography	2010	2020
Calhoun County	\$38,407	\$47,255
Chambers County	\$31,467	\$42,289
Cherokee County	\$40,690	\$41,919
Clay County	\$35,595	\$40,845
Cleburne County	\$36,077	\$44,741
Coosa County	\$35,560	\$38,990
Etowah County	\$36,422	\$44,637
Randolph County	\$34,593	\$43,395
Talladega County	\$36,948	\$41,325
Tallapoosa County	\$36,904	\$45,828
Region	\$36,250	\$42,842
Alabama	\$42,081	\$52,035

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=S2503&g=0400000US01>

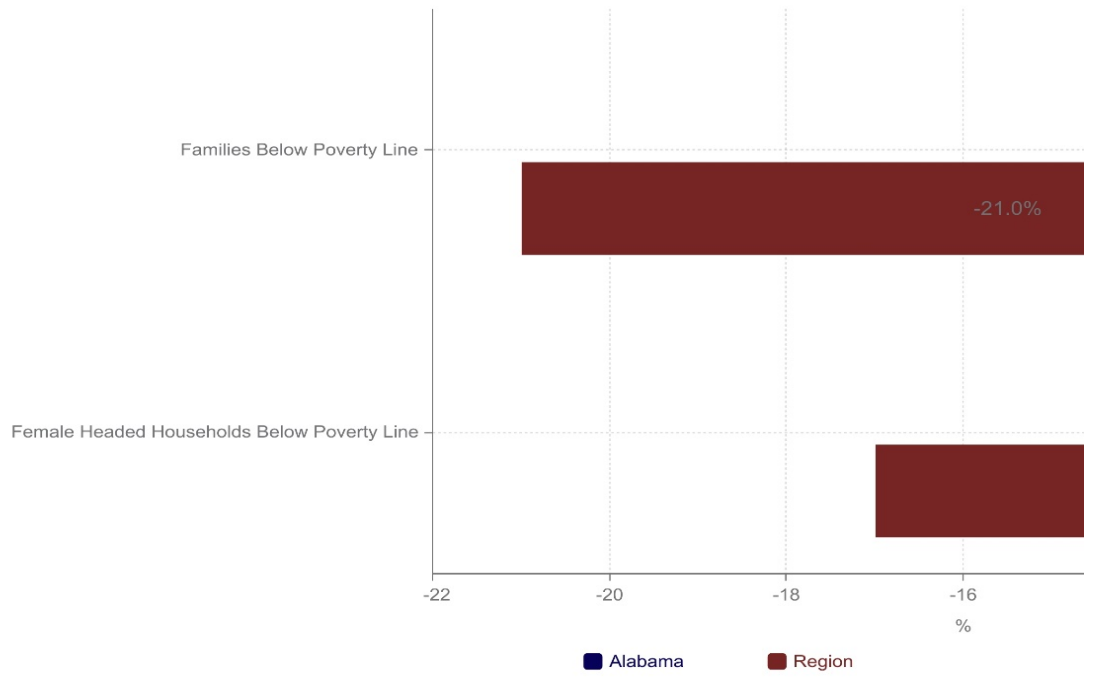
#### Household Income, East Alabama Region 2020

Geography	Less than \$25K		\$25-\$74,999		\$75,000+	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
Calhoun County	15,830	11,985	20,565	19,591	9,981	13,029
Chambers County	5,472	4,029	6,362	5,980	1,820	3,439
Cherokee County	4,041	3,274	4,938	4,726	2,350	2,737
Clay County	2,112	1,426	2,639	2,500	1,094	1,272
Cleburne County	1,830	1,748	2,493	2,498	1,069	1,434
Coosa County	1,583	1,170	2,139	1,895	844	967
Etowah County	14,014	11,144	19,045	16,977	8,483	10,821
Randolph County	2,960	2,588	4,162	4,136	1,407	1,978
Talladega County	10,809	9,872	14,828	13,227	5,514	8,296
Tallapoosa County	5,634	4,786	7,245	7,067	3,403	4,352
Region Total	64,284	52,022	84,417	78,597	35,964	48,325
Alabama	560,933	465,450	803,154	776,733	457,124	646,321

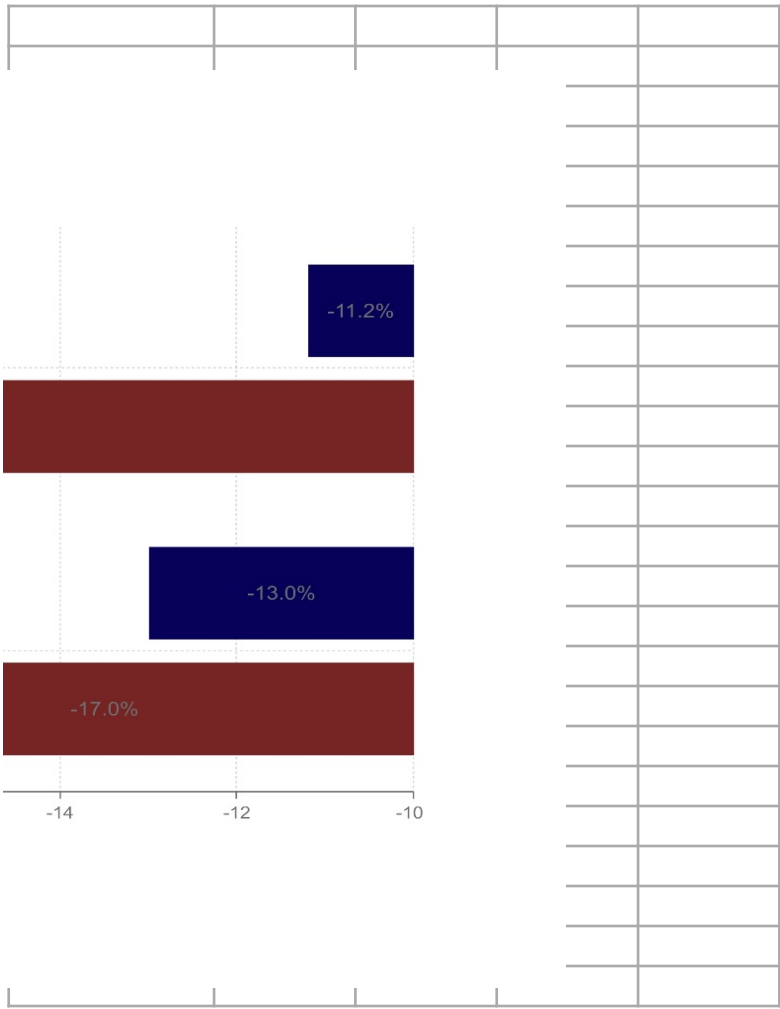




### Change in Poverty, 2010 to 2020



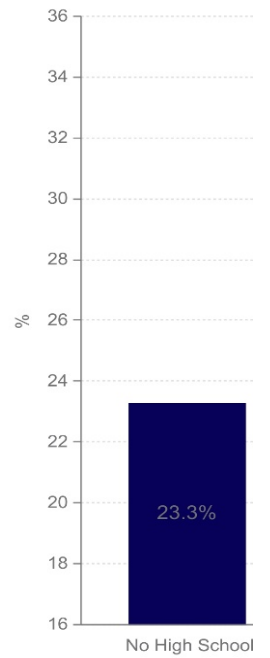







Diploma/GED	Some College, no degree		College Degree	
	2010	2020	2010	2020
27,203	16,477	19,007	17,721	20,970
8,829	4,652	5,166	4,249	5,636
7,495	4,119	3,786	2,969	4,574
3,751	1,572	1,779	1,631	2,085
4,044	1,763	2,291	1,357	2,326
3,482	1,307	1,870	1,193	1,535
24,104	17,328	18,013	16,760	19,480
5,659	2,681	3,075	2,727	4,368
18,777	11,346	13,712	10,123	13,421
9,483	5,517	6,241	6,551	7,664
112,827	66,763	74,940	65,280	82,059
1,014,342	652,708	721,609	888,926	1,169,108

2010	2020	2010	2020	2020
34.90%	20.90%	23.20%	20.40%	25.40%
30.30%	21.00%	21.60%	28.60%	35.00%



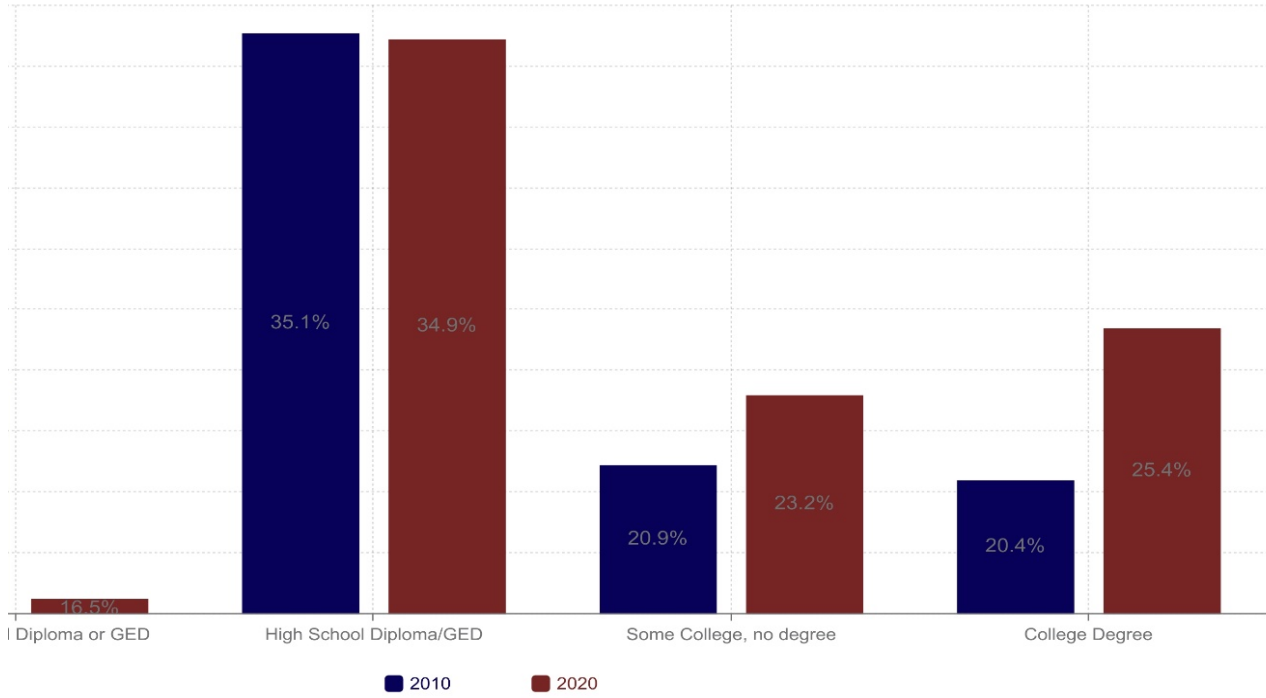
No High School Diploma or GED

High School Diploma/GED

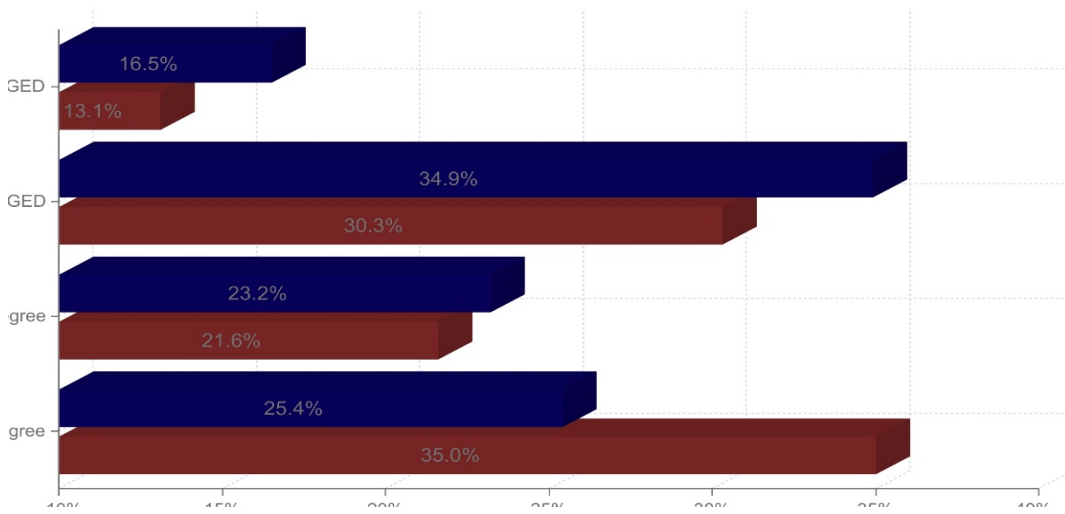
Some College, no degree

College Degree


**Regional Change in Level of Educational Attainment, 2010 to 2020**



**Comparison of Educational Attainment, 2020**



10%

15%

20%

25%  
%

30%

35%

40%

■ Region

■ Alabama







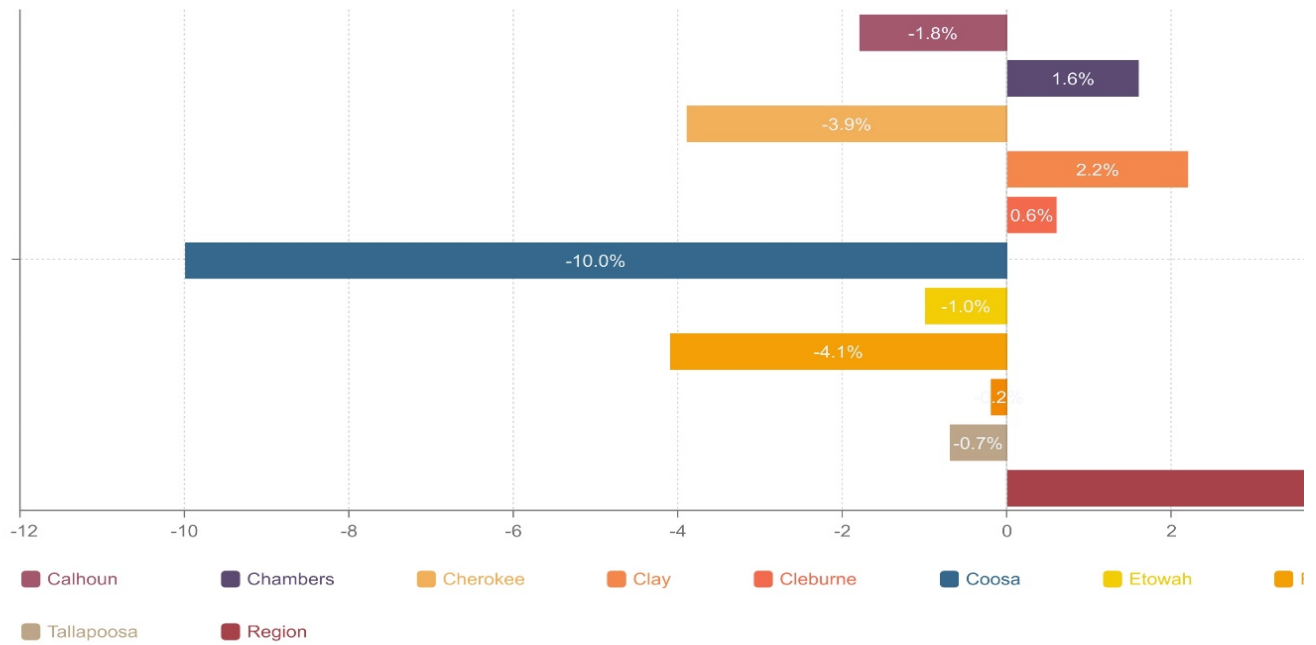

**Employment by Industrial Sector in East Alabama, 2020**

Sectors	Alabama	Calhoun	Chambers	Cherokee	Clay	Cleburne
Total for all sect	2,119,986	47,905	14,724	10,310	5,389	5,814
Agriculture	29,921	626	334	338	132	200
Constructio	141,974	2,487	614	954	368	710
Manufactur	302,005	8,659	4,469	2,284	1,619	1,207
Wholesale	52,964	1,260	299	126	63	237
Retail trade	245,101	6,315	1,286	1,071	746	489
Transportat	117,530	2,074	776	594	295	291
Information	31,100	599	318	69	31	16
Finance and	118,006	1,821	631	364	213	237
Professiona	204,241	3,318	1,149	381	235	422
Educational	480,244	10,856	2,685	2,413	1,053	1,047
Arts, entert	176,319	4,068	979	642	245	370
Other servi	103,797	2,115	545	518	173	241
Public adm	116,784	3,707	639	556	216	347

Coosa	Etowah	Randolph	Talladega	Tallapoosa	Region
4,164	43,002	8,795	32,068	15,465	187,636
89	228	308	489	273	3,017
350	2,970	632	2,275	1,316	12,676
904	7,502	2,332	6,305	3,567	38,848
76	938	106	689	371	4,165
583	5,492	964	3,798	1,605	22,349
283	1,996	509	2,315	865	9,998
29	576	102	392	74	2,206
143	1,303	432	1,370	669	7,183
162	2,420	511	1,772	919	11,289
828	10,338	1,808	6,728	3,298	41,054
290	4,350	313	2,534	1,068	14,859
215	2,760	379	1,539	843	9,328
212	2,129	399	1,862	597	10,664

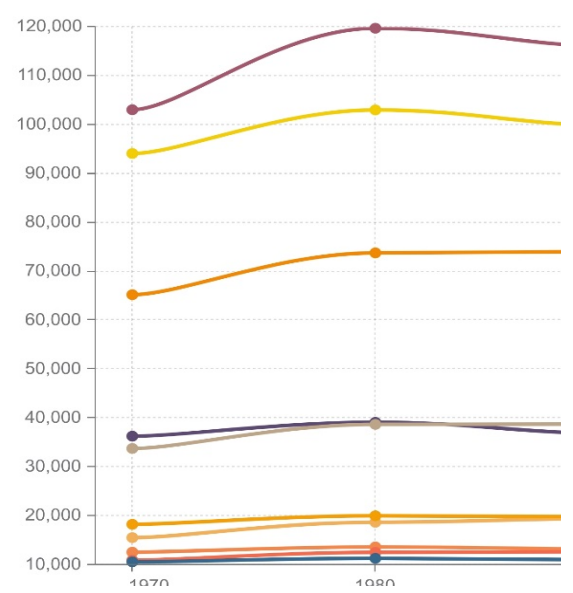
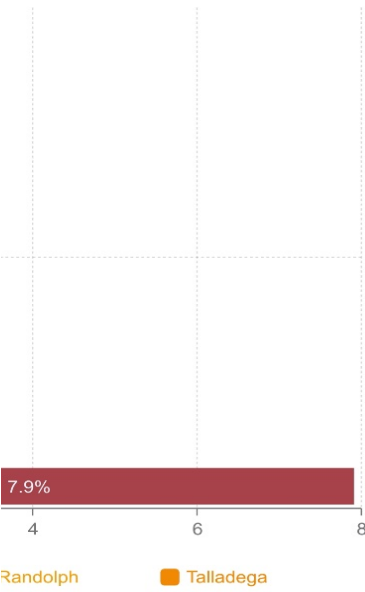
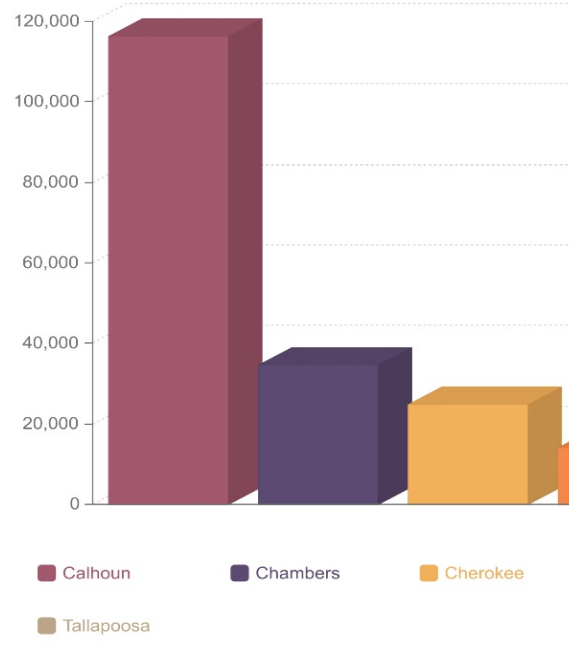
Population of the East Alabama Region						
County	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Calhoun	103,092	119,761	116,034	112,249	118,572	114,324
Chambers	36,356	39,191	36,876	36,583	34,215	33,427
Cherokee	15,606	18,760	19,543	23,988	25,989	26,035
Clay	12,636	13,703	13,252	14,254	13,932	13,285
Cleburne	10,996	12,595	12,730	14,123	14,972	14,952
Coosa	10,662	11,377	11,063	12,202	11,539	10,696
Etowah	94,144	103,057	99,840	103,459	104,430	102,721
Randolph	18,331	20,075	19,881	22,380	22,913	22,732
Talladega	65,280	73,826	74,107	80,321	82,291	80,244
Tallapoosa	33,840	38,766	38,826	41,475	41,616	40,450
Region	369,073	414,325	405,316	421,559	430,863	420,436
Alabama	3,444,354	3,894,025	4,040,587	4,447,100	4,779,736	4,893,186
United States	203,302,037	226,542,250	248,709,873	281,421,906	308,745,538	326,569,308

Population Change, 2010 to 2020





% Change					
	2000-2010	2010-2020			
	5.60%	-3.60%			
	-6.50%	-2.30%			
	8.30%	0.20%			
	-2.30%	-4.60%			
	6.00%	-0.10%			
	-5.40%	-7.30%			
	0.90%	-1.60%			
	2.40%	-0.80%			
	2.50%	-2.50%			
	0.30%	-2.80%			
	2.20%	-2.40%			
	7.50%	2.40%			
	9.70%	5.80%			



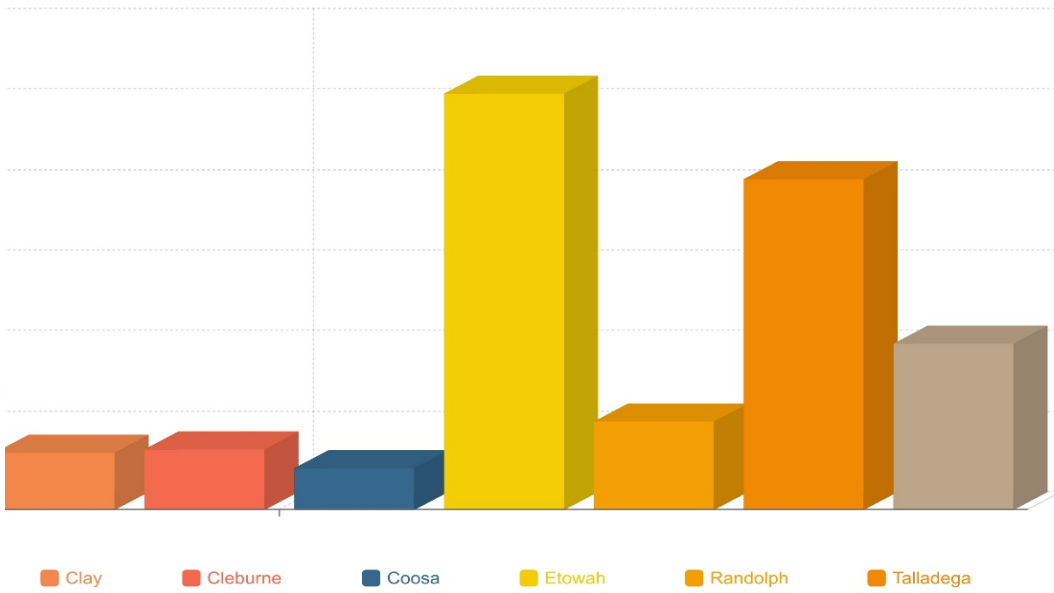

1970

1980

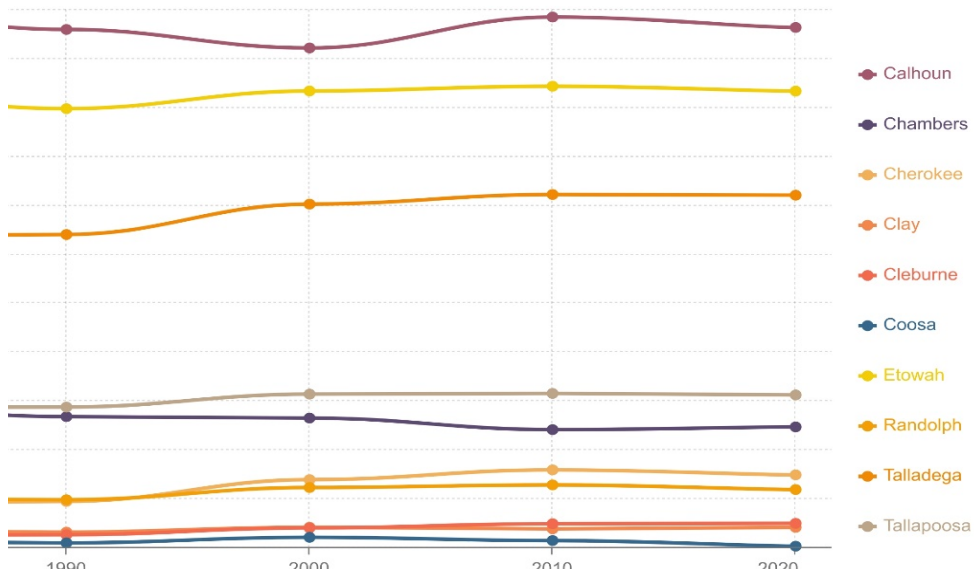




Population by County, 2020



Population Change, 1970 to 2020





**Municipal Population, 1990-2020**

Municipality	Population				% Change		
	1990	2000	2010	2020	1990-2000	2000-2010	2010-2020
Alexander City	14,917	15,008	14,875	14,843	0.6%	-0.9%	-0.2%
Altoona	960	984	933	948	2.5%	-5.2%	1.6%
Anniston	26,623	24,276	23,106	21,564	-8.8%	-4.8%	-6.7%
Ashland	2,034	1,965	2,037	1,984	-3.4%	3.7%	-2.6%
Attalla	6,859	6,592	6,048	5,827	-3.9%	-8.3%	-3.7%
Blue Mountain*	221	233	--	--	5.4%	-100.0%	--
Bon Air	91	96	116	172	5.5%	20.8%	48.3%
Camp Hill	1,415	1,273	1,014	1,006	-10.0%	-20.3%	-0.8%
Cedar Bluff	1,174	1,467	1,820	1,845	25.0%	24.1%	1.4%
Centre	2,893	3,216	3,489	3,587	11.2%	8.5%	2.8%
Childersburg	4,579	4,927	5,175	4,754	7.6%	5.0%	-8.1%
Cusseta**	--	--	123	152	--	100.0%	23.6%
Dadeville	3,276	3,212	3,230	3,084	-2.0%	0.6%	-4.5%
Daviston	261	267	214	174	2.3%	-19.9%	-18.7%
Edwardsville	118	186	202	206	57.6%	8.6%	2.0%
Five Points	200	146	141	114	-27.0%	-3.4%	-19.1%
Fruithurst	177	270	284	235	52.5%	5.2%	-17.3%
Gadsden	42,523	38,978	36,856	33,945	-8.3%	-5.4%	-7.9%
Gantt's Quarry	7	0	--	--	-100.0%	--	--
Gaylesville	149	140	144	170	-6.0%	2.9%	18.1%
Glencoe	4,670	5,152	5,160	5,372	10.3%	0.2%	4.1%
Goldville	61	37	55	52	-39.3%	48.6%	-5.5%
Goodwater	1,840	1,633	1,475	1,291	-11.3%	-9.7%	-12.5%
Heflin	2,906	3,002	3,480	3,431	3.3%	15.9%	-1.4%
Hobson City	794	878	771	759	10.6%	-12.2%	-1.6%
Hokes Bluff	3,739	4,149	4,286	4,446	11.0%	3.3%	3.7%
Jackson's Gap	789	761	828	747	-3.5%	8.8%	-9.8%
Jacksonville	10,283	8,404	12,548	14,385	-18.3%	49.3%	14.6%
Kellyton**	--	--	217	129	--	100.0%	-40.6%
LaFayette	3,151	3,234	3,003	2,684	2.6%	-7.1%	-10.6%
Lanett	8,985	7,897	6,468	6,970	-12.1%	-18.1%	7.8%
Leesburg	218	799	1,027	911	266.5%	28.5%	-11.3%
Lincoln	2,941	4,577	6,266	6,845	55.6%	36.9%	9.2%
Lineville	2,394	2,401	2,395	2,489	0.3%	-0.2%	3.9%
Mountainboro*	261	338	--	--	29.5%	--	--
Munford**	--	--	1,292	1,351	--	100.0%	4.6%
New Site	669	848	773	773	26.8%	-8.8%	0.0%
Oak Grove	436	457	528	564	4.8%	15.5%	6.8%
Ohatchee	1,042	1,215	1,170	1,157	16.6%	-3.7%	-1.1%
Oxford	9,362	14,592	21,348	22,069	55.9%	46.3%	3.4%
Piedmont city	5,288	5,120	4,878	4,784	-3.2%	-4.7%	-1.9%
Rainbow City	7,673	8,428	9,602	10,191	9.8%	13.9%	6.1%
Ranburne	447	459	409	422	2.7%	-10.9%	3.2%
Reece City	657	634	653	615	-3.5%	3.0%	-5.8%
Ridgeville	178	158	112	83	-11.2%	-29.1%	-25.9%

Roanoke	6,362	6,563	6,074	5,311	3.2%	-7.5%	-12.6%
Rockford	461	428	477	349	-7.2%	11.4%	-26.8%
Sand Rock	438	509	560	591	16.2%	10.0%	5.5%
Sardis City	1,301	1,438	1,704	1,814	10.5%	18.5%	6.5%
Southside	5,580	7,036	8,412	9,426	26.1%	19.6%	12.1%
Sylacauga	12,520	12,616	12,749	12,578	0.8%	1.1%	-1.3%
Talladega	18,175	15,143	15,676	15,861	-16.7%	3.5%	1.2%
Talladega Springs	148	124	166	144	-16.2%	33.9%	-13.3%
Valley	8,173	9,198	9,524	10,529	12.5%	3.5%	10.6%
Wadley	517	640	751	659	23.8%	17.3%	-12.3%
Waldo	309	281	283	258	-9.1%	0.7%	-8.8%
Walnut Grove	717	710	698	773	-1.0%	-1.7%	10.7%
Waverly	152	184	145	159	21.1%	-21.2%	9.7%
Weaver	2,715	2,619	3,038	3,339	-3.5%	16.0%	9.9%
Wedowee	796	818	823	737	2.8%	0.6%	-10.4%
Woodland	189	192	184	221	1.6%	-4.2%	20.1%

\*Blue Mountain annexed into the City of Anniston and Mountainboro annexed into the City of Boaz after the 2000 Census. The last residents of Gantt's Quarry had left by 2000. Cusseta, Kellyton and Munford incorporated after the 2000 Census. Fredonia incorporated after the 2010 Census, so no data is available.







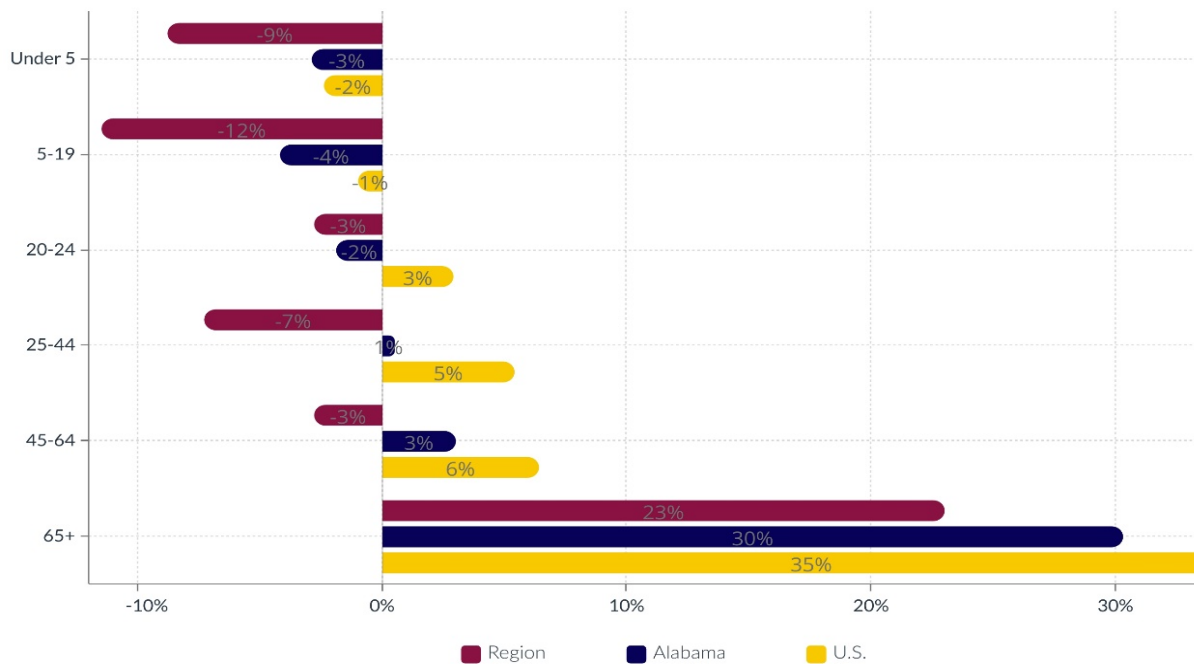




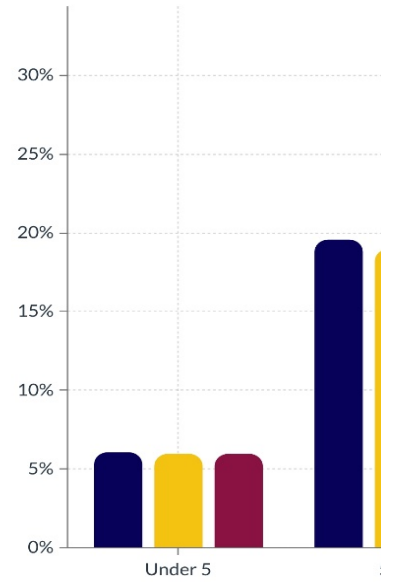
**Population of East Alabama Counties by Age, 2010 and 2020**

County	Under 5		5 to 19		20 to 24		25 to 44	
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
Calhoun	7,266	6,662	23,419	21,425	8,742	7,270	29,935	28,729
Chambers	2,085	1,984	6,837	5,547	1,920	2,125	8,519	7,928
Cherokee	1,337	1,128	4,662	4,388	1,147	1,376	6,072	5,425
Clay	773	722	2,626	2,345	813	847	3,606	2,955
Cleburne	925	888	2,987	2,771	781	755	3,744	3,430
Coosa	572	464	2,148	1,478	581	473	2,684	2,365
Etowah	6,265	5,982	20,677	18,313	6,108	6,238	26,392	24,979
Randolph	1,411	1,314	4,753	4,151	1,334	1,274	5,314	4,977
Talladega	5,034	4,289	16,904	14,614	4,789	5,220	21,618	19,794
Tallapoosa	2,431	2,196	8,025	7,274	2,344	2,183	9,877	8,589
Region	28,099	25,629	93,038	82,306	28,559	27,761	117,761	109,171
Alabama	302,659	293,932	971,682	931,288	330,178	323,960	1,230,455	1,237,123
United States	20,131,420	19,650,192	62,893,075	62,261,904	21,214,118	21,820,378	82,397,154	86,831,842

**Population Change by Age Groups, 2010 to 2020**

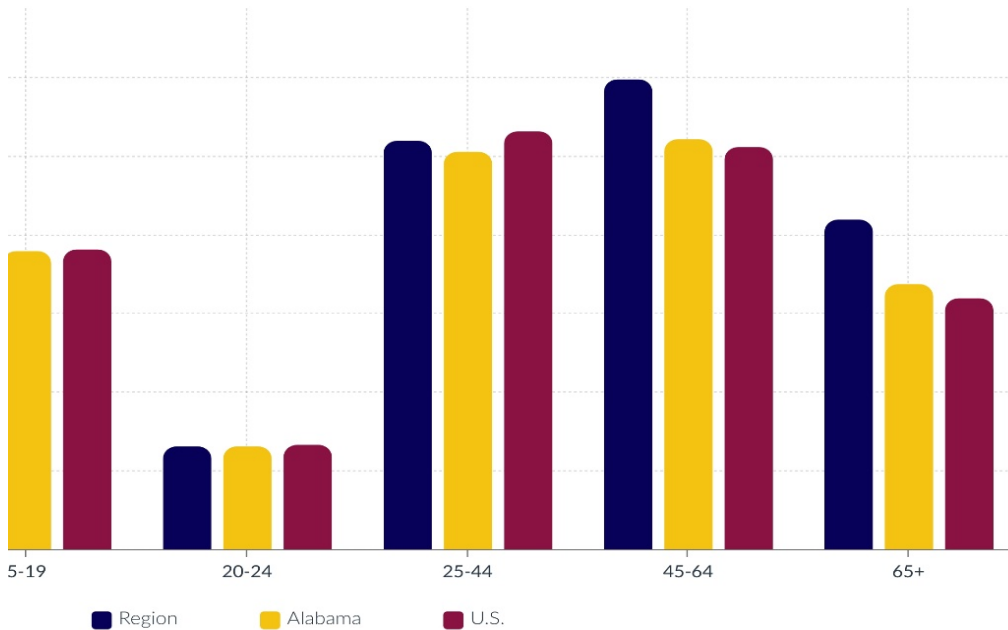


				Percent Change by Age Group,	
45 to 64		65 and Older		County	Under 5
2010	2020	2010	2020		
31,290	29,993	16,497	20,245	Calhoun	-8.30%
9,587	9,313	5,631	6,530	Chambers	-4.80%
7,978	7,749	4,504	5,969	Cherokee	-15.60%
3,708	3,710	2,514	2,706	Clay	-6.60%
4,054	4,034	2,332	3,074	Cleburne	-4.00%
3,576	3,419	1,909	2,497	Coosa	-18.90%
28,409	27,671	16,215	19,538	Etowah	-4.50%
6,192	6,324	3,813	4,692	Randolph	-6.90%
22,706	22,022	11,296	14,305	Talladega	-14.80%
11,854	11,558	7,003	8,650	Tallapoosa	-9.70%
129,354	125,793	71,714	88,206	Region	-8.80%
1,242,460	1,279,449	635,217	827,434	Alabama	-2.90%
78,580,092	83,642,175	38,749,413	52,362,817	United States	-2.40%



2010 to 2020				
5 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 and Older
-8.50%	-16.80%	-4.00%	-4.10%	22.70%
-18.90%	10.70%	-6.90%	-2.90%	16.00%
-5.90%	20.00%	-10.70%	-2.90%	32.50%
-10.70%	4.20%	-18.10%	0.10%	7.60%
-7.20%	-3.30%	-8.40%	-0.50%	31.80%
-31.20%	-18.60%	-11.90%	-4.40%	30.80%
-11.40%	2.10%	-5.40%	-2.60%	20.50%
-12.70%	-4.50%	-6.30%	2.10%	23.10%
-13.50%	9.00%	-8.40%	-3.00%	26.60%
-9.40%	-6.90%	-13.00%	-2.50%	23.50%
-11.50%	-2.80%	-7.30%	-2.80%	23.00%
-4.20%	-1.90%	0.50%	3.00%	30.30%
-1.00%	2.90%	5.40%	6.40%	35.10%

Age Distribution, 2020





**Overview of Business in East Alabama, 2020**

<b>Geography</b>	<b>Number of Paid Employees</b>	<b>Annual Payroll</b>	<b>Average Annual Wages</b>
Calhoun	42,802	\$1,862,394,000	\$41,375
Chambers	8,267	\$339,821,000	\$39,051
Cherokee	4,956	\$180,983,000	\$35,133
Clay	4,251	\$161,421,000	\$35,657
Cleburne	2,104	\$98,735,000	\$42,133
Coosa	1,307	\$51,982,000	\$36,271
Etowah	32,042	\$1,318,061,000	\$37,737
Randolph	4,662	\$167,569,000	\$34,253
Talladega	28,951	\$1,395,641,000	\$46,712
Tallapoosa	12,352	\$475,841,000	\$35,309
Region	141,694	\$6,052,448,000	\$38,363
% of Total	-	-	-
Alabama	2,119,986	99,675,713	\$52,210
% of Total	-	-	-

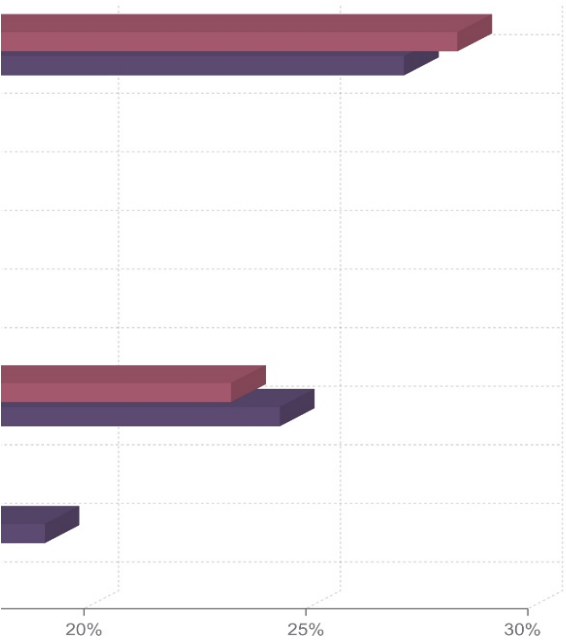
This data came from BLS website

This data came from Census County Business Patterns






County, 2020



in Population




**Business Trends in East Alabama, 2016 to 2020**

Geography	Number of Employees				Average Annual Wages		
	2016	2020	# Change	% Change	2016	2020	# Change
Calhoun	43,763	42,802	-961	-2.20%	\$37,663	\$43,511	\$5,848
Chambers	8,057	8,267	210	2.60%	\$35,746	\$41,108	\$5,362
Cherokee	5,074	4,956	-118	-2.30%	\$33,130	\$36,520	\$3,390
Clay	3,925	4,251	326	8.30%	\$32,737	\$37,977	\$5,240
Cleburne	2,262	2,104	-158	-7.00%	\$41,692	\$46,935	\$5,243
Coosa	1,344	1,307	-37	-2.80%	\$35,914	\$39,779	\$3,865
Etowah	36,213	32,042	-4,171	-11.50%	\$35,335	\$41,136	\$5,801
Randolph	4,630	4,662	32	0.70%	\$32,496	\$35,947	\$3,451
Talladega	29,093	28,951	-142	-0.50%	\$45,267	\$48,208	\$2,941
Tallapoosa	13,515	12,352	-1,163	-8.60%	\$32,855	\$38,523	\$5,668
<b>Region</b>	<b>147,876</b>	<b>124,894</b>	<b>-22,982</b>	<b>-15.50%</b>	<b>\$36,284</b>	<b>\$38,363</b>	<b>\$2,080</b>
<b>Alabama</b>	<b>1,915,306</b>	<b>1,909,145</b>	<b>-6,161</b>	<b>-0.30%</b>	<b>\$44,832</b>	<b>\$52,210</b>	<b>\$7,378</b>
<b>Region as % of state</b>	<b>7.70%</b>	<b>6.50%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>80.90%</b>	<b>80.90%</b>	<b>-</b>

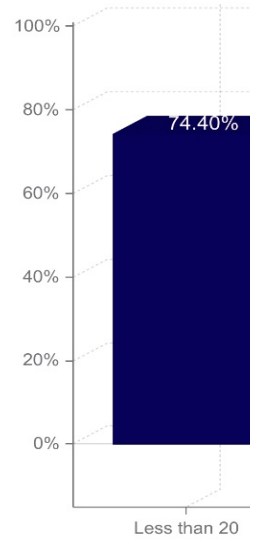
Source:

county bus patterns

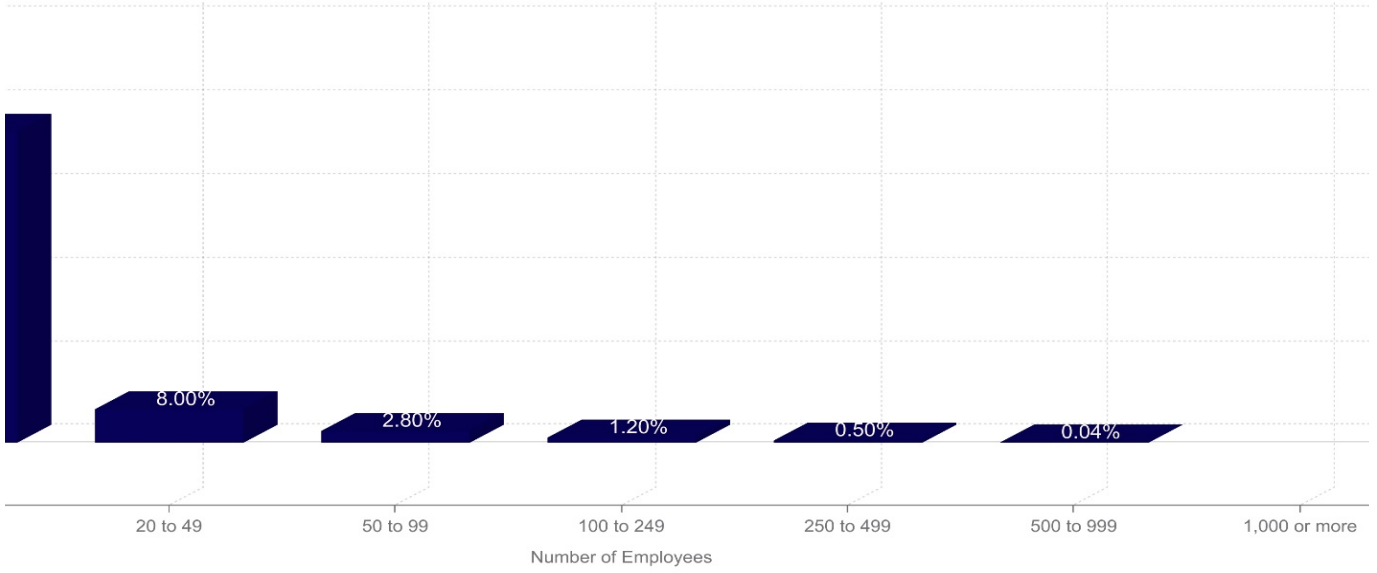
census bureau

bureau of labor stats

Number of Establishments				
% Change	2016	2020	# Change	% Change
15.50%	2,508	2,555	47	0.04%
15.00%	600	633	33	0.20%
10.20%	407	421	14	0.30%
16.00%	213	221	8	0.50%
12.60%	214	235	21	0.50%
10.80%	123	138	15	0.90%
16.40%	2,057	2,095	38	0.05%
10.60%	369	407	38	0.30%
6.50%	1,322	1,422	100	0.10%
17.30%	816	877	61	0.10%
5.70%	8,629	7,925	-704	0.01%
16.50%	122,310	132,126	9,816	0.00%
-	7.10%	6.00%	-	-




**Regional Percentage of Businesses by Number of Employees, 2020**



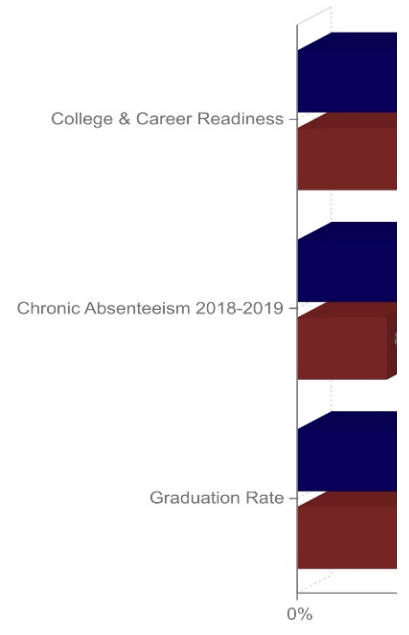


**Table 0.0: School Systems in East Alabama, 2020-2021**

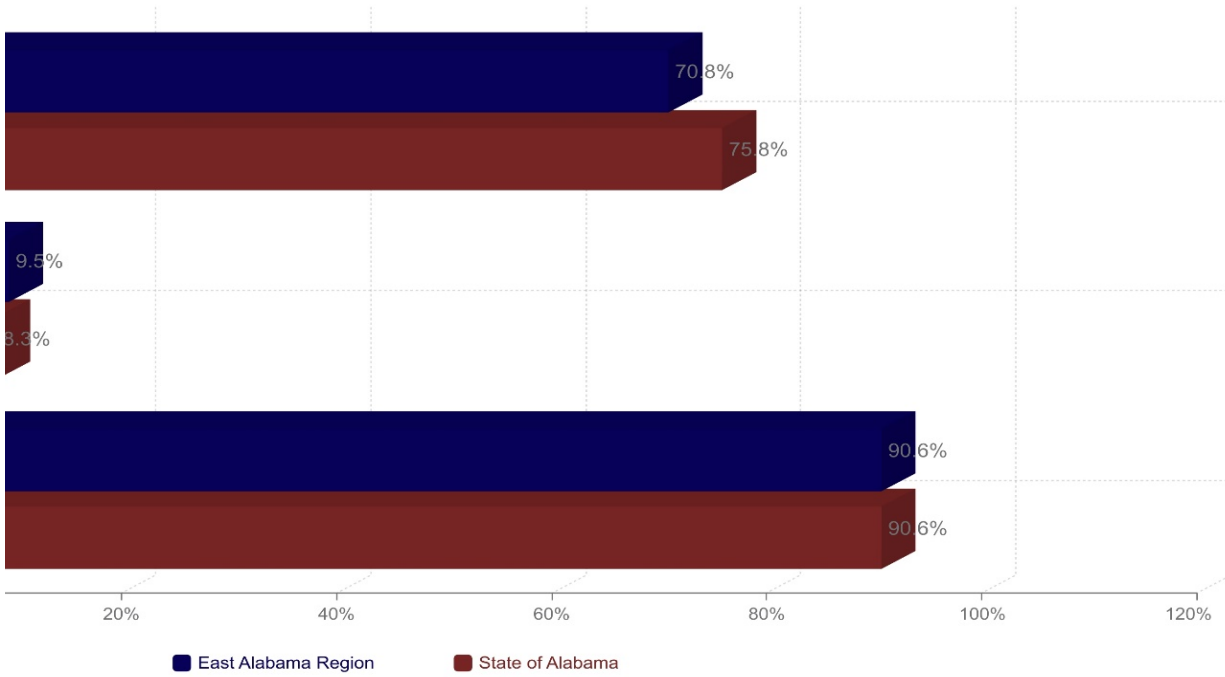
School System	Number of Schools	Number of Students	Student to Teacher Ratio	Average Daily Membership	% Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch	Graduation Rate
Calhoun County	17	8,011	*	*	*	91.40%
Anniston City	6	1,980	*	*	*	77.40%
Jacksonville City	2	1,643	*	*	*	92.00%
Oxford City	6	4,109	*	*	*	95.30%
Piedmont City	3	1,115	*	*	*	97.00%
Chambers County	10	3,352	*	*	*	89.20%
Lanett City	3	969	*	*	*	82.40%
Cherokee County	7	3,781	*	*	*	89.90%
Clay County	4	1,807	*	*	*	86.30%
Cleburne County	7	2,451	*	*	*	94.70%
Coosa County	2	771	*	*	*	80.00%
Etowah County	21	8,189	*	*	*	97.40%
Attalla City	3	1,440	*	*	*	95.50%
Gadsden City	12	4,854	*	*	*	89.70%
Randolph County	7	1,942	*	*	*	88.80%
Roanoke City	3	1,475	*	*	*	97.40%
Talladega County	17	6,998	*	*	*	92.00%
Sylacauga City	4	2,059	*	*	*	95.90%
Talladega City	6	1,837	*	*	*	90.80%
Tallapoosa County	5	2,669	*	*	*	89.70%
Alexander City	5	2,883	*	*	*	89.10%
Region Average	150	64,335	*	*	*	90.60%
Alabama	1,348	729,786	*	*	*	90.60%

\*Due to the impact of COVID-19, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) issued a waiver to A

Chronic Absenteeism 2018-2019	College & Career Readiness				Sour State of Ec		
7.90%	67.50%						
18.60%	47.00%						
9.50%	61.60%						
7.30%	85.30%						
7.20%	95.50%						
8.20%	54.20%						
13.60%	51.00%						
18.20%	66.80%						
4.60%	63.70%						
4.80%	80.30%						
6.60%	52.90%						
11.80%	80.30%						
1.90%	58.40%						
16.60%	70.00%						
11.40%	72.70%						
14.00%	91.20%						
6.90%	77.60%						
6.60%	79.50%						
5.00%	70.00%						
11.10%	85.60%						
6.80%	76.10%						
9.50%	70.80%						
8.30%	75.80%						




**School System Comparison, 2020-2021**



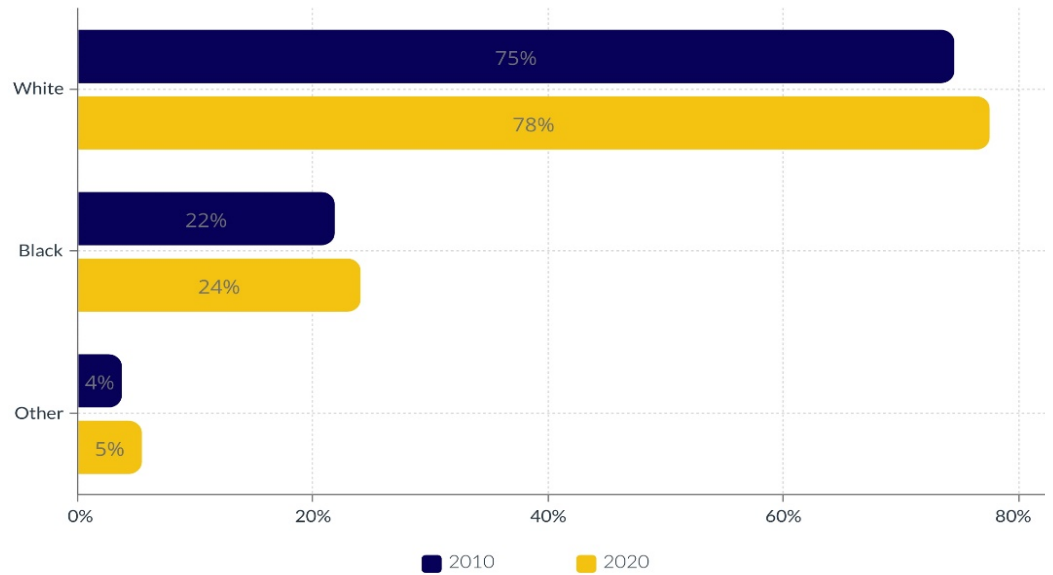




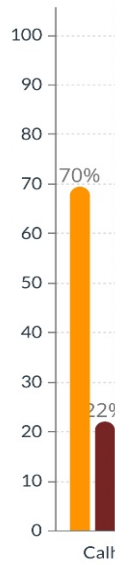

**East Alabama Race and Hispanic Origin**

	Calhoun		Chambers		Cherokee		Cl...
	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010
White	88,840	79,519	20,112	18,616	24,081	22,563	11,380
Black	24,382	25,365	13,257	13,441	1,208	987	2,066
Other	5,350	6,547	846	1,478	700	1,021	486
Hispanic	3,893	5,010	536	1,237	320	400	399
Total	118,572	114,324	34,215	33,427	25,989	26,035	13,932

**East Alabama Regional Population by Race, 2010 and 2020**

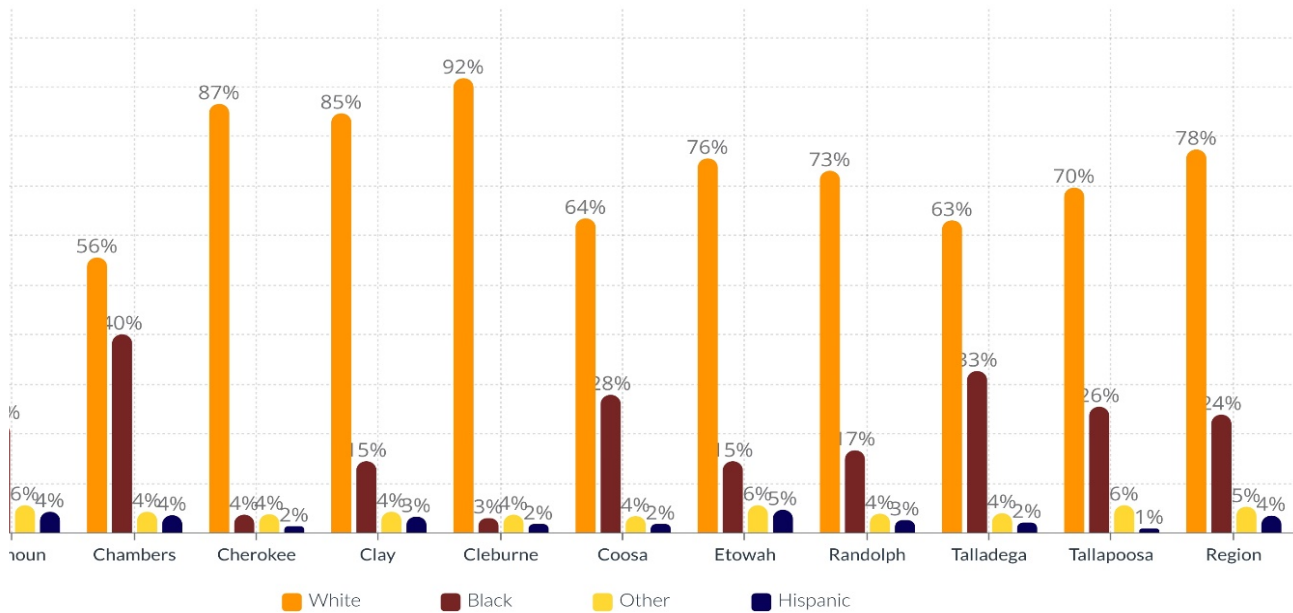


ay	Cleburne		Coosa		Etowah		Randolph		
	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020
	11,261	14,079	13,740	7,648	6,807	83,823	77,731	17,532	16,629
	1,942	498	457	3,582	3,000	15,796	14,999	4,607	3,814
	584	395	575	309	379	4,811	5,811	774	919
	449	307	284	230	201	3,447	4,895	649	605
	13,285	14,972	14,952	11,539	10,696	104,430	102,721	22,913	22,732



Talladega		Tallapoosa		Region		% Change Region
2010	2020	2010	2020	2010	2020	
53,739	50,732	29,087	28,252	350,321	325,850	-7.0%
26,055	26,340	11,083	10,366	102,534	100,711	-1.8%
2,497	3,298	1,446	2,296	17,614	22,908	30.1%
1,671	1,779	1,042	397	12,494	15,257	22.1%
82,291	80,244	41,616	40,450	470,469	420,436	-10.6%

Population by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2020





**RESOLUTION NO. 6516**

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) recognize the importance of guiding and coordinating the efforts of local governments and organizations concerned with the economic development of the district and promoting a stable and diversified economy throughout our Economic Development District (EDD) as designated by the Economic Development Administration (EDA); and

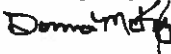
WHEREAS, the EARPDC EDD is required to prepare an updated Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) every five years and maintain it as part of the annual work program; and

WHEREAS, the EARPDC Staff and CEDS Strategy Committee have undertaken and completed the content requirements per 13 CFR 303.6 and 303.7 and EDA guidance; and


WHEREAS, the CEDS is recommended to the EARPDC Board of Directors to cover the next five-year period from 2022 to 2026 along with the required annual reports.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the EARPDC Board of Directors approves and adopts the EARPDC 2022 CEDS, pending the 30-day required comment period.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 28<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2022.

DocuSigned by:  
  
08A028878C72447  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Donna McKay, Mayor of Wadley  
Chairman

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:  
  
2092D8DDDE8C4D0...  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Baker, Mayor of Piedmont  
Secretary

# 2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the East Alabama Region

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ALABAMA REGION IV

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Prepared by  
East Alabama Regional Planning and Development  
Commission







COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR  
THE EAST ALABAMA REGION

**Alabama Region IV**

2022

East Alabama Regional Planning and Development  
Commission

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### **Data, Statistics, and Resiliency Consultation**

JSU Center for Economic Development and Business Research

### **East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission**

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## INTRODUCTION

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*A comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) is designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen a regional economy. The East Alabama CEDS provides an analysis of the regional economy and serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources.*

---

The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) serves as the Economic Development District (EDD) for a ten-county region encompassing the following counties: Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega, and Tallapoosa. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a regional planning and implementation process designed to create jobs, foster more stable and diversified economies, improve living conditions, and provide a mechanism for guiding and coordinating the efforts of people and organizations involved in economic development. Through the planning process, a CEDS document is developed which:

- outlines the region's assets, challenges, needs, and opportunities;
- identifies the goals and objectives of the development program;
- presents the strategies and action plans devised to achieve those goals; and
- outlines criteria for evaluating the program's achievements.

The program is intended to provide greater economic and social stability for the region and its people and to assist existing and guide new economic development activities in the region.

This document is being prepared to keep the *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the East Alabama Region* in compliance with the requirements of the Economic Development Administration Regulatory Revision Final Rule, which went into effect on January 20, 2015. It will be comprehensively updated once every five years. Annual reports will be prepared in the interim years to summarize and assess any significant changes that may affect development within the region.



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## Public Participation

The 2022 CEDS incorporates information gathered for the *CLEAR Plan 2030: Community Livability for the East Alabama Region*—a citizen-based, grassroots planning effort designed to enhance the quality of life for residents in the region and provide a course to economic resiliency, housing affordability and land reuse and preservation. The project was funded by a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The *CLEAR Plan 2030* was the culmination of a three-year planning process conducted by the East Alabama Partnership for Livability, a thirteen-member consortium of public and private entities and non-profit organizations—including the EARPDC—that provide services to multiple jurisdictions in east central Alabama. The Consortium hired Partners for Livable Communities and The Walker Collaborative—which partnered with Randall Gross / Development Economics, Skipper Consulting, Inc., and Epiphany Collaboration, LLC—to assist with the project.

Each Consortium member co-chaired one of six Livability Resource Teams (LRTs), comprised of regional stakeholders (including local elected officials and residents) and experts in one of six key aspects of livability: Community Engagement, Economic Competitiveness, Transportation, Housing, Education, and Health. Each LRT created individual studies pertaining to its area of expertise. Each study included an examination of existing conditions, identification of needs, and establishment of goals, objectives, and performance measures.

The planning process also included an extensive community outreach campaign consisting of a regionwide survey, two “County Conversations” in each county, sessions at senior centers and housing authorities, “mini-conversations”, distribution of printed materials, use of local broadcast stations and newspapers, and the *CLEAR Plan 2030* website and Facebook and Google Plus pages. Participants in these activities received information about livability and provided feedback about livability practices and needs in their communities. Partners in community outreach included Chambers of Commerce, educational institutions (including Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind), civic clubs, human service providers, and local governments. Ultimately, at least 5,400 people throughout the region contributed to the *CLEAR Plan 2030*.

In addition to continuing to utilize the beneficial research provided by the *CLEAR Plan 2030*, the 2022 CEDS planning process included a regionwide survey, regional public hearings, and use of the EARPDC website. Survey results are available in Appendix A. Also, for additional sourcing and information, please see the Appendices.

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## PART I BACKGROUND

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*The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county area in east-central Alabama, bordering the Alabama-Georgia state line. The region lies between the expanding Birmingham and Atlanta metropolitan areas and is convenient to the Montgomery, Chattanooga, Tennessee and Columbus, Georgia metropolitan areas. Some of the region's ten counties and 59 municipalities have shared in the neighboring regions' successes or leveraged their own natural, human, and/or man-made resources to generate their own success; others have not been as fortunate. The following chapters present an overview of East Alabama's people, economy, and resources.*

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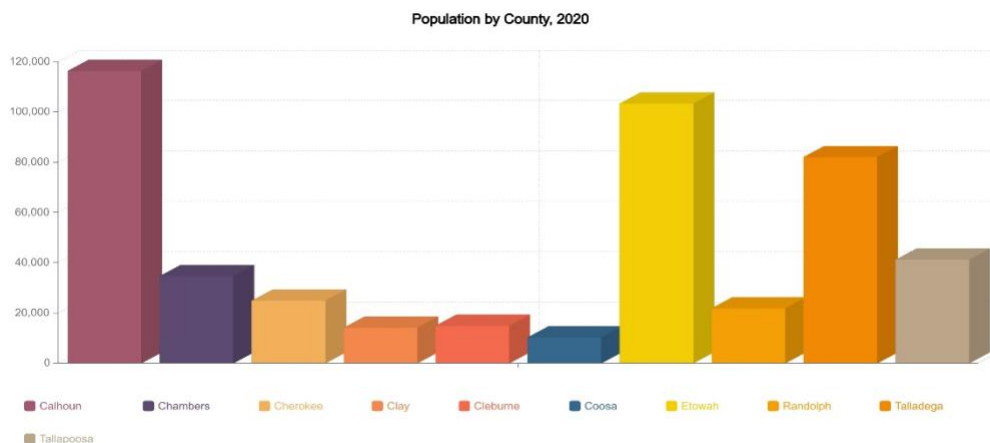
### Population

People are the most important part of the economic engine. People need goods and services, people need to make and provide the goods and services, and people need jobs to earn an income to buy the goods and services. The following sections describe general characteristics of the people living in the East Alabama Region.

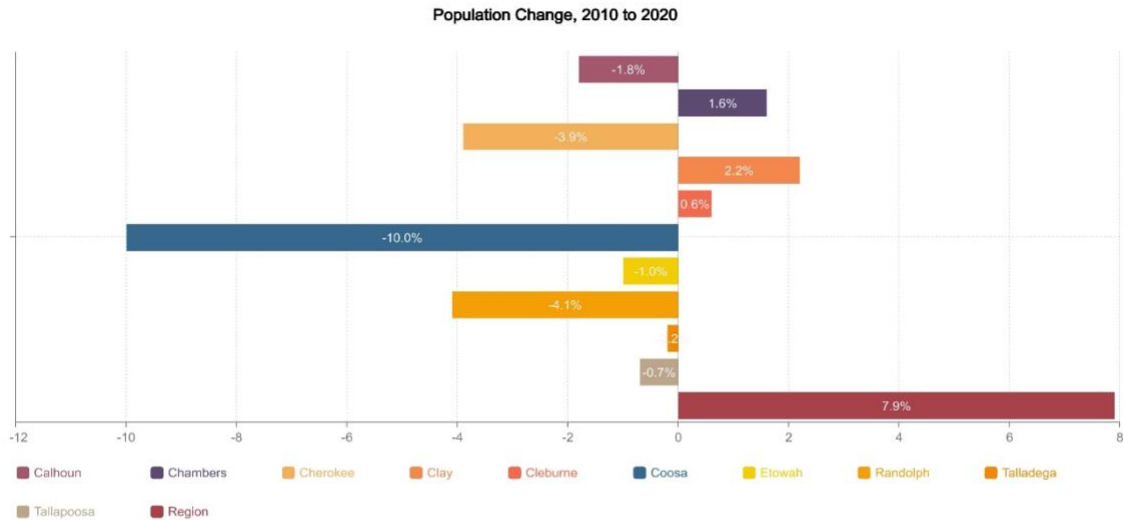
#### Population Trends

As of the 2020 Census, 464,726 people lived in the East Alabama region, a nearly 8% increase from 2010. Meanwhile, Alabama grew by 5.1% and the U.S. by 7.4%. A little over half of the region's population is concentrated in only 3 counties:

Calhoun, Etowah, and Talladega. Calhoun and Etowah Counties are the region's two metropolitan statistical areas, with Anniston and Gadsden as their core cities.



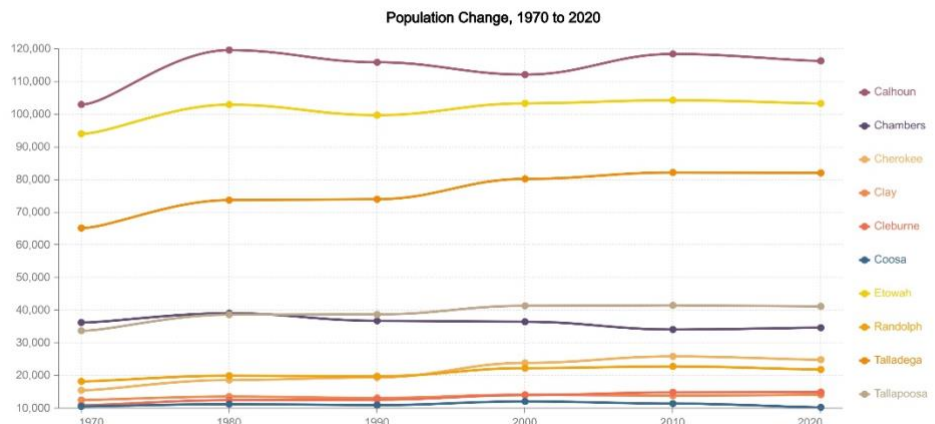
The region's three most populous counties were not necessarily the fastest growing counties, however. Instead, two of the more rural counties, Chambers and Clay, had the highest growth rates, followed by Cleburne County. The remaining counties in the region lost population from 2010 to 2020.



Cherokee, Cleburne, and Randolph Counties offer people working in metro areas (including Atlanta) scenic country and small-town living. Calhoun, Etowah, and Talladega Counties are employment centers traversed by Interstates. Chambers, Clay, Coosa and Tallapoosa Counties were significantly impacted by textile plant closings, although automotive plant suppliers have helped Tallapoosa County recover.

Long-range data show fluctuating population with a generally upward trend in eight of the region's counties. Fifty-year growth rates, calculated as percent change, ranged from 9.9% in Etowah County to 60% in Cherokee County.

Only Chambers County and Coosa County had a net population decrease, at -4.4% and -2.6%, respectively. Regionally, the greatest population gain occurred between 1970 and 1980, when all ten counties enjoyed growth. Over the 50-year period, East Alabama's growth rate was 25.9%, much lower than the state's 45.9% or the nation's 63% growth rates.





Municipality size in the East Alabama Region reflects the area’s rural nature. Of the 58 municipalities, nearly half were towns of less than 1,000 people in 2020. Just over a quarter had populations between 1,000 and 5,000, and nine cities had more than 10,000 residents. The largest city in the region, Gadsden, has been slightly dropping in population since 1990. Oxford, the second largest city, has been steadily increasing since 1990, seeing it’s largest rise of 56% from 1990 to 2000. From 2010 to 2020, Oxford overcame Anniston to become the region’s second largest city. Therefore, although half of the region’s ten counties—Calhoun, Chambers, Etowah, Talladega, and Tallapoosa—have more people living in incorporated cities and towns than in the unincorporated areas, rural and small-town life prevails.

Municipality Size, 2020



“City life” did gain popularity in six counties (Calhoun, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, and Talladega) between 2000 and 2010, however. From 2010-2020, of the region's 58 municipalities, 27 gained population, and eight grew by over 10%. Small towns saw the bulk of the major municipal population shifts, which may reflect a move away from cities and more crowded areas during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, more municipalities lost population than gained it from 2010-2020, and the major municipal population losses were also in rural municipalities.

**Major Municipal Population Shifts, 2010 - 2020**

Municipal Population Growth		Municipal Population Loss	
Bon Air	48.3%	Kellyton	-40.6%
Cusseta	23.6%	Rockford	-26.8%
Woodland	20.1%	Ridgeville	-25.9%
Gaylesville	18.1%	Five Points	-18.7%
Jacksonville	14.6%	Daviston	-18.7%
Southside	12.1%	Fruithurst	-17.3%
Walnut Grove	10.7%	Roanoke	-12.6%
Valley	10.6%	Goodwater	-12.5%

Although population loss was spread throughout the region, the rate of decline was higher in the rural areas than in cities and towns. Of the 31 municipalities that lost population, twelve suffered losses of more than 10%. As of 2010, Calhoun and Etowah Counties have the highest percentage of urban population in the East Alabama region, at 69.0% and 60.2% respectively. These counties are followed by Chambers County, at 50.2%, and Talladega County, at 44.5%. At the other end of the spectrum, Cherokee, Clay, and Cleburne Counties had no urban area whatsoever. In Coosa County, only 2.6% of the population lived in an urban area, and in Randolph County, 21.8% was considered to be urban.

## Map of the East Alabama Region



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The East Alabama region is experiencing a period of population decline, with the rate being considerably lower than that of the state or the nation. As stated previously, the East Alabama region had a -2.4% loss in population between 2010 and 2020 and a 13.9% population increase between 1970 and 2020. Comparatively, the population of the State of Alabama increased by 2.4% in the last ten years and 42.1% since 1970. The United States experienced a 5.8% increase in population between 2010 and 2020 and a 60.6% increase between 1970 and 2020.

In terms of physical size, the East Alabama region encompasses 11.8% of the land in the state. The proportion of the state's population residing within the East Alabama region continues to slowly decrease. In 1980, East Alabama was home to 12% of the state's residents. That number has slipped to 10.4% in 2000, and 8.6% in 2020. It was expected that the steady expansion of the Atlanta and Birmingham area commuter sheds, the retirees who have been attracted to the region's rural character and natural amenities, and those fleeing urban areas during the COVID-19 pandemic would be reflected in the regional perspective with the 2020 Census. Unfortunately, that is not the case. It does appear, however, that the influx of commuting residents and retirees has assisted in maintaining a somewhat stable population base.

## Population By Age Group

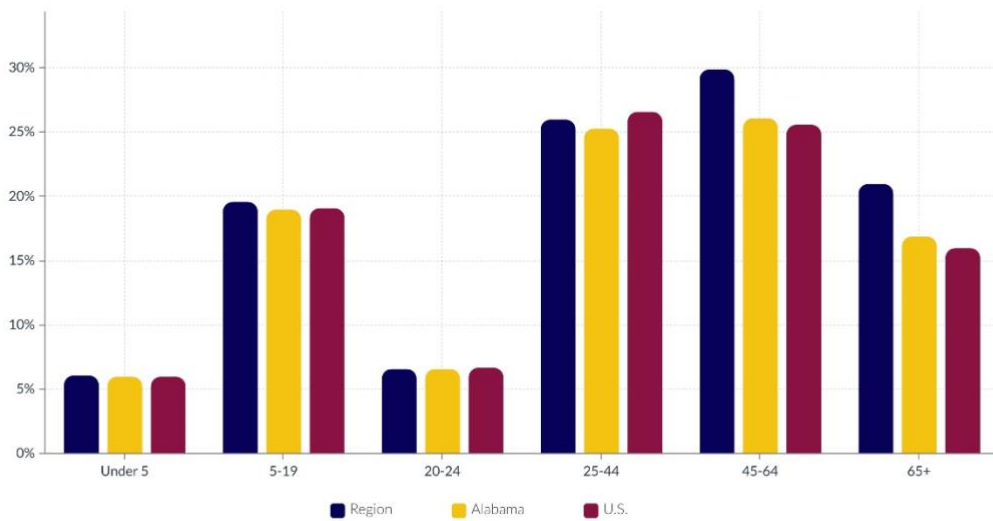
The movement of the Baby Boomers (people born from 1946 through 1964) into retirement age has been a national dialog for quite some time. Besides the potential impact of this generation's retirement on Social Security, there has been great concern about a shortage of employees to fill the void that will be left when these experienced workers retire. The Baby Boom was followed by a "baby bust," a sharp decline in birth rates that lasted through 1976. The birth rate did increase between 1976 and 1990 (sometimes called the "echo boom"), but the jobs the Baby Boomers vacate will have to be filled by increasingly younger—and less experienced—workers over time. Much discussion has ensued about means to entice Baby Boomers to remain in, or otherwise contribute to, the workforce longer. Additionally, since 2014, births in the U.S. have been declining, with 2021 seeing the first increase in birth rate since that time. Birth rates, overall, have been falling since 2007.

The effects of the boom-bust-echo, with declining birth rates since 2007, are evident in the pattern of change in age distribution between 1990 and 2020, with Generation Z becoming more prevalent as they were declared the largest generation as of 2021. People born during the first ten years of the Baby Boom have been moving into the 65+ age category during the past ten years, causing a very high rate of increase; every county in the region saw growth in this category from 2010-2020. Low growth and decline in the 25 to 44 and 20 to 24 age categories reflect the decline in births at the end of the Baby Boom and during the "baby bust". The negative change in Alabama's and the region's college age population also could indicate an increase in the number of young adults who chose to go to college, or get employment, out of state. The "echo boom" is evident in figures for the United States and less so for Alabama. The region appears to have missed out on the "echo boom". The decline in birth rates since 2007 is sharply felt across the region, state, and nation, as the under 5 and 5 to 19 categories saw decline, some substantial, across every geography.

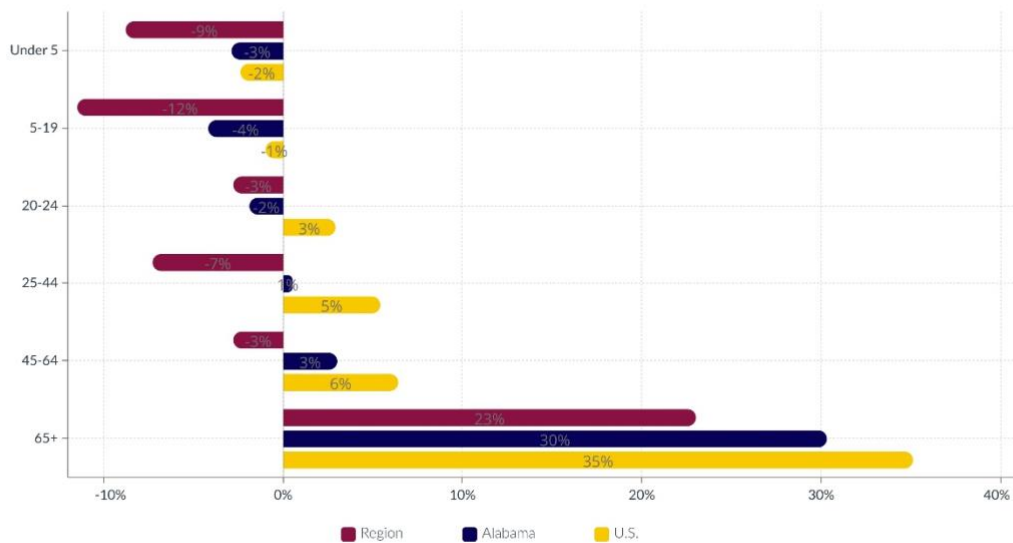
East Alabama has been plagued by young adults leaving the region to attend college then obtaining jobs outside the region. This tendency exacerbated the effects of the "baby bust" and essentially negated the "echo boom". In 2020, the majority of geographies saw decline in 5-19 and 20-24 age categories, showing that this issue is not abating. Unless the exodus of young adults is halted then reversed, East Alabama businesses will have more difficulty filling positions vacated by retiring Baby Boomers than will businesses in other parts of

Alabama or the nation as a whole. The region has been attracting retirees and older workers, however. These people have been attracted to East Alabama because of the State’s low taxes and the region’s numerous lakes, Appalachian foothills, rural character, and easy access to larger urban areas.

Age Distribution, 2020



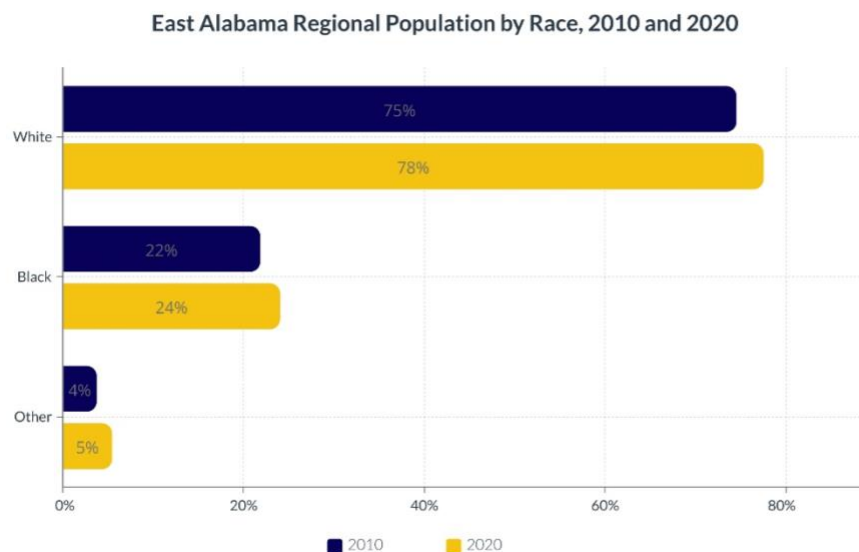
Population Change by Age Groups, 2010 to 2020



## Population by Race & Hispanic Origin

Across the East Alabama region, about three-fourths of the population was white and just under one-fourth was black or African American as of the 2020 Census. The remaining population, at 1.6 percent, was people who are of another race. Between 2010 and 2020, there was a -7% decrease in the white population and a -1.8% decrease in the black population. People of races other than white or black increased considerably by 30%. The percentage of Hispanic people grew by 22% over the 10-year span, with 3.6% of the population claiming to be of that ethnic origin in the 2020 Census. Hispanic or Latino origin is reported separately from race because people who are Hispanic or Latino share a common culture but may be of any race. At present, the number of people who may face language barriers when seeking employment is small. While this fact may seem to be beneficial for the region-in that most of the present and future workforce should have minimal communication problems-it is a detriment to foreign-born people who move into the region, as few resources exist to help them to acclimate. In addition, diversity is a proven contributor to economic growth, and should be fostered across the region.

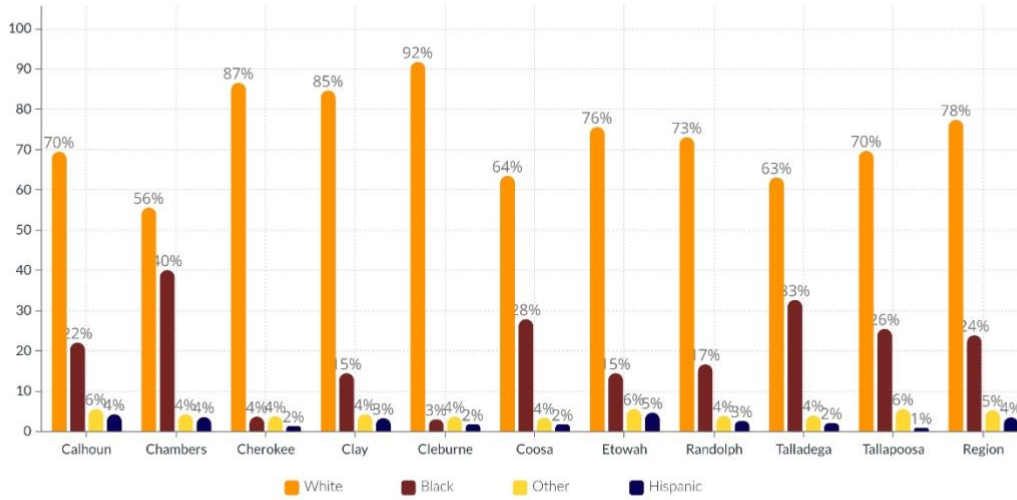
The increase in persons who are of other races or multi-racial is due not only to immigration but also to the continued efforts of the Census Bureau to document and count these persons as a separate race sector since the 2000 Census. For data management purposes, multi-racial persons (due to their relatively small numbers), other small, single race categories, and the “some other race” category were combined into “other”.



The three counties with the strongest minority presence are Chambers, Coosa, and Talladega Counties. Even in Chambers County, which has the highest minority representation, the black population only comprises 40% of the total population, and all minority races combined make up less than half of the population.

Cleburne and Cherokee Counties have the smallest concentrations of minority population, at 6.9% and 7.7%, respectively. Minority population in the remaining seven counties ranges from 19.0% to 36.9%. The Hispanic population is highest in Calhoun and Etowah Counties, each with approximately 4%. The smallest concentrations of Hispanic persons are found in Tallapoosa County, at 1.0% of the population, and Cherokee County, at 1.5%.

Population by Race and Hispanic Origin, 2020



## Workforce Development and Use

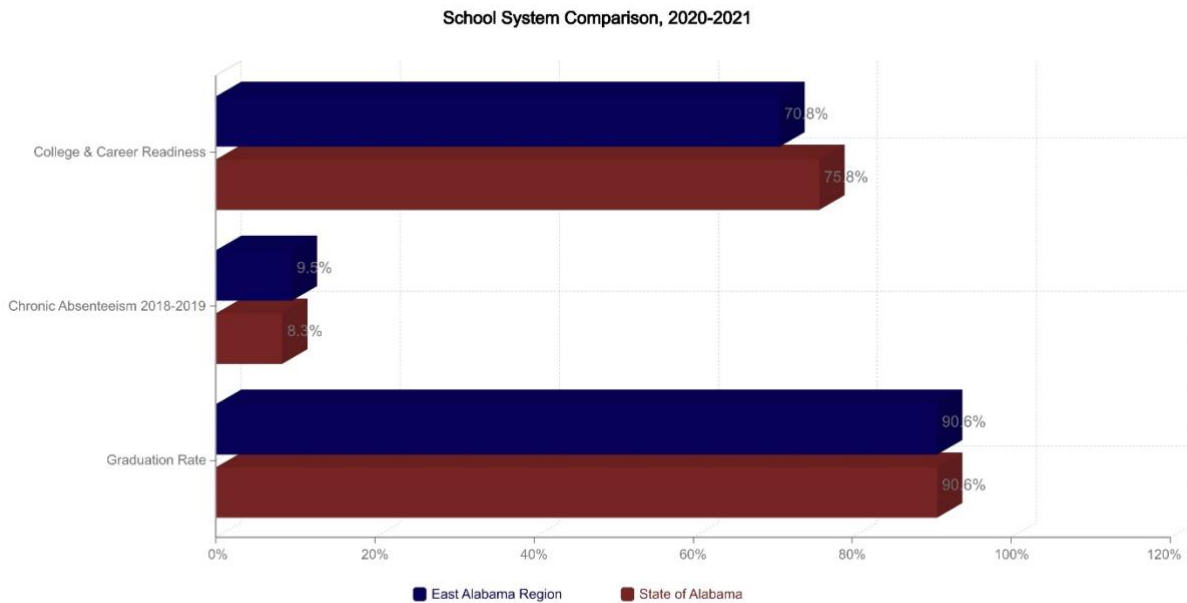
Even if a community has people to fill the jobs economic developers attract, those people must have the skills employers need. The following sections discuss educational and training opportunities available in East Alabama and examine indicators of present workforce preparedness for the ever-changing economy.

### Educational Facilities

Workforce development begins when we are children. In our youth, we learn the skills we need to survive—including skills to obtain and retain employment. We learn to read, to write, to perform mathematical calculations, and we begin to form ideas about what we want to be when we grow up. The East Alabama region has numerous educational facilities that help children and young adults prepare for entry into the working world.

Due to the impact of COVID-19, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) issued a waiver to Alabama on June 9, 2021, waiving the requirement of reporting accountability results for the 2020-2021 school year; therefore, for some metrics older statistics are used. As of the 2020-2021 school year, primary and secondary education is offered through 21 different city and county school systems, which collectively have 150 schools. According to 2019-2020 data, nearly two-thirds of the school children in the region are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, at 61.4 percent, as compared to approximately 50% statewide. Only five school systems have fewer than 59% of their students receiving meal assistance. And, in only two systems are there less than 50% of the students eligible for the free or reduced meal programs. Meal assistance is an indicator of poverty levels in the school systems, and children living in low-income households also may need other types of assistance to remain in school and be successful in their educational endeavors. The East Alabama region's high school graduation rate for 2020-2021, at 90.6 percent, is on par with the state, also at 90.6%. Over half (52 percent) of the region's school systems have a high school graduation rate that is equal to or higher than that of

the state. Ten school systems in East Alabama have a graduation rate that is lower than the state. According to the Alabama Department of Education school system report cards, the Anniston city school system had the lowest graduation rate, at 77 percent, followed by the Lanett City school system and the Coosa County school system, at 82.4% and 80.0%, respectively.



Of particular interest to those in economic development is the availability and quality of vocational education programs. All of the school systems have career and technical training programs. Many of the school systems appear to do a good job of informing students about career and technical education classes and of helping students find jobs in related fields or schools at which to continue their education.

Although students may continue their education in other parts of the state and country, they also have opportunities to receive training in a specific career or to attend college closer to home. Trade schools and similar professional training programs are too numerous to list. There are six main campus colleges and universities and five associated satellite centers in the East Alabama region, which are shown on the map on the opposite page and described in the following section.

Jacksonville State University, located in Jacksonville, was founded in 1883 as a teacher’s college. Since then, Jacksonville State (JSU) has grown to offer a wide range of majors within the Schools of Arts & Humanities, Business & Industry, Education, Health Professions & Wellness, Human Services & Social Sciences, and Science. Over 40 of JSU’s programs are accredited by their professional associations, including Art, Business, Communication, Computer Sciences and Computer Information Systems, Drama, Education, Music, Nursing, and Social Work. JSU offers seven bachelor’s degrees, nine master’s degrees, two doctoral degrees and an educational specialist degree. The University also offers basic engineering and pre-professional training for medicine, law, veterinary medicine, and pharmacy.



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The University of Alabama Gadsden Center offers masters and educational specialist degrees in the College of Education, a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies, and UA Early College, a program for college credit for high school students.

Talladega College, in the City of Talladega, is a private liberal arts college that confers the Bachelor of Arts degree in several disciplines under the Divisions of Business and Administration, Humanities and Fine Arts, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences and Education. Students in the Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics also can earn special degrees and certificates. Founded by former slaves William Savery and Thomas Tarrant in 1865 to educate the children of former slaves, and chartered in 1869, Talladega College remains dedicated to serving the educational needs of African Americans.

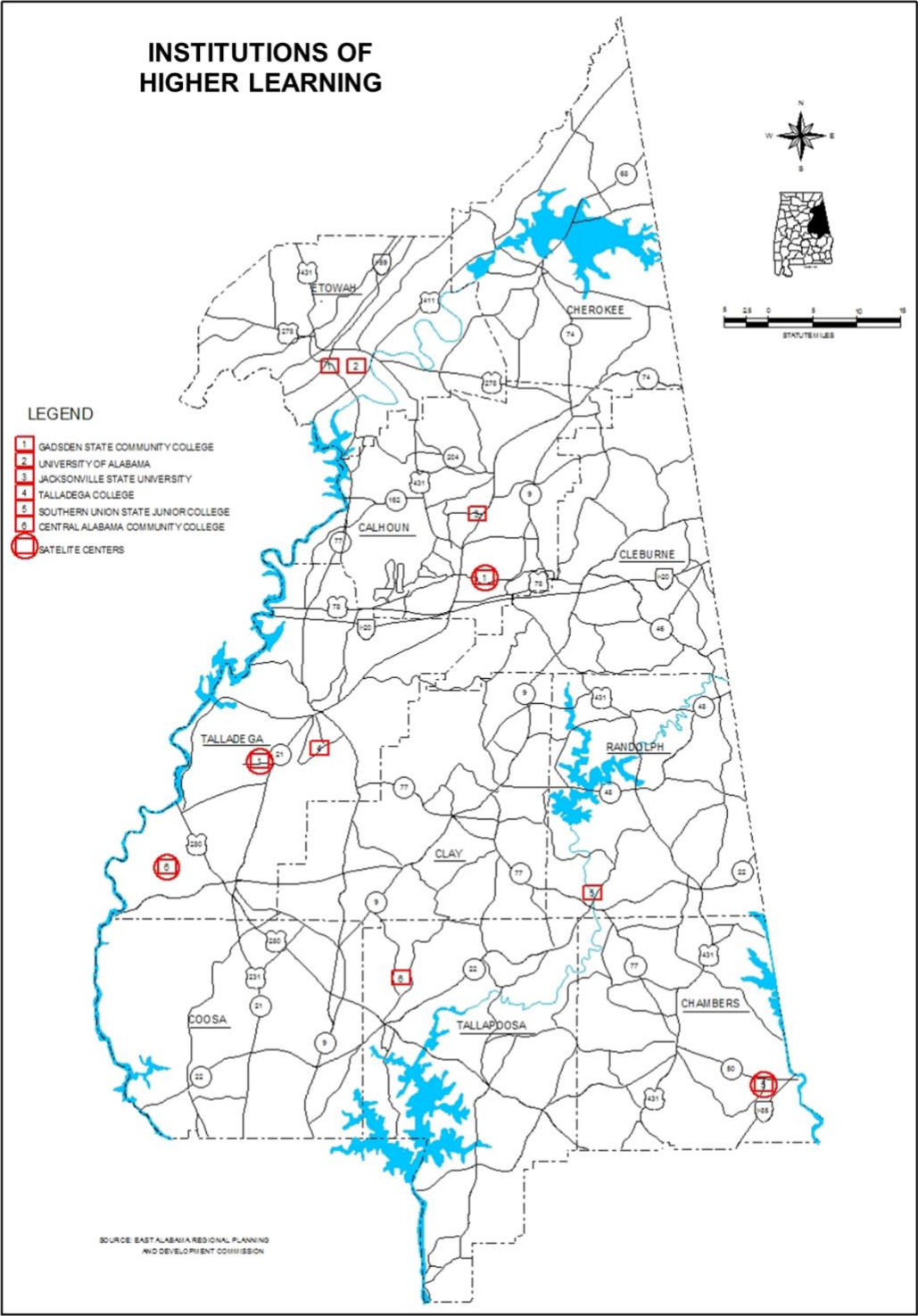
Central Alabama Community College (CACC) is a two-year institution with two main campuses—one in Alexander City and one in Childersburg. It serves Clay, Coosa, Talladega, and Tallapoosa Counties in East Alabama. CACC offers Associate degrees in Science, Applied Science, and Occupational Technology plus certificate programs. Degrees and certificates are offered in fifteen fields of study, including industrial engineering technology and manufacturing technology. Students can transfer core courses to four-year colleges and universities, and CACC has partnered with Capstone School of Nursing at The University of Alabama and with Faulkner University to enable CACC students to obtain Bachelor and Master degrees primarily through distance learning. CACC has also developed a Skills Training program to offer employment training to students not wishing to pursue a degree. CACC is fully accredited in its academic and technical programs of study.

Gadsden State Community College (GSCC) has three campuses in Gadsden, one campus in Centre, one campus in Anniston, one instructional center at McClellan, and instructional sites (in the region) at Piedmont High School and in Cleburne County. GSCC offers academic and technical programs. The academic division offers Associate in Science, Applied Science, and Arts degrees in over fifty majors in its two-year transfer/career program. The technical division offers Associate in Applied Sciences degrees and certificates in engineering technologies and applied technologies (e.g., automotive, cosmetology, welding). GSCC's Skills Training Center offers short-term, non-credit, competency-based training programs in air conditioning and refrigeration, machine trades, office careers, and welding. GSCC is fully accredited in its academic and technical programs of study. GSCC also recently partnered with Anniston Fire Department to offer an EMT class for senior who are dual enrolled at GSCC, and to provide them a scholarship. Upon graduation, and successfully completing the course, the students will be fully licensed EMT'S after turning 18 years old.

Southern Union State Community College (SUSCC) serves Randolph and Chambers Counties within the region, with campuses in Wadley and Valley. The two Opelika campuses also are convenient to those counties. The Academic Division offers an Associate in Science degree, and academic courses are transferable to other colleges and universities. The Health Sciences Division offers programs leading to certificates, awards of achievement, occupational certificates, and Associate in Applied Science degrees. Some of the courses in this division may be transferable to a four-year college or university. The Associate Degree Nursing, Emergency Medical Services, Nursing Assistant, Practical Nursing, Radiography, and Surgical Technology programs are accredited/approved by their professional associations. The Technical Division offers Tech-Prep and Dual Enrollment programs for high school students, Business and Industry programs to meet area employers' training needs, and Associate degree and certificate programs. The Cosmetology, Therapeutic Massage, and Automotive Collision Repair programs are accredited/approved by their professional associations. The Adult Education and Skills Training Division assists non-traditional college students in obtaining the basic and/or occupational skills necessary to obtain a job in the shortest period possible. SUSCC is fully accredited in its academic and technical programs of study.



# INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING



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## Professional Development Programs

The community colleges and JSU provide training and services to those who need to increase or update their work skills and to area businesses and industries. JSU's Small Business Development Center provides counseling and training to small businesses free-of-charge. The Small Business Development Center is housed in the Center for Economic Development (CED), which provides applied research in economic development to state and local government agencies and conducts business research for private commercial enterprises on contractual bases. The CED has conducted economic impact studies, marketing research, and business research. JSU-Gadsden houses a satellite office for both programs.

CACC's Alexander City campus is the only WorkKeys Certified Testing Center in the region. WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system measuring "real world" skills that employers believe are critical to job success. It assesses an individual's skills through a work-related problem-solving process. The Center then compares the individual's skills with skills required for particular positions within a business or industry and helps identify additional training that could help that individual achieve career goals. The Alabama Office of Workforce Development initiated this program to help job seekers and employers, who can use WorkKeys to gage a prospective employee's skill level.

East Alabama has two of the state's sixteen Alabama Technology Network (ATN) Centers, which is a partnership between two-year colleges, the University of Alabama system, Auburn University, and the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama. They are located at CACC and at GSCC. ATN helps businesses remain competitive by teaching employees the latest practices in the areas of health safety and environmental, human resources and organizational development, information technology, lean manufacturing, and quality systems. ATN members also provide technical assistance to businesses if needed, helping them identify existing or potential problems and possible solutions to those problems, plus resources to implement those solutions.

The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs' Office of Workforce Development has 30 One-Stop Centers and 31 satellites throughout the state to provide jobseekers with information on job development, occupational and educational training, vocational rehabilitation, veterans services, and unemployment insurance. Employers work with local centers to locate employees with specific skills. Many centers are electronically linked with partner agencies, such as the Alabama Departments of Industrial Relations, Human Resources, Rehabilitation Services and Education, two-year colleges, and others. The Alabama Career Center System sites in the East Alabama region are the Cheaha Career Center (Anniston), Gadsden Career Center, Roanoke Career Center, and Talladega Career Center. Career Center partners in the region are Alexander City CareerLink (satellite), Anniston CareerLink, Gadsden CareerLink, the Sylacauga Re-employment Center, and Talladega CareerLink.

The Alabama College System's industrial training institute, AIDT, provides job-specific training free of charge to new and expanding industries. Alabama's influx of new automotive plants has drawn employees away from existing industries. The two-year colleges are offering a federally funded program to train workers to fill jobs vacated by those who found work in the expanding automotive industry. The program provides training and job placement services at 34 sites around the state, concentrating in areas around Alabama's automotive manufacturing plants. Existing industries seeking more workers include carpet, metals, and machinery manufacturers.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a source of employment training for job seekers who are at least 55 years old and who have a limited gross household income. The program prepares participants to re-enter the full- or part-time job market by providing paid, temporary part-time community service training in governmental or 501(c)(3) non-profit agencies. The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) administers the program, managing 98 authorized SCSEP slots. The EARPDC is a sub-grantee of Senior Service America, Inc. (a national contractor) and the Alabama Department of Senior Services. Many older workers have gained valuable on-the-job experience and self-sufficiency through this program.

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Locally initiated workforce development initiatives also abound. For instance, the Greater Valley Area Chamber of Commerce and the University of Georgia's Small Business Development Center offer local business owners and employees a series of five weekly classes called the MBA (Moving Business Ahead) Institute. Other program sponsors include local banks and the county's two newspapers. People who attend all five classes receive certificates of completion.

### **Programs for People with Special Training Needs**

Human service organizations, housing authorities, and businesses throughout the region have made efforts to provide worker training for populations that have difficulty finding and keeping employment, such as people who are homeless, who have low incomes or are on welfare, who are elderly, or who have disabilities.

Probably the most well-known facility serving people with disabilities is the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB) in Talladega, which was founded in 1858 by Dr. Joseph Henry Johnson as the Alabama School for the Deaf. Since then, AIDB has grown to become the world's most comprehensive education, rehabilitation, and service system, serving children and adults who are deaf, blind, and multi-disabled and their families. All AIDB services are available to Alabama residents at no charge. Out-of-state students are accepted in the residential programs when space is available. They pay tuition and room and board charges. In addition to providing services on campus, AIDB has eight Regional Centers that provide a wide range of services, from at-home visits for parents of infants who are sensory impaired to programs for seniors who may be experiencing hearing and/or vision loss late in life. AIDB's E.H. Gentry Technical Facility is an accredited two-year technical school which offers adults with sensory impairments aged 16 and up a program of evaluation, adjustment, and vocation training in thirteen different fields. Alabama Industries for the Blind is the state's largest employer of people who are blind or visually impaired, with two manufacturing plants, one retail store, and three stores on military bases in Alabama and Georgia. Employees at the Talladega facility and the Birmingham satellite make and distribute home and office products.

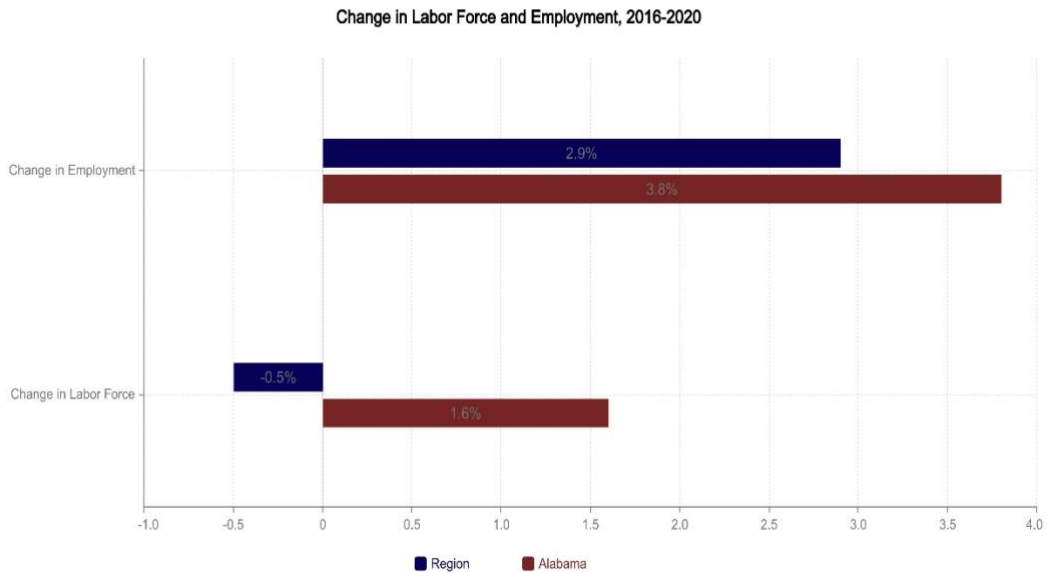
### **Fire Science Programs**

Fire Science programs are offered at high schools across the region. If a student is successful in passing all tests, and state certification, they will leave high school with a 160 or Volunteer Firefighter certification, that becomes active on their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. If the student chooses to attend a 5-week bridge recruit school in the summer, after their senior year they will become a certified firefighter I/II; this enables work at a paid fire department anywhere in Alabama and close to 30 other states. The Fire College offers some scholarships for the bridge program, and a lot of individual fire departments offer scholarships as well.

Each county in our ten-county region has county school systems offering Fire Science programs for seniors in high school. The following city school systems also have high school Fire Science programs: Anniston, Gadsden, Oxford, and Piedmont.

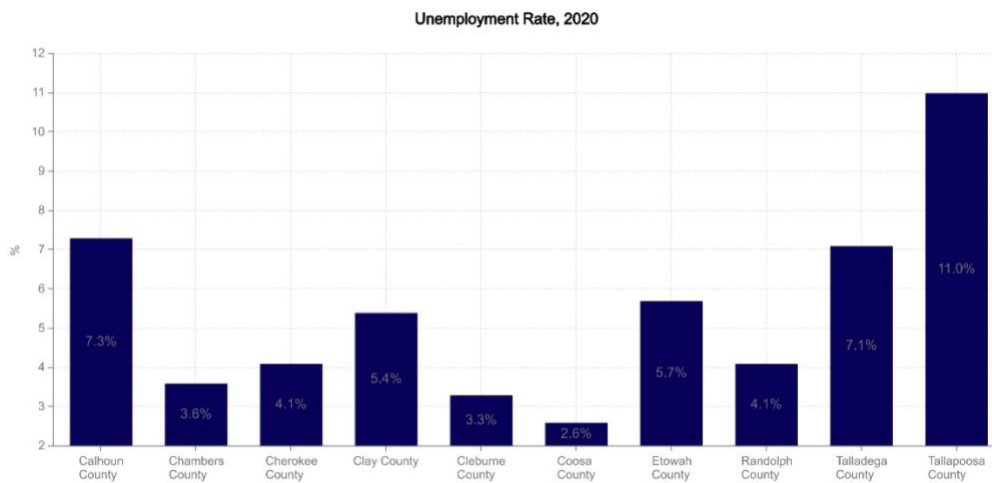
## The Present Workforce

According to the Census Bureau, East Alabama had a 2020 civilian labor force of over 200,000 persons, which is a -0.5% decrease since 2016. The labor force has declined by more than 1,000 people (net) during the past five years. Calhoun County lost the most people from the labor force, at 1,009 persons. Chambers, Coosa, Etowah, and Tallapoosa Counties saw slight gains in labor force, while the other counties experienced losses of fewer than 1,000 people.



Cleburne County, however, did experience a moderate labor force loss in terms of percentage of the labor force, at 3.5% (218 people). Clay County lost 2.8% of its workers during the five-year period, followed by Calhoun County at 1.9%. During the same time period, the state grew by 35,357 persons from the labor force, which equates to an overall increase of 1.6%.

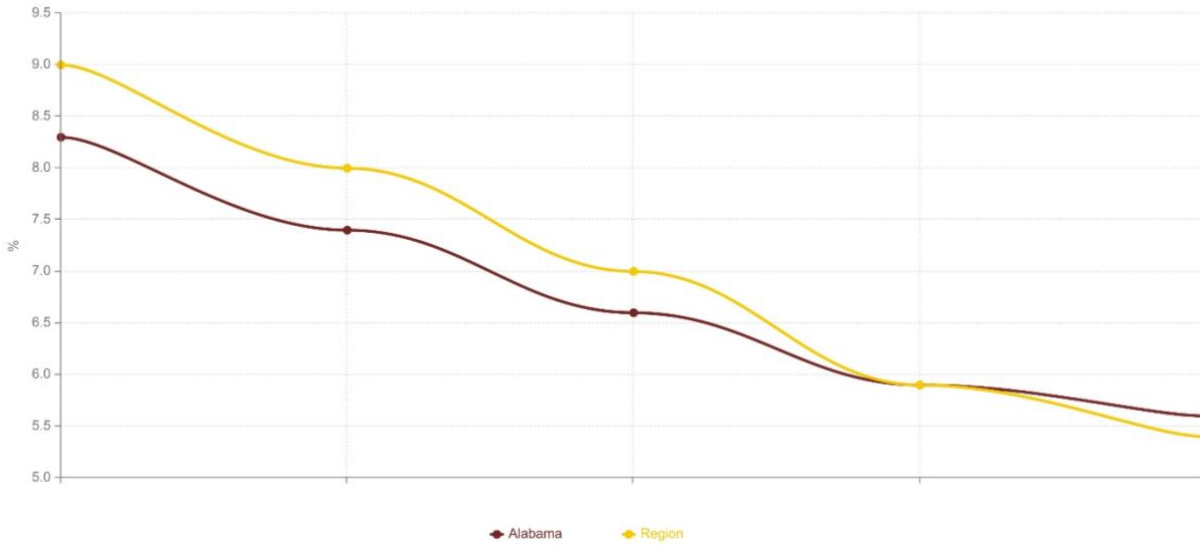
While the local labor force decreased slightly and the state labor force increased moderately from 2016 to 2020, the number of people who are unemployed dropped significantly during that period for both geographies. In East Alabama, unemployment decreased by more than 7,000 persons, or 35.5%. Likewise, the state saw a 31.3% decrease in unemployed persons. In addition, the region lost over 22,000 jobs (a 15% decrease), most of which located in Tallapoosa, Cleburne, and Etowah Counties. Statewide, businesses lost over 6,000 jobs, a -0.3% drop.



More than half of the region’s counties had an unemployment rate that equaled or was lower than the state’s rate of 5.6% in 2020. Coosa County had the lowest unemployment rate, at 2.6 percent, followed by Cleburne

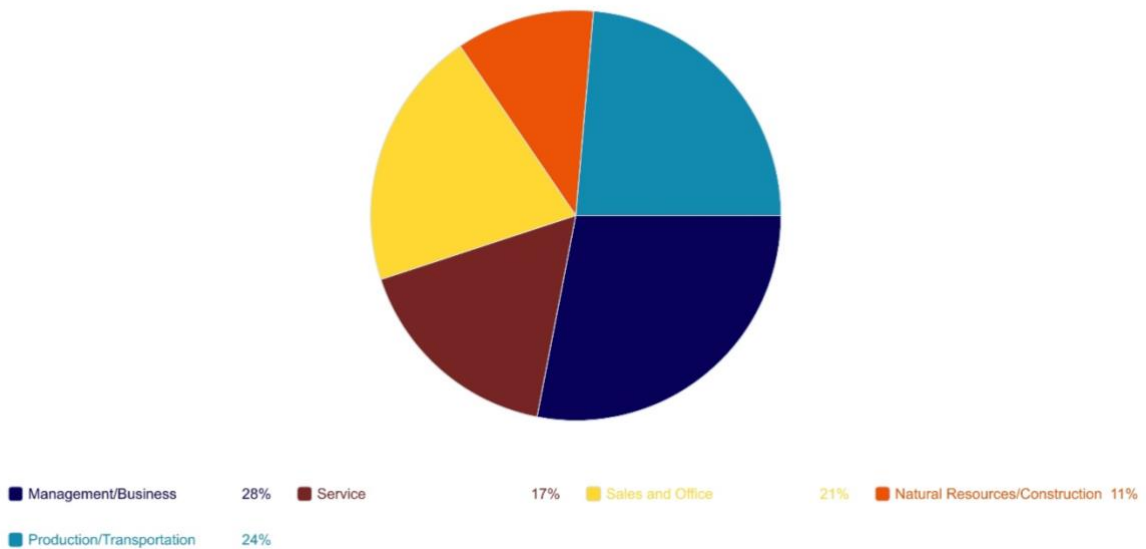
County, at 3.3 percent, and Chambers County, at 3.6%. The other seven counties had unemployment rates greater than 4.0%. Unemployment rates were highest in Tallapoosa County, at 11.0 percent, Calhoun County, at 7.3 percent, and Talladega County, at 7.1%. East Alabama’s unemployment rates have been improving since 2016 and have had a rate on par or lower than the state since 2019. The unemployment gap between the state and the region has been decreasing steadily since 2009. The overwhelming majority of East Alabama counties saw unemployment levels decline between 2016 and 2020. The most dramatic improvement occurred in Coosa County, which dropped from 12.6% to 2.6% in five years.

Unemployment Trends, 2016 to 2020



In the 2020 American Community Survey, the majority of East Alabama’s employed residents reported working in management or business, in spite of the number of manufacturing businesses based in the region. The “production and transportation” and “sales and office” occupations ranked a close second and third respectively. This shift toward management and professional jobs was recognized as early as the 2008-2012 American Community Survey. However, the East Alabama region has a moderately larger percentage of the labor force working in production and transportation at 23.6% than the state at 17.2%.

Employment by Occupation, 2020



As with unemployment, underemployment is prevalent in the East Alabama region. 2020 State of the Workforce Reports—produced by the University of Alabama's Center for Business and Economic Research—found that 22% of East Alabama’s workers are underemployed. This publication defines underemployed persons as “workers who believe that their education and training, skills, or experience (i) are not fully utilized

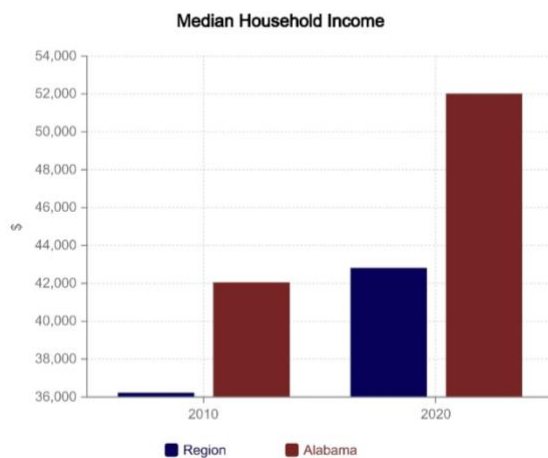
in their current jobs and (ii) qualify them for higher paying or more satisfying jobs for which they could leave their current positions.”

Although underemployment could lead workers to seek employment outside the region, the publication’s authors point out that underemployment can identify economic potential that is not being realized. Those who are underemployed would be likely to apply for new jobs that more closely match their skill levels, provided that the new job had better pay (or other incentives) than the current job. Furthermore, the positions these workers vacate would become available to others who are looking for a job or a career change. East Alabama experienced this phenomenon when Honda Manufacturing opened, and subsequently expanded, its plant in Talladega County.

In addition, and per the same reports, worker shortfall is projected to be 23,705 for the region for 2016 to 2030. Knowing there is expected worker shortfall projected through 2030, the report’s authors suggest prioritizing this issue to address shortfalls for critical occupations.

Median household incomes in many parts of the region have been below the State’s median for quite some time, so the relatively high-paying jobs at Honda drew thousands of applicants. Hopefully these and other higher-tech and manufacturing jobs that have followed in the years since will help stem the erosion of household incomes in East Alabama. The median household income did increase by nearly \$7,000 between 2010 and 2020. However, the regional median income slipped from 86% of the State’s median in 2010 to 82% in 2020.

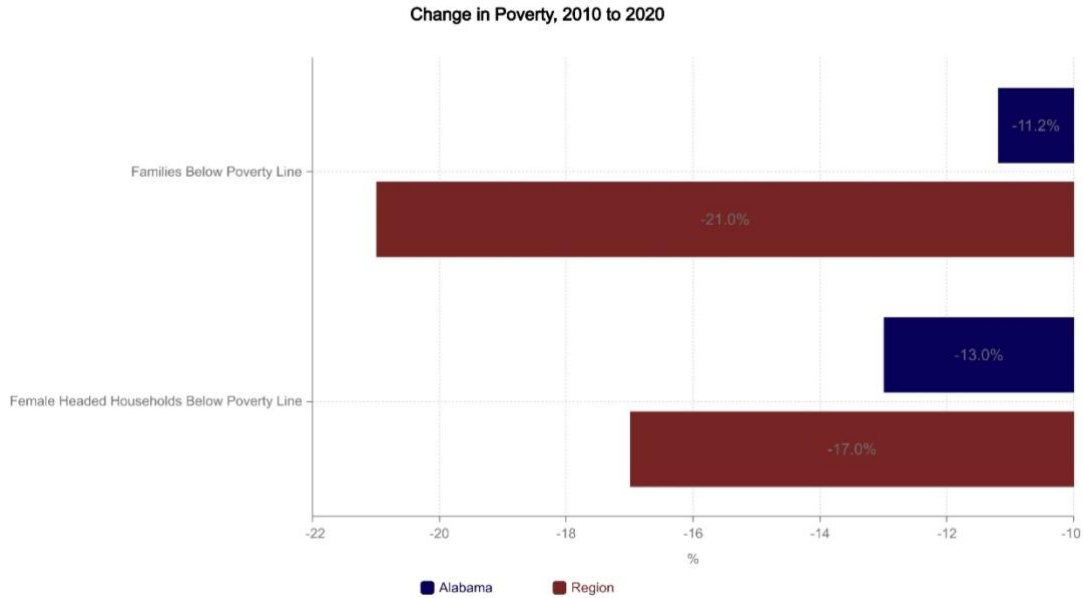
The growing discrepancy between regional and state incomes occurred because the percentage of households earning below \$25,000 decreased more statewide than it did in East Alabama. On the other end of the spectrum, the State experienced a more robust gain in households earning \$75,000 or more than did the region. In addition, only the state kept pace with inflation. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Inflation Calculator, \$1.00 in 2010 had the same buying power as \$1.20 in 2020, or a 20% inflation rate. During that time, the median household income rose 24% statewide and 18% across the region.



Another indicator of regional (and worker) prosperity is the poverty rate. The gap between regional and statewide poverty rates has been growing smaller, with both the region and state decreasing in population below the poverty line from 2010 to 2020. From 2010 to 2020, poverty rates declined in all but one county. Overall, the region held a higher portion of families below the poverty line and female-headed households than the state in 2020. Randolph and Tallapoosa Counties fared worse than the other counties, with a 9.0 percentage point increase in household poverty in Randolph County, and a minor -

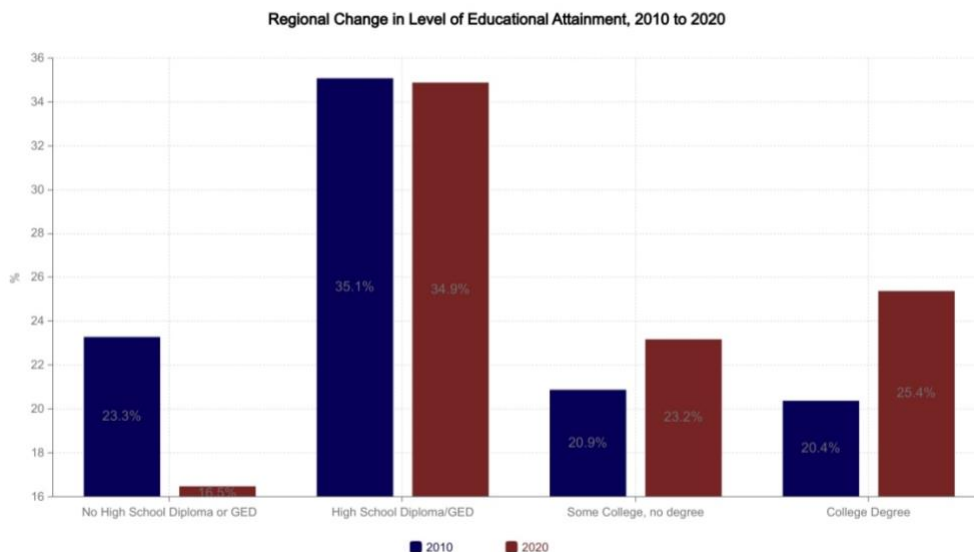
3% decrease in Tallapoosa County. It should be noted that though the region holds a higher poverty rate, it also decreased at a higher rate than the state for both female-headed households and families from 2010-2020.





Households headed by a female tend to have higher poverty rates than those headed by a male or shared by a married couple. Conditions seemed to be improving for Alabama women who were heading a family household, as their poverty rate fell from 36.3% in 2010 to 32.1% in 2020. In East Alabama, the percentage of female-headed families with an income below the poverty level also decreased slightly, dropping from 40.4% in 2010 to 37.5% in 2020.

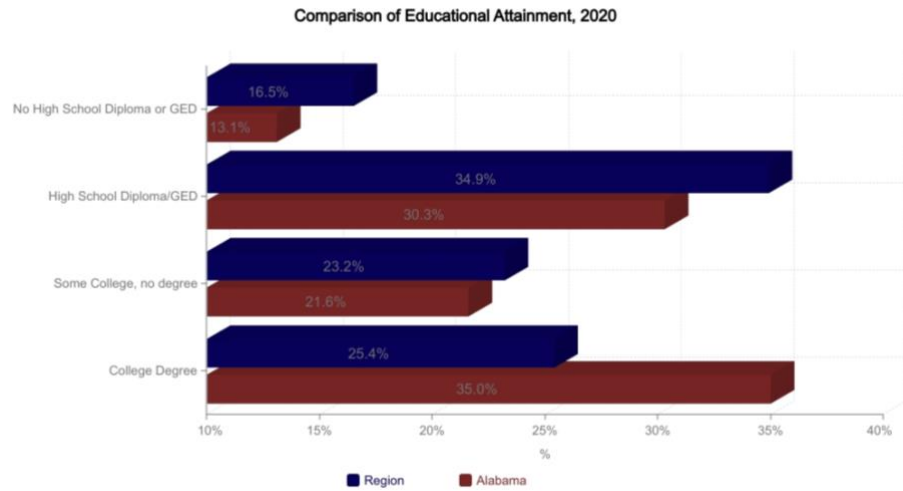
Income levels often correlate strongly with educational levels. Adult educational levels in East Alabama have been improving over time. More people aged 25 and over had completed high school and received at least some college education in 2020 than in 2010; in addition, the region has higher rates than the state in these 2 categories. Many factors may have contributed to this change, some of which are: the introduction of jobs requiring a better education; the infusion of Atlanta-area retirees and commuters, who tend to have relatively high incomes and high education levels; and the loss of some older long-time residents, who had been more likely to drop out of school to work in area industries.





Despite this progress, the region still lags the state in college educational attainment. This discrepancy probably is caused, in part, by East Alabama having a higher proportion of people in the older age categories than the state. Also, the region has a history of high school graduates going to college elsewhere, then looking for jobs that require higher skill levels and offer higher pay than they can find in East Alabama.

At this time, the automotive industry (manufacturing plants and their suppliers) is an opportunity for East Alabama’s future workforce needs. The Honda plant dramatically increased its production and employment since it began operations in 2001. This industry not only has brought more jobs to the



area but also has supported many smaller specialized businesses and spin-off industries in the region. Although not in East Alabama, the Kia plant near West Point, Georgia, has begun to have a similar effect on the region. Kia and Hyundai tend to share suppliers, and a Hyundai plant is located in Montgomery, positioning the region’s southern tier counties as competitors for automotive suppliers. The next chapter will discuss the region’s economy in more detail.

Changes are taking place in the occupational structure of East Alabama's labor market. Many new, complex, specialized job choices are appearing due to such factors as technological advances, changing lifestyles, governmental policies, and the offering of new goods and services to the public. Those engaging in workforce development need to ensure that training opportunities within the region keep pace with these changes. See below a community profile for the East Alabama region. Profiles for individual counties can be found in Appendix A.

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
10 Counties

461,546	-0.30%	2.38	49.0	42.8	\$50,691	\$142,103	\$106,930	19.8%	59%	96,232
Population Total	Population Growth	Average HH Size	Diversity Index	Median Age	Median HH Income	Median Home Value	Median Net Worth	Age <18	Age 18-64	Age 65+



14.7%  
Services

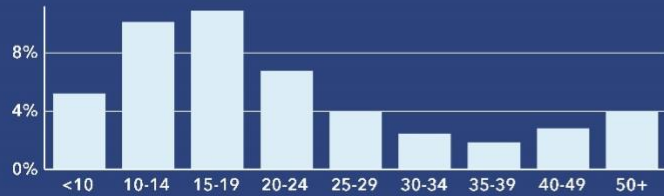


36.1%  
Blue Collar

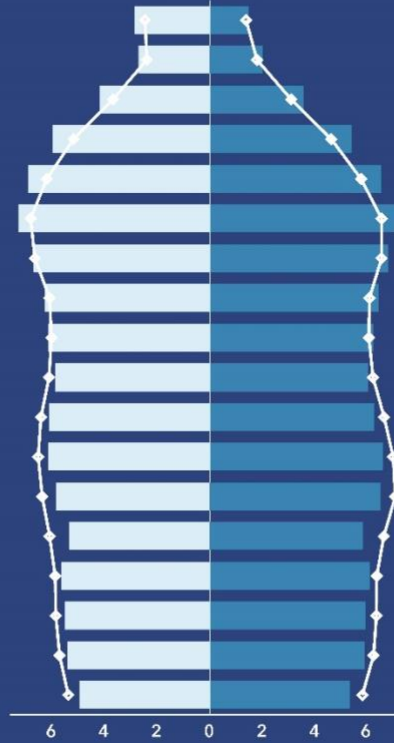


49.1%  
White Collar

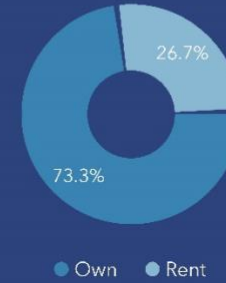
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



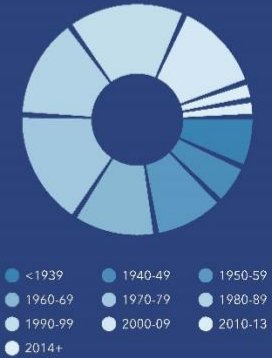
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



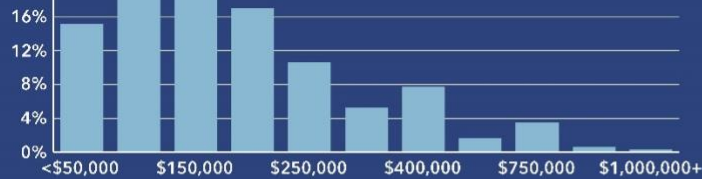
Home Ownership



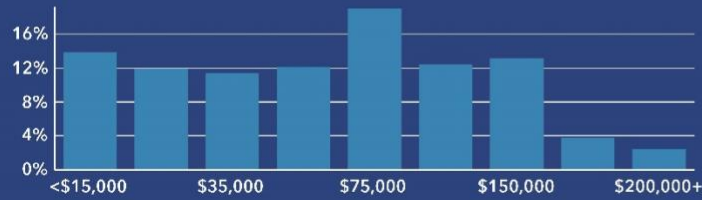
Housing: Year Built



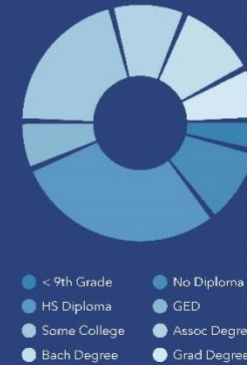
Home Value



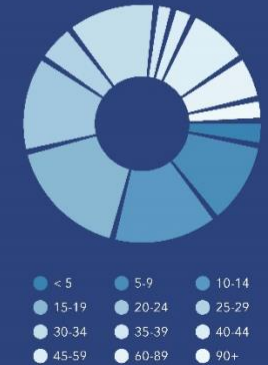
Household Income



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



Source: Esri, ACS  
Esri forecasts for 2022, 2016-2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

## The Regional Economy

Economic developers have a complex task: bringing jobs into their communities and capitalizing on economic clusters while promoting economic diversity. Although they are discussed in more detail later in this chapter, in general, economic clusters are interrelated businesses that are in close proximity to one another, such as automobile manufacturing plants, the companies that provide the plants with parts, and the companies that provide the parts plants with materials for their manufacturing processes. While communities should make efforts to create an economic synergy by bringing together interrelated businesses, they also need to foster multiple clusters of businesses that center around different types of industries. Doing so will help buffer the community from a potential downturn in one industry. The following sections examine the different components of East Alabama's economy.

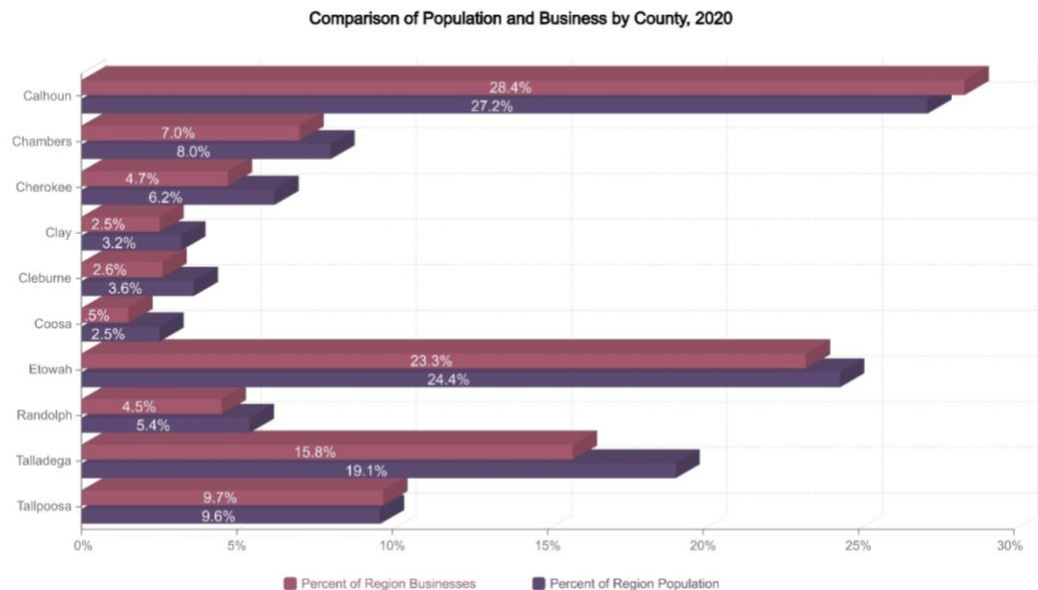
### Overview

The East Alabama region is home to approximately 9,004 businesses, which employ over 141,000 people. As would be anticipated, most of these businesses are located in the three counties that have the most people: Calhoun, Etowah, and Talladega Counties. In fact, the distribution of business throughout the region strongly correlates with the distribution of people throughout the region. Over two-thirds of the region's residents (71 percent) live in Calhoun, Etowah, and Talladega Counties, and just over two-thirds of the region's businesses (67 percent) have located in these three counties.

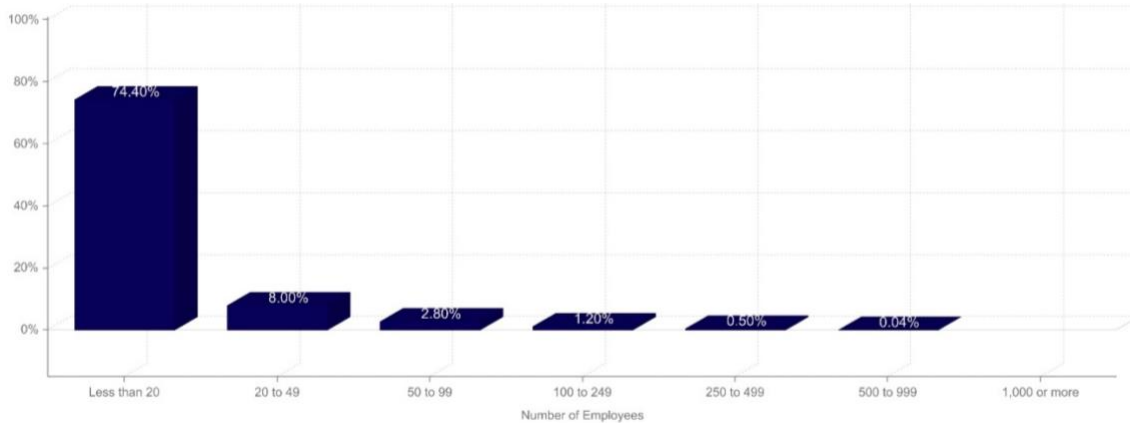
Although much emphasis is placed on an area's largest employers, the vast majority of East Alabama's businesses employ 20 or fewer people. Small businesses are just as prevalent throughout the state. In fact, in the region and across Alabama, less than 1% of all businesses have over 250 employees. However, these statistics should not

detract from the fact that an industrial plant that is located in a rural county and employs 350 people could eliminate most of the jobs in the county should it relocate or close. That county would lose not only that business and at least some of its resident workforce but also jobs in the businesses that supported that industry or that provided goods and services to that industry's employees.

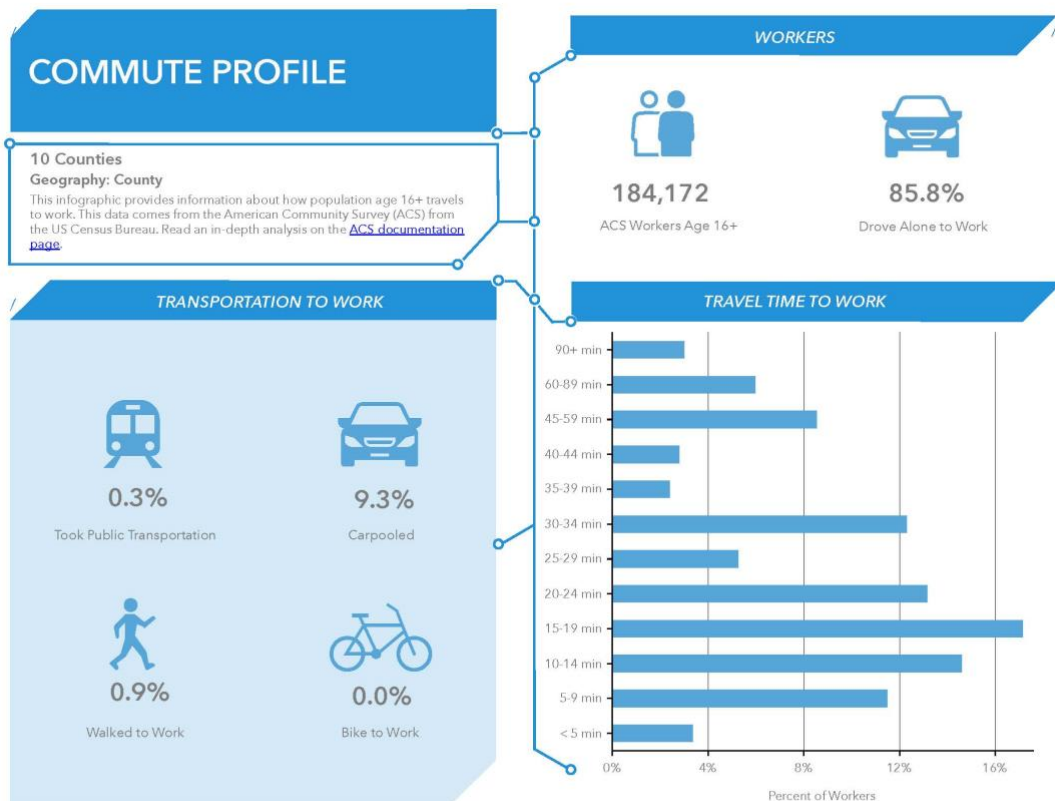
East Alabama's 9,000 businesses pumped over \$6 billion in pre-tax income into the area's economy in 2020. People who worked in the region averaged roughly \$38,363 in gross pay, which is \$13,847 below the average pay statewide. It is important to note that not all these people spent their money in East Alabama. Some workers commuted into the region, and some East Alabamians commuted to jobs outside the region. In 2020, 28.6% of the region's workforce aged 16 and older worked outside their county of residence, according to the American Community Survey.



Regional Percentage of Businesses by Number of Employees, 2020



At the county level, the 2016-2020 American Community Survey estimates that commuting patterns varied greatly throughout the region, with 77% of Coosa County’s workers driving to another county to work and 82% of Randolph County’s workers going to jobs within the county. Local residents traditionally have held most of the jobs in their county of residence, with the majority of counties in the region reporting less than 30% of workers aged 16 and older leaving the county to work in 2020. Interestingly, though Coosa County had the largest percentage of people leaving the county to go to work, it wasn’t in the top five counties with the highest mean travel time to work. Cleburne County had the highest average commute time at 33.7 minutes, and Chambers County had the lowest at 23.2 minutes. See below a regional commute profile; county commute profiles can be found in Appendix A.



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

© 2022 Esri

Nearly one-fourth (22 percent) of the people working in East Alabama work in educational services, healthcare, and social assistance. This is the top employer in the region and in four of the region’s ten counties. Manufacturing closely follows as a major employer for the region, with 21% working in this sector, and ranking first in six of the ten counties. At least 12% of all East Alabama employees work in retail trade as the third most popular sector. Rounding out the top five employment sectors are “arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services” and “construction”.

East Alabama is more reliant on manufacturing than the state as a whole. Statewide, more people work in educational services, health care and social assistance, at 22.7 percent, than in manufacturing, at 14.2%. Retail trade is a close third, employing 11.6% of all workers throughout the state. Likewise, the State of Alabama is more reliant on manufacturing than the country as a whole. Nationwide, manufacturing only employs 10% of workers, behind educational services, health care, and social assistance, at 23.3 percent, professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services, at 11.7 percent, and retail trade, at 11.0%.

**Comparison of Employment by Major Industry Sectors, 2020**

	Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	Construction	Manufacturing	Wholesale Trade	Retail Trade	Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	Information	Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	Educational services, and health care and social assistance	Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	Other services, except public administration	Public administration
Alabama	1.4%	6.7%	14.2%	2.5%	11.6%	5.5%	1.5%	5.6%	9.6%	22.7%	8.3%	4.9%	5.5%
Region	1.6%	6.8%	20.7%	2.2%	11.9%	5.3%	1.2%	3.8%	6.0%	21.9%	7.9%	5.0%	5.7%
Calhoun	1.3%	5.2%	18.1%	2.6%	13.2%	4.3%	1.3%	3.8%	6.9%	22.7%	8.5%	4.4%	7.7%
Chambers	2.3%	4.2%	30.4%	2.0%	8.7%	5.3%	2.2%	4.3%	7.8%	18.2%	6.6%	3.7%	4.3%
Cherokee	3.3%	9.3%	22.2%	1.2%	10.4%	5.8%	0.7%	3.5%	3.7%	23.4%	6.2%	5.0%	5.4%
Clay	2.4%	6.8%	30.0%	1.2%	13.8%	5.5%	0.6%	4.0%	4.4%	19.5%	4.5%	3.2%	4.0%
Cleburne	3.4%	12.2%	20.8%	4.1%	8.4%	5.0%	0.3%	4.1%	7.3%	18.0%	6.4%	4.1%	6.0%
Coosa	2.1%	8.4%	21.7%	1.8%	14.0%	6.8%	0.7%	3.4%	3.9%	19.9%	7.0%	5.2%	5.1%
Etowah	0.5%	6.9%	17.4%	2.2%	12.8%	4.6%	1.3%	3.0%	5.6%	24.0%	10.1%	6.4%	5.0%
Randolph	3.5%	7.2%	26.5%	1.2%	11.0%	5.8%	1.2%	4.9%	5.8%	20.6%	3.6%	4.3%	4.5%
Talladega	1.5%	7.1%	19.7%	2.1%	11.8%	7.2%	1.2%	4.3%	5.5%	21.0%	7.9%	4.8%	5.8%
Tallapoosa	1.8%	8.5%	23.1%	2.4%	10.4%	5.6%	0.5%	4.3%	5.9%	21.3%	6.9%	5.5%	3.9%

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## Economic Trends

Although the State of Alabama fared well in the early 2000s, those economic gains were diminished by industry and business down-sizing, consolidations, and closings in the latter part of the decade. During the 2016 through 2020 period, Alabama saw a net increase of 9,816 businesses—a 0.001% growth—and a modest loss of 6,161 jobs, a -0.3% decline rate. Average annual pay increased from \$44,832 in 2016 to \$52,210 in 2020—an increase of \$7,378 or 16.5%. East Alabama showed somewhat differing trends during that period. The region experienced the economic downturn much more severely than other parts of the state, with a net loss of nearly 23,000 jobs and 700 businesses. The average worker did receive an increase in annual pay, but that “raise” was lower than the state average by \$5,298, growing from \$36,284 in 2016 to \$38,363 in 2020.

East Alabama has lagged other areas of the state in attracting new residents, employers, and jobs for quite some time. The region contains 15% of Alabama’s counties (10 of 67) and 12% of the state’s land area. In 1980, 10.6% of Alabamians called East Alabama home, and the region claimed 9.9% of Alabama businesses and 10.4% of Alabama jobs. The economic figures declined slowly but steadily over the next 32 years, to 6.0% of the State's businesses and 6.5% of Alabama jobs by 2020. This trend should reverse as the Atlanta and Birmingham metropolitan areas continue to push outward, making East Alabama more attractive to metro-area workers who want a more rural lifestyle and, subsequently, to businesses. However, it would be prudent to determine which of East Alabama’s economic sectors have been strengthening and which have been weakening, so economic developers know how to target their efforts.

## Economic Clusters

Once upon a time, the textile industry permeated East Alabama—not just its economy, but also its communities. Textile companies built plants, they built housing for their workers around their plants, and sometimes they even built stores, schools, parks, and civic buildings. The companies provided all the necessities for residents of these mill villages. Gradually, the companies gave up ownership of the stores, the schools, the parks, the civic buildings, the houses. Worker wages and the cost of keeping up the plant equipment and facilities increased. Many of the companies started moving production to countries that could offer lower production costs. Some of the companies that attempted to remain in East Alabama were driven out of business by low-cost competition. Although it is still one of the region’s economic clusters, the once thriving textile industry has eroded precipitously over the past ten to 20 years.

According to a 2007 report produced by the Harvard Business School's Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness, *Clusters and Cluster Development*, clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, and associated institutions in a particular field that are present in a nation or region. Clusters arise because they increase the productivity with which companies can compete. The development and upgrading of clusters is an important agenda for governments, companies, and other institutions. Cluster development initiatives are an important new direction in economic policy, building on earlier efforts in macroeconomic stabilization, privatization, market opening, and reducing the costs of doing business.

While the textile cluster has declined, other economic clusters have been rising. East Alabama sits in an area ripe with automobile manufacturing plants: Honda Manufacturing of Alabama, in Lincoln; Hyundai Motor Manufacturing Alabama, in Montgomery; Mazda Toyota and Toyota Motor Manufacturing, in Huntsville; Mercedes Benz, in Vance; and Kia Motor Manufacturing Georgia, in West Point, Georgia. In addition to being the home of the Honda plant, the region reaped the benefits of Honda’s supplier network and has attracted Kia and Hyundai suppliers, as the two companies have the same parent company and share suppliers.

Wood products are another of the region’s clusters. This cluster originates in the region’s countless wooded acres. Timber growers. Timber harvesters. Timber trucking. Pulp mills. Paper mills. Lumber mills.



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Lumber stores. Cabinet makers. Wood preserving factories. Numerous individuals and companies engage in wood-related business in East Alabama.

Tourism is an under-emphasized cluster in East Alabama. Tourism revolving around outdoor recreational activities exists in abundance. Hikers in the Talladega National Forest purchase last-minute supplies, eat at local restaurants, and may want to stay one night in a hotel. People who float the canoe or kayak trails or go fishing may use a local outfitter, purchase supplies locally, eat at local restaurants, and sleep at local hotels. Area lakes are home to local, state, and national fishing tournaments that draw fishers to area hotels, campgrounds, restaurants, and stores. Rock climbers at Cherokee Rock Village may want to spend the night nearby, eat a meal or two, and purchase forgotten equipment. Visitors to the Little River Canyon National Preserve may wish to rent a cabin at DeSoto State Park or a hotel room in a nearby town. Cyclists on the Chief Ladiga Trail can stop for a drink or a meal, an overnight stay, or bicycle equipment or repairs. The City of Heflin's frisbee golf course has attracted visitors from other states. Heritage tourism has been increasing nationally as more places lose their historic flavor. Locally, many communities have brochures guiding visitors along historic sites walking or driving tours. The City of Talladega has an annual Pilgrimage. The City of Valley, made up of four former mill villages, has been a participant in a multi-state textile heritage trail. The City of Sylacauga holds an annual Marble Festival, showcasing the city's native white marble and drawing visitors from around the world. The City of Anniston holds the Annual Noble Street Festival and Sunny King Criterium, which has an international draw. Local assessments of natural, historical, and cultural assets and coordinated development and marketing efforts could help this economic cluster reach its full potential.

## **Geography, Environment, and Natural Resources**

The East Alabama region's ten counties encompass 6,164 square miles of land, making it the second largest of Alabama's 12 regions. These counties form a generally triangular region sandwiched between the Alabama/Georgia state line on the east and the Coosa River on the west. As would be expected in a region of this size, there is great natural diversity and an abundance of natural resources, giving the region great potential for expanding its economic base and realizing considerable economic growth.

### **Geographic Features**

Geographic features are major determinants of an area's physical potential. These features determine opportunities and constraints that shape land use patterns. They may also facilitate or impose restrictions on economic development activities. The East Alabama region is an area of distinct topographic contrast and is physically diverse and rich with natural resources. The northern two-thirds of the region is characterized by the mountainous terrain of the southern Appalachians, interspersed with broad, low-lying river valleys. The Coosa and Tallapoosa Rivers flow southwest through this portion of the region, draining a large headwaters area in northwestern Georgia. The two rivers eventually converge in the Montgomery area to form the Alabama River. The main mountain ridges separating these two rivers possess the highest elevations in Alabama. The summits of Mount Cheaha, the State's highest point, Dugger Mountain, and Choccolocco Mountain are over 2,000 feet above mean sea level. The main mountainous ridges extending through Talladega, Calhoun, Cleburne, and Cherokee Counties constitute the heart of the Ridge and Valley geographic province. Small portions of Etowah and Cherokee Counties north and west of Lookout Mountain are in the Cumberland Plateau geologic province. The remaining southeastern half of the region is characterized by the rolling plains of the Piedmont geologic province, which extends east into Georgia and south to the Fall Line, extending roughly from Columbus, Georgia, to Montgomery.

### **Topographic Elements**

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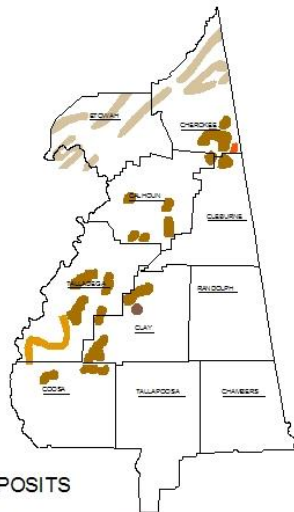
Topographic information provides a quick overview of the characteristics of an area, such as hilly or flat areas, soil conditions, vegetated areas, and mineral collection areas. This information on the land may suggest the best sites for buildings, transportation access, and activity areas. Alternatively, imposing conventional development patterns on variable topography may result in hazardous conditions. Geological features in the region that may present major barriers to economic development are soil limitations and severe slopes.

There are many soil types in the region that may pose problems for various land use development. The greatest limitations imposed by these soil types are soils subject to frequent flooding and soils having shrink-swell characteristics and low strength. The Soil Conservation Service publishes reports periodically which can be used in determining the suitability of soils for various urban uses. By determining the suitability of soil and identifying problem areas, development may proceed and provide a safe and healthy environment. Severe or steep slopes also present limitations to urban development in the region. Slopes in excess of 25% may cause severe limitations for all types of development.

Various mineral collection areas are found in almost every county in the region. Only Chambers County in the southeastern corner of the region has virtually no mineral supply, with only a portion of a deposit of corundum/asbestos that extends eastward from Tallapoosa County into Chambers County. Although the other nine counties in the region all have mineral deposits to some degree, the most abundant mineral resources are in the northwestern half of the region.

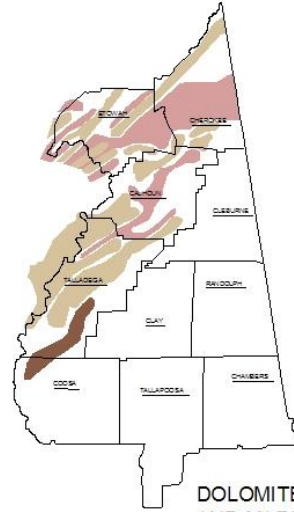


# Mineral Deposits



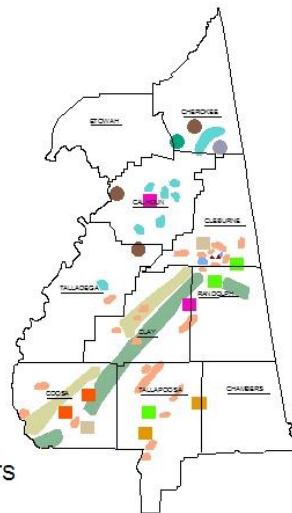
**IRON ORE DEPOSITS**

- RED IRON ORE, MORE THAN 2' THICK, GENERALLY
- GRAY IRON ORE
- MANGANIFEROUS IRON ORE
- BROWN IRON ORE
- PYRITE



**DOLOMITE, LIMESTONE AND MARBLE DEPOSITS**

- DOLOMITE
- LIMESTONE
- MARBLE



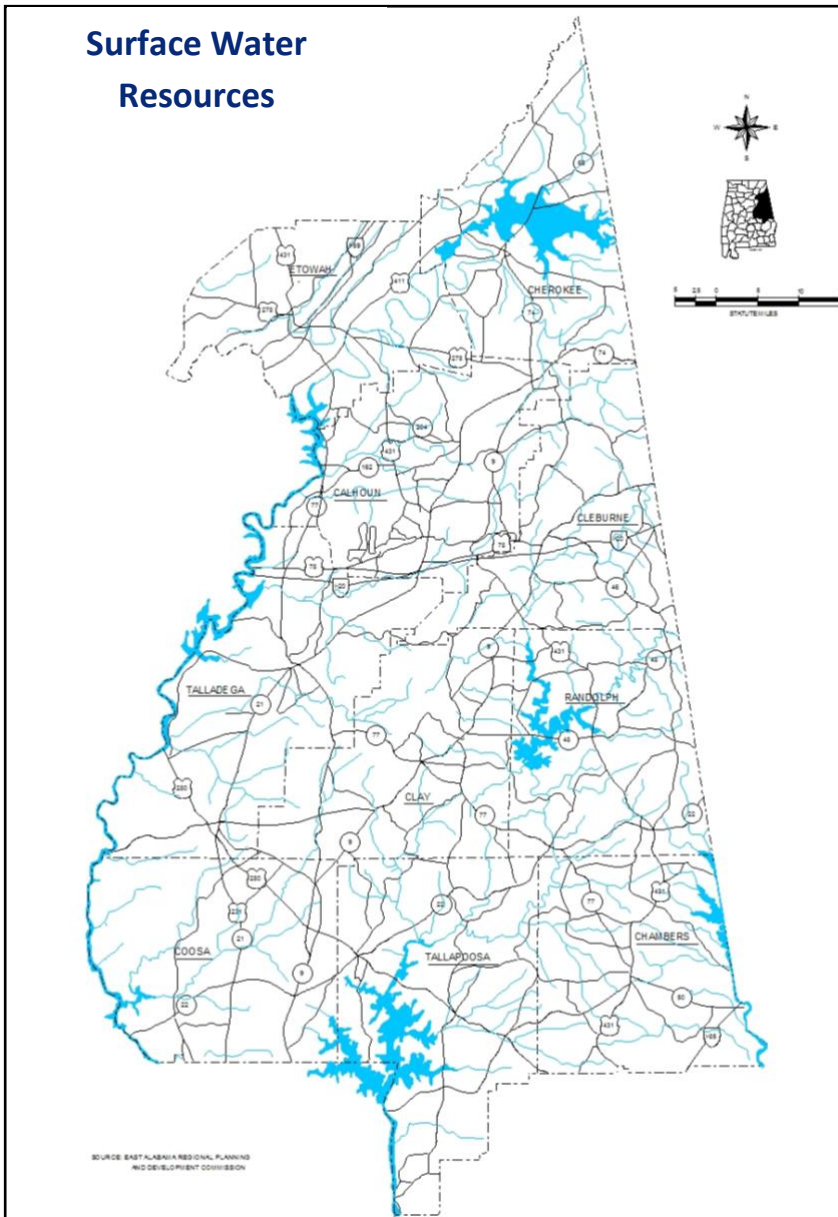
**MISCELLANEOUS MINERAL DEPOSITS**

- KAOLIN
- KYANITE
- CORUNDUM, ASBESTOS
- TIN
- LEAD, ARSENIC
- GLASS SAND, SILICA
- CLAY
- FLUORITE
- COPPER
- BARITE
- MICA
- GRAPHITE
- GOLD
- BAUXITE

SOURCE: GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF ALABAMA

## Hydrologic Resources

While the area's surface water system is the most obvious hydrologic feature, it is only one of the several hydrologic resources found in the East Alabama region. Other resources include groundwater resources, wetlands, flood plains and watershed protection. Since water is a basic requirement for all life, these hydrologic resources require special consideration and protection. The East Alabama region is home to an extensive surface water system that includes the main stems of three rivers: the Coosa River, the Tallapoosa River and a small portion of the Chattahoochee River. Flowing southwest from Georgia, the Coosa River flows through Cherokee and Etowah Counties before forming the western border of the region along Calhoun, Talladega and Coosa Counties. The Tallapoosa River also enters the state from Georgia and flows



through Cleburne, Randolph, Chambers and Tallapoosa Counties before merging with the Coosa River to form the Alabama River in Elmore County south of the East Alabama region. Finally, the Chattahoochee River flows from Georgia into Alabama in Chambers County and travels south forming the border between the two states.

The Tallapoosa River system includes Lake Wedowee (an impoundment of the R.L. Harris Dam) in Randolph County, Lake Martin in Tallapoosa County, and Yates Lake, also in Tallapoosa County. Lake Martin is the largest of the reservoirs that is wholly located within Alabama. The East Alabama Region also includes portions of two lakes on the Chattahoochee River system, both of which are partially located in Chambers County: West Point Lake and Lake Harding. The remainder of these lakes are in Georgia.

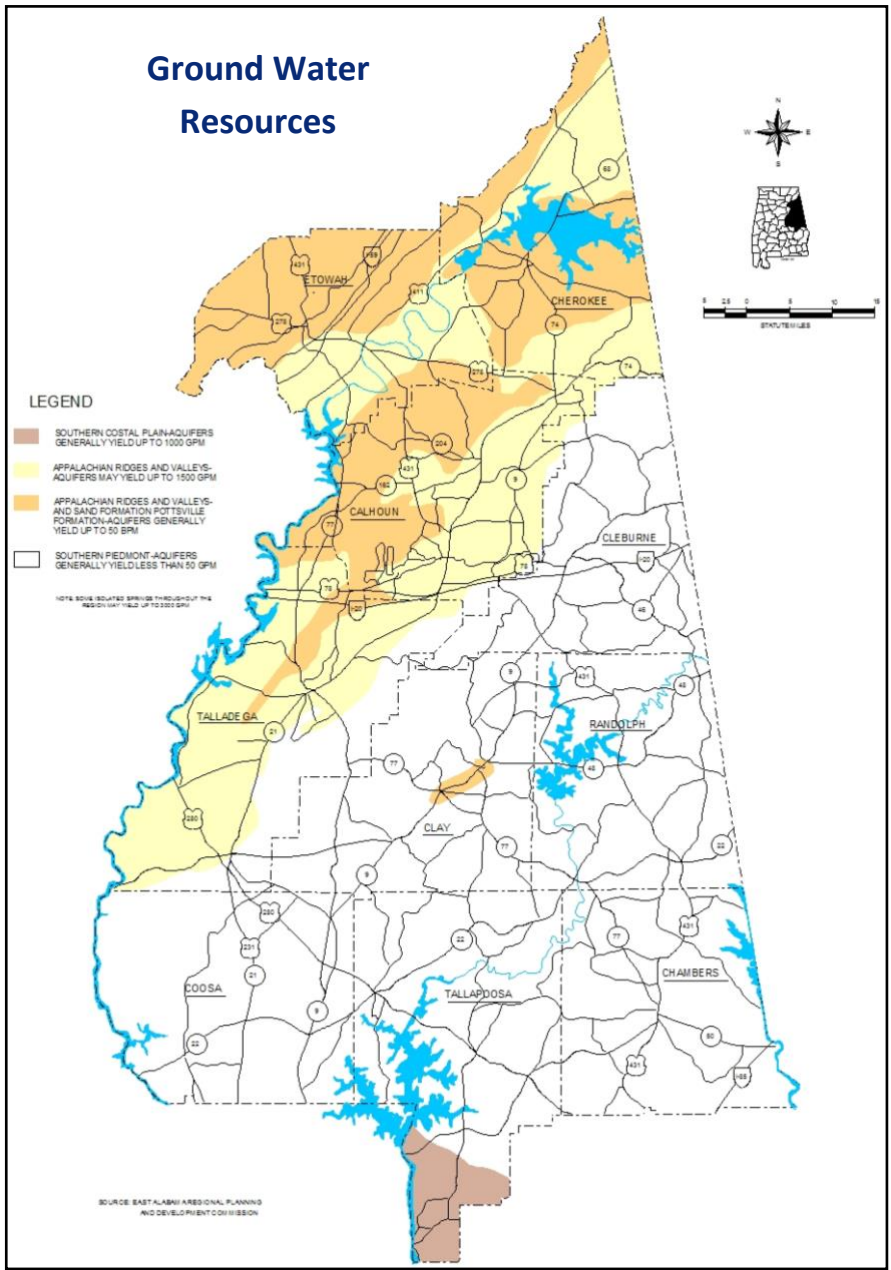
Equally as important as the surface water resources are the region's groundwater resources. Most of East Alabama's groundwater

resources are located in the northwestern part of the region that lies in the Appalachian Ridges and Valleys Formation. All or most of Calhoun, Cherokee, Etowah, and Talladega Counties are located in this formation. This area generally has high yield wells, at 150 gallons per minute (GPM) or more. In addition, the southern

part of Tallapoosa County, which lies in the Southern Coastal Plain Formation, also has high yield wells, at up to 1,000 gallons per minute. The remainder of the East Alabama region is located in the Southern Piedmont Formation, in which the aquifers generally yield less than 50 gallons per minute. These counties include Chambers, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Randolph, and Tallapoosa Counties.

Floodplains and wetlands are found throughout the region. Many of the region's municipalities and

counties participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. Flood insurance rate maps for the participating jurisdictions are available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission. Several of the region's municipalities and counties have had special flood hazards identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) yet are not in the National Flood Insurance Program. Wetlands, such as bogs, swamps, and marshes, are now recognized as prime environmental features. The State SCS has recently completed a statewide inventory of the wetland locations utilizing infrared photography. Additional information concerning wetland locations is available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) and local SCS offices.



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## Endangered Species

Endangered species are those in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of their range. Their prospects for continued survival and propagation are in immediate jeopardy. A list of rare and endangered species is available through the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Sport, Fisheries and Wildlife. The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has also compiled a database indicating at least 145 known native plants and animals from around 20 or fewer sites in the state. In an effort to protect endangered species, the United States government prohibits any action, including the removal of advantageous habitat that would endanger any of their numbers. Most construction that is viable to economic development reduces habitat acreage. Not only are land type species subject to these effects, but birds and aquatic life as well. Fish populations, for example, are seriously affected by channel changes, construction-generated pollution, and point and non-point discharges of pollution.

The single biggest problem affecting protected fish is sedimentation, which smothers fish eggs and habitat. Sedimentation results from agricultural and forestry practices and from bridge and road construction, all of which can cause erosion. Soil conservation measures, such as leaving buffer strips adjacent to streams when cutting timber on steep slopes, should be employed. Also, pesticides should not be sprayed near waterways. The best way to avoid impacts on fish is to closely follow Alabama's Best Management Practices for Forestry.

## Vegetation Resources

The East Alabama region has abundant vegetation resources, including several federal and state forest and park areas. These areas include two districts of the Talladega National Forest -- the Shoal Creek District and the Talladega District, the Mountain Longleaf National Wildlife Refuge, Cheaha State Park, and Wind Creek State Park. These forest areas provide a variety of recreational opportunities, as well as functioning as a conservation tool for the forest resources. Three types of forests are dominant throughout the region. Oak-Pine forests are found in the northern part of the region, primarily in Calhoun, Cherokee, Cleburne, and Randolph Counties. There are small forests of longleaf-slash pine in western Clay and Coosa Counties and eastern Talladega County. The predominant forest type is the loblolly-shortleaf pine forest, which is found in Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne, Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega, and Tallapoosa Counties. The region's forest resources are closely tied to its economic health, making it imperative that these resources be managed properly.

## Transportation Access and Other Development Resources

The region's infrastructure and other development resources are important in retaining and attracting both a population base and business and industrial base. In this section, the region's existing infrastructure is reviewed, including transportation systems and utility systems, along with the financial resources available to improve that infrastructure.

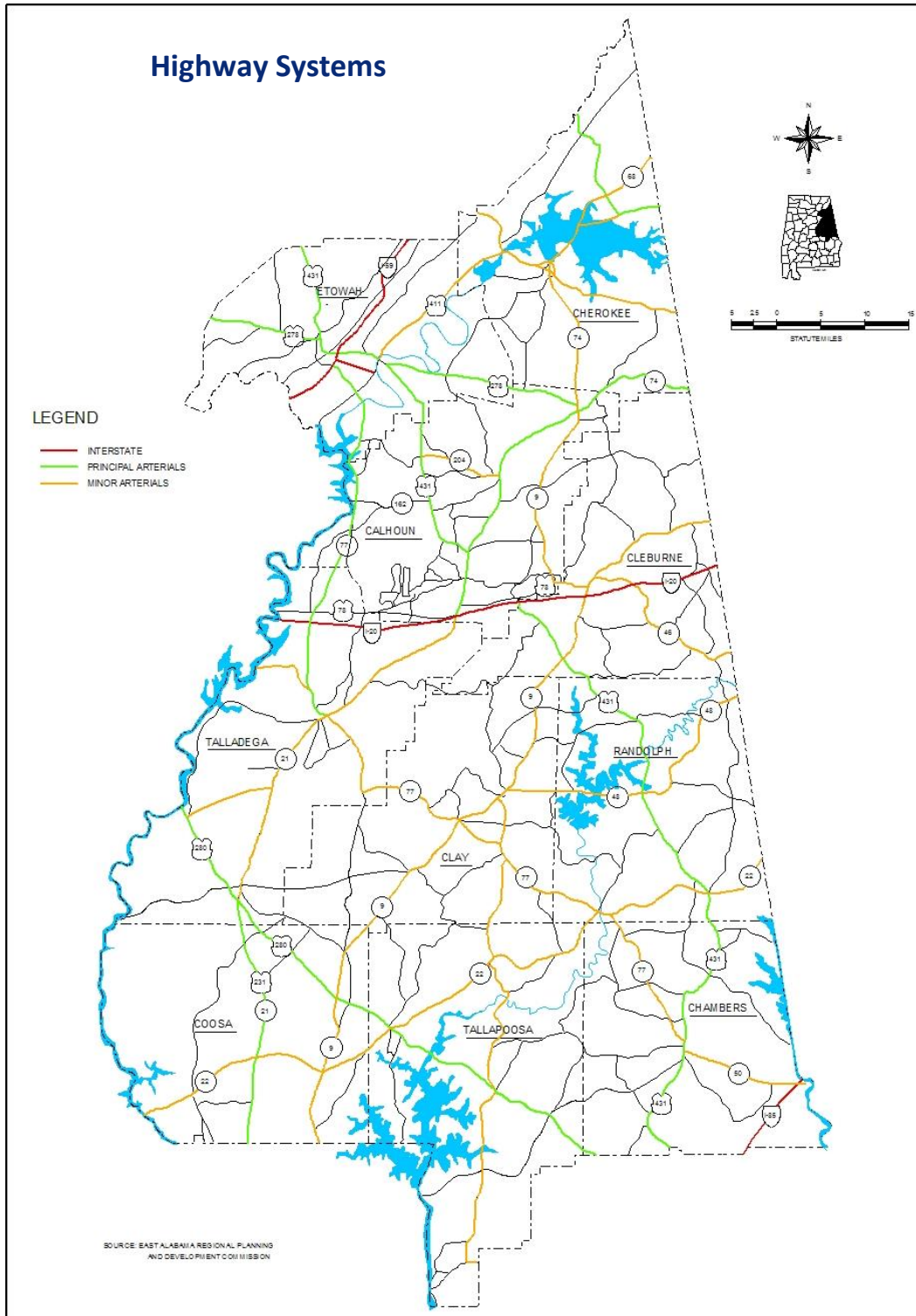
### Transportation Facilities

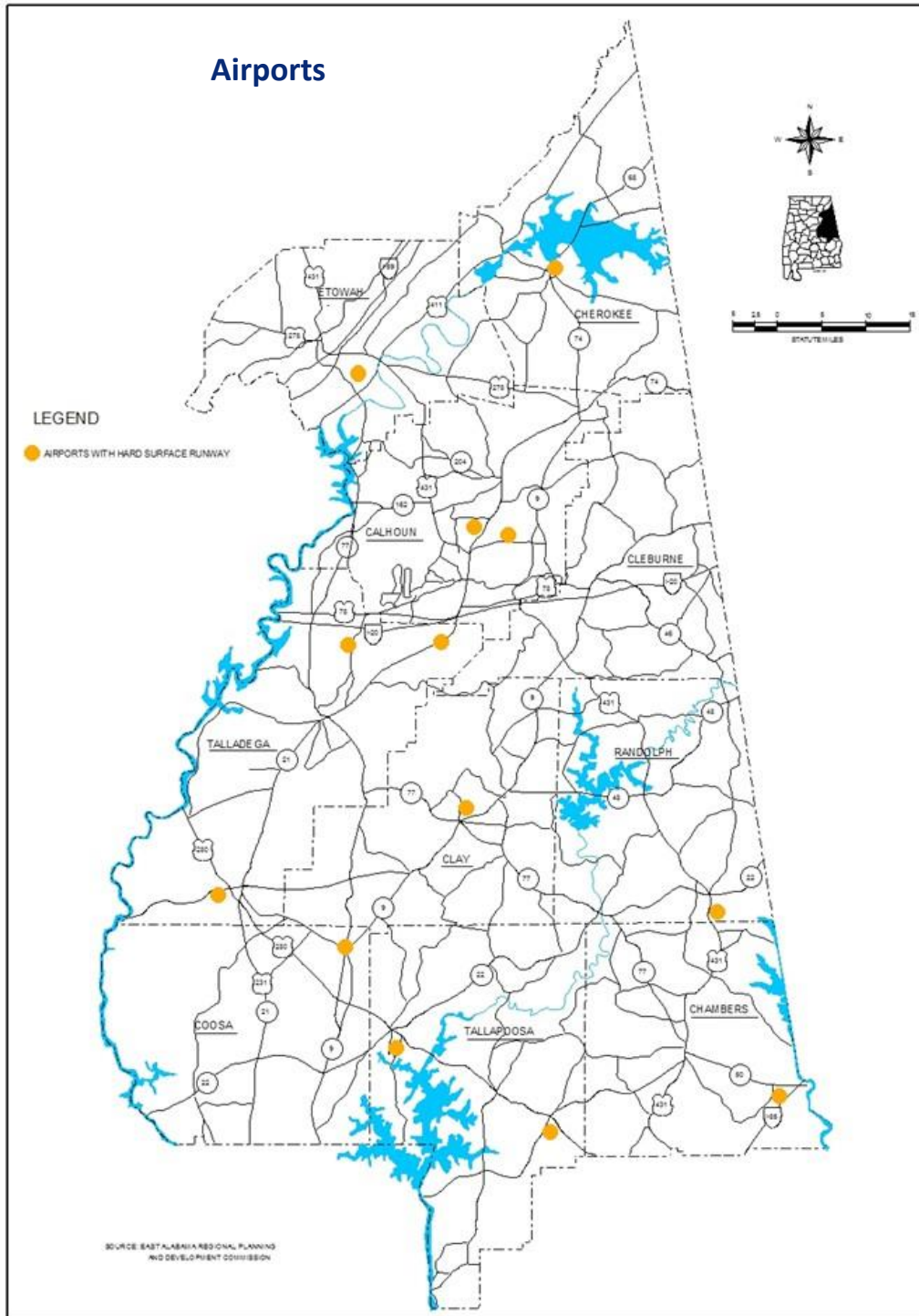
There are several means of transportation available in the ten-county region, which maximize accessibility for the essential movement of people and goods between linked activities. Due to the low population density of most of the region, travel demand is primarily served by the highway network. The East



Alabama Region has a good basic network of federal and state highways, and many miles of paved county roads, as shown on the map.

Almost all of the region's population growth centers and major employment hubs are accessible by one of the interstates or federal highways; there are, however, a few municipalities that have experienced population growth that are only accessible by a state highway.





There are 13 airports located throughout the region. The majority of these airports serve local residents who own small passenger planes. Anniston-Calhoun County Airport and Gadsden Municipal Airport are the only two airports in the region capable of supporting commercial air traffic, although regular airline service to both airports was suspended in 1996. Commercial air service, however, is available in nearby Birmingham.

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The major railroads that operate through the East Alabama Region are Norfolk-Southern Corp, CSX Transportation Incorporation, and Alabama & Tennessee Railway, LLC.

The region has numerous motor freight lines to provide freight service. The regular and frequent schedules, in addition to the good connections in nearby metropolitan areas, enable this area to be close to market centers across the nation.

There is one commercial bus line available in the ten-county region, Greyhound Bus Line. The City of Gadsden has a demand-response urbanized transportation system called Demand and Response Transportation (DART). The Cities of Goodwater, Childersburg, Oak Grove, Sylacauga, and Talladega operate a demand response service through the EARPDC's Areawide Community Transportation System (ACTS), serving northeaster Coosa County. The City of Lineville contracts to provide transportation services to residents along a fixed route. Calhoun County operates an urbanized fixed route transit system and complementary paratransit service, which serves Anniston, Oxford, Weaver, Jacksonville, and Hobson City. Rural area transportation services are available in all but Chambers, Randolph, and Talladega Counties.

### **Water and Sewer Facilities**

The provision of water supplies and sewage treatment facilities within the region is of utmost importance. The provision of these services also constitutes one of the primary determinants of land use intensity throughout the East Alabama Region. This is particularly true of water service areas. Individual wells often yield water in low quantities during certain periods of the year. Therefore, intense urban development must depend on public supplies. Water and sewer service areas are typically located within and adjacent to incorporated municipalities in the East Alabama Region. Most often the water is supplied by these municipalities, and in some cases public water authorities provide service to the unincorporated areas. Private wells are also used in isolated areas throughout the region. All sewage treatment plants in the area are owned by municipalities, except in areas where they are owned by governmental installations.

### **Public Utilities**

The Alabama Power Company serves an area in and around the Anniston, as well as all the counties within the region except for the northern portion of Cherokee County. The Cherokee Electric Cooperative provides for the electrical needs of those residing in Cherokee County and portions of Calhoun and Etowah Counties. In addition, several of the municipalities located throughout the region have their own electric systems. They buy power from either the Alabama Power Company or rural electric co-ops (REA) and distribute the electricity within the corporate limits through their own system.

Natural gas is provided by Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company in the southern portion of the region and by Southern Natural Gas company in the northern portion of the region. Although natural gas facilities are not available for every municipality in the region, most areas are served by natural gas facilities. Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company purchases natural gas in Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi and moves it across the continent, selling it principally to local utility companies and local gas distributing systems. Southern Natural Gas Company has transmission lines running through the northern portion of the East Alabama Region, with small lines to the individual cities. Alabama Gas Corporation serves as a natural gas distribution company and distributes the gas supplied by Southern Natural Gas Company to residential, commercial, and industrial customers in the area. In addition to Alabama Gas Corporation, there are many smaller municipal and private distribution systems serving various communities in our region. The natural gas transmission lines are located throughout the district so that natural gas facilities could be made available to nearby communities upon demand. Public utilities for the most part, are adequate for current needs and for foreseeable future demands of the district.

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## Opportunity Zones

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 designated opportunity zones to furnish tax investments for investors to develop in underdeveloped and lower income areas. The program gives investors the opportunity to defer and reduce capital gains taxes by reinvesting into businesses and projects within the opportunity zone. These powerful tax incentives can serve to make areas more attractive for investors to locate. According to the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), “Opportunity Zones are low-income census tracts with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent and a median family income of less than 80 percent of the statewide or area income.” There are twelve opportunity zones across the East Alabama Region. 52.3 million Americans live in economically distressed communities, making this an important endeavor for all localities. Each county contains at least one section, with Calhoun County containing the most with opportunity zones in two census tracts. Our infrastructure, existing business clusters, and rich historical and natural resources suited to tourism are economic assets to any investor looking to take advantage of the region’s opportunity zones. The critical infrastructure, which was discussed previously in this plan, makes East Alabama an attractive location for investment, when considering the connectivity of highways systems and nearby airports.

Established economic clusters, such as the automobile industry, provide opportunities for investors to come to opportunity zones and join this flourishing ecosystem. Educational services and healthcare, another abundant industry opportunity in the region, provide this same opportunity for expansion into an existing atmosphere. One underutilized economic activity for the region is tourism; with several tourism attractions present already, the region has the opening to expand, drawing more tourists to visit, and spend more time and money, in the East Alabama region.

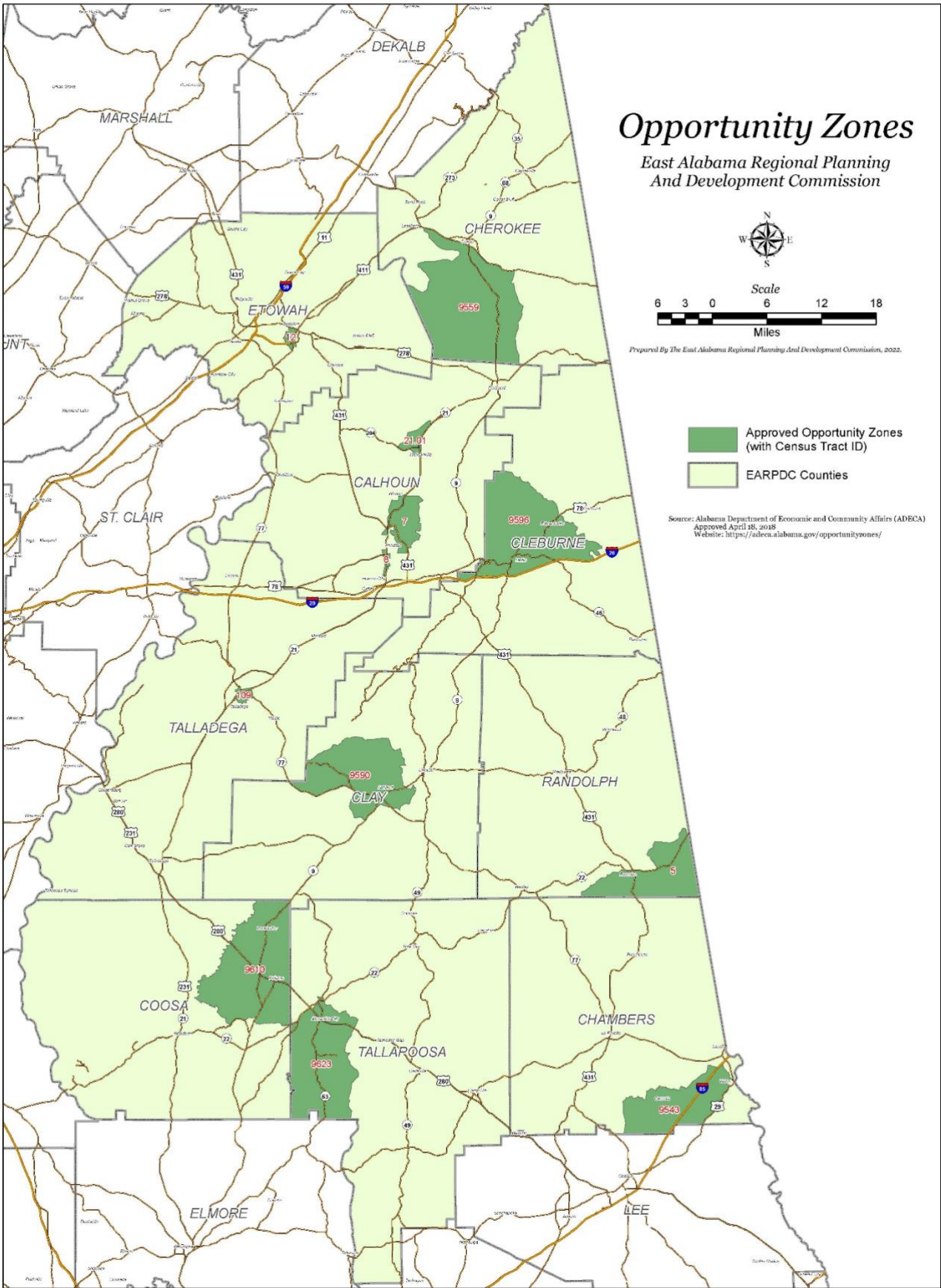
East Alabama is also home to economic assets that can be leveraged for opportunity zones in the form of partnerships. Opportunity Alabama highlights several potential partners that can help the Opportunity Zone environment thrive, which includes “community foundations, economic development groups, incubators and accelerators, and colleges and universities”, to name a few.

Two business incubators are located in the region, including Northeast Alabama Entrepreneurial Center in Anniston, Calhoun County, and Lake Martin Innovation Center in Alexander City, Tallapoosa County. Additional incubators are in nearby Auburn, Bessemer, and Birmingham. Incubators can help generate capable businesses that may utilize opportunity zones in the coming years.

As mentioned earlier when discussing economic clusters, East Alabama’s education system is another great partner and asset to Opportunity Zones. The Educational Facilities section goes into depth on the many educational institutions and opportunities across the region, including colleges, universities, professional development programs, and programs for people with special training needs. These institutions present a great potential for partnership and connections for engagement on this subject.

Every county in the region, apart from Cleburne County, is also affiliated with an economic development group, and all counties have an active and engaged County Commission as well as Chambers of Commerce. Such groups include Calhoun County Economic Development Council, Chambers County Development Authority, Cherokee County Industrial Development Authority, Clay County Economic Development Council, Lake Martin Economic Development Alliance, Etowah County Economic Development, Gadsden-Etowah Industrial Development Authority, Randolph County Economic Development Authority, and Talladega County Economic Development Authority. Local groups such as these can have great impacts on opportunity zone funding throughout the region.





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## Resiliency Strategy

There are many variations of the definition of “resilience”, depending which dictionary or field of study you refer to, but resiliency all boils down to an entity’s ability to recover from hardship. Economic resiliency is a community’s ability to withstand and recover from rarely foreseen and often unforeseen economic shocks such as recession, natural disasters, and pandemics to just name a few.

Economic resilience cannot rest on one county, industry, business, or person alone. Interregional agility among government agencies, industries, businesses, and communities is necessary for economic resilience in a regional setting when assessing impacts on economic assets, anticipating risks, and boosting responsiveness. Local economic development professionals and organizations should think about their role in both preparing for future economic disruptions and recovery when addressing economic resilience. Planning and economic development approaches concentrating on enhancing economic development initiatives to satisfy new demands, enhance innovation and entrepreneurship, increase regional population, and reduce the gap between urban and rural areas, just to name a few, is imperative to increased regional economic resilience.

### Importance of Gauging Economic Resiliency through the Measure of Economic Diversity

According to Chmura JobsEQ, “economic diversity measures the degree to which a region utilizes a broad mix of economic activities.” For example, a region that relies predominantly on one sole industrial sector, such as poultry production, is not economically diverse, while another that possesses a vibrant manufacturing section and forestry sector in addition to poultry production is said to be more economically diverse.

For the purpose of this document, we are utilizing the Chmura JobsEQ economic diversity index. The methodology for Chmura’s economic diversity index is that this analysis “computes the Economic Diversity Index for every county and MSA at the 6-digit NAICS level even when employment suppression issues make it difficult to find data for all industries. While the Bureau of Labor Statistic’s county-level dataset is bound by non-disclosure rules, this analysis utilizes JobsEQ employment data which incorporates additional sources and methodologies to provide a complete employment dataset of all regions, making a thorough Economic Diversity Index calculation possible.”

This metric is crucial for determining how adaptable and stable an economy will likely be amid an unanticipated economic event. An effective tool for planning is a measure of economic variety. With COVID-19’s effects on economic circumstances being so pervasive lately, a more diversified economy is better able to withstand economic decline and job losses brought on by such shocks.

With a national index rating of 0.00, the United States is the region with the greatest economic diversity. When comparing two regions, a region with a comparatively lower index value is thought to be more economically diversified than one with a higher value. Index measures are presented as numerical values and percentage changes for this analysis. When compared to the national index standard, all index values for each county and region are more than 0.00, suggesting a lower level of economic variety. Positive numbers across periods (a negative percent change) indicate higher levels of economic variety throughout time. For the

EARPDC ten-county region, the economic diversity index is considered for 2011, 2016, and 2021 as index measurements and percent changes for each county, and region average.

### EARDPC 10- County Region Diversity Index

Region Code	Region Description	Diversity Index 2011	Diversity Index 2016	Diversity Index 2021	2011-2016 % Change	2016-2021 % Change	2011-2021 % Change
01015	Calhoun County, Alabama	73.93	73.46	75.38	-0.64%	2.61%	1.96%
01017	Chambers County, Alabama	99.91	103.87	99.37	3.96%	-4.33%	-0.54%
01019	Cherokee County, Alabama	106.72	108.01	107.04	1.21%	-0.90%	0.30%
01027	Clay County, Alabama	123.91	129.38	133.49	4.41%	3.18%	7.73%
01029	Cleburne County, Alabama	123.21	125.25	119.66	1.66%	-4.46%	-2.88%
01037	Coosa County, Alabama	147.05	142.2	132.09	-3.30%	-7.11%	-10.17%
01055	Etowah County, Alabama	74.88	76.95	76.93	2.76%	-0.03%	2.74%
01111	Randolph County, Alabama	106.16	107.53	112.06	1.29%	4.21%	5.56%
01123	Tallapoosa County, Alabama	90.42	92.52	93.96	2.32%	1.56%	3.92%
01121	Talladega County, Alabama	94.09	97.7	100.66	3.84%	3.03%	6.98%
	EARDPC Region Average	104.03	105.69	105.06	1.59%	-0.59%	1.00%

In relation to the EARPDC 10-county region, the counties of Calhoun and Etowah are more economically diverse with Diversity Index values ranging in the mid-70s for both counties. With these two counties exhibiting the lowest economic diversity index values and therefore the highest levels of economic diversity, points to the importance of economic dynamics in urbanized areas when firms locate to a region. Tallapoosa County is also more economically diverse with values in the mid-90s. Clay and Coosa Counties are the least economically diverse counties in the region with Diversity Index values in the mid-130s.

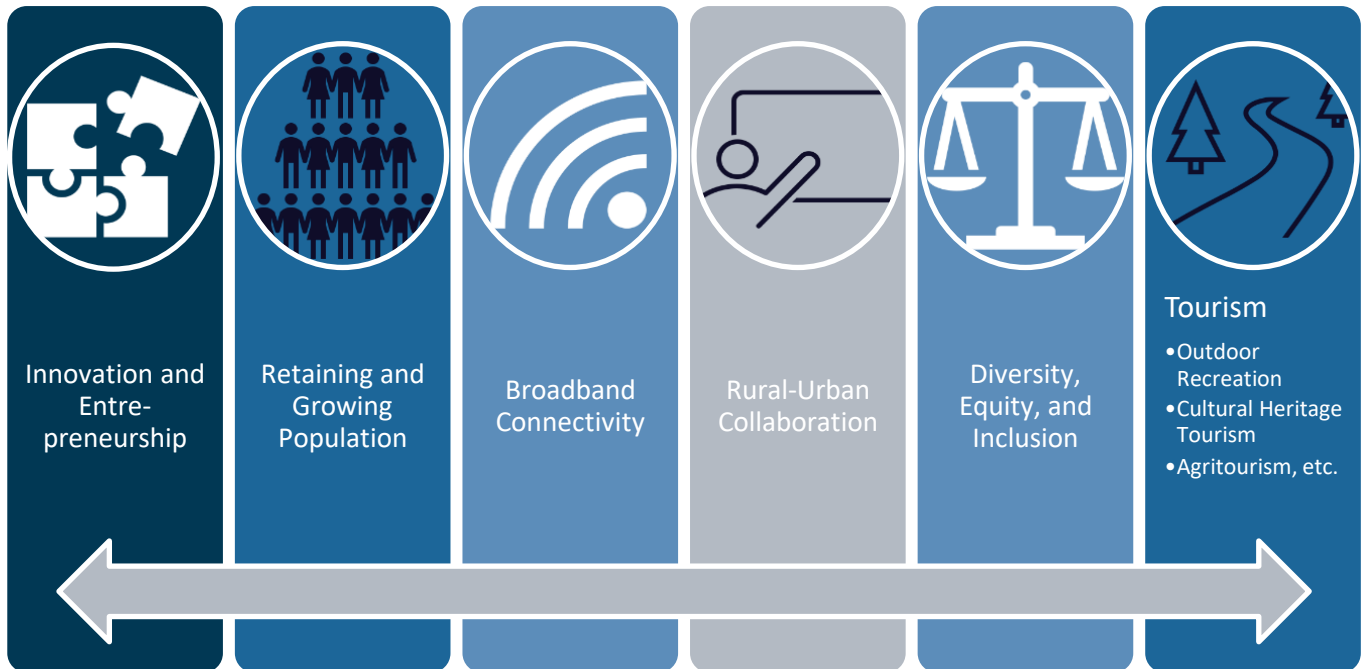
Diversity Index value changes from 2011-2016 were overall negative; eight of the ten counties experienced lower levels of diversity, while only two counties became more economically diversified. The biggest improvement in economic diversity was for Coosa County as its index value declined from 147.05 to 142.2, a -3.30% improvement. Clay County experienced the largest percent decline in economic diversity as its index value increased by 4.41% from 123.91 to 129.38.

From 2016 to 2021, economic diversity conditions in the region improved with five of the counties experiencing more economic diversification and five counties experiencing lower levels of diversity. Only one county that improved from 2011 to 2016 also improved from 2016 to 2021 and that was Coosa County. The biggest improvement in economic diversity during this period was again for Coosa County as its index value continued to decline by -7.11% from 142.2 to 132.09. During the period, Randolph County experienced the largest decline as its index measurement worsened by 4.21%, 107.53 to 112.06. The ten-county EARPDC region increased in economic diversity as its index value declined by -0.59% from 105.59 to 105.06.

Perhaps the best measure for economic diversity is the change over a longer period that considers values before and during the economic shock of COVID-19. From 2011 to 2021, the largest percent change decline was 7.73% in Clay County with much of the decline occurring in the 2011-2016 time period. Coosa County experienced the most improvement in economic diversity as its index value declined by -10.17% over the period. For this ten-year period, the EARPDC ten-county region worsened in economic diversity by 1.00%.

**Source:** CHMURA Economics & Analytics <https://www.chmura.com/blog/chmura-economic-diversity>.

## Strategic Areas to Focus on to Increase Regional Economic Resiliency



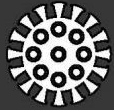
### Disaster Strategy

Each of the counties in the region is a part of a recently updated hazard mitigation plan, which are now done regionally and divided by Alabama Emergency Management Divisions. The Alabama Emergency Management Agency classifies them as follows: Division F includes Etowah and Cherokee Counties; Division G includes Calhoun, Cleburne, Clay, Randolph, and Talladega Counties; and Division D includes Chambers, Coosa, and Tallapoosa Counties. These plans go into detail describing emergency planning, disaster information, and response and recovery actions and plans for each county.

### COVID-19 Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic had a considerable economic impact on the East Alabama Region. Communities were unprepared in this unprecedented situation to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. Many businesses, institutions, and production and manufacturing companies were forced to shut down or implement work from home policies to protect the public from infection. This had a far-reaching impact on supply chains, school systems, and government budgets, just to name a few examples. A huge issue in the East Alabama region was the lack of internet availability and connectivity, which effected the capability of students to attend online classes, or employees to safely work from home. The COVID-19 pandemic made apparent many of the region's economic development issues, which were considered to determine regionally developed strategies to build capacity for economic development based on local business conditions and needs. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the East Alabama Region planning process considered recovery and resilience regarding all these matters during plan development. Please the impact planning and at-risk population reports below. Individual County reports can be found in Appendix A.





# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

10 Counties

Geography: County



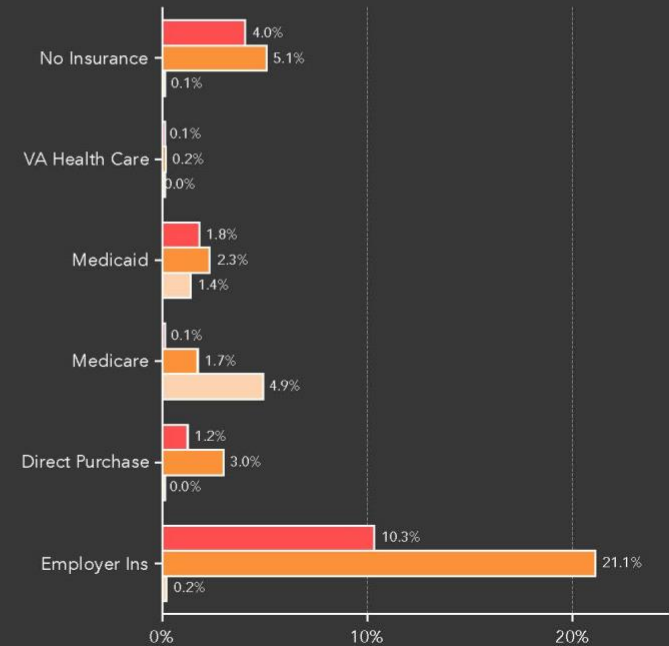
461,546	2.38	188,136	42.8	\$50,691	\$142,103	177	91%
Population	Avg Size Household	Households	Median Age	Median Household Income	Median Home Value	Housing Affordability	Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

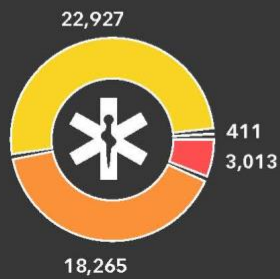


## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Pop 19-34 Pop 35-64 Pop 65+



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



0-18 19-34 35-64 Age 65+

## POVERTY



## AT RISK POPULATION



Sources: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020, Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Axle, ACS

Note: Medicaid values for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Axle, ACS

**LANGUAGE (ACS)**

	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
<b>English Only</b>	67,937	263,562	86,777	418,276
<b>Spanish</b>	2,756	7,104	542	10,402
Spanish & English Well	2,583	5,230	417	8,230
Spanish & English Not Well	167	1,380	72	1,619
<b>Indo-European</b>	295	1,461	498	2,254
Indo-European & English Well	234	1,251	440	1,925
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	61	152	52	265
<b>Asian-Pacific Island</b>	85	1,206	294	1,585
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Well	85	932	249	1,266
Asn-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	246	8	254
<b>Other Language</b>	177	448	95	720
Other Language & English Well	177	428	95	700
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	20	0	20



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

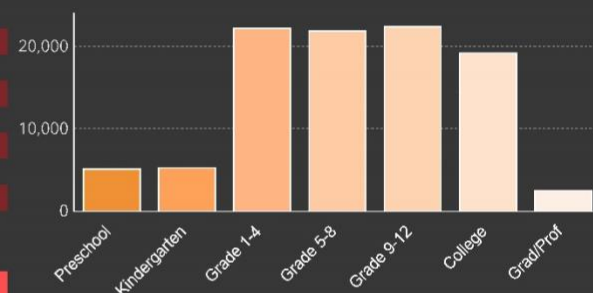
10 Counties

**461,546** Population    **2.38** Avg Size Household    **188,136** Households    **42.8** Median Age    **\$50,691** Median Household Income    **\$142,103** Median Home Value    **177** Housing Affordability    **91%** Internet at Home

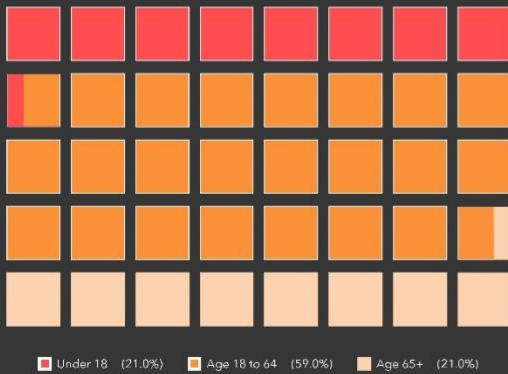
**POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)**

	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	447,979
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	29,801
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	42,339
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	28,360
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	23,245
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	39,294
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	14,322
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	270,618

**SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)**



**POPULATION BY AGE**



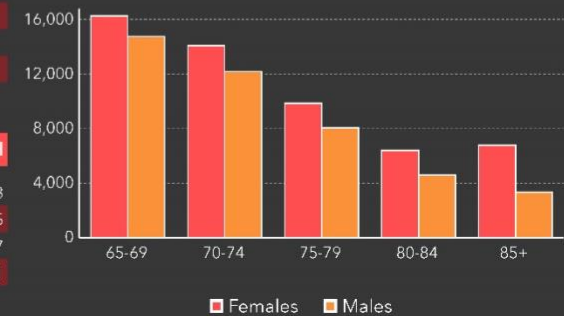
**POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)**

	Below	Above	Total
Total	30,424	149,090	179,514
Married Couple Families	4,709	80,078	84,787
Other Families w/Male Householder	1,226	7,054	8,280
Other Families w/Female Householder	8,732	17,342	26,074
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	6,133	21,413	27,546
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	9,624	23,203	32,827

**NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS) %**

	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.7%	3,013
Population Age 19-34	4.0%	18,265
Population Age 35-64	5.1%	22,927
Population Age 65+	0.1%	411

**SENIOR POPULATION**



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022-2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data /x/le, ACS

Version 1.13



# AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

## 10 Counties



Geography: County

**461,546** Population  
**188,136** Households  
**2.38** Avg Size Household  
**42.8** Median Age  
**\$50,691** Median Household Income  
**\$142,103** Median Home Value  
**56** Wealth Index  
**177** Housing Affordability  
**49** Diversity Index

### AT RISK POPULATION

**64,381** Households With Disability  
**96,232** Population 65+  
**10,698** Households Without Vehicle

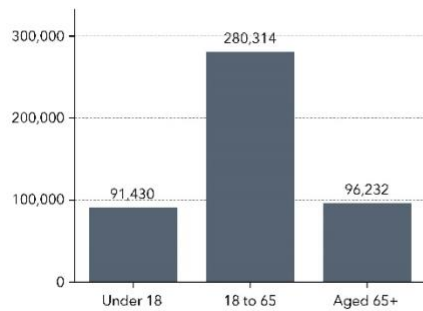
### POVERTY AND LANGUAGE

**17%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**30,424** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**53** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

### POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**436,896** Daytime Population  
**14,303** Total Businesses  
**158,878** Total Employees

### POPULATION BY AGE



Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	67,937	263,562	86,777	418,276
Spanish	2,756	7,104	542	10,402
Spanish & English Well	2,583	5,230	417	8,230
Spanish & English Not Well	167	1,380	72	1,619
Spanish & No English	6	494	53	553
Indo-European	295	1,461	498	2,254
Indo-European & English Well	234	1,251	440	1,925
Indo-European & English Not Well	61	152	52	265
Indo-European & No English	0	58	6	64
Asian-Pacific Island	85	1,206	294	1,585
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Well	85	932	249	1,266
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	246	8	254
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	28	37	65
Other Language	177	448	95	720
Other Language & English Well	177	428	95	700
Other Language & English Not Well	0	20	0	20
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0

Source: FPL, ACS, FPL Data Table, U.S. Census Bureau 2022, 2021, 2016-2020

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## SWOT ANALYSIS

*A SWOT Analysis examines the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats facing the region and the regional economy. The CEDS Strategy Committee and the public were invited to contribute to the analysis. The results were utilized to inform the update process of the Development Strategies and Action Plan section.*

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SWOT Analysis components are defined by the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) as follows:

- **Strengths** are a region's relative competitive advantages (e.g., industry supply chains and clusters, extensive port, rail, and broadband assets, specialized workforce skills, higher education levels, collaboration among stakeholders) and often are internal in nature;
- **Weaknesses** are a region's relative competitive disadvantages (e.g., a risk-averse or change-resistant regional culture), also often internal in nature;
- **Opportunities** are chances or occasions for regional improvement or progress (e.g., expansion of a biosciences research lab in the region), often external in nature; and
- **Threats** are chances or occasions for negative impacts on the region or regional decline (e.g., several companies in the region considering moving to lower-cost areas of the state), also often are external in nature.

Key SWOT issues for the East Alabama Region are identified below.

### Strengths

- Lake and River Areas Colleges and Universities
- Resources available to businesses and public in general
- Local agencies collaborate and promote one another
- Medical facilities Rural Area Personality Tourist attractions
- Easy access to highways Education system
- Local options for shopping
- Local trucking companies provide transportation opportunities for businesses
- Rich history
- Quality law enforcement
- Community spirit, courage, and determination whether it be sports, education, etc.
- Natural resources, environment, recreation value, agriculture, and tourism potential
- Cultural heritage Employment opportunities Cost of living and taxes
- Interstate highway connectivity
- Low crime rate
- Hospital and health clinics
- Elderly care facilities
- Willingness to collaborate as a region
- Land, natural resources, regional universities, and community colleges



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- Partnerships for economic incentives with the state
  - Airport connections
  - Close knit community who often stand together when individuals/entities are in peril
  - Solid education system
  - Comparatively reasonable land prices
  - Railroads
  - Quarries
  - Williams Pipeline Natural Gas
  - Growing industries
  - Strong economic development organization
  - Abundant water and sewer capacity
  - Multiple telecom and power providers (options)
  - Strong & diverse manufacturing/industrial base
  - Strong non-profit base
  - Increasing population
  - Abundance of land
  - Strong entrepreneurship presence
  - Strong relationships with state partners/agencies
  - Diverse employment opportunities

## Weaknesses

- Road Conditions
- Aging population
- Lack of public transportation systems
- Lack of childcare availability
- Distance between rural and urban areas
- Lack of cell phone reception
- Small reliable workforce pool
- Low wages
- Lack of local job opportunities with good benefits
- Local employers with archaic business practices (prejudiced, close-minded)
- Locals with “no outsiders” mindset
- Traffic congestion and wrecks
- Housing stock
- Insufficient broadband
- Infrastructure
- Entertainment for children of all ages
- Empty, deteriorating buildings
- Hotels and meeting centers
- Recreational facilities
- Technology access and an elevated need for broadband
- Housing for workers of business and industry

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- Lack of affordable housing
  - Lack of zoning and ordinances
  - Limited labor force
  - Shortage of industrial buildings
  - Lack of continuity and agreement on growth
  - Lack of affordable rental properties
  - Need for relocation of business professionals
  - School performance compared to greater Alabama
  - Lack of accountability for commission staff
  - Social media
  - Lack of walkability
  - Lack of young leaders
  - Need for more leadership education on economic growth
  - Split time zones
  - Lack of business/entrepreneurship support programs
  - Poverty, low HH income

## **Opportunities**

- Continued partnerships and collaborations
- Enhanced private & public sector partnerships
- A broad Ecotourism economy
- Room to expand
- Pull from larger areas' workforce pool
- Better internet service throughout the county
- Organic food options grown in the area
- Growth in tourism
- Possible food production for local landowners
- Housing developments
- Employment: Retail, restaurants, and industry to locate
- Infrastructure investment
- Developable land
- Talent retention
- Tie education & workforce development programs to business/industry targets
- Attract light, clean industry
- Rivers and lakes
- Farmland
- Architecturally significant downtowns
- Broadband access
- Progress: influx of individuals who are willing to invest
- School system
- Reasonably priced land
- Agritourism

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- Forest Industry
  - Museums
  - Rails to Trails
  - Lake and River areas
  - Walkable towns and micro-communities that are self-sustaining
  - Hiking Trails
  - Boating
  - Regional partnerships
  - Airports
  - Retaining and recruiting talent
  - Tech entrepreneurship growth (CORI Rural Innovation Initiative)
  - Education partnerships with secondary and post-secondary entities
  - Federal funding to improve infrastructure (water/sewer, roadways, broadband) Internship, co-op, and apprenticeship
  - Assisting with workforce development
  - Consolidated school system

## Threats

- Students finishing school then moving to another location
- Education not molding a qualified workforce
- Rural dis-connectivity with workforce
- Lack of resources and products for marketing the region
- Younger generations leaving lake area and being replaced with retirees
- Too much expansion will taint the rural character of the area
- Poverty and drugs
- Aging and decrease in population
- Exodus of young adult who cannot find a job locally
- Educational disparities
- Ignoring smart growth
- Downtowns in peril
- Lack of united front by mayors & councils to lobby state leaders
- Untrained or unavailable workforce Instability and conflict in the country and world
- Inflation
- Poverty Level
- Higher wages elsewhere
- Tax base decline
- Lack of motivation to change
- Disruptive citizen behavior
- Competition and lack of relationships between cities within counties and among counties
- Competition from neighboring larger communities
- Low wages for automotive jobs
- Decreased workforce participation

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- Lack of state support for recruitment and funding
  - Lack of funding to grow infrastructure and tax base
  - Division between school systems
  - Not enough participation in grant funding opportunities
  - Region has worst two performing MSAs in the state

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## PART II

### DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLAN

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*This final phase of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy entails devising program development strategies and determining which strategies will be most likely achieve the overall economic development goal for the region. The EARPDC's overall goal is to develop an expanded economic base within the East Alabama Region which utilizes the region's natural and human resources, provides full employment for the region's citizenry, facilitates economic resilience, and improves the area's quality of life. The following chapters translate this broad goal into a series of long-range goals and short-range objectives and establish ways to achieve those goals and objectives and to measure success.*

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This section summarizes the *CLEAR Plan 2030 Implementation Plan*, which was the culmination of an intensive two-year public engagement process. The *CLEAR Plan 2030* was also utilized in the previous 5-year CEDS update, and it was determined that due to the amount of research, effort, and public engagement that went into the plan, it was still a valuable resource to guide the 2022 CEDS.

The *Implementation Plan* presents rural and small urban communities (ranging in size from 55 to 37,000) and rural and small urban counties (ranging from 11,000 to 120,000 inhabitants) with potential means to attain the goals their residents identified as crucial to improving livability. The *Implementation Plan* considers feasibility and potential impacts of plan implementation, addressing the resources needed to carry out the proposed projects and providing case studies. Strategies are phased and potential challenges are addressed. The *Implementation Plan* is intended to aid in maximizing the potential for long-term success of these initiatives and to facilitate marketing the region to prospective investors and businesses. The full document is available in the online library at [www.earpdc.org](http://www.earpdc.org).

The *CLEAR Plan 2030* utilized eight livability principles to guide the planning process.

1. *Encourage Prosperity and Upward Mobility*
  - Recognize the potential to grow and create prosperity for all
  - Mobilize resources to encourage an inclusive, competitive, and satisfied workforce
  - Support inclusive, competitive, and satisfied workforces
  - Provide opportunities for young people (jobs, education, recreation) as reasons to stay
  
2. *Champion Valued Communities*
  - Encourage healthy lifestyles and strong families
  - Create safe environments for all residents
  - Support communities of faith
  - Address health of both mind and body
  
3. *Value and Protect the Region's Beauty and Natural Resources*

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- Support stewardship to ensure that natural resources meet the needs of present and future generations
  - Preserve the natural beauty and unique assets in the region
  - Provide open access to active and passive recreational pursuits
4. *Celebrate Heritage and Cultural Assets*
    - Express the region’s history, diversity, sense of place, accessibility, and vibrancy through high-quality urban design and historic preservation
    - Host ample and diverse arts and cultural resources that are available to all residents
  5. *Think Regionally, Act Locally*
    - Support diverse, accessible, and affordable transportation options that allow all people to be mobile
    - Take advantage of proximity to other cities and increase access, allowing for regional connectivity
    - Leverage political and economic resources together to solve problems
    - Capitalize on opportunities that cannot be handled within neighborhoods, towns, or cities
    - Create infrastructure that supports economic growth, cultural vitality, and environmental stability
  6. *Invest in Quality and Accessible Education*
    - Promote high-quality learning environments, along with opportunities for continued education for all age groups
    - Increase access to job skill training and other higher-level education opportunities
  7. *Promote a Sense of Place and a Pride of Ownership and Home*
    - Promote a love of home and hearth as community values
    - Value engaged, well-informed citizens whose voices influence government processes and who take pride and active interest in issues affecting their community
    - Support high quality, diverse, and affordable housing options that are available to all residents
  8. *Grow Local and Regional Leadership*
    - Be far-seeing enough, flexible enough, and wise enough not to undermine either physical or social support systems
    - Engage all members of a community to create more prosperous, convenient, equitable, healthy, and attractive places for present and future generations
    - Build visionary and entrepreneurial team-based leadership that invites public participation across all spectrums and works creatively to accomplish its goals
    - Address the interdependent economic, environmental, and social concerns of a community and region
    - Create linkages among all stakeholders and foster public/private partnerships

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### REGIONAL NEEDS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Community Engagement Livability Resource Team (LRT) identified the following regional needs:

- **There is a need for constant, consistent, long-term communication.**
  - Foster grassroots planning efforts through open and consistent messaging about project status and implementation, accompanied by constant acceptance of resident input.
  - Institute a long-term messaging process to keep the process “alive.”
- **The concept of *Regionalism* is foreign to many residents and should be promoted.**
  - Nurturing regionalism in elements such as tourism, commerce and transportation will make the concept familiar to residents and foster acceptance.
  - Building geographically on existing partnerships will expand the concept of regionalism.
- **There are populations that require specialized outreach.**
  - Some populations will require additional effort to engage in the planning and implementation processes. The effort is needed so that residents will have knowledge of and opportunities to provide input on proposed activities prior to implementation.
- **To truly engage residents throughout the region, the community engagement process must be in a constant state of evolution.**
  - The community engagement process should be expanded to reach out to all corners of the region and contain a truly representative sample of the region’s population.
- **Funding is vital to proper community engagement.**
  - A well thought out community engagement strategy should allow for some financial expenditure (e.g., professional facilitators, advertising, technology, meeting facilities).
  - Offering to cover transportation costs of residents attending public meetings in the extreme rural areas of the region would lessen the burden experienced by some.
  - Avenues for input, messaging, and information dissemination must be varied to accommodate those with no or limited access to the internet, radio, broadcast TV, and/or print media.



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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

#### **Goal 1. Provide long-term communication avenues to inform stakeholders and the public of the status of livability throughout the region.**

##### **Objectives**

- Maintain a website with regional livability status and information.
- Publish and distribute periodicals with information regarding livability.
- Conduct an annual status update public meeting in locations varying year to year.

##### **Strategies**

- Partner with existing communication entities (media, internet providers, local governments, etc.)
- Identify entities throughout the region champion livability and promote communications.

##### **Metrics**

- Increase awareness of livability and resources available to livable communities. Measure using web counter hits, number of inquiries regarding livability, number of local governments incorporating livability principles in planning.
- Identify and train two (2) individuals willing to champion the concept of livability in each county in the region.

##### **Implementation Steps**

- Establish an organization to spearhead regional livability efforts.
- Develop a multi-faceted communications program.
  - Create an organization logo
  - Create an organization website
  - Develop a regularly-issued newsletter
  - Develop an annual report
  - Host regularly-scheduled public forums
  - Maintain on-going communications with the region's media outlets
  - Utilize social media to promote the organization and its mission

#### **Goal 2. Promote the concept and benefits of regionalism to local governments and the public.**

##### **Objectives**

- Increase support for regionalism by increasing the number of individuals promoting it.
- Increase the number of local governments incorporating regional partnerships in planning and economic development.

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## Barriers

- Time constraints on individuals capable of and willing to educate residents and promote the concept of regionalism.
- Competition for scarce resources (economic development, funding, etc.)

## Strategies

- Identify and train two (2) individuals willing to champion the concept of regionalism in each county in the region.
- Promote regionalism to show that, by combining resources, competition is not so aggressive and possibly detrimental to development, resource accumulation, etc.

## Metrics

- Identify and train two (2) individuals willing to champion the concept of regionalism in each county in the region.
- Educate local governments on the benefits of regionalism regarding resource sharing, economic development, etc.

## Implementation Steps

- Provide educational opportunities on regionalism.
  - Utilize educational forums on regionalism
  - Provide additional educational opportunities on regionalism
- Identify and utilize regionalism-oriented organizations.
  - Identify and utilize national-level organizations promoting regionalism
  - Identify and study regional-level model organizations promoting regionalism

## Goal 3. Identify and provide outreach to specialized populations.

### Objectives

- Provide convenient and meaningful access to input from all populations residing in the region.

### Barriers

- Diversity of needs throughout the region
- Rural nature of the region
- Funding

### Strategies

- Identify diverse needs and partner with entities already meeting the needs (for example, translating surveys into Braille by AIDB—a service they already provide).
- Provide outreach and one-on-one contact throughout the region in the most remote of places.
- Seek funding partnerships and collaboration with entities already meeting needs.

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## Metrics

- Increase in contacts made and input received, as well as awareness of livability and its principles.

## Implementation Steps

- Identify categories of relevant specialized populations
- Develop and implement an outreach strategy for each relevant group

## **Goal 4. Expand the LRT—or its successor—to include representation from local governments, private entities and residents throughout the region.**

### Objectives

- Identify and train one (1) individual in each county in the region who is willing to champion the concept of community engagement and livability.
- Identify one (1) local government in each county that is willing to champion the concept of livability.

### Barriers

- Lack of resources to inform residents and local governments about the importance of livability
- Apathy
- Time constraints on individuals

### Strategies

- Educate on the importance of livability to overcome apathy.
- Provide planned, long term schedule of events to fit into individuals' time schedules.

### Metrics

- Increase the number of LRT members to twenty (20) by 12/31/2027.
- Increase the diversity of LRT members to include representatives from each county in the region.

### Implementation Steps

- Recruit new members to the organization's committees.
  - Take advantage of public forums to identify and recruit new committee members
  - Contact local governments, chambers, businesses and other entities for committee recruits
- Provide an orientation program for new committee members

## **Goal 5. Design a sustainable funding stream to cover community engagement costs.**

### Objectives

- Provide incentives for residents of extreme rural regions to cover transportation costs to attend public meetings.
- Obtain funds to cover costs associated with community engagement.

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### **Barriers**

- There is currently no identified entity to donate or manage funding.

### **Strategies**

- Partner with local businesses to provide incentives.
- Identify funding source to provide funds (donations, foundation grants, fund raisers).

### **Metrics**

- Obtain an annual budget of \$1,500 by 12/31/2027

### **Implementation Steps**

- Conduct community engagement in a financially viable manner.
  - Establish a carpooling program for meetings
  - Pursue grants and foundation and corporate support for community engagement

## **Goal 6. Improve technology access and availability to include broadband internet**

### **Objectives**

- Improve interconnectivity of citizens via internet to interact with, learn more about, and contribute to public activities and projects
- Obtain funds to cover costs associated with internet technology infrastructure.

### **Barriers**

- Internet connectivity and infrastructure is lacking or completely absent across the region.

### **Strategies**

- Partner with local businesses to provide space with internet availability
- Identify funding source to provide funds (donations, foundation grants, fund raisers).

### **Metrics**

- Improve internet access across the region by 20% by 2027

### **Implementation Steps**

- Provide educational opportunities on internet access and usage

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## ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

### REGIONAL NEEDS FOR ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

The Economic Competitiveness Livability Resource Team (LRT) and the Education LRT held combined meetings due to the intertwining nature of workforce development, economic competitiveness, and education. Discussion centered on the following regional needs:

- **Need to diversify the regional economy.**
  - Currently the economy is concentrated on specific industries, i.e. the automotive industry, military, and education.
  - Region 5 and Region 8 Workforce Development Councils identified the target industries in the region. They include automated manufacturing, construction, healthcare, services, and tourism.
- **Apathy regarding cooperation among entities can be difficult.**
  - There is a need to motivate people to be involved in improving the economy and supporting their community and larger region.
- **Thinking regionally, but acting locally is necessary.**
  - However, doing so is a difficult concept to incorporate into everyday life.
  - Economics, natural resources, and tourism are especially important to a regional outlook and could be tied to the region.
  - Creating corridor plans connecting cities to one another would help tie together the region.
- **Define the regional advantages and how to market them.**
  - Identification of what makes the region unique and advantageous is integral to marketing it to national and international businesses, industries, and people looking for a new place to call home.
- **Enrich the support system for existing business and industries.**
  - Make sure people know they are appreciated and a vital part of the East Alabama economy.
  - Create a plan to help recruit businesses, industry, and people into small communities.
  - Infrastructure costs can be prohibitive to development and hinder progress; therefore, something needs to be done to address it.
- **Creation of “Leadership East Alabama” program.**
  - This program would facilitate an exchange of ideas and promote a more regional perspective.
- **Workforce development and coordination is vital to meeting industry needs.**
  - There is a need to link education and industry needs.
  - Connect community colleges and high schools with industries.
  - School funding for training in specific industrial techniques can be difficult to obtain and may be unpredictable.
- **Need to change the mindset regarding career tech education.**

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- There is a negative connotation associated with career tech and 2-year degrees. This mindset needs to be changed.
  - **Career coach and job shadowing.**
    - More job shadowing and career coach opportunities need to be offered to students so they can determine the best path for their future.
  - **Need to identify what skills already exist in the region and what skills are needed.**
    - Identify industry needs/skills gaps. Technological advances are changing labor force needs, specifically the number of people needed to do a specific task.

## ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, BARRIERS, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

#### Goal 1. Align needed skills with jobs.

##### Objectives

- Develop an effective collaborative environment between industry and education.
- Continually analyze employer needs and employment trends.
- Align education and training programs with actual needs.
- Provide learning opportunities through real life experiences.

##### Barriers

- Lack of knowledge of how to or desire to participate in an effective collaborative environment between industry and education.
- Lack of knowledge of available training for students and businesses.
- Financial costs associated with developing specific career aligned curriculum.
- Identifying specific employer needs can be problematic, time consuming, and ever changing.
- Limited involvement of local businesses and industries in workforce and economic development conversations, which are needed to further the region economically.

##### Strategies

- Work with the Region 5 and Region 8 Workforce Development Councils, EDAA, and AIDT to further communication between industry and education.
- Pursue low cost mechanisms and grant funding to identify needs and provide training and real life employment experiences.
- Provide workshops/training seminars on grant opportunities and how to write grant applications.
- Promote the ACT WorkKeys program, which utilizes the National Career Readiness Certificate, across the region.
- Create a database which lists all available training programs throughout the region.
- Utilize workforce apprenticeships or internships.

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## Metrics

- Increase the percentage of over 25 population with an associate's degree or higher to the State's average (currently 29%) over a five-year period. Measure using American Community Survey.
- Increase the number of ACT WorkKeys program schools and graduates obtaining a National Career Readiness Certificate by 2% over a five-year period. Measure using data from ACT.

## Implementation Steps

- Develop strong partnerships with private employers for training and education.
  - Coordinate with Region 5 and Region 8 Workforce Development Councils
  - Conduct direct personal outreach to existing private employers
  - Leverage private funding for scholarship programs
- Increase access to higher-education resources.
  - Maximize the use of scholarship programs
  - Work to enhance Jacksonville State University as the region's premier four-year institution of higher education
- Enhance communication and promotion of existing workforce programs.
  - Work with the Workforce Development Councils to promote the State's existing workforce training and education programs

## Goal 2. Increase the number of people prepared for high wage, high growth jobs.

### Objectives

- Market and promote the region to national and international industries.
- Increase awareness of career opportunities in local high growth sectors.
- Enhance and increase educational and training opportunities.

### Barriers

- Differentiating the region from the state and nation can be difficult
- Lack of desire to complete the necessary education to be prepared for the high wage, high growth jobs

### Strategies

- Develop a comprehensive marketing package to promote the region to the world.
- Provide informational packets in schools and online stating career paths and the steps to take to achieve the high wage, high growth jobs.
- Increase the number of career coaches promoting occupational options.

### Metrics

- Increase the number of ACT WorkKeys program schools and graduates obtaining a National Career Readiness Certificate by 2% over a five-year period. The data will come from ACT.

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## Implementation Steps

- Enhance and promote amenity value to retain businesses and educated workforce.
  - Work with the Community Foundation of Northeast Alabama's member foundations to generate funding for enhancing community amenity assets
  - Promote community assets and amenities to existing and prospective businesses
  - Examine opportunities for regional amenity corridors
- Identify local economic development strengths and small-town targets.
  - Identify market opportunities in small towns and rural communities
  - Assist with implementation of economic development “readiness” projects and programs
- Promote fairs and trade shows to enhance networking
  - Promote the use of mobile job and training fairs
  - Promote larger cities in the region as sites for trade shows
- Engage students and prospective workers with technology training.
  - Promote the use of emerging technologies to increase interest in training and education
  - Work with area businesses to promote more apprenticeships and other hands-on training

## Goal 3. Provide training and job opportunities to enhance human capital.

### Objectives

- Communicate opportunities to special populations, training providers and employers.
- Identify and connect special populations to employment and training opportunities.
- Assist with training providers and employers in how to accommodate special populations.

### Barriers

- Identifying and communicating training and employment opportunities to special populations can be extremely difficult
- Financial cost and unpredictable nature of grants to fund training programs and the costs associated with marketing the programs are troublesome

### Strategies

- Work with social service and economic development agencies to communicate training and other opportunities to special populations and employers.
- Dovetail this work into as many other programs as possible to lower expenses.
- Utilize internship, co-op, and apprenticeship opportunities to assist with workforce development

### Metrics

- Increase the number of training events held each year by 2% over a five-year period.

### Implementation Steps

- Support the existing social service framework.
  - Work with existing social service and development agencies
- Engage and incentivize the private sector in special needs training and employment.



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- Engage with the private sector
  - Establish incentive programs
  - Enhance access to support systems to enable participation in training and employment programs.
    - Enable use of life skills training
    - Inventory and distribute information about existing services
    - Increase access to standard industry equipment and technology
    - Enhance volunteer recruitment
    - Enable child care services

#### **Goal 4. Support existing businesses and spur local entrepreneurship.**

##### **Objectives**

- Create a business incubator to provide resources to support entrepreneurs.
- Develop a marketing brand for the East Alabama region.
- Develop a strategy to enhance the tourism industry.
- Coordinate efforts to retain existing businesses and industries.
- Enhance financial incentives/opportunities for local existing business/industry.

##### **Barriers**

- Extensive collaboration and knowledge is required to create a business incubator
- Finding common ground can be difficult and prohibitive to the collaboration needed to develop a marketing brand, creating a strategy to enhance the tourism industry, and coordinating efforts to retain existing businesses and industries
- Financial burden associated with developing a business incubator and offering incentives/opportunities to local existing business/industry
- Geographic size of the region can be problematic when trying to promote collaboration throughout the region. Thinking regionally but acting locally is difficult.
- Technology deficit in the region. There is a lack of consistent, high-quality long distance and cell phone service, nor is there high-speed internet everywhere in the region.

##### **Strategies**

- Utilize existing educational resources—e.g., University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Development or Jacksonville State University Small Business Development Center—to provide knowledge to galvanize collaboration and development of a business incubator, marketing brand, tourism strategy, and retain existing business and industries.
- Pursue partnerships, grant-funding sources, and other resources to relieve the financial burden associated with developing a business incubator or offering incentives/opportunities to local existing business and industry.
- Utilize technology as much as possible to connect the region; for example, conference calls and web conferencing can bring people together.
- Collaborate with Connecting Alabama and other organizations to bring high-speed internet and other communication technology to as many people as possible in the region.

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## Metrics

- Increase the number of collaboration/planning meetings held each year by 2% over a five-year period.
- Increase participation in the Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE) program by 1% over a five-year period.

## Implementation Steps

- Establish a regional marketing program and brand.
  - Build on existing economic development resources
  - Work with existing industries to identify competitive strengths
  - Determine regional economic development branding concepts
  - Develop a regional economic development program
- Leverage tourism potential.
  - Develop a regional tourism development strategy
  - Establish tourism corridors and nodes
- Assess the feasibility of business incubator projects.
  - Work with universities to identify incubator concepts
  - Test the feasibility of incubators
- Promote the use of existing small business resources.
  - Take advantage of resources available through Made in Alabama organizations
  - Communicate with area businesses about assistance programs
- Focus on business retention and growth efforts.
  - Most new jobs will be created by businesses that already exist in the region
  - Enable the growth of existing businesses
- Enhance amenity value as a tool for economic development.
  - Costs and amenities drive location decisions
  - Link economic development and tourism efforts
- Focus financial and other incentives on growing local businesses.
  - Local businesses create jobs and create amenity value
  - Let the State handle incentives for out-of-state relocations

## Goal 5. Capitalize on existing downtown areas.

### Objectives

- Conduct a comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance review and update, if needed, to create appealing downtown areas which promote opportunities for mixed-use space.
- Develop a marketing plan to accentuate downtown areas.
- Establish and promote social, recreational, cultural, and commercial activities downtown.
- Design an effective and safe multimodal transportation plan to and within downtown.

### Barriers

- 
- Apathy regarding downtown areas, especially ones in complete disrepair
  - Time and fiscal constraints and apathy towards reviewing comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances
  - Establishing clear governance over downtown areas, including maintenance and ability to conduct activities, is needed
  - Prioritization of the personal motor vehicle over any other form of transportation is problematic when trying to promote biking and walking
  - Conflict between rural and urban counties regarding priorities and competition

### Strategies

- Organize small activities downtown to draw people to the area, building on the momentum to launch an aggressive program of events to draw people to the area, promote biking and walking.
- Acquire research that promotes downtowns and what can happen if a community focuses their efforts on their downtown.
- Work with the regional chamber of commerce programs to communicate the benefits of collaboration and identify the priorities of rural areas.

### Metrics

- Increase the number of communities that have a downtown association or equivalent program by 2% over a five-year period.
- Increase the number of communities that participate in the Main Street program by 2% over five-years (they are currently not accepting new applicants).

### Implementation Steps

- Establish a regional main street program and recruit downtowns.
  - Establish a regional main street program
  - Promote the merits of downtown revitalization
  - Identify candidate communities for a revitalization program
- Establish a local revitalization program (recommended for each community, adapted to meet their unique circumstances and needs).
  - Establish a downtown revitalization entity
  - Prepare a downtown revitalization plan
  - Implement the revitalization plan
- Establish a local historic preservation program.

## **Goal 6. Assist in the development of physical infrastructure and facilities; for example, utilizing or demolishing abandoned industrial and commercial sites.**

### Objectives

- Identify and seek funding sources to improve existing industrial and commercial sites and provide adequate community facilities and services.
- Repurpose or remediate existing properties.
- Designate and promote buildings comparable to the AdvantageSite program.

- 
- Provide best practices regarding the permitting process for construction and demolition of buildings.
  - Insure a safe, efficient and economic transportation system.
  - Provide safe, decent, and sanitary housing in a suitable living environment for all residents of the region.

### **Barriers**

- Environmental and regulatory concerns associated with reuse or demolishing of existing structures, especially former industrial sites
- Funding and collaboration is needed to create a program for buildings that is comparable to the AdvantageSite program
- Funding
- Current transportation practices
- Lack of affordable housing

### **Strategies**

- Develop partnerships for sharing best practices, identifying potential funding sources, and addressing regulatory and environmental concerns.
- Work with the existing AdvantageSite program to modify/adapt it for buildings.
- Work with transportation professionals to modernize transportation practices.
- Collaborate with housing providers to increase available affordable housing.

### **Metrics**

- Increase the number of reutilized industrial and commercial sites by 2% over a five-year period.
- Develop a program for buildings comparable to the AdvantageSite program and see the number of certifications increase each year over a five-year period.
- Increase the percentage of local governments with adequate community facilities and services by 2% over the next five years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Utilize programs for inventorying and marketing industrial properties.
  - Utilize the existing AdvantageSite program for industrial sites
  - Establish a program for buildings modeled after AdvantageSite
- Utilize programs for funding infrastructure and facilities.
  - Pursue funding from existing programs for infrastructure and facilities
  - Explore the potential for new programs for infrastructure and facilities funding
- Utilize existing environmental clean-up programs.

## **Goal 7. Develop and conserve the region's natural resources by utilizing land use and growth management policies.**

### **Objectives**

- Provide optimal development of communities' agriculture and timberland.

- 
- Provide optimal development and control of water resources and address flood hazard issues in the region.
  - Protect and preserve valuable environmental and historic resources.
  - Promote the efficient use of energy.

### **Barriers**

- There is a delicate balance between development and conservation, which can be problematic for agricultural land, timberland, water resources, flood hazard areas, and historic resources.
- Lack of knowledge of land use and growth management practices.
- There is a cost associated with implementing energy conservation methods, which may deter people from implementing the measures that would be cost saving in the future.

### **Strategies**

- Providing educational materials clearly explaining development constraints and optimal conditions for development.
- Educate on the benefits of land use and growth management practices.
- Identify funding sources for implementing energy conservation methods.

### **Metrics**

- Increase the percentage of reused properties by 2% over a five-year period.
- Decrease the percentage of vacant commercial structures by 2% over a five-year period.
- Increase the number of local governments with land use and/or growth management policies by 2% over the next five-years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Provide educational opportunities on land use and growth management.
  - Utilize educational forums on sound land use and growth management practices
  - Utilize educational forums on comprehensive planning and zoning
  - Provide additional educational opportunities on comprehensive planning and zoning
- Assist communities with planning and zoning initiatives.
  - Initiate comprehensive plans
  - Initiate new zoning and development regulations
- Educate the public on energy efficiency measures and encourage action.
  - Promote the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Star Program
  - Encourage action from potential Energy Star program participants
- Promote other existing energy programs

## **Goal 8. Assist in the development of internet infrastructure and facilities**

### **Objectives**

- Identify and seek funding sources to improve existing internet infrastructure and provide adequate community facilities and services.

- 
- Designate and promote buildings to serve as co-working space for remote workers
  - Create opportunities for more residents to utilize remote work
  - Insure an efficient and economic technology system to promote local businesses
  - Foster an environment for digital economies to thrive

### **Barriers**

- Lack of access to internet can restrict access to jobs or business location
- Internet infrastructure is missing or lacking across the region
- Funding
- Learning curve of newer technology

### **Strategies**

- Develop partnerships for sharing best practices and identifying potential funding sources
- Work with technology professionals to modernize infrastructure and practices.
- Collaborate to increase available internet connectivity.

### **Metrics**

- Increase the percentage of local governments with adequate internet connectivity by 2% over the next five years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Utilize programs for funding infrastructure and facilities.
  - Pursue funding from existing programs for infrastructure and facilities
  - Explore the potential for new programs for infrastructure and facilities funding
- Promote technology improvements

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## TRANSPORTATION

### REGIONAL NEEDS FOR TRANSPORTATION

The Transportation Livability Resource Team (LRT) identified the following regional needs:

#### Urban Transit

- **Steady funding for transit**
  - The only funding sources for local transit in the region are from federal sources, matched with required local government support.
  - There are no State contributions for transit.
  - There are no private partnerships for funding transit throughout the region.
- **Reduction in headways for existing fixed route transit systems**
  - Established fixed route transit systems currently have one-hour headways. This situation makes for ineffective and unreliable transportation for employment purposes.
- **Improved, less fragmented transit routes**
  - Existing land use patterns prohibit compact development and promote sprawl, reducing the effectiveness of the existing transit systems.
- **Promotional options are limited because promotion will not reduce headway and make the system more attractive to new users.**
  - Many potential users have the perception that the system is only available to specialized populations.
  - Sprawl prevents residents from accessing services.
  - The existing service routes do not support all ranges of housing costs (primarily convenient for low-income housing).
- **There is a need for better coordination among transit providers and expanded funding sources.**
  - There is no interconnected transit across county lines. The existing fixed route transit systems rarely cross municipal boundaries.

#### Rural Transit

- **In various areas throughout the region, transit options are non-existent.**
- **There is a lack of State and local financial contributions to rural transit systems.**
  - Existing transit systems operate on federal grants with only required matching funds submitted by local governments.
- **Continued residential dispersion creates challenges for transit.**
  - Land use patterns do not discourage sprawl; in fact, in some cases it is encouraged.
  - Zoning practices segregate land uses and discourage compact development.
- **Potential users view transportation services as being limited.**

- 
- Many potential users have the perception that the system is only available to specialized populations.
  - Sprawl prevents residents from readily accessing services.

### **Urban Roads and Highways**

- **There is unchecked low-density sprawl throughout the region. Focus should occur on reuse and redevelopment.**
  - Sprawl results in limited resources being spread even thinner to maintain existing and extend new infrastructure in far flung developments.
  - Alternatives to strict Euclidian zoning should be instituted. Compatible, mixed-use zoning should be considered, promoted and adopted.
  - Public schools located outside of neighborhoods create new traffic congestion and the perceived need to transport students by private automobile. Additionally, those who use transport services provided by the school system are forced to endure long transit times on the school buses.
  - Obsolete height restrictions in the Central Business Districts discourage higher densities and mixed-use multi-story structures.
- **There is too much dependence on federal money and sales tax to support road maintenance.**
  - A reliable, steady funding stream is needed to properly maintain the existing road network.
- **Best management practices should be used for access management. There is currently a lack of access management regulation and interagency planning/collaboration.**
- **Alternative transportation access is extremely limited.**
  - There is little emphasis on sidewalks, bike lanes and bike paths.
  - There is little connectivity between land uses.
  - Most municipalities are over-zoned for highway commercial. Limit highway commercial zoning to key intersections only.

### **Rural Roads and Highways**

- **Low-density sprawl in rural areas places extreme financial burdens on local governments and residents associated with the large number of road miles that must be maintained using limited revenue sources.**
  - Infill development is not encouraged in rural communities.
  - Walkable, compact design should be practiced in existing rural communities.
- **Rural areas in Alabama tend to have weak land use controls, with no zoning authority in the unincorporated areas.**
- **There is limited funding for necessary maintenance and bridge replacement.**
  - A steady, predictable, adequate funding stream is required for proper maintenance of roads and bridges.



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## TRANSPORTATION

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, BARRIERS, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

#### **Goal 1. Promote public and private partnerships for funding both transportation and transit.**

##### **Objectives**

- Identify non-traditional, steady funding alternatives for transportation and transit in both the urbanized and rural areas of the region.
- Encourage Best Management Practices and investigate new uses of emerging technologies for transit and transportation maintenance.

##### **Barriers**

- Dependence on federal money and existing state tax structure.
- Lack of State contributions to transit.
- Reduced local government contributions to transit and transportation.
- Lack of coordination among public and private entities to fund transit and maintain transportation facilities.

##### **Strategies**

- Work with legislators to identify revenues to enable municipal and county resurfacing projects (not capacity building) and investment in transit as needed.
- Work with Legislature and State DoT to begin contributions to supplement transit funding.
- Engage the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Transit Advisory Board in multi-modal transportation planning activities.

##### **Metrics**

- Improved tax structure to allow for funding to maintain existing transportation infrastructure.
- Begin State contributions to fund transit by 2027.
- Keep a running inventory of invested funds for transportation projects. MPO, RPO, TAP, RTP, grants, etc. for the region.

##### **Implementation Steps**

- Promote public and private partnerships for transportation funding.
  - Pursue creative funding approaches to general transportation initiatives.
  - Pursue new strategies and partnerships to provide transit throughout the region.

#### **Goal 2. Promote compact development, land/structure reuse and infill development to avoid sprawl and low-density land use.**

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## Objectives

- Encourage compatible mixed-use developments where feasible; where not feasible, promote higher residential densities that make transit and pedestrian trips feasible. Coordinate these policies in regional and local transportation plans.
- Reduce minimum parking space requirements for retail and commercial uses.
- Encourage mixed-use urban development that includes mixed-income and elderly residential facilities. Develop affordable housing and housing needs assessment approaches.
- Promote alternative transportation and reduction of Daily Vehicle Miles Travelled.
- Promote and encourage municipalities and counties to utilize Best Management Practices in access management.
- Promote sidewalks, trails and bike paths (interior connections) between adjacent land uses. Establish practices and policies in comprehensive plans and subdivision regulations.

## Barriers

- Unchecked low-density sprawl both in urban and rural areas.
- Lack of access management compliance and consistency.
- Lack of infill development, reuse of existing structures and land for redevelopment.

## Strategies

- Encourage mixed-use development with flexible parking and height allowances.
- Seek investment sources for land and structure redevelopment.

## Metrics

- Increase the number of local governments practicing mixed use zoning to five (5) throughout the region by 2027.
- Inventory the region for adopted policies and types that address mixed use or form-based zoning for compatibility.

## Implementation Steps

- Pursue goals 5 and 7 within "Section B: Economic Competitiveness".
  - Capitalize on existing downtown areas and Main Street initiatives.
  - Utilize land use and growth management policies
- Emphasize compact land use and development patterns in appropriate locations.

## Goal 3. Promote Complete Streets Concepts, to include Public Transit

### Objectives

- Encourage and facilitate walkability and bicycling
- Encourage public transit development
- Ensure quality and capacity of existing infrastructure systems
- Increase transportation options

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**Barriers**

- Weak land use control and lack of zoning power.
- Urban and rural sprawl.

**Strategies**

- Promote the practice of, and educate the public and officials on, the benefits of complete streets

**Metrics**

- Use of complete streets in three (3) municipalities.
- Capture development patterns and map the areas for future connectivity and transportation connection planning

**Implementation Steps**

- Emphasize concepts such as bicycle facilities, sidewalks, crossing opportunities, and transit to provide safe, accessible streets for all users

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# HOUSING

## REGIONAL NEEDS FOR HOUSING

The Housing Livability Resource Team (LRT) identified the following regional needs:

- **Increase the affordable housing stock.**
- **Aging in place services.**
  - According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “aging in place is the ability to live in one’s own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level.” Aging in place services allow people to stay in their homes rather than moving to a nursing home, which can be costly and removes people from mainstream society. Therefore, ADA accessible housing and supportive housing services are needed for the growing over-60 population in East Alabama.
- **More transitional housing is needed for several populations.**
  - Homeless programs are needed in East Alabama. Many people do not realize the high level of homelessness in the Region. Long-term transitional housing is needed, as transitional housing is typically for a limited period. Additionally, quick sources of housing are needed for people in times of need, especially during a natural disaster or personal financial emergency.
- **Better utilization of existing housing and empty properties.**
  - Vacant properties attract mischief and lower the visual appeal of a neighborhood. Utilizing empty properties and houses could provide sources of housing for people who need it most and improve the community as a whole. However, financial resources are needed to rehabilitate properties.
- **Public housing needs to look more inviting.**
  - Public housing does not have to look unattractive. It can be appealing looking, which would boost the morale of residents.
  - Unappealing structures may cause residents to not want to live there, even if it may be a better situation than their current living arrangements.
- **More deeply subsidized housing is needed.**
  - Subsidized housing includes public housing authorities (which typically have a 2-3 year wait list), Housing Choice Vouchers, and other housing assistance programs. Housing Choice Vouchers allow residents to live in housing that is not located at the public housing authority but is subsidized through a voucher. Therefore, the tenant pays a set amount of the rent based on a percentage of their income and the government pays for the rest of the rent not covered by the tenant. However, as government funding is tightened, fewer Housing Choice Vouchers are available.
- **Mixed-use and mixed-income developments are desired.**
  - Mixed-use refers to neighborhoods, which have residences, businesses, offices, churches, and shopping within the same area. This approach promotes accessibility through walking and provides people without transportation the opportunity to utilize the various functions with ease.

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Furthermore, healthy food and employment are also needed in proximity to housing and would be ideally placed in a mixed-use development.

- **Financial resources for mobile home purchases and rent-to-own/lease purchases are needed.**
  - There is a lack of financing options for people wishing to purchase a mobile home (which may be the most affordable option). Some rehabilitation programs require applicants to own their home, which is problematic for long-term renters. Therefore, a rent-to-own program is needed.
- **Weatherization and improvement of substandard housing is greatly needed.**
  - Improvements to existing housing are needed throughout the region. People may lack the knowledge or resources to weatherize their homes. In addition, improvement of substandard housing is needed. These homes may have a tree caving in their roof or an extremely cracked foundation and need assistance to fix it.

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## HOUSING

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, BARRIERS, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

**Goal 1. Every Alabama resident should have the opportunity for safe, decent, affordable housing regardless of income level.**

#### Objectives

- Housing assistance providers complete an assessment of services provided to eliminate redundancies or duplication of efforts.
- Increase the number of affordable housing units available in East Alabama.
- Increase awareness of the lack of housing affordability in the region.
- Leverage Opportunity Zones in East Alabama

#### Barriers

- Funding is needed to complete an assessment, increase the number of affordable housing units, and create materials to increase awareness
- Reluctance and difficulty in collaborating to reduce overlap and the development of affordable units
- Lack of awareness of the issues regarding affordable housing
- Perceived risks to investing
- Lack of affordable rentals and middle housing.

#### Strategies

- Identify and apply for assistance to complete an assessment, increase affordable housing units, and create materials to increase awareness.
- Explain the need for affordable housing units and form partnerships to develop it.
- Encourage redevelopment in areas suffering from disinvestment.
- Overall assessment of developable land on a regional level.
- Promote middle housing.
- Address blight to promote additional housing.

#### Metrics

- Develop a comprehensive list of housing assistance providers throughout the region with a list of services they offer.
- Collaborate with local government, non- profits, and developers to increase the number of affordable and available units in the region by 20 units in five years.
- Show a 2% decrease in the number of people spending over 30% of their income on housing within the next five years. (This indicates affordability.)
- Show a 2% in Opportunity Zone development across the region

#### Implementation Steps

- Develop strong partnerships with housing-related real estate, construction, finance, and retail businesses.
  - Establish a housing committee of the proposed east Alabama partnership (eap) to assess affordable housing needs
  - Conduct comprehensive housing conditions assessments
  - Develop model house, fundraising, and awareness programs

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- Enhance coordination and service delivery among existing housing providers.
    - Inventory and assess existing housing service provider base
    - Develop targeted resources for reducing gaps or problems in existing service delivery
  - Utilize a “carrot and stick” approach to encourage the rehabilitation of rental housing.
    - Inventory rental housing resources and conditions
    - Encourage local governments to provide incentives for rental housing construction and improvements
    - Match incentive “carrots” with regulatory “sticks” where necessary

## **Goal 2. Increase awareness and availability of accessible housing in the East Alabama Region.**

### **Objectives**

- Identify and promote ADA compliance measures so existing housing can be rehabilitated to meet access needs.
- Locate funding sources for modifying homes to be more ADA accessible.

### **Barriers**

- Funding to increase awareness and make modifications to homes
- Lack of knowledge regarding federal regulations requiring accessibility

### **Strategies**

- Identify and obtain funding resources
- Create educational materials about ADA accessibility requirements and possible modifications

### **Metrics**

- Collect the number of clients with newly accessible elements due to awareness and programs over five years.
- Collect the number of grants funded for modifying homes to make them more accessible by nonprofits and the Partnership over five years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Help maximize the region’s share of available accessibility grant funding and volunteer support
  - Identify and track grants, volunteers and other resources for enhancing accessibility
- Establish housing accessibility programs through area hospitals or associated providers
  - Develop Collaborations with Area Hospitals
  - Assist in Producing Information Packets

## **Goal 3. Increase the number of transitional programs, including services for the homeless and victims of abuse.**

### **Objectives**

- Increase available occupancy at existing and new shelters.
- Decrease the number of homeless in the region by providing long-term transitional housing.

### **Barriers**

- Funding for programs
- “Not in my back yard” (NIMBY) issues: People may not want these programs located in their neighborhood

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### Strategies

- Raise awareness of the needs that the general population is not aware exists, i.e. homelessness, the need for affordable housing, and services for victims of abuse, through educational programs.
- Pursue grant funding to provide transitional housing programs.

### Metrics

- Increase the number of available occupancies at shelters by 2% over five years.
- Decrease the number of homeless in the region by 2% over five years.

### Implementation Steps

- Raise awareness of homelessness and target affordable housing for the homeless.
  - Encourage use of “housing first” models.
- Target hands-on support services and training and work initiatives to homeless.
  - Initiate homeless work initiatives.

## **Goal 4. Increase awareness of housing assistance programs and the discrimination reporting processes.**

### Objectives

- Develop targeted marketing strategies to reach the population in need.
- Many are unaware of problems in affordability. Make people aware through education.
- Develop educational materials and presentation kits regarding affordable and fair housing.
- Collect data on discrimination occurring throughout the region.

### Barriers

- Awareness of options. Many people do not know what to do when facing discrimination or need housing assistance.
- False perception that needs are being met.
- There is an overwhelming need; however, there are not enough resources to meet the need.

### Strategies

- Provide funding for fair housing initiatives program grant, which will provide funding for education regarding discrimination.
- Promote providers of housing assistance and their programs.
- East Alabama Partnership for Livability should create a list, identifying the population in need of resources over the next five years.

### Metrics

- **The East Alabama Partnership for Livability should increase the number of educational materials and presentation kits to three over the next five years.**

### Implementation Steps

- Increase awareness of housing assistance opportunities and options.
  - Work with fair housing centers to develop model homes, awareness and fundraising campaigns



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## **Goal 5. Fill data gaps related to housing needs and discrimination.**

### **Objectives**

- Collaborate with providers of housing assistance to determine existing data related to livability.
- Collaborate with Fair Housing Centers to expand services and education throughout the East Alabama Region regarding housing discrimination education and appropriate reporting methods.

### **Barriers**

- Funding
- Fears of reporting discrimination due to retaliation
- Entities that provide housing assistance do not have the staff or manpower to create the needed data

### **Strategies**

- Identify and obtain funding resources.
- Promote the benefits of reporting discrimination through the appropriate channels, which will deter the practice in the future.
- Establish and implement a volunteer program that consists of properly training volunteers to ferret out data resources and speak to clients about discrimination

### **Metrics**

- Collect data, which did not exist before, regarding housing needs over the next five years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Utilize university and community college resources for data collection.
  - Work with area universities and community colleges to establish a joint health and housing research center
  - Generate baseline and regular data for use by area housing agencies and planners
- Work with the fair housing centers to strengthen their capacity.
  - Integrate data collection into needs assessments and use data to inform program design
  - Help strengthen programs to prevent and address discriminatory practices in the housing sector
  - Help communicate and advocate for affordable housing resources for the region

## **Goal 6. Promote developing suitable housing to increase availability**

### **Objectives**

- Collaborate with local governments, non-profits, developers, and local businesses to provide housing options in high opportunity downtown neighborhoods, which would allow people easy access to employment, shopping, and other services.
- Partner with local governments, non-profits, and developers to incorporate housing into existing neighborhoods.
- Advance availability of affordable and quality housing for all ages, incomes, and abilities.

### **Barriers**

- Cost prohibitive expenses associated with retrofitting space above businesses to residences.
- Business owners and developers requiring too large of rent payments.

- 
- It can be less expensive to develop a "greenfield" rather than use a vacant lot in an existing neighborhood.

### **Strategies**

- Provide training and education on how to retrofit space above businesses for residents and the appropriate costs associated with the space.
- Pursue grant funding to supplement the cost associated with retrofitting space.
- Encourage utilization of vacant lots by offering incentives to developers.
- Rehabilitate & maintain existing housing stock.
- Promote incentive program for suitable housing and housing assistance

### **Metrics**

- Increase the percentage of available housing by 2% over a five-year period.
- Decrease the percentage of vacant lots within cities by 5% over a five-year period.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Use housing market analyses to recruit downtown development.
  - Commission housing market analyses
  - Integrate housing market studies into broader downtown master planning efforts.
- Encourage local voluntary site assembly equity partnerships with property owners.
  - Encourage voluntary site assembly strategies
  - Facilitate "matchmaking" between private property owners and potential developers
- Encourage integration of mixed-income or affordable housing.
  - Work with local governments to enable incentives for inclusion of affordable units in downtown housing.
- Help create incentives for downtown building rehabilitation.
  - Help create and promote a package of incentives for building rehab
  - Help promote downtown building rehabilitation and communicate success stories

## **Goal 7. Increase availability of broadband internet in both residential and rural areas**

### **Objectives**

- Develop vital infrastructure to reach residences in need across the region
- Many are unaware of opportunities to increase connectivity. Make people aware through education.
- Enable remote work and e-learning opportunities for all residents
- Decrease regional residential internet access disparity

### **Barriers**

- Awareness of options.
- False perception that needs are being met.
- There is an overwhelming need; however, there are not enough resources to meet the need.
- Lack of existing infrastructure

### **Strategies**

- Pursue grant funding to supplement the cost of creating and/or improving infrastructure
- Seek partnerships to provide areas with free, public internet access

### **Metrics**

- Residential internet access should see a 5% increase over the next 5 years.

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### **Implementation Steps**

- Increase awareness of internet access disparities across the region.
- Collaborate with regional partners to increase access and availability of broadband internet

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## EDUCATION

### REGIONAL NEEDS FOR EDUCATION

The Education Livability Resource Team (LRT) and the Economic Competitiveness LRT held combined meetings due to the intertwining nature of workforce development, economic competitiveness, and education. Discussion centered on the following regional needs:

#### **Begin career exploration early.**

- Career exploration and mentorship (including businesses and industry) for elementary age and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students with examples of successful people and what they had to do to get to their position.
- Give students examples of how schooling fits into “real” life.

#### **Early childhood education is an economic competitiveness driver and needs to be improved.**

- Quality early childhood education is vitally important to attract people to the region and as an economic driver.
- In addition to writing, reading, math, and science, early childhood education curricula should include teamwork and problem solving.

#### **Accessibility**

- In some areas, internet access—even at schools—can be inaccessible and unaffordable.
- The community colleges and universities are limited in their geographic area.

#### **Students need to be taught how to be successful in life.**

- Students need to be educated with basic skills to succeed in life such as work ethic, decision-making consequences, personal finance, budgeting, entrepreneurship, fiscal responsibility, balancing a checkbook, credit worthiness.
- The ACT Ready to Work Initiative and WorkKeys program teach many of the basic life skills.

#### **Promote alternatives to a 4-year college degree.**

- There is a need for more work study programs in high schools so students can understand the work place and why it is important.
- The negative mindset toward two-year schools needs to be changed.

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## EDUCATION

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, BARRIERS, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

**Goal 1. Increase educational attainment by beginning with early education and giving people the opportunity to advance their education.**

#### Objectives

- Increase percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds in school throughout region to at least 50%.
- Increase the number of people graduating from high school.
- Increase the number of people with an associate degree or higher.

#### Barriers

- Financial costs associated with developing an increased number of preschools.
- Transportation to and from school can be problematic.
- Apathy towards educational attainment.

#### Strategies

- Each community develops their own planning strategies to address the issue.
- Provide information about how people who graduate from high school or obtain a GED generally have higher income than people who do not.
- Education partnerships with secondary and post-secondary institutions

#### Metrics

- Increase the percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds in school to at least 50% over a five-year period. Utilize data from the American Community Survey.
- Increase the percentage of on-time high school graduation (% of freshmen who graduate in 4 years) to over 80% in a five-year period. Utilize data from [www.countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org).
- Increase the percentage of the over-25 population with an associate degree or higher to at least the State's average over a five-year period. Utilize data from the American Community Survey.

#### Implementation Steps

- Develop measures to recruit and support early childcare facilities throughout the region.
  - Establish an Education Committee to develop measures for recruitment and support of early childcare facilities.
  - Determine funding sources.
- Develop and distribute information to parents on the importance of pre-k education.
  - Provide educational materials to parents on the value of early childhood education.

**Goal 2. Decrease dropout rate with specific tasks, programs, and ideas for how to accomplish this.**

#### Objectives

- Career exploration for elementary/middle school age students.

- 
- Before and after-school programs and mentorships.

#### **Barriers**

- Availability of businesses to partner with for mentorships, especially in rural areas.
- Identifying resources can be an issue.
- Transportation to and from school and programs.
- Financial cost associated with specific tasks and programs.

#### **Strategies**

- Involve local business and industry to introduce careers.
- Identify mentors, programs through YMCA, churches, after school programs, recreation departments.
- Wi-Fi at public places, such as recreation departments, so students have access to the internet.
- Utilize grant funding for tasks and programs.

#### **Metrics**

- Decrease the dropout rate to less than 1% over the next five years. Conduct an annual review using State of Alabama data.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Have the education committee work with local schools to develop career exploration resources and programs.
  - Build a basic website template for career exploration that can be modified to suit individual schools' needs.
  - Develop a Career Day at schools or a Workplace "Shadowing" Program for older students.
- Work to establish mentoring programs in high schools.
  - Develop guidelines for establishing mentoring programs for high school students

### **Goal 3. Work together to use resources.**

#### **Objectives**

- Identify resources, including monetary and human.
- Find ways to increase communication and update others about educational successes.

#### **Barriers**

- The lack of a formal communication network with established education agencies makes it difficult to collaborate effectively.
- High speed internet is not available everywhere, which can make collaboration difficult.

#### **Strategies**

- Share successes and new initiatives across the region.
- Share faculty/resources to expand offerings, using virtual education.

- 
- Develop and expand regular communication between all groups, especially universities, K-12, and pertinent agencies such as the Alabama Virtual Library.
  - Involve Connecting Alabama in future discussions regarding resources.

### **Metrics**

- Increase the number of meetings and communication within education leadership to at least two meetings a year over the next five years. Collect the meeting information.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Increase programming in public libraries.
  - Work with the region's public libraries to increase programming and ensure as many as possible are actively participating in the Alabama Virtual Library.
- Develop and expand communication and information networks and enhance existing facilities.
  - Develop alternative public information avenues to showcase educational successes and initiatives.
  - Seek assistance with expanding internet capabilities to those areas with limited or no service.
  - Enhance and upgrade existing education infrastructure.

## **Goal 4. Collaborate with regional workforce development councils to link industry needs with training and education.**

### **Objectives**

- Identify needs for training by working with the economic development agencies in the region.
- Training at 2-year schools, such as Gadsden State and Southern Union, and vo-tech education should be aligned with needs.

### **Barriers**

- Fewer resources are available now than in the past.
- Few life coach opportunities and career exploration programs are available.
- Overall lack of knowledge about training available within the region.

### **Strategies**

- Involve AIDT in the effort to link industry needs with training and education.
- Meet with large employers/industries, including automotive and health care, to identify needs.
- Coordinate with existing effective career exploration programs, like the Boy Scouts of America Explorer Program, to provide resources for students.
- Work with the Workforce Development Councils to identify sustainable funding sources and employers/industries to be involved in career days, job shadowing, and other programs.
- Promote "on the job" videos with local businesses.

### **Metrics**

- 
- Increase collaboration between industry, business, and K-12 in providing training and workforce development over a five-year period. Document the number of meetings.
  - Increase membership in the Region 5 and 8 Workforce Development Councils by 2% over five years. The Region 5 and 8 Workforce Development Councils will document members.
  - Decrease the regional unemployment rate to fewer than 4% over the next five years. Use Alabama Department of Labor data.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Increase awareness of job training opportunities.
  - Develop additional forms of outreach to increase citizen awareness of available job training within the region.
- Strengthen the region's voice on statewide boards and establish additional career development centers in the region.
  - Increase the region's presence on Workforce Development Boards and in Career Development Centers.
- Encourage county participation in the ACT® Certified Work Ready Communities Program.
  - Promote the ACT® Certified Work Ready Communities Program.

### **Goal 5. Work with state agencies to obtain grants to support training and education.**

#### **Objectives**

- Increase the number of grants successfully funded across the region.
- Provide training in how to write grants.

#### **Barriers**

- Identification of grant writers who are willing to provide their services.
- Availability of grant funding.

#### **Strategies**

- Workshops/training seminars on grant opportunities and how to write grant applications.

#### **Metrics**

- Increase the number of grants reported over the next five years. Gather the data through a survey process or other methods.
- Increase number of grants successfully funded over the next five years. Gather the data through a survey process or other methods.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Form a consortium of educators, non-profits and public agencies to develop and hold grant writing workshops.
  - Work with the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) to identify and coordinate appropriate entities to provide grant writing training.



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**Goal 6. That school systems use the "Best Practices," data, studies, trends and resources of the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama (PARCA), as well as other educational resources, in development, implementation and assessment of their school system's goals and objectives.**

**Objectives**

- Use best practices in school systems to reach goals and objectives.
- Use PARCA to provide best practices data in higher achievement measures, which would indicate success in applying best practices.

**Barriers**

- Financial barriers associated with gathering data and best practices.

**Strategies**

- Provide programs to assist with data and best practices collection.

**Metrics**

- Increased use of best practices used to reach school systems' goals and objectives over a five-year period. Collect data on school systems using best practices.
- Increase the number of school systems reaching their goals and objectives over a five-year span. Collect data on school systems reaching their goals and objectives.

**Implementation Steps**

- Develop a best practices model.
  - Develop a model "Best Practices" Plan that can be used by all schools in the region to develop and track goals and objectives.
- Develop a strategic plan for education in the region.
  - Establish a collaborate effort, that includes education professionals, to develop a Model Strategic Plan for Education.
  - Identify a school or schools to participate in a Strategic Planning Pilot Program.

**Goal 7. Increase broadband internet available for educational purposes.**

**Objectives**

- Increase the number of schools able to fully implement e-learning
- Decrease internet access disparity among students and schools
- Expand access to technology and facilities that increase educational opportunities

**Barriers**

- Rural areas and smaller municipalities lack funding and infrastructure.
- Availability of funding.
- Technology disparities based on school budgets

---

**Strategies**

- Build partnerships to expand internet availability
- Seek funding to improve and expand infrastructure

**Metrics**

- Increase the number of students able to utilize e-learning opportunities. Gather the data through a survey process or other methods.

**Implementation Steps**

- Hold speaker series and/or workshops to educate the public on technology opportunities
- Develop and expand broadband internet networks

---

## HEALTH

### REGIONAL NEEDS FOR HEALTH

The Health Livability Resource Team identified the following regional needs:

**To promote effectiveness of health care systems, an all-inclusive collection of data should be conducted.**

- Social aspects of users
- Payers
- Federal access to hospitals

**There is a need to improve connectivity.**

- How residents can connect to proper health care resources and services.
- How professionals can connect with residents and health care maintenance information.

#### **Public Education**

- There is a need to educate the public on existing health care and resources within the region.

## HEALTH

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, BARRIERS, STRATEGIES, METRICS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

**Goal 1. Make East Alabama the healthiest region in the State.**

#### **Objectives**

- Encourage programs that provide health care to the uninsured.
- Educate the public on self-management of health issues
- Educate the public on healthy life styles at an early age.

#### **Barriers**

- Lack of financial resources/insurance, which leads to escalation of existing ailments.

#### **Strategies**

- Seek investment to educate the public on self-care and healthy life styles.
- Encourage the development of programs to provide services to those with no insurance.

#### **Metrics**

- Lower rates of the most common preventable diseases by 2% in 10 years.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Develop a healthy lifestyles program for youths.
  - Develop programs to educate youth on healthy lifestyles and making healthy choices.
- Develop a health, prevention and wellness program.

- 
- Develop a Health, Prevention and Wellness Program starting with senior citizens and expanding over time to include all adults in the region.
  - Establish a Food Policy Council in the East Alabama region.
    - Establish a Food Policy Council within the East Alabama region to promote and develop Healthy Eating and Health, Prevention and Wellness Programs.

## **Goal 2. Decrease non-life-threatening emergency room visits.**

### **Objectives**

- Encourage programs that provide health care to the uninsured.
- Educate the public on the proper use of the health care system.

### **Barriers**

- Lack of programs to educate the public.
- Lack of transportation network, which leads to the improper use of ambulance services and emergency services.

### **Strategies**

- Public education to inform residents of existing resources and alternatives.

### **Metrics**

- Reduction in non-life-threatening emergency transport and services by 2% in 10 years.

### **Implementation Steps**

- Broaden access to alternative care services.
  - Broaden access to alternative care services.
  - Encourage emergency rooms to provide Ambulatory Care Units on-site for frequent ER users.
- Address other barriers to alternative health care options.
  - Evaluate transportation services in rural areas to determine the level of services provided.

## **Goal 3. Increase awareness of existing health programs and services in the East Alabama region.**

### **Objectives**

- Provide an easily accessible comprehensive list of existing resources and services throughout the region to all residents.
- Provide outreach and education through existing partnerships (such as school/County Extension) on health resources.
- Improve and expand internet access to increase access to information and resources, such as telemedicine

### **Barriers**

- Funding to compose a resource guide

- 
- Champions for outreach
  - Lack of internet access

#### **Strategies**

- Promote partnerships of existing health care and resource centers to create a resource guide.
- Identify an entity to champion the process.
- Improve and expand internet infrastructure

#### **Metrics**

- Decrease in non-essential ER visits.
- Decrease in relapse or repeated admission for the same reasons.
- Increase in telemedicine visits.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Develop a healthcare and transportation resource directory.
  - Develop public information on healthcare and transportation services

### **Goal 4. Quality after-care management**

#### **Objectives**

- Create a specialized call center for the medical community that would be a regional cooperative among care providers manage patient care (especially important for after-care management).

#### **Barriers**

- Financial resources

#### **Strategies**

- Garner investment and funding from local governments, non-profit and private entities for the creation and management of such a call center.

#### **Metrics**

- Decrease in non-essential ER visits.
- Decrease in relapse or repeated admission for the same reasons.

#### **Implementation Steps**

- Investigate the viability of creating a call center for the management and informing of patient care
  - Investigate the viability (cost, responsible operating party, location, etc.) of creating a call center.

### **Goal 5. Promote the development of medical facilities to be available equally across the region**

#### **Objectives**

- 
- Increase the number of medical facilities available in the region
  - Address current needs, such as mental health and opioid abuse

**Barriers**

- Financial resources
- False perceptions about needs to be met

**Strategies**

- Explains need for a range of medical offerings
- Encourage development for medical facilities
- Promote partnerships of existing medical facilities
- Expand and improve the condition of existing medical systems
- Promote telemedicine

**Metrics**

- Increase in medical facilities
- Decrease in average travel time to receive treatment

**Implementation Step**

- Conduct feasibility study for additional facilities and recruit new facilities and companies, and enhance existing infrastructure
- Enhance broadband internet capabilities

---

## Implementation Matrix

The following three pages feature a plan Implementation Matrix that summarizes the key recommendations of this plan, as follows:

### Subject Category

The matrix is organized to reflect the following six subject categories:

- A. Community Engagement
- B. Economic Competitiveness
- C. Transportation
- D. Housing
- E. Education
- F. Health

### Alphanumeric Designation

Each subject category has been assigned a sequential letter and each primary plan recommendation has been given a sequential number. The category letter and recommendation number are combined for an alphanumeric designation for easy referencing.

### Page Number

This column indicates the plan page numbers that explain the recommendation in detail.

### Responsible Party

This column indicates the recommended party (or parties) to spearhead implementation in order of their level of responsibility.

### Timeframe

This section sequences implementation into Ongoing (Year 1), Mid Term (Years 2-3) and Long Term (Years 4-5) categories.

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
<b>Community Engagement</b>				
A-1-1	Establish an organization to spearhead regional livability efforts.	52	Long term	EAP-EARPDC
A-1-2	Develop a multi-faceted communications program.	52	Long term	EAP-Community Engagement
A-2-1	Provide Educational Opportunities on regionalism.	52	Mid-term	EAP-Community Engagement
A-2-2	Identify and utilize regionalism-oriented organizations.	52	Ongoing	EAP-Community Engagement
A-3-1	Identify categories of relevant specialized populations.	53	Ongoing	EAP-Community Engagement
A-3-2	Develop and implement an outreach strategy for each relevant group.	53	Mid-term	EAP-Community Engagement
A-4-1	Recruit new members to the organization's committees	54	Mid-term	EAP-Community Engagement
A-4-2	Provide an orientation program for new committee members	54	Long-term	EAP-Staff
A-5-1	Conduct community engagement in a financially viable manner	54	Ongoing	EAP-Community Engagement
A-6-1	Provide educational opportunities on internet access and usage	55	Mid-term	Local ED Agencies, JSU
<b>Economic Competitiveness</b>				
B-1-1	Develop strong partnerships with private employers for training and education.	57	Ongoing	EAP, WDCs, Local ED Agencies
B-1-2	Increase access to higher-education resources.	57	Ongoing	EAP - Workforce Committee, Colleges
B-1-3	Enhance communication and promotion of existing workforce programs.	57	Ongoing	EAP - Workforce Committee, WDCs
B-2-1	Enhance and promote amenity value to retain businesses and educated workforce.	58	Ongoing	EAP, Local ED Agencies, Chambers, CFNEA



#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
B-2-2	Identify local economic development strengths and small-town targets	58	Mid-term	EAP - ED Committee, EARPDC
B-2-3	Promote fairs and trade shows to enhance networking.	58	Ongoing	EAP - Workforce & ED Committees
B-2-4	Engage students and prospective workers with technology training.	58	Mid-term	EAP - Workforce Comm., Schools
B-3-1	Support the existing social service network.	59	Ongoing	EAP - Workforce Comm., Service Orgs.
B-3-2	Engage and incentivize the private sector in special needs training and employment.	59	Long-term	EAP - Wkfrce & ED Comms. / Special Pop.
B-3-3	Enhance access to support systems to enable participation in training and employment programs.	59	Ongoing	EAP - Workforce Comm., Service Orgs.
B-4-1	Establish a regional marketing program and brand.	60	Long-term	EAP - ED Comm., ED Orgs, Chambers, Inds.
B-4-2	Leverage tourism potential.	60	Ongoing	EAP - ED Comm., ED Orgs, CVBs
B-4-3	Assess the feasibility of business incubator projects.	60	Long-term	EAP - ED Comm., JSU / Colleges
B-4-4	Promote the use of existing small business resources.	60	Ongoing	EAP - ED Comm., ED Orgs, State
B-4-5	Focus on business retention and growth efforts.	60	Ongoing	EAP - ED Comm., Local Govts.
B-4-6	Enhance amenity value as a tool for economic development.	60	Mid-term	EARPDC
B-4-7	Focus financial and other incentives on growing local businesses.	60	Ongoing	EAP - ED Comm., Local Govts.

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
B-5-1	Establish a regional main street program and recruit downtowns	61	Ongoing	EAP, EARPDC, Alabama Main St. Program
B-5-2	Establish a local revitalization program (recommended for each community, adapted to meet their unique circumstances, and needs).	61	Long-term	EAP, EARPDC, Alabama Main St. Program
B-5-3	Establish a local historic preservation program.	61	Long-term	Local Gov'ts, ADAH, EAP
B-6-1	Utilize programs for inventorying and marketing industrial properties.	62	Ongoing	Econ. Develop. Orgs., EAP
B-6-2	Utilize programs for funding infrastructure and facilities.	62	Ongoing	Econ. Develop. Orgs., EAP
B-6-3	Utilize existing environmental clean-up programs.	62	Ongoing	Econ. Develop. Orgs., EAP
B-7-1	Provide educational opportunities on land use and growth management.	63	Mid-term	EAP, EARPDC
B-7-2	Assist communities with planning and zoning initiatives.	63	Ongoing	EAP, EARPDC
B-7-3	Educate the public on energy efficiency measures and encourage action.	63	Ongoing	EAP, EPA / HUD / DOE
B-7-4	Promote other existing energy programs.	63	Ongoing	EAP, EARPDC, Local Govt.
B-8-1	Utilize programs for funding infrastructures and facilities.	64	Mid-term	Local Govt.
B-8-2	Promote technology improvements.	64	Ongoing	Local Govt., Colleges, JSU
<b>Transportation</b>				
C-1-1	Promote public and private partnerships for transportation funding.	68	Ongoing	EAP-EARPDC
C-2-1	Pursue Goals 5 & 7 within "Section B: Economic Competitiveness".	68	Mid-term	See Section B Above

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
C-2-2	Emphasize compact land use and development patterns in appropriate locations.	68	Ongoing	EAP-EARPDC
C-3-1	Emphasize concepts such as bicycle facilities, sidewalks, crossing opportunities, and transit to provide safe, accessible streets for all users.	69	Ongoing	ALDOT, Local Govt., EARPDC
<b>Housing</b>				
D-1-1	Develop strong partnerships with housing-related real estate, construction, finance, and retail businesses.	73	Mid-term	EAP - Hsg Comm., JSU, CFNEA, providers
D-1-2	Enhance coordination and service delivery among existing housing providers.	73	Ongoing	EAP - Hsg Comm., EARPDC
D-1-3	Utilize a “carrot and stick” approach to encourage the rehabilitation of rental housing.	73	Mid-term	EAP - Hsg Comm., Local Govts, EARPDC
D-2-1	Help maximize the region’s share of available accessibility grant funding and volunteer support.	74	Ongoing	EAP-Hsg. Comm.
D-2-2	Establish housing accessibility programs through area hospitals or associated providers.	74	Long-term	EAP - Hsg Comm., Hosp., Retail, Serv. Prov.
D-3-1	Raise awareness of homelessness and target affordable housing for the homeless.	74	Mid-term	EAP - Hsg Comm., Fair Housing Centers
D-3-2	Target hands-on support services and training and work initiatives to homeless.	74	Mid-term	EAP - Hsg Comm. / Wrkfrc Comm., Colleges
D-4-1	Increase awareness of housing assistance and options.	75	Ongoing	FHCs, Local govt., HUD
D-5-1	Utilize university and community college resources for data collection.	76	Ongoing	Colleges (JSU), EARPDC

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
D-5-2	Work with fair housing centers to strengthen their capacity.	76	Mid-term	EAP - Hsg Comm., JSU, FHCs, Banks
D-6-1	Use housing market analyses to recruit downtown development	76	Mid-term	EARPDC, Main St. Orgs, Local Govts
D-6-2	Encourage local voluntary site assembly equity partnerships with property owners.	76	Ongoing	EARPDC, MS Orgs, EAP-ED Com., Loc Govs
D-6-3	Encourage integration of mixed-income or affordable housing.	76	Ongoing	EARPDC, Main Street Orgs, Local Govts
D-6-4	Help create incentives for downtown building rehabilitation.	76	Mid-term	EARPDC, Main Street Orgs, Local Govts
D-7-1	Increase awareness of internet access disparities across the region.	77	Ongoing	EARPDC, Chambers, Local govts.
D-7-2	Collaborate with regional partners to increase access and availability of broadband internet.	77	Long-term	Local govts., County Commissions, Colleges (JSU)
<b>Education</b>				
E-1-1	Develop measures to recruit and support early childcare facilities throughout the region.	80	Long-term	EAP, Education Administration
E-1-2	Develop and distribute information to parents on the importance of pre-k education.	80	Mid-term	EAP - DOE
E-2-1	Have the education committee work with local schools to develop career exploration resources and programs.	80	Long-term	EAP - Education Comm., Schools, Colleges
E-2-2	Work to establish mentoring programs in high schools	80	Long-term	EAP - Ed. Com., Schools/Colleges, EARPDC
E-3-1	Increase programing in public libraries.	81	Ongoing	EARPDC, Library Boards, Local Gov'ts.

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
E-3-2	Develop and expand communication and information networks and enhance existing facilities.	81	Mid-term	EARPDC-EAP
E-4-1	Increase awareness of job training opportunities.	82	Ongoing	EARPDC, Workforce Dev. Councils
E-4-2	Strengthen the region's voice on statewide boards and establish additional career development centers in the region.	82	Long-term	EARPDC, City and County Leaders
E-4-3	Encourage county participation in the ACT Work Ready Communities Program.	82	Ongoing	EARPDC, Local Leaders, Businesses
E-5-1	Form a consortium of educators, non-profits, and public agencies to develop and hold grant writing workshops.	83	Long-term	EARPDC, Chambers of Commerce
E-6-1	Develop a best practices model.	84	Mid-term	EAP-Schools, Colleges
E-6-2	Develop a strategic plan for education in the region.	84	Long-term	EAP-Schools, DOE
E-7-1	Hold speaker series and/or workshops to educate the public on technology opportunities.	84	Long-term	Schools, Colleges, Local govts.
E-7-2	Develop and expand broadband internet networks.	84	Ongoing	Local govt., schools, Local leaders
<b>Health</b>				
F-1-1	Develop a healthy lifestyles program for youth.	86	Long-term	EAP, EARPDC, Local health depts.
F-1-2	Develop a health, prevention, and wellness program.	86	Long-term	Local health depts, EARPDC-Area Agency on Aging
F-1-3	Establish a Food Policy Council in the East Alabama Region.	86	Mid-term	EARPDC, EACPA, Schools, Local Govt.
F-2-1	Broaden access to alternative care services.	87	Ongoing	EAP, EARPDC, Chambers of Commerce

#	Action	Page #	Time Frame	Potential Partners
F-2-2	Address other barriers to alternative health care options.	87	Mid-term	EARPDC
F-3-1	Develop a healthcare and transportation resource directory.	87	Long-term	EARPDC, Colleges, Local health depts.
F-4-1	Investigate the viability of creating a call center for the management and informing of patient care.	88	Long-term	EAP, EARPDC, Local leaders
F-5-1	Conduct feasibility study for additional facilities, recruit new facilities and companies, and enhance existing infrastructure	88	Long-term	Local businesses, local leaders, EARPDC, Chambers of Commerce
F-5-2	Enhance broadband internet capabilities	88	Ongoing	Local leaders, local govts, Ec Dev Orgs

## **Appendix A: CEDS Planning Survey Results**



# CEDS Planning Survey Results

CEDS Strategy Committee Meeting | 3/29/2022



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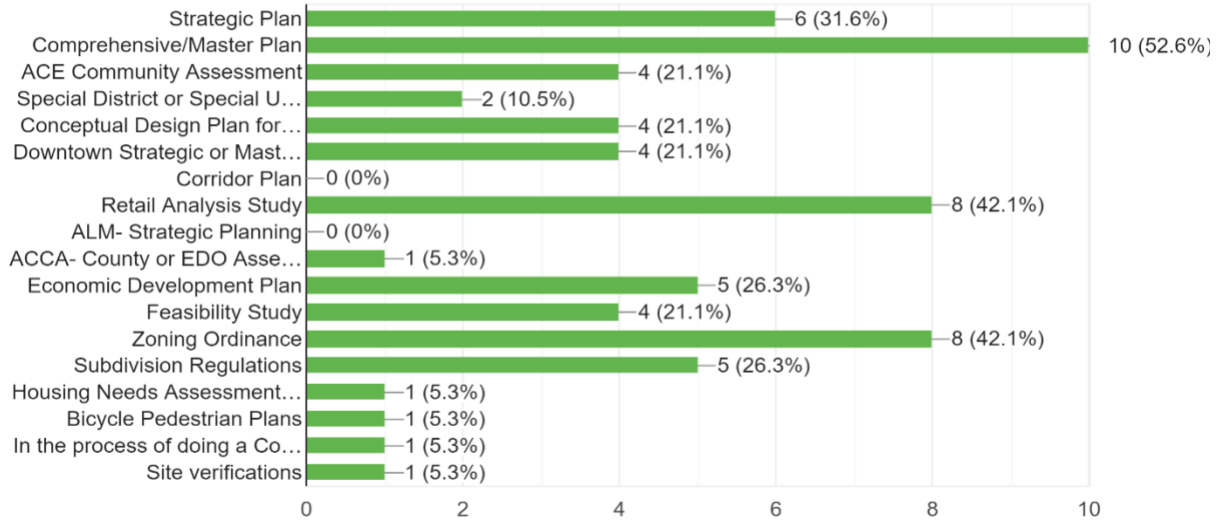
## Responses

- Calhoun County
  - City of Anniston
  - City of Jacksonville
- Chambers County
  - Town of Waverly
  - Chambers County Development Authority
  - City of Valley
  - Chambers County Commission
  - Chambers County Development Authority
- Cherokee County
  - Cherokee County Chamber of Commerce and Tourism
- Clay County
  - Clay County Economic Development Council
- Cleburne County
  - Town of Ranburne
- Coosa County
  - Town of Kellyton
- Etowah County
  - Etowah Chamber
  - Gadsden-Etowah Industrial Development Association
- Randolph County
  - Randolph County Economic Development Authority
  - Town of Wadley
- Talladega County
  - City of Talladega
- Tallapoosa County
  - City of Alexander City
  - Town of New Site

## Plans Utilized

Please choose which plan or plans your organization has conducted:

19 responses



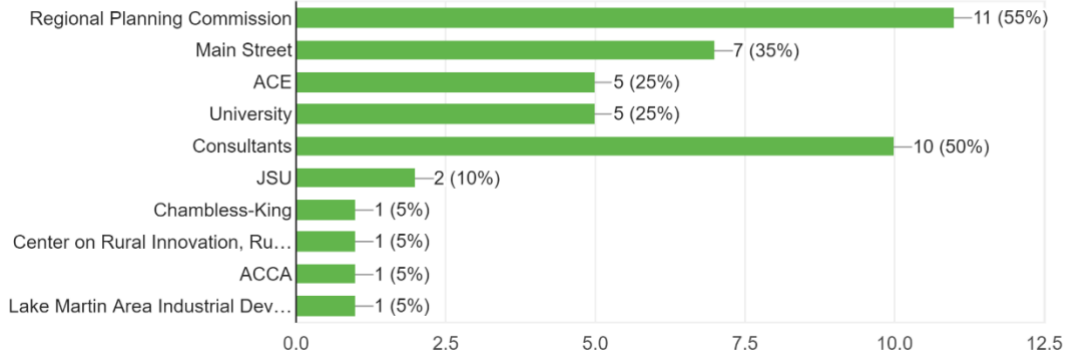
Top 3 planning methods:

1. Comprehensive/Master Plan
2. Retail Analysis Study
3. Zoning Ordinance

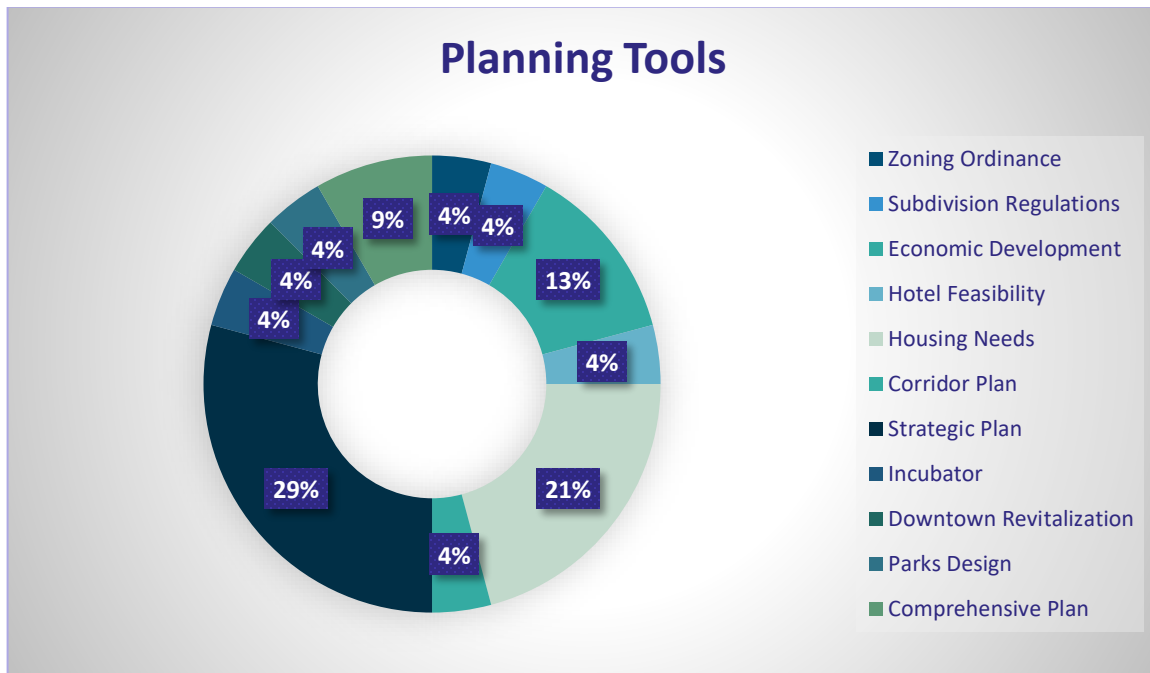
## Planning Partners

Who have you worked with in your planning process? (if a University, please specify under "other")

20 responses



## Future Planning Goals



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## Increase Community Engagement

Actual Plan Implementation	Increasing surveillance to mitigate crime	Increased retail
Comprehensive Master Plan	Regional Conferences	Tourism points-of-interest
Senior Centers/Joint Activities	Regional Meetings	In-house technical assistance

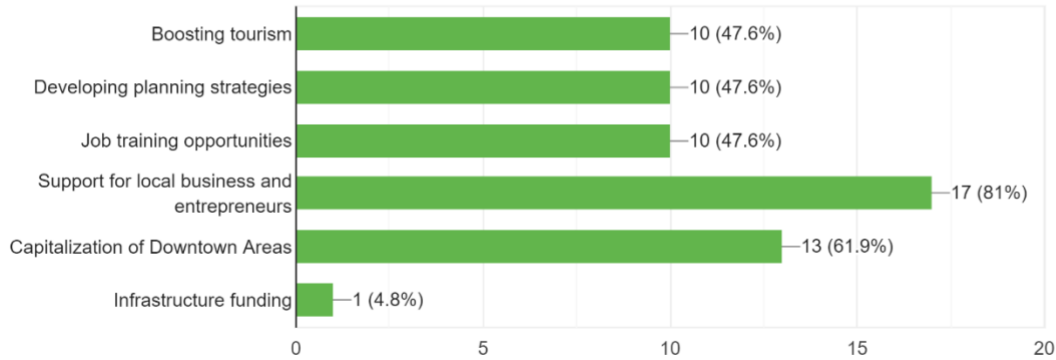
## Transportation Challenges

- Bike Access
- Public Transportation
- Disabled Transportation
- Elderly/Senior Transportation
- Pedestrian Access
- Medical/pharmaceutical needs
- Daycare Transportation
- Bus System
- Truckers

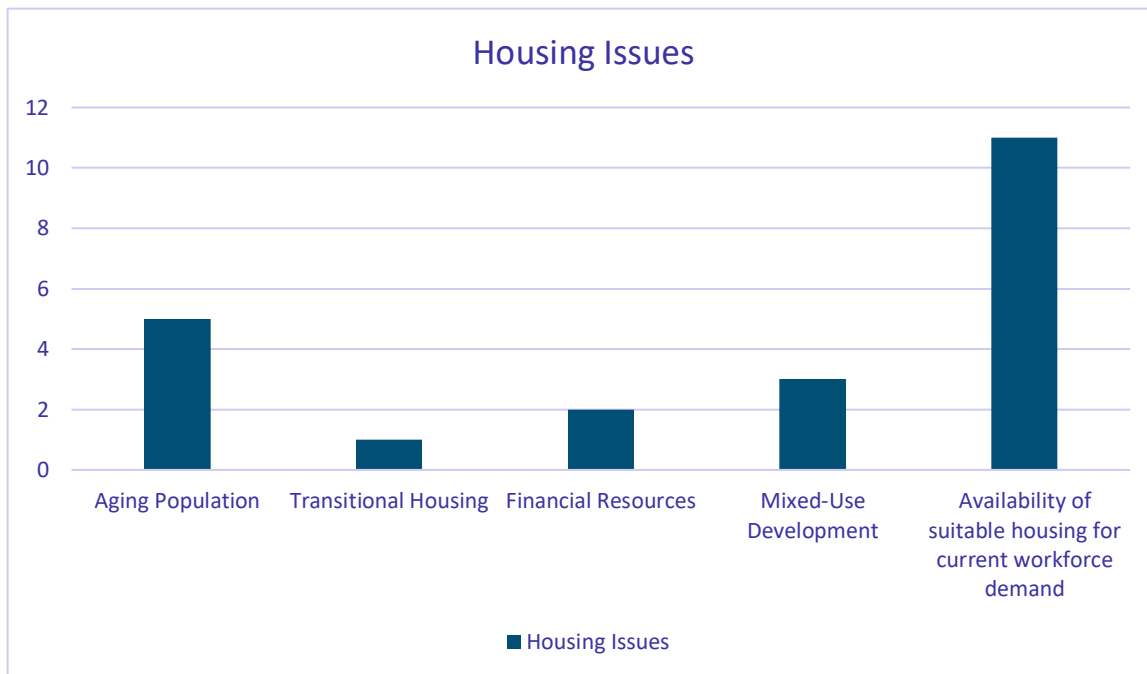
## Economic Competitiveness

Which could potentially offer the best economic competitiveness benefits to your area?

21 responses

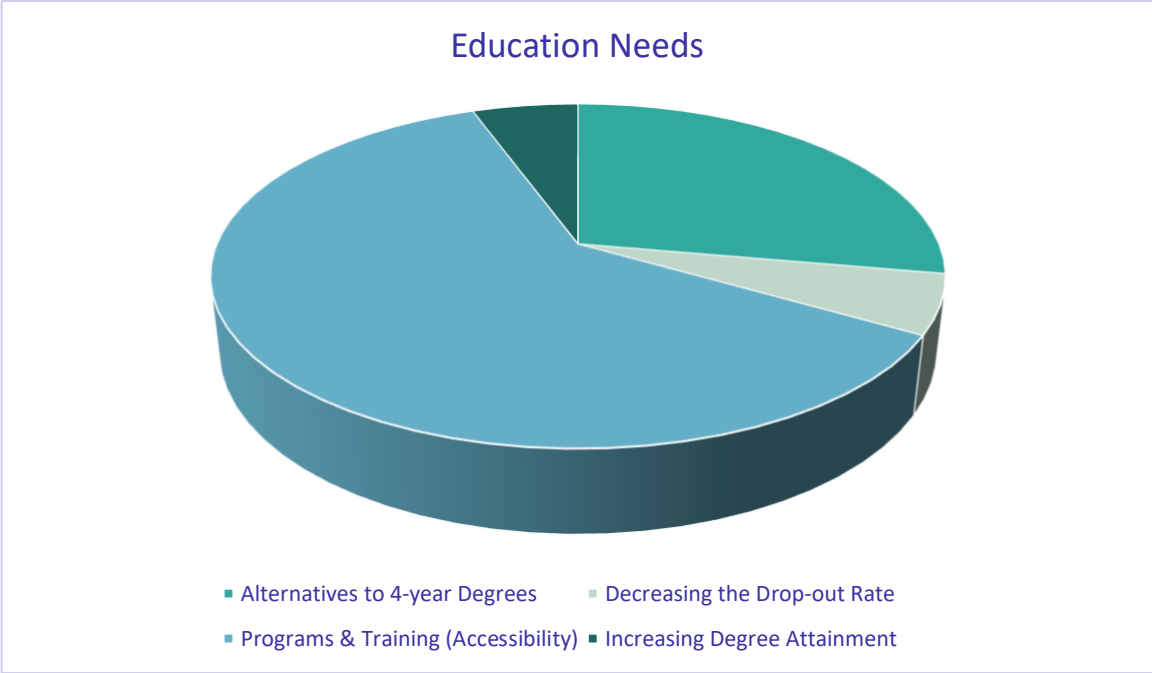


## Housing Issues



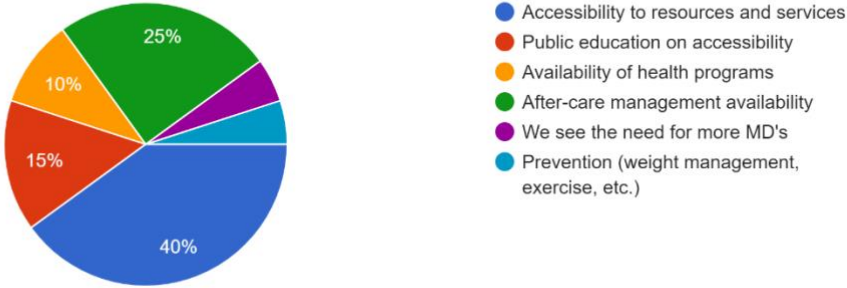
Other housing issues discussed in responses included the need for affordable housing for college students, and lack of room for new development.

# Education



# Health

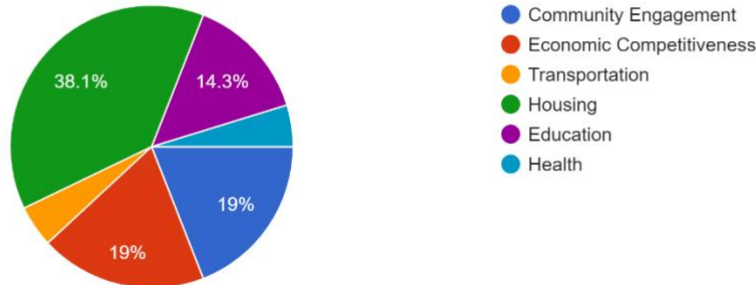
What health concern is there the most notable lack of in your area?  
20 responses



## CEDS Goals Ranked

Of our CEDS goal sections, which presents the biggest challenge to your area?

21 responses



## CEDS Goals Challenges

Availability and access

COVID-19, the political climate, and lack of retail areas to congregate

Connections from existing transportation services to industry

Supply unable to meet demand (causing population loss)

Unused industrial sites and buildings need occupation

Lack of Housing

Lack of Emergency Medical Facilities

School System Student Retainment

Lack of General Education

Lack of Community Involvement

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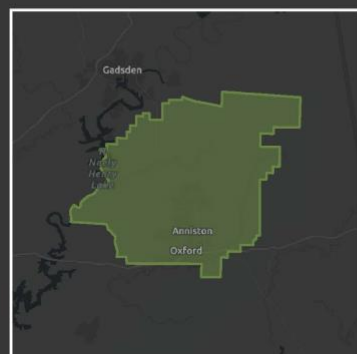
**Appendix B: COVID Impact Reports, Community Profiles,  
Commute Profiles, and At-Risk Populations by County**





# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Calhoun County, AL  
Geography: County



**115,233** Population  
**2.38** Avg Size Household  
**46,031** Households  
**39.9** Median Age  
**\$52,358** Median Household Income  
**\$142,133** Median Home Value  
**181** Housing Affordability  
**92%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**115,953** Daytime Population  
**3,802** Total Businesses  
**45,987** Total Employees

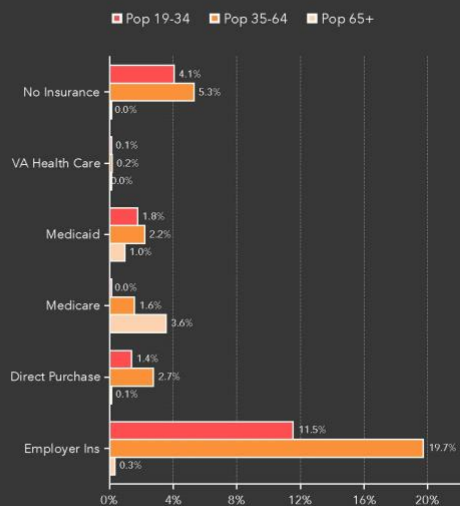
## POVERTY

**7,351** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**7,058** Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

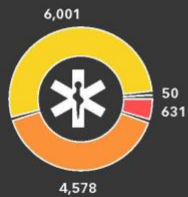
## AT RISK POPULATION

**16,413** Households With Disability  
**22,078** Population 65+  
**2,270** Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Legend: 0-18, 19-34, 35-64, Age 65+



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source: Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	17,275	66,559	19,703	103,528
Spanish	759	1,958	245	2,960
Spanish & English Well	688	1,378	154	2,370
Spanish & English Not Well	71	319	46	436
Indo-European	35	311	155	501
Indo-European & English Well	35	307	155	497
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	4	0	4
Asian-Pacific Island	38	434	142	614
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	38	311	105	454
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	123	37	160
Other Language	0	59	0	59
Other Language & English Well	0	59	0	59
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

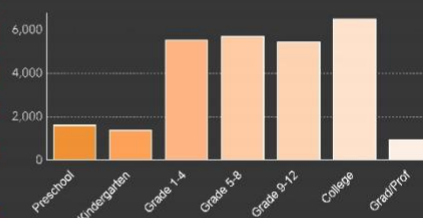
Calhoun County, AL

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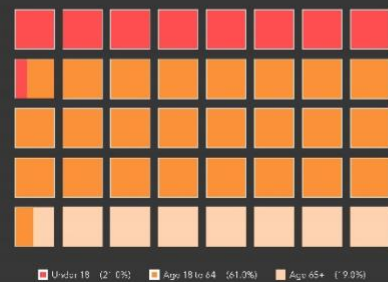
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	111,229
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	7,486
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	10,070
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	7,737
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	5,030
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	9,096
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	2,777
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	69,033

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



Legend: Under 18 (2.0%), Age 18 to 64 (61.0%), Age 65+ (37.0%)

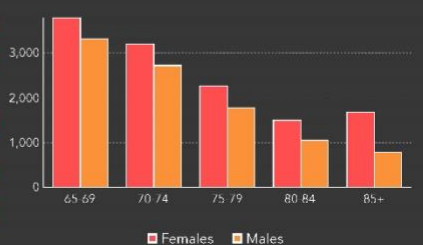
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

	Below	Above	Total
Total	7,351	37,221	44,572
Married Couple Families	946	19,734	20,680
Other Families w/Male Householder	215	1,776	1,991
Other Families w/Female Householder	1,949	4,500	6,449
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	1,663	5,247	6,910
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	2,578	5,964	8,542

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Population	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.6%	631
Population Age 19-34	4.1%	4,578
Population Age 35-64	5.3%	6,001
Population Age 65+	0.0%	50

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.2



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Chambers County, AL  
Geography: County



34,619 Population    2.37 Avg Size Household    14,215 Households    43.7 Median Age    \$50,870 Median Household Income    \$126,417 Median Home Value    199 Housing Affordability    88% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

29,013 Daytime Population    976 Total Businesses    8,957 Total Employees

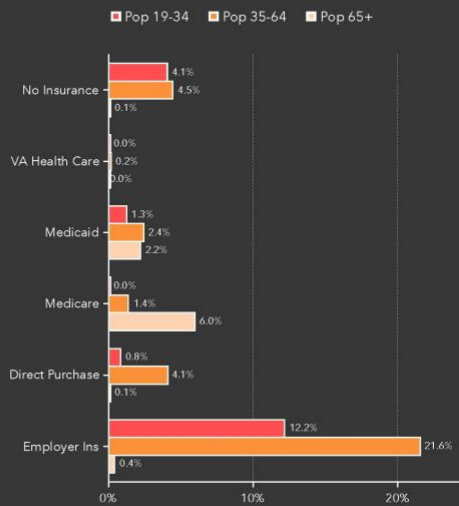
## POVERTY

2,212 Households Below the Poverty Level    2,188 Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

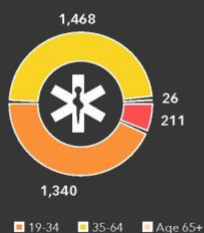
## AT RISK POPULATION

4,865 Households With Disability    7,505 Population 65+    1,000 Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)

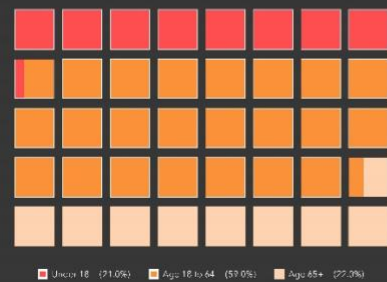


Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020, Esri, Esri-MRIS-Simmons, Esri-Data Analysts, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRIS-Simmons, Esri-Data Analysts, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	4,872	19,246	6,492	30,568
Spanish	80	333	3	416
Spanish & English Well	80	258	3	341
Spanish & English Not Well	0	75	0	75
Indo-European	0	147	37	184
Indo-European & English Well	0	74	10	157
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	21	21
Asian-Pacific Island	0	227	38	265
Asian-Pacific Island & English Well	0	218	38	256
Asian-Pacific Island & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language	10	0	0	10
Other Language & English Well	10	0	0	10
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0

## POPULATION BY AGE



Under 18 (21.0%)    Age 18 to 64 (59.0%)    Age 65+ (22.0%)



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

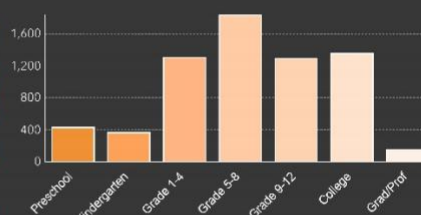
Chambers County, AL

34,619 Population    2.37 Avg Size Household    14,215 Households    43.7 Median Age    \$50,870 Median Household Income    \$126,417 Median Home Value    199 Housing Affordability    88% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	32,875
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	1,628
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	3,434
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	2,232
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	1,983
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	3,504
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	1,388
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	18,706

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



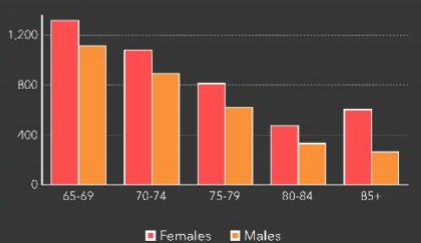
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

	Below	Above	Total
Total	2,212	11,370	13,582
Married Couple Families	251	5,710	5,961
Other Families w/Male Householder	79	886	965
Other Families w/Female Householder	635	1,560	2,195
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	504	1,575	2,079
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	743	1,639	2,382

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.6%	211
Population Age 19-34	4.1%	1,340
Population Age 35-64	4.5%	1,468
Population Age 65+	0.1%	26

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020, Esri, Esri-MRIS-Simmons, Esri-Data Analysts, ACS

Version 11



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Cherokee County, AL  
Geography: County



**24,634** Population  
**2.36** Avg Size Household  
**10,303** Households  
**46.7** Median Age  
**\$49,390** Median Household Income  
**\$144,919** Median Home Value  
**169** Housing Affordability  
**90%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**20,833** Daytime Population  
**698** Total Businesses  
**5,167** Total Employees

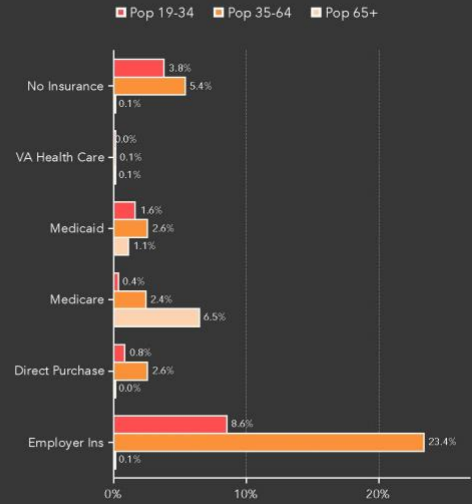
## POVERTY

**1,688** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**1,455** Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

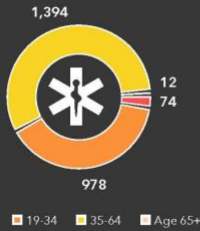
## AT RISK POPULATION

**3,295** Households With Disability  
**5,732** Population 65+  
**343** Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Aisle, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Aisle, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
<b>English Only</b>	3,748	14,567	5,911	24,226
<b>Spanish</b>	101	407	39	537
Spanish & English Well	75	70	29	274
Spanish & English Not Well	26	63	0	189
<b>Indo-European</b>	0	42	13	55
Indo-European & English Well	0	42	1	43
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	12	12
<b>Asian-Pacific Island</b>	0	35	16	51
Asian-Pacific & English Well	0	35	16	51
Asian-Pacific & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
<b>Other Language</b>	26	12	0	38
Other Language & English Well	26	12	0	38
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

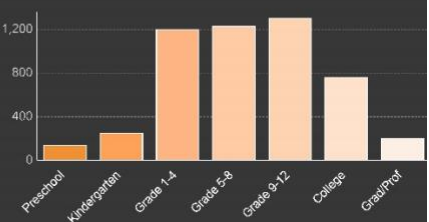
Cherokee County, AL

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**2.36** Avg Size Household  
**10,303** Households  
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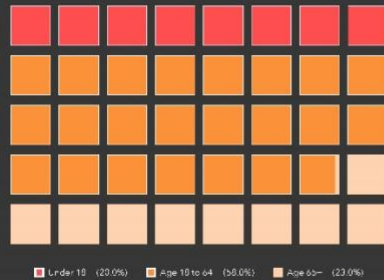
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	25,680
<0.50	973
0.50-0.99	2,349
1.00-1.24	2,102
1.25-1.49	1,238
1.50-1.84	2,470
1.85-1.99	666
2.00+	15,882

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



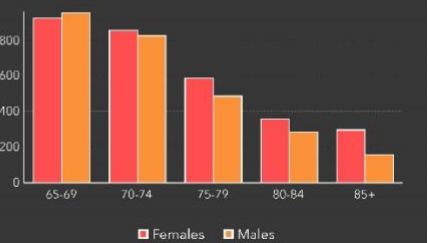
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

	Below	Above	Total
Total	1,688	9,148	10,836
Married Couple Families	544	5,552	6,096
Other Families w/Male Householder	9	403	412
Other Families w/Female Householder	306	571	877
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	498	1,367	1,865
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	331	1,255	1,586

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS) %

Population Age	%	Total
Population <19	0.3%	74
Population Age 19-34	3.8%	978
Population Age 35-64	5.4%	1,394
Population Age 65+	0.1%	12

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Aisle, ACS

Version 1.12





# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Clay County, AL  
Geography: County



14,295 Population    2.35 Avg Size Household    5,972 Households    44.8 Median Age    \$44,986 Median Household Income    \$129,000 Median Home Value    177 Housing Affordability    87% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

12,971 Daytime Population    313 Total Businesses    4,521 Total Employees

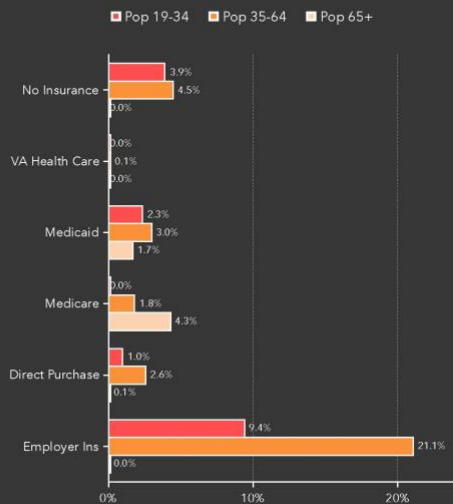
## POVERTY

942 Households Below the Poverty Level    619 Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

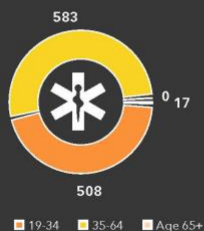
## AT RISK POPULATION

1,953 Households With Disability    3,140 Population 65+    287 Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source: Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	1,939	7,619	2,694	12,272
Spanish	54	222	12	288
Spanish & English Well	51	213	12	279
Spanish & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Indo-European	0	3	0	3
Indo-European & English Well	0	3	0	3
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

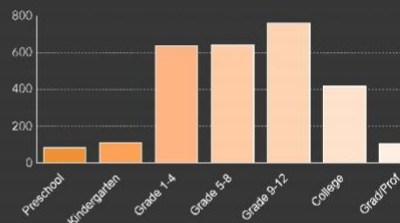
Clay County, AL

14,295 Population    2.35 Avg Size Household    5,972 Households    44.8 Median Age    \$44,986 Median Household Income    \$129,000 Median Home Value    177 Housing Affordability    87% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Category	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	13,002
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	631
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	1,387
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	727
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	940
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	1,390
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	500
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	7,427

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



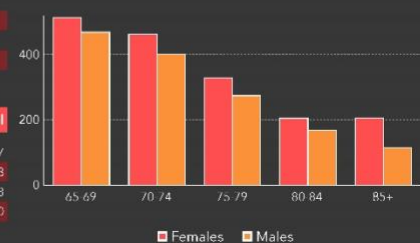
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	942	4,211	5,153
Married Couple Families	123	2,621	2,744
Other Families w/Male Householder	46	175	221
Other Families w/Female Householder	293	420	713
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	167	501	668
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	313	494	807

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Category	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.1%	17
Population Age 19-34	3.9%	508
Population Age 35-64	4.5%	583
Population Age 65+	0.0%	0

## SENIOR POPULATION



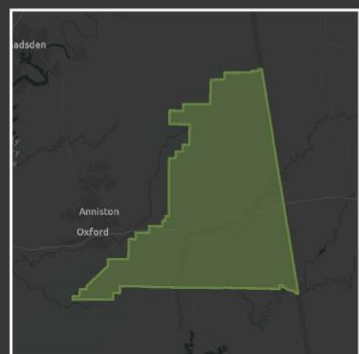
Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.1



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Cleburne County, AL  
Geography: County



**15,013** Population    **2.45** Avg Size Household    **6,058** Households    **42.8** Median Age    **\$48,426** Median Household Income    **\$136,660** Median Home Value    **177** Housing Affordability    **90%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**11,886** Daytime Population    **345** Total Businesses    **2,709** Total Employees

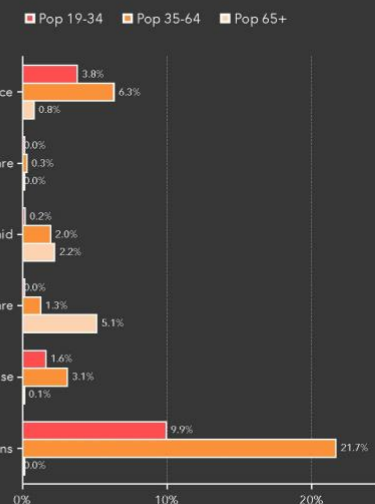
## POVERTY

**1,061** Households Below the Poverty Level    **738** Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

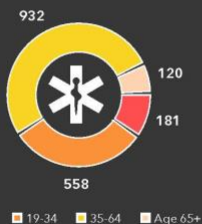
## AT RISK POPULATION

**2,280** Households With Disability    **3,087** Population 65+    **354** Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	2,405	8,284	3,957	13,746
Spanish	77	187	14	278
Spanish & English Well	71	172	14	197
Spanish & English Not Well	0	65	0	68
Indo-European	0	37	3	40
Indo-European & English Well	0	37	3	40
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

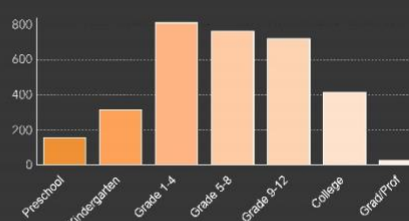
Cleburne County, AL

**15,013** Population    **2.45** Avg Size Household    **6,058** Households    **42.8** Median Age    **\$48,426** Median Household Income    **\$136,660** Median Home Value    **177** Housing Affordability    **90%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Category	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	14,736
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	689
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	1,606
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	711
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	1,011
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	1,361
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	363
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	8,995

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



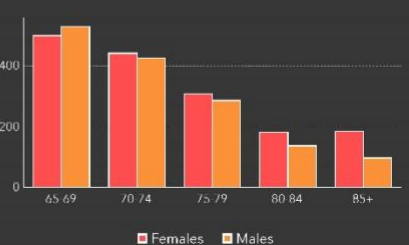
## POPULATION BY AGE



## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	1,061	4,774	5,835
Married Couple Families	168	2,887	3,055
Other Families w/Male Householder	33	102	135
Other Families w/Female Householder	125	475	600
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	149	534	683
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	586	776	1,362

## SENIOR POPULATION



## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Category	(ACS)	%	Total
Population <19	1.2%	181	
Population Age 19-34	3.8%	558	
Population Age 35-64	6.3%	932	
Population Age 65+	0.8%	120	



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.2



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Coosa County, AL  
Geography: County



10,106 Population    2.25 Avg Size Household    4,357 Households    47.5 Median Age    \$45,722 Median Household Income    \$106,429 Median Home Value    217 Housing Affordability    88% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

7,501 Daytime Population    204 Total Businesses    1,689 Total Employees

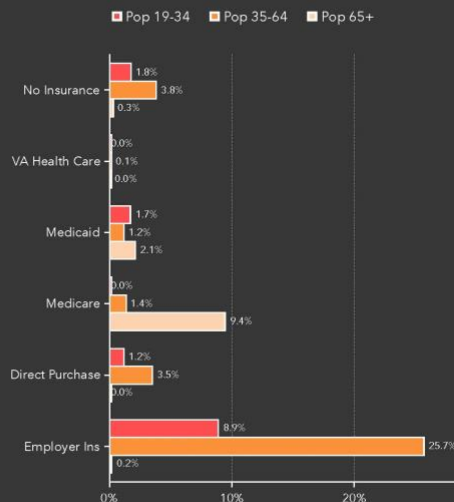
## POVERTY

518 Households Below the Poverty Level    415 Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

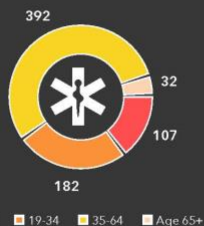
## AT RISK POPULATION

1,602 Households With Disability    2,354 Population 65+    90 Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	1,299	6,312	2,490	10,101
Spanish	0	71	7	78
Spanish & English Well	0	31	7	38
Spanish & English Not Well	0	40	0	40
Indo-European	0	9	0	9
Indo-European & English Well	0	9	0	9
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	44	0	44
Other Language & English Well	0	44	0	44
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

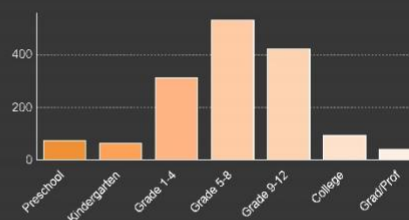
Coosa County, AL

10,106 Population    2.25 Avg Size Household    4,357 Households    47.5 Median Age    \$45,722 Median Household Income    \$106,429 Median Home Value    217 Housing Affordability    88% Internet at Home

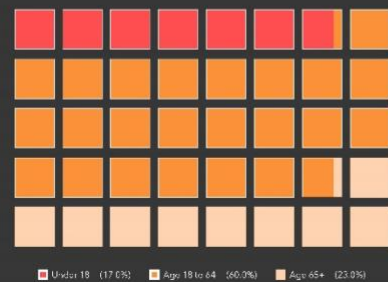
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	10,267
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	500
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	783
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	538
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	657
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	989
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	305
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	6,495

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



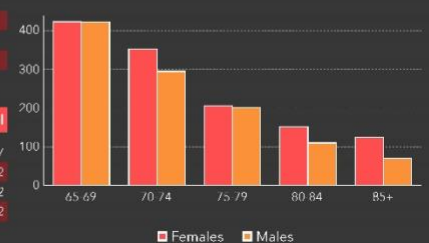
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	518	3,498	4,016
Married Couple Families	81	1,912	1,993
Other Families w/Male Householder	21	145	166
Other Families w/Female Householder	116	329	445
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	116	631	747
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	184	481	665

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Population	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	1.0%	107
Population Age 19-34	1.8%	182
Population Age 35-64	3.8%	392
Population Age 65+	0.3%	32

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

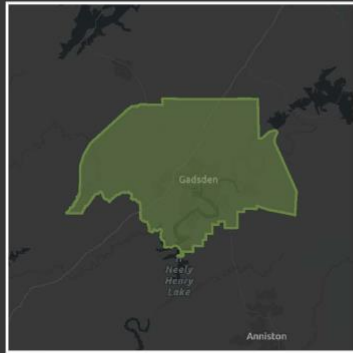
Version 1.2





# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Etowah County, AL  
Geography: County



102,879 Population    2.42 Avg Size Household    41,800 Households    43.5 Median Age    \$45,103 Median Household Income    \$155,433 Median Home Value    143 Housing Affordability    92% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

99,752 Daytime Population    3,464 Total Businesses    39,893 Total Employees

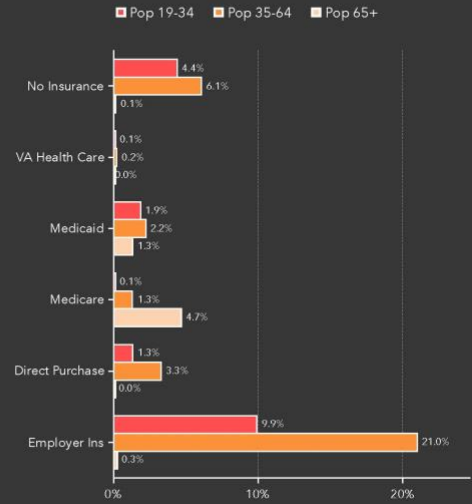
## POVERTY

6,333 Households Below the Poverty Level    5,537 Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

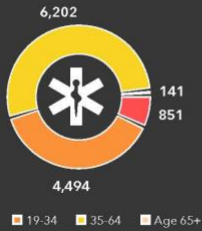
## AT RISK POPULATION

12,705 Households With Disability    22,262 Population 65+    2,234 Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

Etowah County, AL

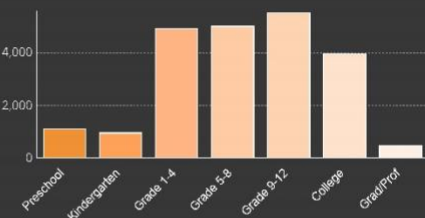
LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	15,099	53,222	19,132	92,469
Spanish	762	1,959	168	2,889
Spanish & English Well	753	1,343	134	2,230
Spanish & English Not Well	9	410	26	445
Indo-European	98	367	142	605
Indo-European & English Well	35	241	142	418
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	61	68	0	129
Asian-Pacific Island	35	338	71	444
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	35	297	71	383
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	62	0	62
Other Language	141	191	0	332
Other Language & English Well	141	181	0	322
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	10	0	10

102,879 Population    2.42 Avg Size Household    41,800 Households    43.5 Median Age    \$45,103 Median Household Income    \$155,433 Median Home Value    143 Housing Affordability    92% Internet at Home

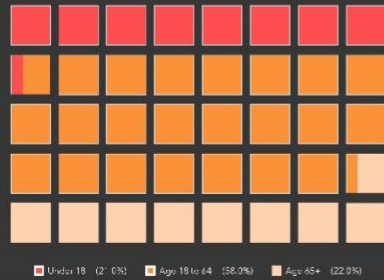
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	101,456
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	6,589
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	9,610
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	6,063
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	4,475
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	8,103
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	3,156
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	63,460

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



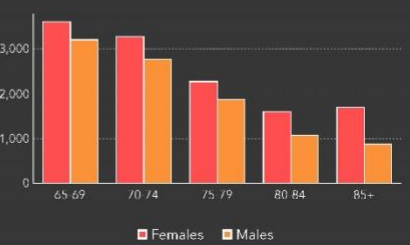
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

	Below	Above	Total
Total	6,333	32,432	38,765
Married: Couple Families	1,041	17,041	18,082
Other Families w/Male Householder	265	1,164	1,429
Other Families w/Female Householder	1,920	3,952	5,872
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	1,092	4,712	5,804
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	2,015	5,563	7,578

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

	(ACS)	%	Total
Population <19		0.8%	851
Population Age 19-34		4.4%	4,494
Population Age 35-64		6.1%	6,202
Population Age 65+		0.1%	141

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.3



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Randolph County, AL  
Geography: County



**21,756** Population    **2.41** Avg Size Household    **8,873** Households    **43.4** Median Age    **\$48,449** Median Household Income    **\$129,610** Median Home Value    **188** Housing Affordability    **89%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**19,304** Daytime Population    **694** Total Businesses    **5,641** Total Employees

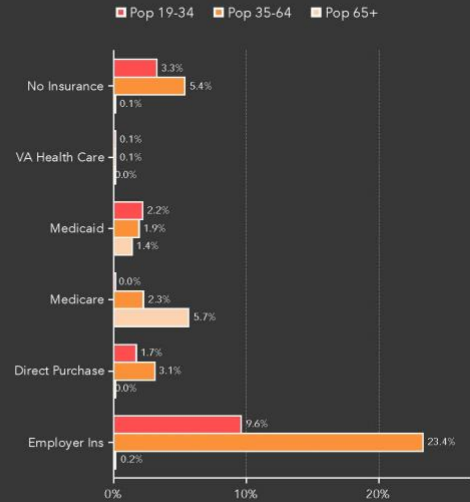
## POVERTY

**1,765** Households Below the Poverty Level    **1,422** Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

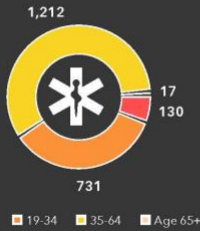
## AT RISK POPULATION

**2,839** Households With Disability    **4,655** Population 65+    **406** Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	3,303	12,899	4,643	20,845
Spanish	159	219	34	412
Spanish & English Well	159	191	34	384
Spanish & English Not Well	0	28	0	28
Indo-European	38	117	13	168
Indo-European & English Well	38	107	3	148
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	10	10	20
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

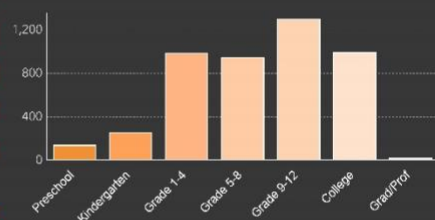
Randolph County, AL

**21,756** Population    **2.41** Avg Size Household    **8,873** Households    **43.4** Median Age    **\$48,449** Median Household Income    **\$129,610** Median Home Value    **188** Housing Affordability    **89%** Internet at Home

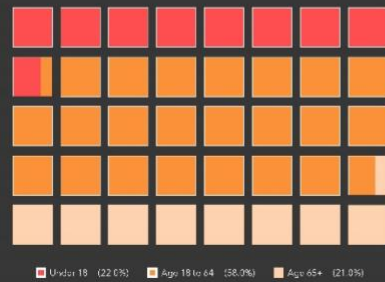
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Category	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	22,180
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	1,899
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	2,266
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	774
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	771
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	2,324
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	884
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	13,262

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



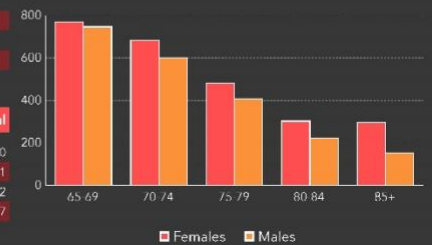
## POPULATION BY AGE



## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	1,765	6,890	8,655
Married Couple Families	394	4,064	4,458
Other Families w/Male Householder	139	326	465
Other Families w/Female Householder	405	797	1,206
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	278	972	1,250
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	545	731	1,276

## SENIOR POPULATION



## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Category	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.6%	130
Population Age 19-34	3.3%	731
Population Age 35-64	5.4%	1,212
Population Age 65+	0.1%	17



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version 1.1





# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Talladega County, AL  
Geography: County



81,857 Population    2.37 Avg Size Household    33,142 Households    41.9 Median Age    \$54,540 Median Household Income    \$137,192 Median Home Value    197 Housing Affordability    89% Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES



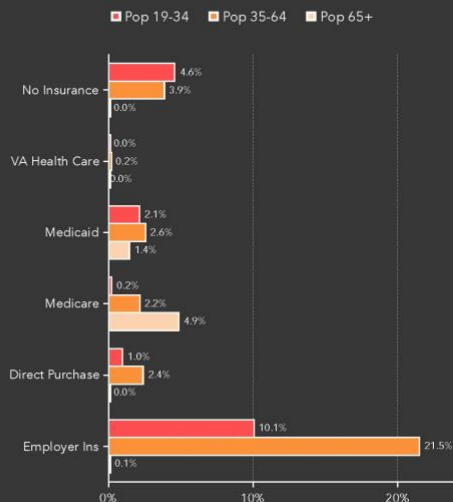
## POVERTY



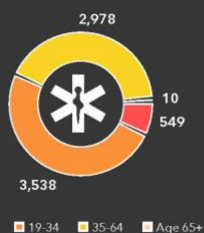
## AT RISK POPULATION



## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	12,152	47,069	14,113	73,323
Spanish	424	1,259	24	1,707
Spanish & English Well	403	1,024	24	1,451
Spanish & English Not Well	21	187	0	208
Indo-European	126	365	47	538
Indo-European & English Well	126	304	38	468
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	61	9	70
Asian-Pacific Island	0	134	26	160
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	79	18	97
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	55	8	63
Other Language	0	130	95	225
Other Language & English Well	0	120	95	215
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	10	0	10



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

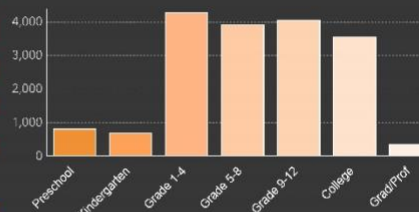
Talladega County, AL

81,857 Population    2.37 Avg Size Household    33,142 Households    41.9 Median Age    \$54,540 Median Household Income    \$137,192 Median Home Value    197 Housing Affordability    89% Internet at Home

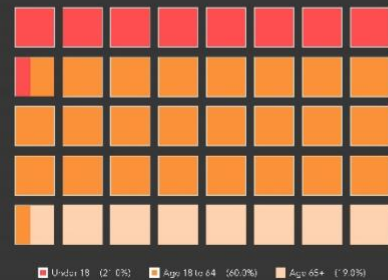
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	76,675
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	6,364
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	7,314
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	5,101
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	5,020
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	6,430
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	2,632
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	43,024

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	5,869	25,872	31,741
Married Couple Families	829	13,243	14,072
Other Families w/Male Householder	272	1,310	1,582
Other Families w/Female Householder	1,979	3,260	5,239
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	1,151	4,117	5,268
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	1,638	3,942	5,580

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Population	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.7%	549
Population Age 19-34	4.6%	3,538
Population Age 35-64	3.9%	2,978
Population Age 65+	0.0%	10

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Analytics, ACS

Version: 1.3



# CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) IMPACT PLANNING REPORT

Tallapoosa County, AL  
Geography: County



**41,154** Population    **2.33** Avg Size Household    **17,385** Households    **45.8** Median Age    **\$53,492** Median Household Income    **\$148,523** Median Home Value    **180** Housing Affordability    **90%** Internet at Home

## POPULATION AND BUSINESSES

**39,716** Daytime Population    **1,459** Total Businesses    **13,922** Total Employees

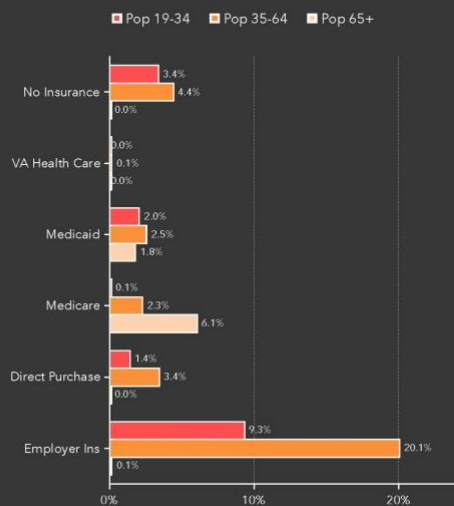
## POVERTY

**2,685** Households Below the Poverty Level    **2,956** Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP

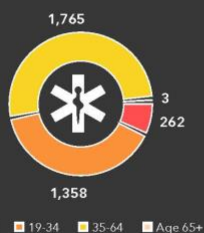
## AT RISK POPULATION

**6,273** Households With Disability    **9,567** Population 65+    **1,296** Households Without Vehicle

## HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)



## POPULATION NO HEALTH INSURANCE (ACS)



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Aisle, ACS

Note: Medicaid value for population 65+ is defined as Medicaid plus Medicare. For other age groups it is Medicaid only. Source Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Aisle, ACS

LANGUAGE (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
<b>English Only</b>	5,836	22,814	8,555	37,203
<b>Spanish</b>	340	491	6	837
Spanish & English Well	300	360	6	666
Spanish & English Not Well	40	90	0	130
<b>Indo-European</b>	0	63	88	151
Indo-European & English Well	0	54	85	142
Indo-Euro & English Not Well	0	9	0	9
<b>Asian-Pacific Island</b>	12	38	1	51
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	12	32	1	45
Asian-Pac Isl & English Not Well	0	6	0	6
<b>Other Language</b>	0	12	0	12
Other Language & English Well	0	12	0	12
Other Lang. & English Not Well	0	0	0	0



# KEY INDICATORS: IMPACT PLANNING

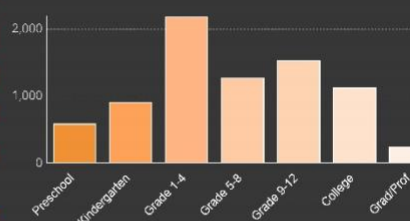
Tallapoosa County, AL

**41,154** Population    **2.33** Avg Size Household    **17,385** Households    **45.8** Median Age    **\$53,492** Median Household Income    **\$148,523** Median Home Value    **180** Housing Affordability    **90%** Internet at Home

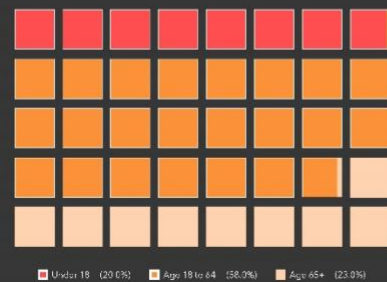
## POPULATION AND POVERTY STATUS (ACS)

Income to Poverty Ratio	Total
Population for whom Poverty Status is Determined	39,879
Income to Poverty Ratio <0.50	3,052
Income to Poverty Ratio 0.50-0.99	3,520
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.00-1.24	2,375
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.25-1.49	2,120
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.50-1.84	3,627
Income to Poverty Ratio 1.85-1.99	1,651
Income to Poverty Ratio 2.00+	23,534

## SCHOOL ENROLLMENT (ACS)



## POPULATION BY AGE



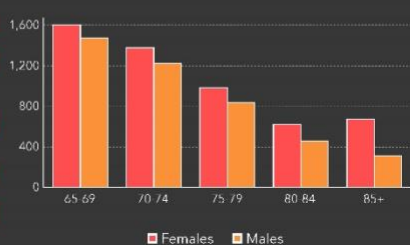
## POVERTY LEVELS (ACS)

Category	Below	Above	Total
Total	2,685	13,674	16,359
Married Couple Families	332	7,314	7,646
Other Families w/Male Householder	147	167	914
Other Families w/Female Householder	1,000	1,478	2,478
Nonfamilies w/Male Householder	515	1,757	2,272
Nonfamilies w/Female Householder	691	2,358	3,049

## NO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE (ACS)

Population	(ACS) %	Total
Population <19	0.7%	262
Population Age 19-34	3.4%	1,358
Population Age 35-64	4.4%	1,765
Population Age 65+	0.0%	3

## SENIOR POPULATION



Source: Esri forecasts for 2022, 2027, 2016-2020; Esri, Esri-MRI-Simmons, Esri-Data Aisle, ACS

Version: 1.3

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Calhoun County, AL

115,233 -0.46% 2.38 51.9 39.9 \$52,358 \$142,133 \$103,988 19.8% 61% 22,078  
Population Total Population Growth Average HH Size Diversity Index Median Age Median HH Income Median Home Value Median Net Worth Age <18 Age 18-64 Age 65+



16.2%  
Services

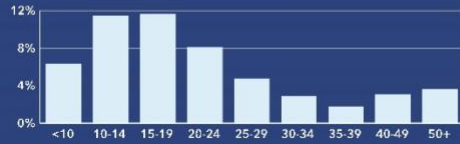


31.6%  
Blue Collar



52.2%  
White Collar

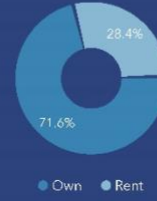
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



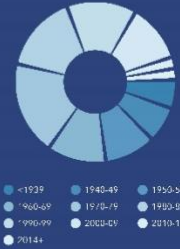
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



Housing: Year Built



Home Value



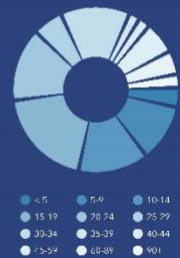
Household Income



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri Sources: Esri, ACI  
File: forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Chambers County, AL

34,619 -0.20% 2.37 58.8 43.7 \$50,870 \$126,417 \$93,462 19.5% 59% 7,505  
Population Total Population Growth Average HH Size Diversity Index Median Age Median HH Income Median Home Value Median Net Worth Age <18 Age 18-64 Age 65+



11.9%  
Services

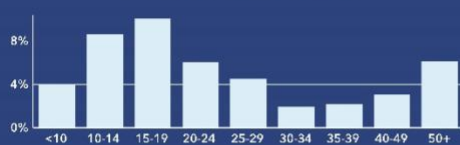


42.4%  
Blue Collar

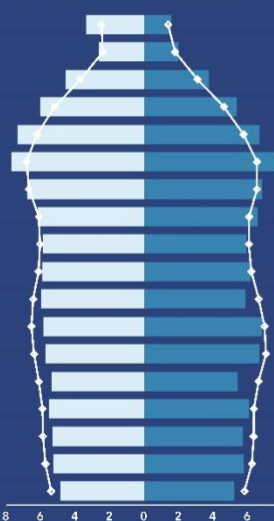


45.7%  
White Collar

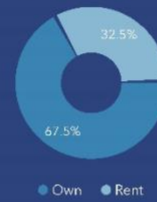
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



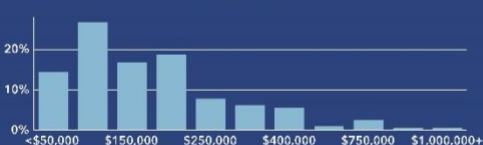
Home Ownership



Housing: Year Built



Home Value



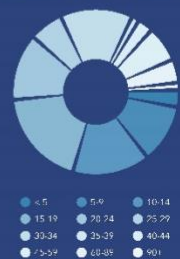
Household Income



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri Sources: Esri, ACI  
File: forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama



# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Cherokee County, AL

24,634   -0.60%   2.36   20.0   46.7   \$49,390   \$144,919   \$132,816   18.7%   58%   5,732  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



12.6%  
Services

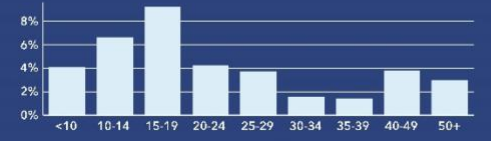


41.0%  
Blue Collar

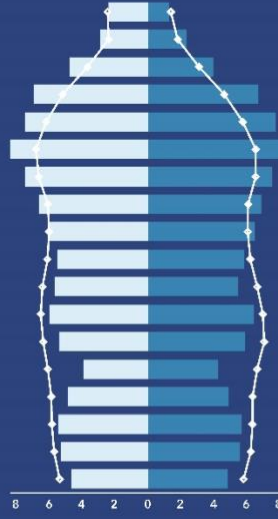


46.4%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



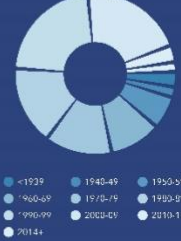
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



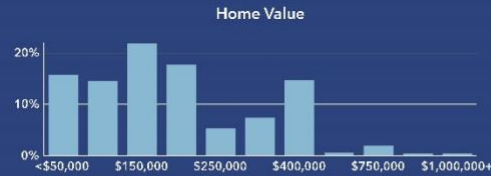
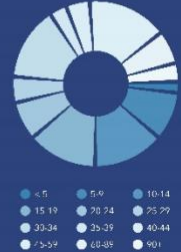
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri   Sources: Esri, ACI  
 For forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Clay County, AL

14,295   0.18%   2.35   38.5   44.8   \$44,986   \$129,000   \$110,391   19.2%   59%   3,140  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



11.6%  
Services

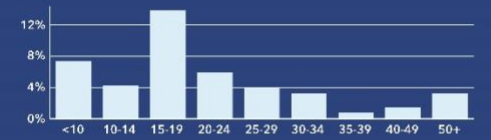


48.5%  
Blue Collar

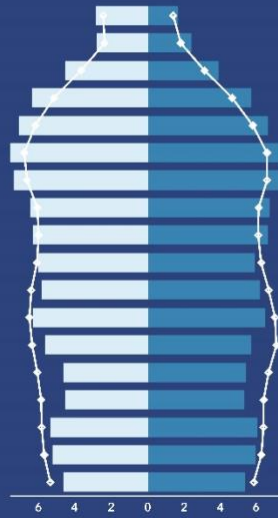


39.9%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



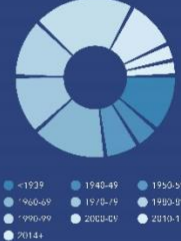
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



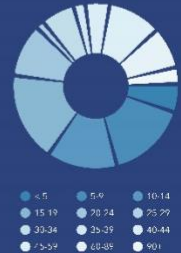
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri   Sources: Esri, ACI  
 For forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Cleburne County, AL

15,013   -0.13%   2.45   19.1   42.8   \$48,426   \$136,660   \$116,875   21.2%   58%   3,087  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



10.3%  
Services

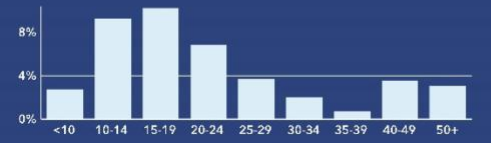


40.3%  
Blue Collar

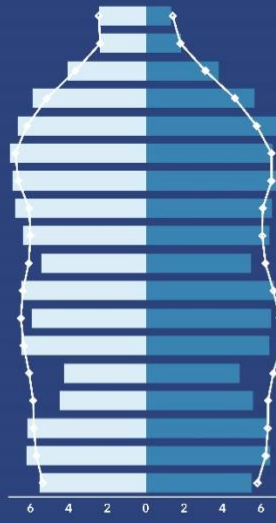


49.4%  
White Collar

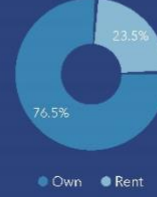
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



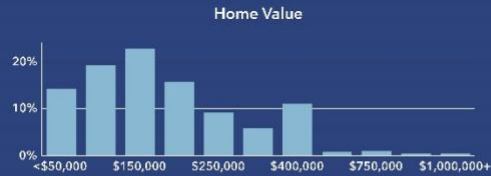
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri   Sources: Esri, AECI  
 File: forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Coosa County, AL

10,106   -1.21%   2.25   50.7   47.5   \$45,722   \$106,429   \$127,858   16.5%   60%   2,354  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



18.4%  
Services

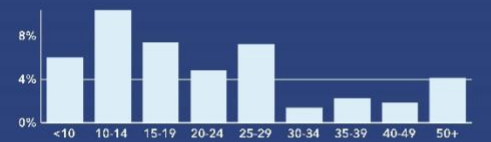


41.1%  
Blue Collar



40.4%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



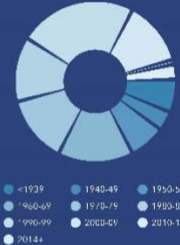
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



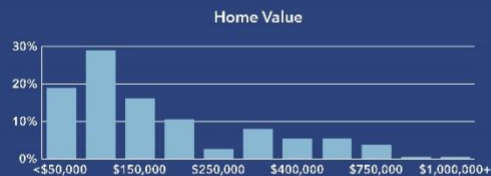
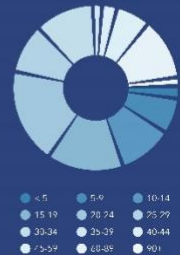
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri   Sources: Esri, AECI  
 File: forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Etowah County, AL

102,879 -0.24% 2.42 45.9 43.5 \$45,103 \$155,433 \$101,562 20.1% 58% 22,262  
Population Total Population Growth Average HH Size Diversity Index Median Age Median HH Income Median Home Value Median Net Worth Age <18 Age 18-64 Age 65+



17.2%  
Services

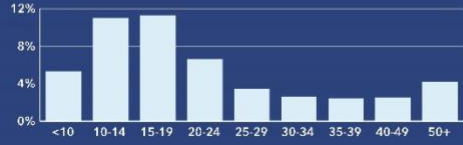


31.8%  
Blue Collar

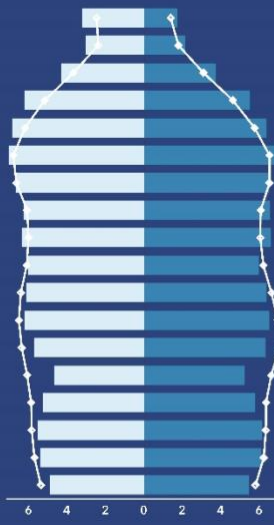


51.0%  
White Collar

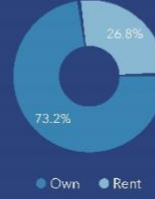
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



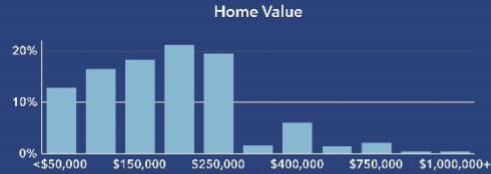
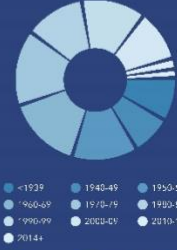
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



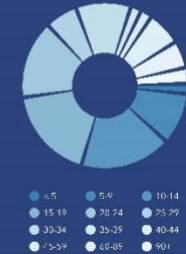
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT WE KNOW  
Sources: Esri, ACI  
Est. forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Randolph County, AL

21,756 -0.43% 2.41 42.2 43.4 \$48,449 \$129,610 \$107,130 20.6% 58% 4,655  
Population Total Population Growth Average HH Size Diversity Index Median Age Median HH Income Median Home Value Median Net Worth Age <18 Age 18-64 Age 65+



12.0%  
Services

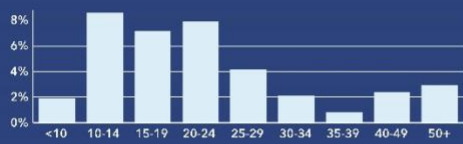


44.4%  
Blue Collar

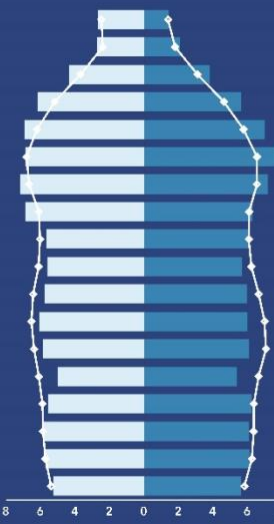


43.6%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



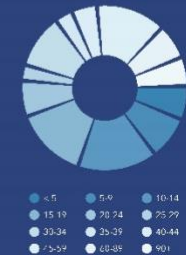
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT WE KNOW  
Sources: Esri, ACI  
Est. forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

Dots show comparison to Alabama



# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Talladega County, AL

81,857   -0.16%   2.37   53.0   41.9   \$54,540   \$137,192   \$103,467   20.3%   60%   15,852  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



14.1%  
Services

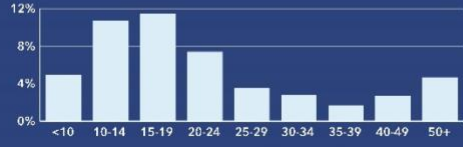


36.4%  
Blue Collar

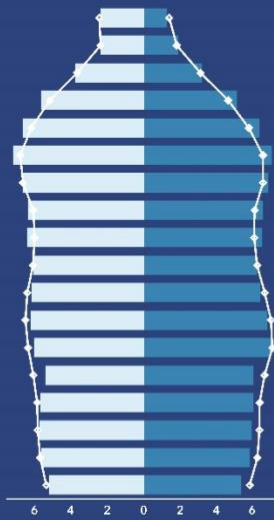


49.5%  
White Collar

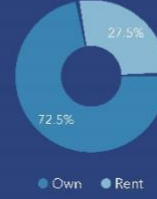
Mortgage as Percent of Salary



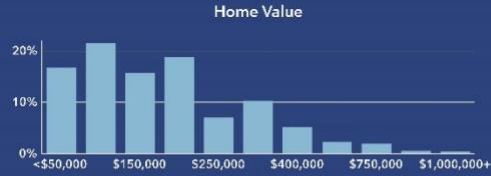
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



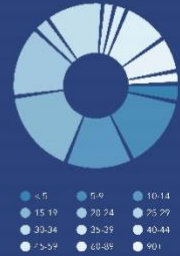
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE  
 Sources: Esri, AEC  
 Esri, forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

# COMMUNITY PROFILE

Geography: County  
Tallapoosa County, AL

41,154   -0.17%   2.33   49.2   45.8   \$53,492   \$148,523   \$123,344   18.9%   58%   9,567  
 Population Total   Population Growth   Average HH Size   Diversity Index   Median Age   Median HH Income   Median Home Value   Median Net Worth   Age <18   Age 18-64   Age 65+



13.1%  
Services

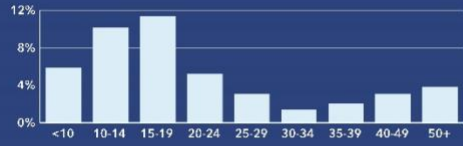


38.8%  
Blue Collar



48.1%  
White Collar

Mortgage as Percent of Salary



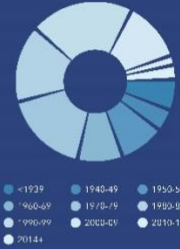
Age Profile: 5 Year Increments



Home Ownership



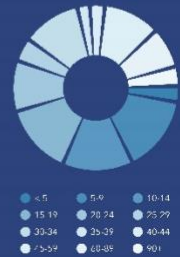
Housing: Year Built



Educational Attainment



Commute Time: Minutes



esri THE SCIENCE OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE  
 Sources: Esri, AEC  
 Esri, forecasts for 2022, 2014, 2020, 2027

# COMMUTE PROFILE

Calhoun County, AL  
 Geography: County

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



47,349

ACS Workers Age 16+



84.6%

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



0.6%

Took Public Transportation



10.4%

Carpooled



1.2%

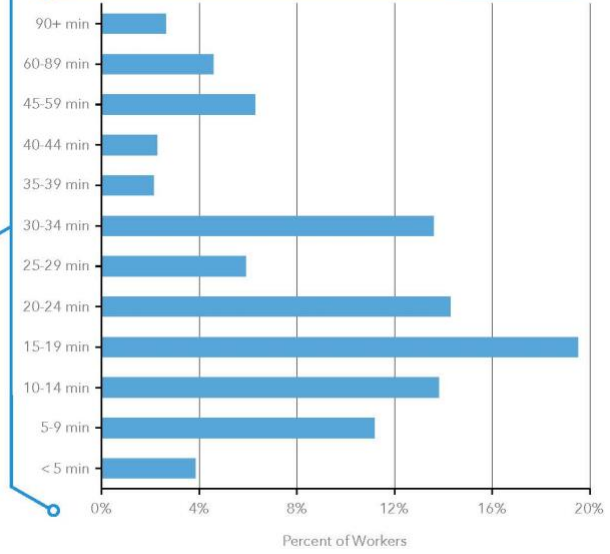
Walked to Work



0.0%

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

**Chambers County, AL**  
**Geography: County**

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



**14,187**

ACS Workers Age 16+



**87.4%**

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



**0.2%**

Took Public Transportation



**9.1%**

Carpooled



**0.8%**

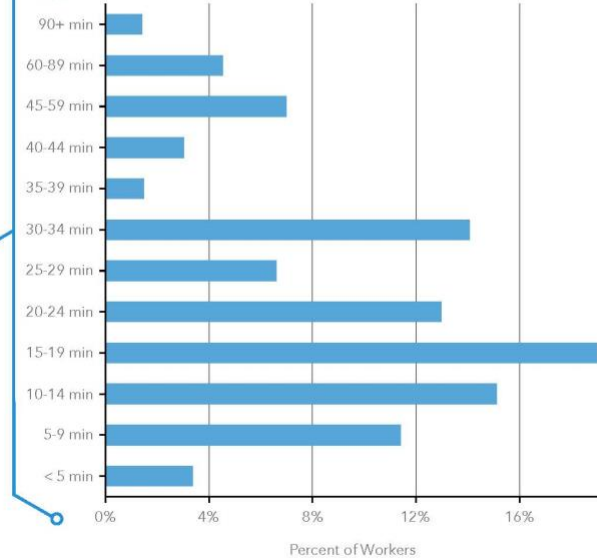
Walked to Work



**0.0%**

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

**Cherokee County, AL**  
**Geography: County**

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



**10,206**

ACS Workers Age 16+



**86.0%**

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



**0.2%**

Took Public Transportation



**9.8%**

Carpooled



**0.6%**

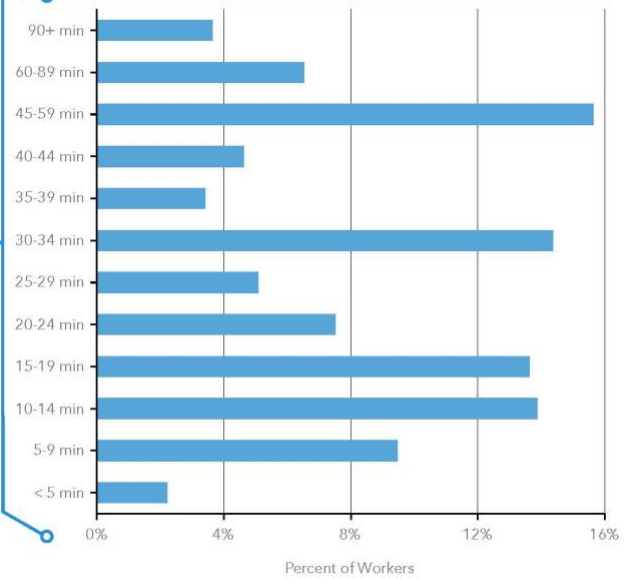
Walked to Work



**0.0%**

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

Clay County, AL  
 Geography: County

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



5,285

ACS Workers Age 16+



89.4%

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



0.0%

Took Public Transportation



4.7%

Carpooled



0.7%

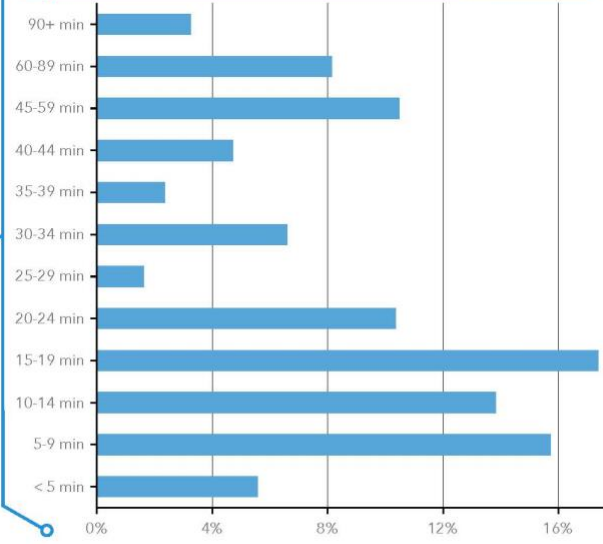
Walked to Work



0.0%

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



Percent of Workers

This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

Cleburne County, AL  
 Geography: County

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



5,697

ACS Workers Age 16+



86.2%

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



0.0%

Took Public Transportation



9.8%

Carpooled



0.7%

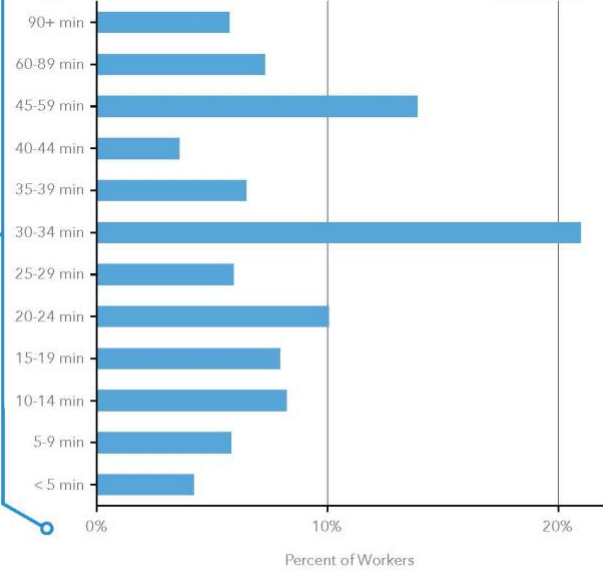
Walked to Work



0.0%

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

**Coosa County, AL**  
**Geography: County**

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



**4,077**

ACS Workers Age 16+



**79.4%**

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



**0.0%**

Took Public Transportation



**12.3%**

Carpooled



**1.6%**

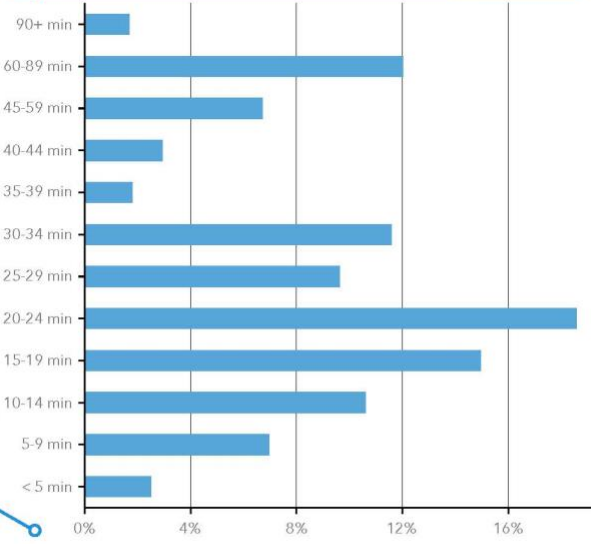
Walked to Work



**0.0%**

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



Percent of Workers

This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

**Etowah County, AL**  
**Geography: County**

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



**42,147**

ACS Workers Age 16+



**88.0%**

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



**0.1%**

Took Public Transportation



**7.6%**

Carpooled



**0.8%**

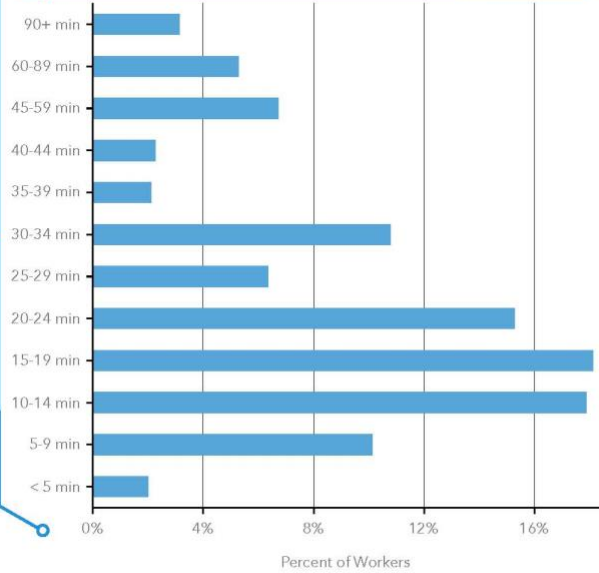
Walked to Work



**0.0%**

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

**Randolph County, AL**  
**Geography: County**

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



**8,698**

ACS Workers Age 16+



**87.1%**

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



**1.4%**

Took Public Transportation



**7.2%**

Carpooled



**0.4%**

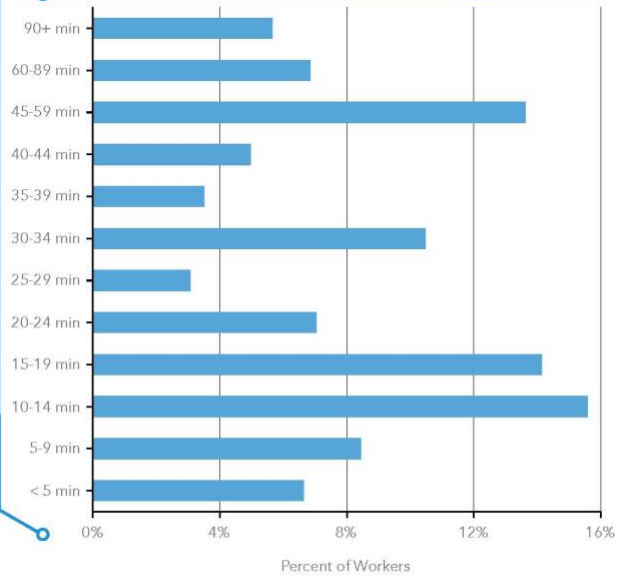
Walked to Work



**0.0%**

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

Talladega County, AL  
 Geography: County

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



31,257

ACS Workers Age 16+



84.0%

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



0.2%

Took Public Transportation



10.3%

Carpooled



1.1%

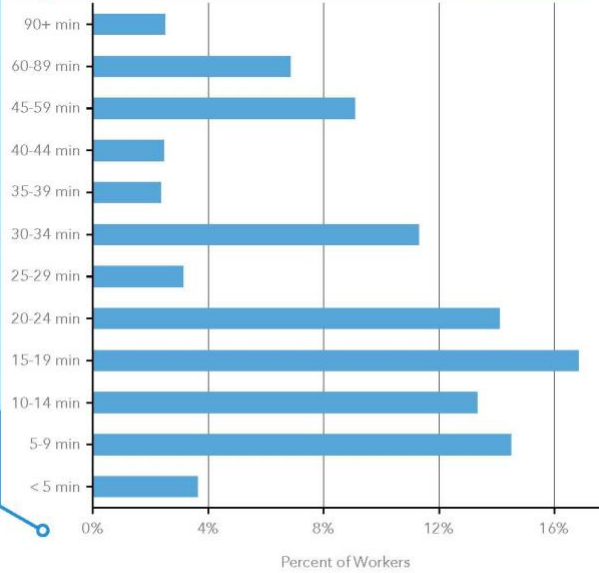
Walked to Work



0.1%

Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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# COMMUTE PROFILE

Tallapoosa County, AL  
 Geography: County

This infographic provides information about how population age 16+ travels to work. This data comes from the American Community Survey (ACS) from the US Census Bureau. Read an in-depth analysis on the [ACS documentation page](#).

## WORKERS



15,269

ACS Workers Age 16+



84.5%

Drove Alone to Work

## TRANSPORTATION TO WORK



0.3%

Took Public Transportation



10.7%

Carpooled



0.9%

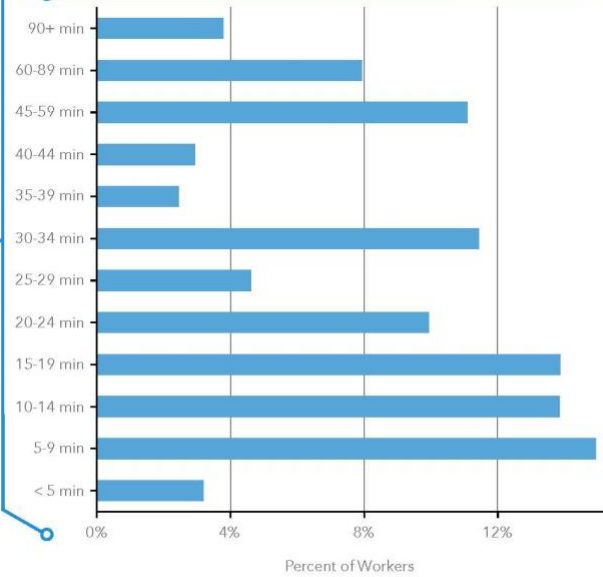
Walked to Work



0.0%

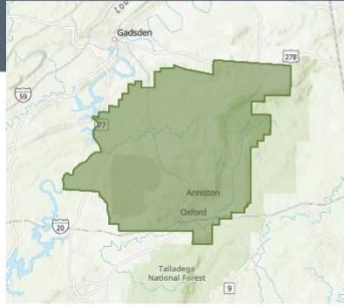
Bike to Work

## TRAVEL TIME TO WORK



This infographic contains data provided by American Community Survey (ACS). The vintage of the data is 2016-2020.

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Calhoun County, AL



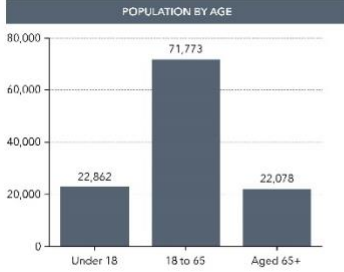
Geography: County

**115,233** Population  
**46,031** Households  
**2.38** Avg Size Household  
**39.9** Median Age  
**\$52,358** Median Household Income  
**\$142,133** Median Home Value  
**57** Wealth Index  
**181** Housing Affordability  
**52** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**16,413** Households With Disability  
**22,078** Population 65+  
**2,270** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	17,275	66,550	19,703	103,528
Spanish	759	1,956	245	2,960
Spanish & English Well	688	1,578	154	2,370
Spanish & English Not Well	71	319	46	436
Spanish & No English	0	109	45	154
Indo-European	35	311	155	501
Indo-European & English Well	35	307	155	497
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	4	0	4
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	38	434	142	614
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	38	311	105	454
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	123	0	123
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	37	37
Other Language	0	59	0	59
Other Language & English Well	0	59	0	59
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**16%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**7,351** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**45** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**115,953** Daytime Population  
**3,802** Total Businesses  
**45,987** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AACS, US Census Bureau, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Chambers County, AL



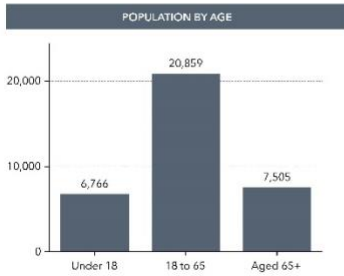
Geography: County

**34,619** Population  
**14,215** Households  
**2.37** Avg Size Household  
**43.7** Median Age  
**\$50,870** Median Household Income  
**\$126,417** Median Home Value  
**46** Wealth Index  
**199** Housing Affordability  
**59** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**4,865** Households With Disability  
**7,505** Population 65+  
**1,000** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	4,872	19,244	6,452	30,568
Spanish	80	333	3	416
Spanish & English Well	80	258	3	341
Spanish & English Not Well	0	75	0	75
Spanish & No English	0	0	0	0
Indo-European	0	147	37	184
Indo-European & English Well	0	147	10	157
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	21	21
Indo-European & No English	0	0	6	6
Asian-Pacific Island	0	227	38	265
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	218	38	256
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	9	0	9
Other Language	10	0	0	10
Other Language & English Well	10	0	0	10
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

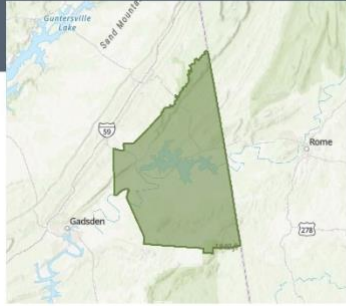
**16%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**2,212** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**29,013** Daytime Population  
**976** Total Businesses  
**8,957** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AACS, US Census Bureau, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Cherokee County, AL



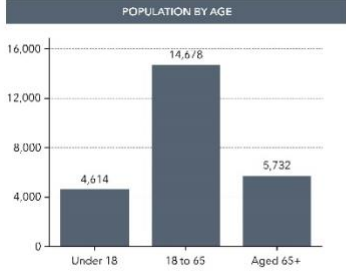
Geography: County

**24,634** Population  
**10,303** Households  
**2.36** Avg Size Household  
**46.7** Median Age  
**\$49,390** Median Household Income  
**\$144,919** Median Home Value  
**57** Wealth Index  
**169** Housing Affordability  
**20** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**3,295** Households With Disability  
**5,732** Population 65+  
**343** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	3,748	14,567	5,911	24,226
Spanish	101	407	29	537
Spanish & English Well	75	170	29	274
Spanish & English Not Well	26	163	0	189
Spanish & No English	0	74	0	74
Indo-European	0	42	13	55
Indo-European & English Well	0	42	1	43
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	12	12
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	35	16	51
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	35	16	51
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	26	12	0	38
Other Language & English Well	26	12	0	38
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

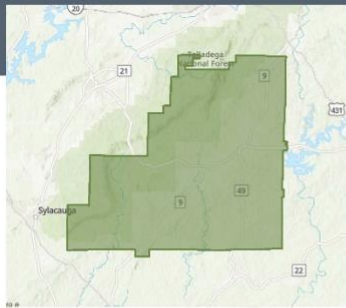
**16%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**1,688** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**20,833** Daytime Population  
**698** Total Businesses  
**5,167** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AACS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Clay County, AL



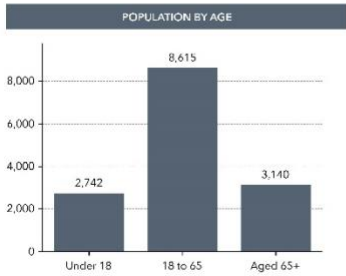
Geography: County

**14,295** Population  
**5,972** Households  
**2.35** Avg Size Household  
**44.8** Median Age  
**\$44,986** Median Household Income  
**\$129,000** Median Home Value  
**54** Wealth Index  
**177** Housing Affordability  
**39** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**1,953** Households With Disability  
**3,140** Population 65+  
**287** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	1,959	7,619	2,694	12,272
Spanish	54	222	12	288
Spanish & English Well	54	213	12	279
Spanish & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Spanish & No English	0	9	0	9
Indo-European	0	3	0	3
Indo-European & English Well	0	3	0	3
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**18%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**942** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**12,971** Daytime Population  
**313** Total Businesses  
**4,521** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AACS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Cleburne County, AL



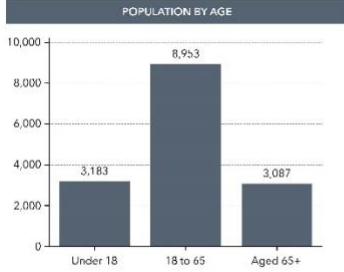
Geography: County

**15,013** Population  
**6,058** Households  
**2.45** Avg Size Household  
**42.8** Median Age  
**\$48,426** Median Household Income  
**\$136,660** Median Home Value  
**50** Wealth Index  
**177** Housing Affordability  
**19** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**2,280** Households With Disability  
**3,087** Population 65+  
**354** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	2,405	8,284	3,057	13,746
Spanish	77	187	14	278
Spanish & English Well	7	112	14	197
Spanish & English Not Well	0	68	0	68
Spanish & No English	6	7	0	13
Indo-European	0	37	3	40
Indo-European & English Well	0	37	3	40
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**18%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**1,061** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**11,886** Daytime Population  
**345** Total Businesses  
**2,709** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AACS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Coosa County, AL



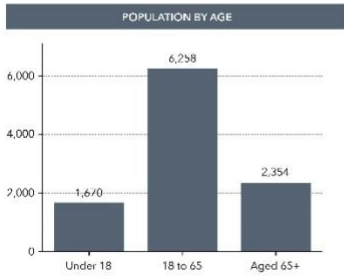
Geography: County

**10,106** Population  
**4,357** Households  
**2.25** Avg Size Household  
**47.5** Median Age  
**\$45,722** Median Household Income  
**\$106,429** Median Home Value  
**56** Wealth Index  
**217** Housing Affordability  
**51** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**1,602** Households With Disability  
**2,354** Population 65+  
**90** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	1,299	6,312	2,490	10,101
Spanish	0	71	7	78
Spanish & English Well	0	31	7	38
Spanish & English Not Well	0	40	0	40
Spanish & No English	0	0	0	0
Indo-European	0	9	0	9
Indo-European & English Well	0	9	0	9
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	44	0	44
Other Language & English Well	0	44	0	44
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**13%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**518** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**7,501** Daytime Population  
**204** Total Businesses  
**1,689** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AACS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Etowah County, AL



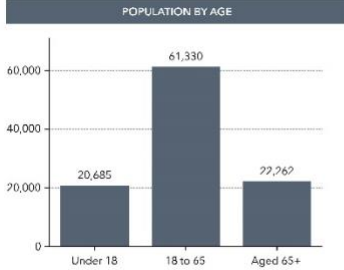
Geography: County

**102,879** Population  
**41,800** Households  
**2.42** Avg Size Household  
**43.5** Median Age  
**\$45,103** Median Household Income  
**\$155,433** Median Home Value  
**56** Wealth Index  
**143** Housing Affordability  
**46** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**12,705** Households With Disability  
**22,262** Population 65+  
**2,234** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	15,090	58,222	19,157	92,469
Spanish	762	1,959	168	2,889
Spanish & English Well	753	1,343	134	2,230
Spanish & English Not Well	9	410	26	445
Spanish & No English	0	206	8	214
Indo-European	96	367	142	605
Indo-European & English Well	35	241	142	418
Indo-European & English Not Well	61	68	0	129
Indo-European & No English	0	58	0	58
Asian-Pacific Island	35	338	71	444
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	35	257	71	363
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	62	0	62
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	19	0	19
Other Language	141	191	0	332
Other Language & English Well	141	181	0	322
Other Language & English Not Well	0	10	0	10
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**16%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**6,333** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**8** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**99,752** Daytime Population  
**3,464** Total Businesses  
**39,893** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/ArcGIS Online, U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.



## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Randolph County, AL



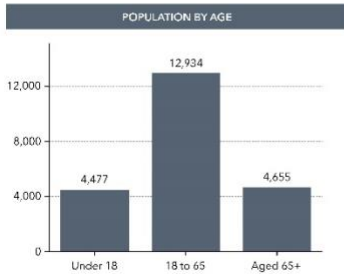
Geography: County

**21,756** Population  
**8,873** Households  
**2.41** Avg Size Household  
**43.4** Median Age  
**\$48,449** Median Household Income  
**\$129,610** Median Home Value  
**55** Wealth Index  
**188** Housing Affordability  
**42** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**2,839** Households With Disability  
**4,655** Population 65+  
**406** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	3,303	12,890	4,645	20,838
Spanish	159	219	34	412
Spanish & English Well	159	191	34	384
Spanish & English Not Well	0	28	0	28
Spanish & No English	0	0	0	0
Indo-European	38	117	13	168
Indo-European & English Well	38	107	3	148
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	10	10	20
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	0	0	0
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**20%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**1,765** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**19,304** Daytime Population  
**694** Total Businesses  
**5,641** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/ArcGIS Online, U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020.



## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Talladega County, AL



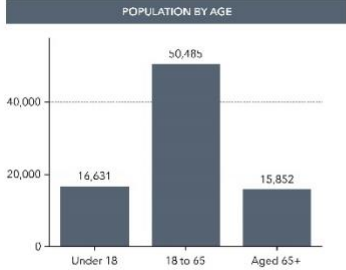
Geography: County

**81,857** Population  
**33,142** Households  
**2.37** Avg Size Household  
**41.9** Median Age  
**\$54,540** Median Household Income  
**\$137,192** Median Home Value  
**55** Wealth Index  
**197** Housing Affordability  
**53** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**12,156** Households With Disability  
**15,852** Population 65+  
**2,418** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	12,152	47,060	14,113	73,325
Spanish	424	1,259	24	1,707
Spanish & English Well	403	1,024	24	1,451
Spanish & English Not Well	21	187	0	208
Spanish & No English	0	48	0	48
Indo-European	126	365	47	538
Indo-European & English Well	126	304	38	468
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	61	9	70
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	0	134	26	160
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	0	79	18	97
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	55	8	63
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	130	95	225
Other Language & English Well	0	120	95	215
Other Language & English Not Well	0	10	0	10
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

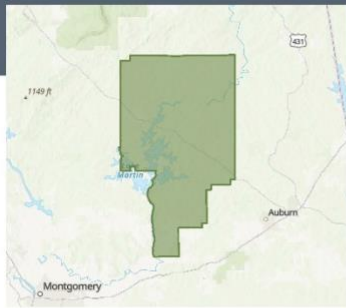
**18%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**5,869** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**79,967** Daytime Population  
**2,348** Total Businesses  
**30,392** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AECOS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020

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## AT RISK POPULATION PROFILE

### Tallapoosa County, AL



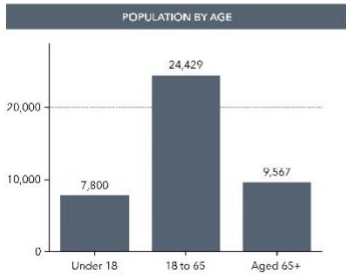
Geography: County

**41,154** Population  
**17,385** Households  
**2.33** Avg Size Household  
**45.8** Median Age  
**\$53,492** Median Household Income  
**\$148,523** Median Home Value  
**66** Wealth Index  
**180** Housing Affordability  
**49** Diversity Index

**AT RISK POPULATION**

**6,273** Households With Disability  
**9,567** Population 65+  
**1,296** Households Without Vehicle

Language Spoken (ACS)	Age 5-17	18-64	Age 65+	Total
English Only	5,834	22,814	8,555	37,203
Spanish	340	491	6	837
Spanish & English Well	300	360	6	666
Spanish & English Not Well	40	90	0	130
Spanish & No English	0	41	0	41
Indo-European	0	63	88	151
Indo-European & English Well	0	54	88	142
Indo-European & English Not Well	0	9	0	9
Indo-European & No English	0	0	0	0
Asian-Pacific Island	12	38	1	51
Asian Pacific Isl & English Well	12	32	1	45
Asian-Pacific Isl & English Not Well	0	6	0	6
Asian-Pacific Isl & No English	0	0	0	0
Other Language	0	12	0	12
Other Language & English Well	0	12	0	12
Other Language & English Not Well	0	0	0	0
Other Language & No English	0	0	0	0



**POVERTY AND LANGUAGE**

**16%** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**2,685** Households Below the Poverty Level  
**0** Pop 65+ Speak Spanish & No English

**POPULATION AND BUSINESSES**

**39,716** Daytime Population  
**1,459** Total Businesses  
**13,922** Total Employees

Sources: Esri/AECOS, US Census Bureau, 2012-2017, 2019, 2020

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## **Appendix C: Support Resolutions**

**RESOLUTION 22-R-29**

**A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022 (CEDS)**

**MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SUPPORT**

WHEREAS; the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

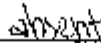
WHEREAS; the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (LDD) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment,

WHEREAS; the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance,

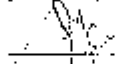
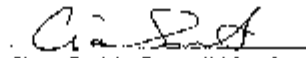
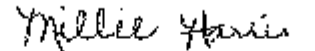
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Anniston, Alabama, hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

**PASSED and ADOPTED** this the 7<sup>th</sup> day of **June, 2022**.


CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
ANNISTON, ALABAMA



Jack Draper, Mayor

  
Jay Jenkins, Council Member  
Demetric Roberts, Council Member  
Ciara Smith, Council Member  
Millie Harris, Council Member

ATTEST:

  
Skylar Bass, City Clerk



RESOLUTION No. R-2138-22

A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION'S  
2022 COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

**WHEREAS**, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) serves a ten county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit, and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The EARPDC serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO); and

**WHEREAS**, the EARPDC represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the local development district's community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The CEDS document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks, and other milestones to positively impact economic development within the region in support of EDA grant investments; and

**WHEREAS**, the EARPDC will be working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach in the development of the 2022 CEDS document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs, economic policies, and address economic potential and prosperity.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF JACKSONVILLE, ALABAMA THAT:** The City Council of the City of Jacksonville, Alabama hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages regional participation for the identification of job creating and business development investments.


PASSED AND ADOPTED this 11<sup>th</sup> day of July, 2022.

  
Approved by Mayor Johnny L. Smith



  
Brenda Long, City Clerk

  
Council President Tony K. Taylor

  
Council Member Coty Galloway

  
Council Member Andrew Green

  
Council Member Terry Wilson

Absent  
Council Member Sherry Laster

RESOLUTION NO. 22-05-24  
EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022 (CEDS)

MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SUPPORT

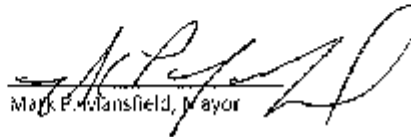
WHEREAS; the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

WHEREAS; the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (LDD) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. the document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment;

WHEREAS; the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance;

THEREFORE; the City of Centre hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

HEREBY resolved on May 24, 2022.

  
Mark P. Evansfield, Mayor

Attest:  
  
Sherrie Chandler, City Clerk

**RESOLUTION  
EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022 (CEDs)**

**MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SUPPORT**

**WHEREAS;** the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

**WHEREAS;** the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (EDA) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDs. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment.

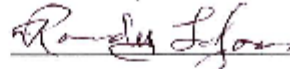
**WHEREAS;** the agency working with its CEDs Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE CHEROKEE COUNTY COMMISSION** endorses the CEDs process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

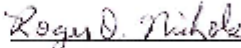
**IN WITNESS WHEREOF,** the Cherokee County Commission has caused this Resolution to be executed in its name on this the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of May, 2022.



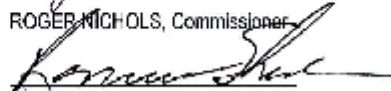
TIM BURGESS, Chairman



RANDY JONES, Commissioner



ROGER NICHOLS, Commissioner



RONNIE SHAW, Commissioner



CARLTON TEAGUE, Commissioner

  
ATTEST

2022/305

RESOLUTION NO. R-235-22

**Endorsing the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission  
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2022 (CEDS)**

WHEREAS, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO); and

WHEREAS, the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (LDD) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment; and

WHEREAS, the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Gadsden, Alabama, hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

I hereby certify that the above and foregoing was duly adopted by the City Council of Gadsden, Alabama, at a meeting held on August 16, 2022.

  
Iva Nelson, City Clerk

Rick Nash, Mayor  
Teresa Hutchens, Clerk

**TOWN OF ALTOONA**  
**ALTOONA ALA**

P.O. BOX 279 Altoona, Alabama 35952  
PH: 205.589.2311 FX: 205.589.6006  
altoonaclerk@yahoo.com

**COUNCILMEN:**  
Matt Anderson  
Sylvester Catling  
Lisa Dover  
Dan Hopper  
Angie Lambert

RESOLUTION - 22-0607

**EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**  
**COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022 (CEDS)**

**MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SUPPORT**

WHEREAS; the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO),

WHEREAS; the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (EDA) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment,

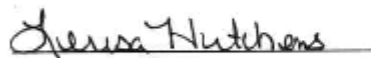
WHEREAS; the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance,

THEREFORE: the Town of Altoona hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

HEREBY resolved on June 7, 2022



Richard Nash, Mayor



Teresa Hutchens, Clerk



"A Town Born From Coal With A Heart Of Gold"

RESOLUTION NO. 22-07

EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022 (CEDS)

MUNICIPAL AND COUNTY SUPPORT

**WHEREAS**, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission serves a ten-county region providing services for planning, senior services, urban and rural transit and support in the pursuance of grants for its member governments. The agency serves as a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO),

**WHEREAS**, the agency represents the region for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as the Local Development District's (LDD) community facilitator and author of the region's CEDS. The document serves as a guide to identify goals, tasks and other milestone approaches to positively impact economic development in the region in support of EDA grant investment,

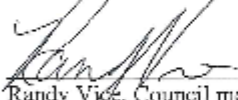
**WHEREAS**, the agency working with its CEDS Advisory Committee to encourage community engagement and outreach, develops the document and subsequent updates to ensure the region's needs and economic policies address economic potential and prosperity pursuance,

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT**, the City of Rainbow City, Alabama hereby endorses the CEDS process and encourages vast regional participation and the identification of job creating and business development investments.

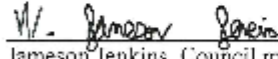
**APPROVED AND ADOPTED** this the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of May, 2022.

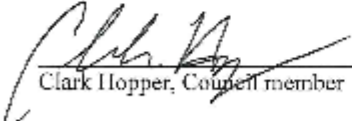
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joe Taylor, Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anita Bedwell, Council member

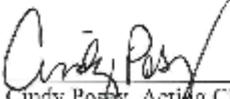
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Randy Vice, Council member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Brince, Council member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jameson Jenkins, Council member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clark Hopper, Council member

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cindy Posy, Acting Clerk



## **2023 Update**

### **Community Engagement**

In assessing the progress and relevance of the community engagement goals, there is a range of actions among stakeholders in the East Alabama Regional Planning Commission - EDD. Goal 1, focused on communication avenues, has elicited varied responses, with some organizations maintaining websites, conducting public meetings, and participating in regionalism studies with a regional push towards unifying these assets and providing an aligned message for East Alabama. There is an increased opportunity to focus on goals 1 and 2 for a more cohesive plan. Comprehensive plans are currently being developed or have been recently updated in Anniston, Gadsden, Lanett, Roanoke, Talladega, Weaver, and Altoona. These plans help engage the community and set forth priorities and objectives that align with the goal of broad-based community engagement with economic development objectives and efforts to meet them. Goal 2, centered on promoting regionalism, is undergoing significant progress, notably with JSU and Alabama Power conducting a targeted regional economic development organization feasibility and strategy study. Goal 3, targeting specialized populations, acknowledges barriers such as diversity of needs and the region's rural nature, with strategies in place to identify and partner with entities meeting those needs. Goal 4, aiming to expand representation, involves efforts to train individuals and local governments as champions of community engagement. Goals 5 and 6, focused on sustainable funding and technology access, respectively, are met with various initiatives, including providing incentives for residents in rural areas and seeking funds for technology infrastructure. Overall, there is a mix of opinions on the relevance and progress of these goals, with funding availability playing a pivotal role and some organizations actively working towards these objectives while others consider alternative approaches. Various collaborative efforts with external entities like EARPDC, Jacksonville State University, and Alabama Power are underway.

## **Economic Competitiveness**

The feedback on the Economic Competitiveness goals reveals a varied landscape of progress and relevance across different regions. JSU's Center for Manufacturing Support emerges as a significant contributor to Goal 2, increasing the number of people prepared for high-wage, high-growth jobs. Additionally, Gadsden State Community's Advanced Manufacturing Center is nearing completion, which will further enhance goal two and efforts to build a robust workforce. This dual institution additive approach is proving to be a substantial asset for our region. Anniston and Chambers County report achievements and sustained focus on several goals. Clay County BOE showcases progress in Goal 3, opening a Career Tech facility and hosting a workforce summit. The Gadsden- Etowah IDA has opened its Venue2 coworking space to support nascent, entrepreneurial, and other businesses that require flexible office space. The City of Jacksonville demonstrates strides in Goal 4 with active bodies promoting and retaining businesses and industries. However, Goal 6, focusing on physical infrastructure development, appears to have seen limited advancements in some areas. One substantial improvement in physical infrastructure has been the addition of a 100-acre pad, plans for a large water tank, water, and sewer service, and enhanced electrical infrastructure at Etowah County's Northeast Alabama Regional Mega site. The feedback emphasizes the importance of ongoing efforts, collaboration with consulting firms, and support for entrepreneurs to foster economic development. Areas like Randolph County acknowledge slow progress and are implementing programs addressing workforce development and affordable housing. Gadsden has entered the alternative energy field by recruiting a modular nuclear reactor manufacturing firm that will bring extensive investment and jobs, but crucially opening the region to the alternative energy industry. An additional role that Anniston is playing in Economic Competitiveness has been the addition of a formal incentive review process that requires an economic impact analysis of projects seeking tax abatements or other incentives. While there are areas of success, the feedback underscores the diverse challenges and opportunities within the Economic Competitiveness goals, suggesting a need for targeted strategies and continued collaborative efforts for sustained growth.



## **Transportation**

Regarding transportation within the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), various county stakeholders note that the established goals, objectives, and strategies remain pertinent. Goal 1, which advocates for public and private partnerships for funding transportation and transit, has garnered attention for its continued relevance. JSU CEDBR's involvement in assessing the economic impact of a proposed public transit route expansion into Jacksonville underscores the ongoing importance of such initiatives beyond traditional road and bridge repairs. The feedback stresses the need to enhance pedestrian and bicycle-friendly aspects of transit infrastructure. Jacksonville has committed funds to purchase a bus in their budget to move forward the goal of enhanced public transit services in the region. In Anniston and Calhoun County, there is an affirmation of the continued critical role of MPO and RPO in these goals. Anniston has initiated a major project to build transportation infrastructure by completing the Chief Ladiga Trail into Anniston from Weaver. This effort is focused both on an outdoor recreation objective of connecting through the Silver Comet Trail to Atlanta but also on increasing equity and access to workforce transportation for those in more urbanized parts of the area. Anniston has also adopted a complete streets policy to advance this goal of equity and accessibility in transportation infrastructure investment. Chambers County acknowledges challenges in addressing these objectives, while rural Clay County needs more progress. For Jacksonville, Goal 1 sees advancements through inclusion in a Transit Services Study, exploring the feasibility of expanding transit programs. Goal 3 witnesses ongoing efforts with a consultant designing a multi-use trail extension, demonstrating a commitment to promoting Complete Streets Concepts. Gadsden has improved their Black Creek Trail system and is applying for additional funding to enhance and expand trails, focusing on connectivity between existing trails in the city. Gadsden also reports significant progress on updating the Northeast Alabama Regional Airport through a new airport layout funded through grant dollars. The collaborative approach and ongoing projects across these counties underscore the collective commitment to addressing the transportation goals outlined in the CEDS.

## **Education**

In the Education section of the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the goals and objectives remain relevant, as indicated by the feedback from the CEDS committee and participating counties. Goal 1, focused on increasing educational attainment from early education onward, aligns with ongoing efforts to collaborate with East Alabama Works, JSU's Center for Manufacturing Support, and regional economic developers. Anniston has partnered with local entities and nonprofits to address Goal 1, showcasing the collaborative nature of these educational initiatives. Chambers County underscores the ongoing relevance of these goals, actively working with local and state partners to tackle the outlined objectives. In Clay County, the Economic Development Council has hosted regional workforce summits through East Alabama Works! The BOE has opened a career tech facility, aligning with Goal 4. Jacksonville supports the local Board of Education and collaborates with Jacksonville State University, emphasizing Goal 4's significance. While progress may vary across objectives, the consistent affirmation of the relevance of these educational goals and the active collaboration between local entities and educational institutions underscores a collective commitment to advancing education and workforce development in the East Alabama region.

## **Housing**

In the Housing section of the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the established goals and objectives remain relevant, as evidenced by feedback from stakeholders in various counties. Goal 1, emphasizing the provision of safe, decent, and affordable housing for all residents, remains pertinent. Anniston and Calhoun County have actively worked on these objectives through the city's CDBG program, indicating a commitment to addressing housing affordability in the region. Chambers County acknowledges the relevance of these goals, even if they are not the primary focus of their work. In Clay County, the Economic Development Council has supported a 40-house development in Ashland, demonstrating efforts to provide affordable housing options. Jacksonville reports advancements in Goal 6, involving acquiring and donating land to Habitat for Humanity, contributing to housing availability in high-opportunity downtown neighborhoods. Randolph County is exploring housing opportunities, including leveraging rent-to-own options in Opportunity Zones. The City of Jacksonville notes ongoing progress, deeding properties to Habitat for Humanity, resulting in new affordable homes for families. Despite varying levels of advancement, the consistent acknowledgment of the relevance of these housing goals and the collaborative effort across counties underscores a collective commitment to addressing housing needs and discrimination in the East Alabama region.

## **Healthcare**

In the Healthcare section of the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the goals and objectives remain highly relevant, according to feedback from stakeholders in various counties. Goal 1, aspiring to make East Alabama the healthiest region in the state, aligns with ongoing efforts to encourage programs providing healthcare to the uninsured and promoting public education on self-management of health issues and healthy lifestyles. In Anniston, the opening of the Satcher Health Center is highlighted as a significant stride for underserved citizens, demonstrating progress in addressing healthcare accessibility. In Gadsden, a new regional cancer treatment center is under construction to provide important cancer services to residents across the region. Chambers County acknowledges the relevance of these goals, particularly in Goal 5, which they are actively working on. In Clay County, the Economic Development Council supports the local hospital in seeking new grant opportunities for critical needs, aligning with Goal 4. Jacksonville State University's involvement in non-biased research on the economic impact of Medicaid expansion emphasizes the importance of addressing monumental health needs, including mental health, in the state. The City of Jacksonville expresses ongoing support for programs assisting residents. Overall, the consistent affirmation of the relevance of these healthcare goals and the diverse efforts across counties underscores a collective commitment to improving healthcare access and outcomes in the East Alabama region.

# 2020 Census Summary

10 Counties  
Geography: County



The 2020 Census data includes information on population and housing as well as detailed data on age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, household and family type, relationship to householder, group quarters population, housing occupancy, and tenure.

## KEY FACTS

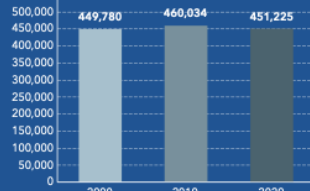
**464,726** Total Population    **224,113** Housing Units    **75.7** Population Density    **2.39** Average Household Size    **188,888** Total Households    **48.5** Diversity Index

### 2010-2020 ANNUAL GROWTH RATE

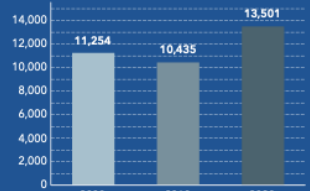


Source: This infographic contains data provided by U.S. Census (2000, 2010, 2020).

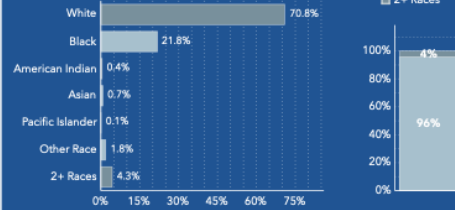
### HOUSEHOLD POPULATION



### GROUP QUARTERS



### TOTAL POPULATION BY RACE



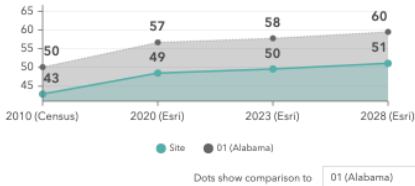
POPULATION BY AGE AND RACE	Less Than 18 Years	18 Years and Older
Total	96,534	368,192
1 Race	89,305	355,339
White	61,984	267,224
Black	23,101	78,203
American Indian/Alaska Native	451	1,542
Asian	599	2,756
Pacific Islander	72	151
Some Other Race	3,098	5,463
2 or More Races	7,229	12,853

## Community Change Snapshot

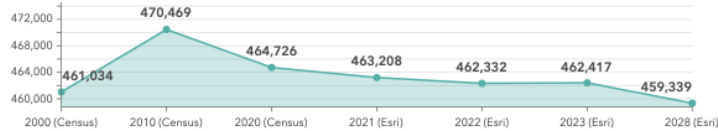
10 Counties  
Geography: County



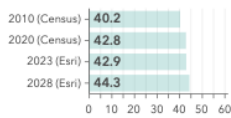
### Diversity Index



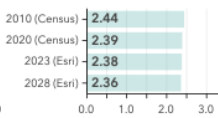
### Total Population



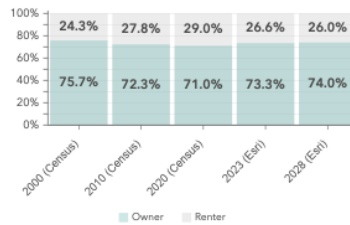
### Median Age



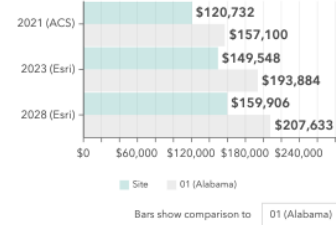
### Average Household Size



### Owner vs Renter Occupied Units

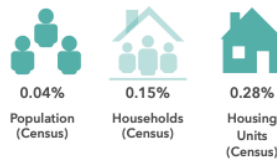


### Median Home Value

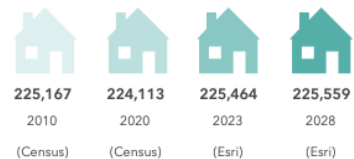


Source: This infographic contains data provided by U.S. Census (2000, 2010, 2020), Esri (2023, 2028), ACS (2017-2021). © 2023 Esri

### 2000-2020 Compound Annual Growth Rate



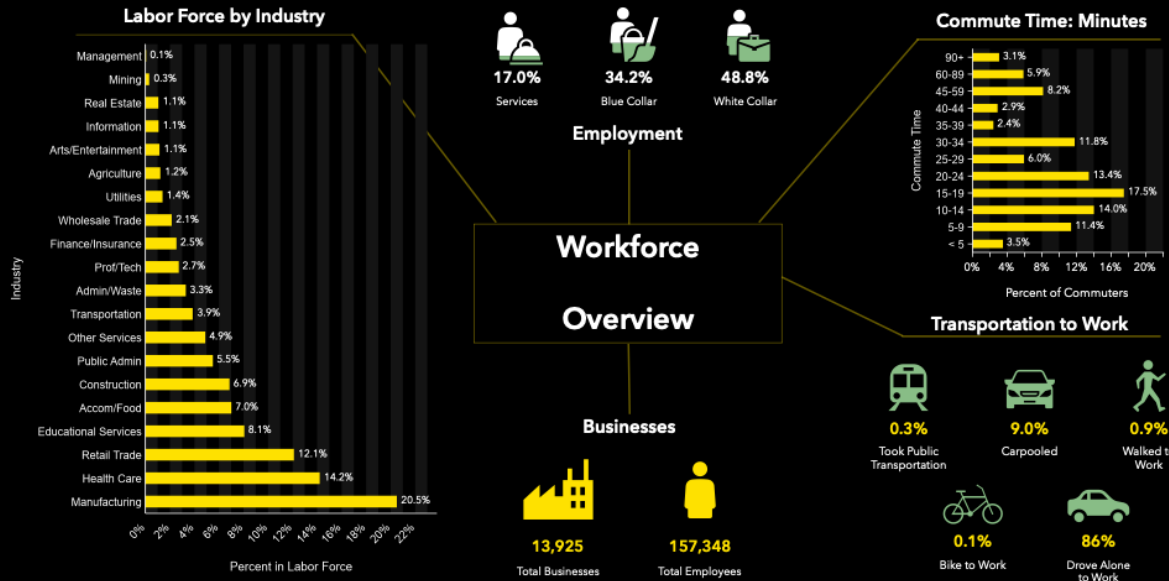
### Total Housing Units: Past, Present, Future



# Economic Development Profile

10 Counties

Geography: County



Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri (2023), Esri-Data Axle (2023), ACS (2017-2021), Esri-U.S. BLS (2023), AGS (2023).

# Emergency Information

10 Counties  
Geography: County

November 28, 2023

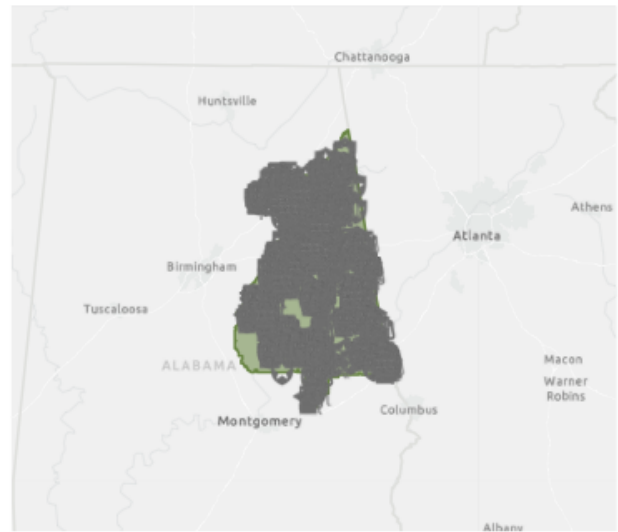
## Population



## At Risk



## Facilities



**Source:** This infographic contains data provided by Esri (2023), ACS (2017-2021), Esri-Data Axle (2023), Esri-MRI-Simmons (2023), Esri-U.S. BLS (2023), Foursquare POI data updated quarterly. Each category shows a max of 5,000 locations. © 2023 Esri

# Nonprofit Charitable Profile



10 Counties  
Geography: County

## Key Population Facts

<b>188,913</b> Total Households	<b>\$102,101</b> Median Net Worth	<b>\$47,922</b> Median Household Income	<b>42.9</b> Median Age	<b>\$39,446</b> Median Disposable Income
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## Estimated Consumer Charitable Spending

<b>\$6,727,160</b> Gifts of Stocks/ Bonds/Mutual Funds	<b>\$56,770,937</b> Cash Gifts to Charities	<b>\$92,777,078</b> Other Cash Gifts
<b>\$169,110,597</b> Cash Gifts to Churches/Religious Organizations	<b>\$10,523,893</b> Cash Gifts to Educational Institutions	<b>\$4,109,947</b> Cash Gifts to Political Organizations

## Key Volunteer Behaviors (Index)

<b>86</b> Served on Committee for Local Org	<b>92</b> Engaged in Fundraising	<b>90</b> Volunteered for a Charitable Org
<b>93</b> Participated in Public Activity	<b>94</b> Social Media: Follow Charitable Groups	<b>100</b> Attended Public Meeting on Town or School Affairs

## Estimated Market Potential for Charitable Giving (Index)

 <b>66</b> Arts or Cultural Organizations	 <b>77</b> Environmental Organizations	 <b>80</b> Health Organizations	 <b>71</b> Social Services Organizations
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Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri (2023, 2028), U.S. Census (2000, 2020), Esri-U.S. BLS (2023), Esri-MRI-Simmons (2023).