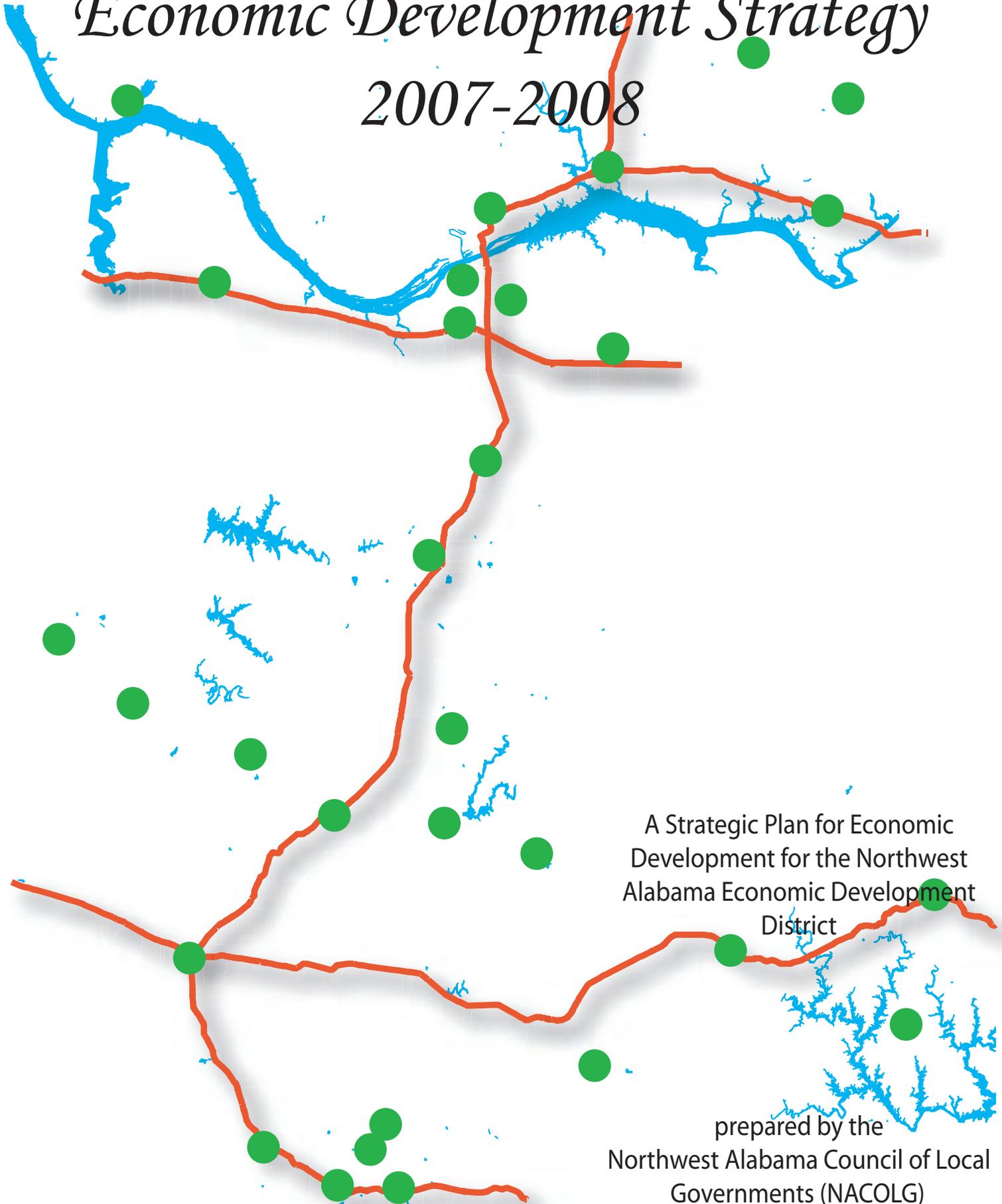


Northwest Alabama Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

2007-2008



Northwest Alabama Comprehensive
Economic Development Strategy, 2007-2008:
A Strategic Plan for Economic Development for the Northwest
Alabama Economic Development District

This report was prepared with assistance of planning grant funds from the Economic Development Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce by the staff of the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments.

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Section 1.0: Introduction: Purpose, Process
and Organization

1.0 Introduction: Purpose, Process and Organization

1.1. CEDS Purpose

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is the result of a regional economic planning process that brings together private and public interests for the purpose of creating a guide to economic development for the five-county region of Northwest Alabama. As its name implies, the CEDS is designed to be a regional comprehensive plan and, as such, it involves a variety of actors, agencies and initiatives in an attempt to encompass and define the range of economic development activities that are undertaken in Northwest Alabama. Through analysis of the region's unique characteristics, the preparation of a CEDS provides an opportunity to analyze the human and physical capital of the region and establish priorities for investment and funding leading to job creation and retention. The CEDS results from an on-going, diverse and inclusive planning process involving both private and public partners and an active public involvement component. This process allows the formation of policies representing the widest possible constituency and presenting the viewpoints of lay people and professionals as to the direction and character of economic growth in the region. This understanding of broader economic priorities allows for targeted investment into economic activities and generators with the broadest support and greatest likelihood of success.

In addition to the broad-based planning components of the CEDS, the document is required to qualify for federal investments under the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965. EDA investments are intended to promote and complement additional investments from private sources in areas suffering from economic dislocation due to changes in global competitiveness, acute historic economic hardship, or sudden and severe job loss. The document is prepared by a Planning Organization, which is responsible for appointing a strategy committee (in Northwest Alabama, the CEDS committee), submitting a compliant CEDS document (see 13 C.F.R. 303.7), updating or revising the CEDS, and reporting the CEDS to other entities. The Planning Organization charged with managing the CEDS process for Region I in Alabama is the Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments.

1.2 The Planning Organization, CEDS Committee, and CEDS Content

The Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments (NACOLG) represents the five counties and 35 municipalities of northwest Alabama. Founded in 1966, NACOLG houses numerous planning and governmental service functions, including Aging Services, Transit, Metropolitan and Rural Transportation Planning, and a full staff of grant-writers and community planners. Since 2002, the five-county NACOLG region has been an Economic Development District, the regional designation used by the Economic Development Administration to administer public works assistance, economic adjustment planning aid, and technical assistance. The NACOLG Board of Directors has also served as the Economic Development District Board.

Federal regulations require that the Board name a Strategy Committee (CEDS Committee) to oversee the development and review of the CEDS. This committee is composed of representatives of public and private organizations including major regional employers, governments, workforce development representatives, labor groups and minority groups. The broadly representative body must be constituted by a majority of private



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sector representatives chosen from the executive and managerial level employees of for-profit enterprises. Remaining members represent non-profit sectors, governments, and higher education.

2007-2008 CEDS Committee Members

**The Shoals- Colbert and Lauderdale
County**

Mayor Bobby Irons, City of Florence
Dr. Humphrey Lee, Northwest Shoals
Community College/Chamber of
Commerce of the Shoals
Gayle Littrell Rogersville Area Chamber of
Commerce
James Brown, Alabama Department of
Transportation
Forrest Wright, Shoals Economic
Development Authority
Carolyn Long, University of North Alabama
Small Business Development Center
James L. Farmer, International Brotherhood
of Electrical Workers
Wayman Pace, TVA
Bobby King, North American Lighting
Steve Pierce, Private Sector Representative
John Rusevlyan, Private Sector
Representative
Pam Doyle, Private Sector Representative
Steve Schecher, Private Sector
Representative
Phillip Forsythe, Private Sector
Representative

Franklin County

Mayor Jeff Reid, City of Red Bay
Jerry Groce, Franklin County Department of
Human Resources

Mitchell Mays, Franklin County Economic Development
Authority
Phyllis Thomas, Private Sector Representative
Mike Holway, Private Sector Representative
Lynn Causey, Private Sector Representative
Margaret Lovett, Private Sector Representative

Marion County

Mayor Ray Harper, City of Hamilton
Mayor Phil Segraves, City of Guin
David Graham, Marion County Community Development
Foundation
Susan Burrow, Beville State Community College
Steve Foshee, Tombigbee Electric Cooperative
Dr. Margeurite Kelley, Private Sector Representative
Delmo Payne, Private Sector Representative
Kristy Hunt, Private Sector Representative
Warren Williford, Private Sector Representative
Phil Fowler, Private Sector Representative
Jason Post, Private Sector Representative

Winston County

Mayor Larry Albright, City of Haleyville
Frank Tidwell, Alabama Power Company
Grady Batchelor, Winston County Industrial Development
Authority
Roger Hayes, Private Sector Representative
Ken Sunseri, Private Sector Representative
Shane Cook, Private Sector Representative
Jon Bennett, Private Sector Representative
Bo Knight, Private Sector Representative

Regulations also mandate a portion of the content of the CEDS. An acceptable document must include an overview of the economic geography and economic conditions of the region, to include: economy, population, geography, workforce development and use, transportation access, resources, environment and other pertinent data. The document provides an in-depth analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the economic development of the region and identifies the top most regional priorities for implementation.



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NACOLG and Economic Development District Board of Directors

Mayor Billy D. Hendrix, Chairman

Town of Anderson

Mayor John Berry, Vice Chairman

Town of Double Springs

Mayor Ed Crouch

Town of Hodges

Mayor Billy Don Anderson

City of Sheffield

Mayor Jerry Mays

Town of Phil Campbell

Judge Dewey Mitchell

Lauderdale County Commission

Mayor Harold Chandler

Town of Rogersville

Mayor Jerry McIntyre

Town of Waterloo

Mayor Sam Hudson

Town of St. Florian

Mr. Kenny Jackson

Marion County Commission

Mayor Brandon Webster

Town of Gu-Win

Mayor Drennon Veal

Town of Bear Creek

Mayor Douglas Guinin

Town of Hackleburg

Mayor Perry Franks

Town of Brilliant

Mayor Ray Harper

City of Hamilton

Mayor Phil Segraves

City of Guin

Mr. Jerry Mobley

Winston County Commission

Mayor Letus Atkinson

Town of Twin

Mayor Larry Albright

Town of Haleyville

Mayor William R. West

City of Winfield

Mayor Derreck Cagle

Town of Lynn

Mayor Ronald T. Wilson

Town of Addison

Mayor Pete Parrish

Town of Natural Bridge

Mr. James Bingham

Colbert County Commission

Hon. Barry Moore

Franklin County Commission

Mayor Tommy Nelson

City of Red Bay

Mayor Johnny Brown

City of Russellville

Mayor D.W. Franklin

Town of Vina

Mayor Bobby Irons

City of Florence

Mayor Jerry Mitchell

Town of Killen

Mayor Herman Jagers

Town of Lexington

Mayor William West

City of Winfield



NACOLG has invested additional commitment to the CEDS, embracing the document as a vital economic development and planning opportunity. As a Planning Organization with a number of additional functions, NACOLG encourages CEDS participation on the part of the public, private interests and individuals as a means of targeting project priorities for investment. Although inclusion in the CEDS is a requirement for certain federal funding opportunities with EDA, NACOLG strongly promotes the CEDS plan and planning process as an opportunity for coordinating additional efforts, such as Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations, Rural Action Commission, various workforce development initiatives, and other planning and implementation opportunities. The incorporation of wide regional projects (both short and long term) into one document and into a process of continuous review maintains awareness and increases leverage and opportunity for implementing these projects. The multi-jurisdictional nature of the CEDS includes in its planning process opportunities for implementation from a comprehensive variety of sources, including local, state and federal agencies and actors and representing private and public sources of investment and implementation resources.

1.3 The CEDS Planning Process: Planning for Partnership

In the framework of this plan, a broad understanding of the direction and long-term goals of economic development activities are considered necessary for effective strategies to develop into the functional building blocks of economic and community development. Under the endorsed planning framework for the Northwest Alabama CEDS, the successful implementation of one or several strategies accomplishes an objective; several related objectives realize a particular goal. From this perspective, the process of developing the CEDS takes on both short- and long-range significance as the centerpiece economic planning and as the central economic priority-setting mechanism for the activities of the region's economic development district. Whether resulting from private or public sources or located within a local, regional or statewide scale, the CEDS' comprehensive nature is designed to coordinate investment and implementation opportunities and direct these toward the implementation of the region's highest identified priorities to achieve sustainable economic growth. Foremost, the CEDS process was meant to be a private-public partnership with the goal of creating a viable short-, intermediate- and long-range economic development plan. To this end, the CEDS Committee met in June, July, and August 2007.

A second essential element of the CEDS review process involved public participation, discussion and feedback. To accomplish this, local level public meetings were held in June and July 2007 in the five counties of the NACOLG region. Finally, to foster the involvement of a variety of private and public interests, a partnership list was constructed and each of the organizations on that list was contacted to inform them of the meetings, encourage their attendance, and also to obtain any existing strategic plans. Where provided, these plans were reviewed for consistency and incorporation into the document with the CEDS planning process and the resulting policies.

1.3.1 Development Partners

Economic development in a region as diverse as Northwest Alabama is conducted by a variety of agencies, actors and individuals. Often, geography and agency focus create division between actors and agencies with similar, and in many cases the same, economic development goals. Individuals and efforts are



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sometimes fragmented and duplicative, which leads to inefficiency in communication and the allocation of resources. A community with a large number of economic developers is a blessing insofar as there is social and economic capital devoted to problem-solving but it can be problematic when attempting to assess various programs and coordinate planning and investment priorities. The CEDS planning process attempted to overcome this difficulty by engaging the economic development community throughout the development of the plan.

First, a list of economic partners was developed based on past agency interaction with others involved in economic development. Second, these partners were contacted to ensure that they were aware of the CEDS process, what the CEDS was, and that NACOLG encouraged their participation in the plan. Third, partners were asked to share existing strategic plans, and these were reviewed and incorporated where they were available. Additionally, development partners were contacted prior to each public meeting and encouraged to attend in order to add their feedback. In this fashion, the CEDS was coordinated with other agencies, with

2008-2007 CEDS Development Partners

Regional Partners

Northwest Alabama Rural Planning Organization
Municipal and county elected officials and boards, committees and commissions
Tennessee Valley Authority
The University of North Alabama
Northwest Shoals Community College
USDA Farm Service Agency
USDA Rural Economic and Community Development
USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
Alabama Power
Alabama Mountain Lakes Association
East Lauderdale News
Bevill State Community College
Shoals Entrepreneurial Center
UNA Small Business Development Center

(The Shoals) Colbert & Lauderdale County:

Shoals Economic Development Authority (SEDA)
Shoals Chamber of Commerce
Rogersville Area Chamber of Commerce
The Times Daily
The Courier Journal
Shoals Manufacturer's Association (SEDA)

Shoals Industry-Education Training Alliance (SEDA)
Lauderdale County Tourism Department
Colbert County Tourism and Convention Bureau
Florence Main Street, Inc.
Alabama Cooperative Extension System- Lauderdale County Office
Alabama Cooperative Extension System- Colbert County Office
Shoals Resource Conservation and Development Council
Sheffield Historical Commission
Sheffield Redevelopment Authority
Shoals Metropolitan Planning Organization

Franklin County

Franklin County Chamber of Commerce
Franklin County Free Press
Franklin County Economic Development Authority
Bear Creek Development Authority
Alabama Cooperative Extension System- Franklin County Office
Franklin County Historical Society



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Marion County

Marion County Journal Record
Bear Creek Development Authority
Alabama Cooperative Extension System- Marion
County Office
Winfield Main Street, Inc.
Guin Industrial Development Board
Community Development Foundation of Marion
County

Winston County

Industrial Development Authority of Winston
County
Bankhead National Forest, U.S. Forestry Service
The Northwest Alabamian
Haleyville Chamber of Commerce
Alabama Cooperative Extension System- Winston
County Office
Houston Historical Society

the goal being consistency in the planning process and broad involvement by other agencies and individuals concerned with economic and community development.

1.3.2 Plan Development

The process of developing the plan, which is interactive, exploratory, and informative, is the heart of any plan. The final document plays an important role, encapsulating the discoveries made along the way, but never fully encompasses the significance of planning in terms of capacity-building and networking. To facilitate this process, NACOLG engaged the development community at four distinct levels: the executive-level elected officials of the region, represented on the NACOLG/EDD Board; the CEDS Committee, made up of public- and private-sector representatives; development partners identified from the regional community; and the general public. Of these groups, the CEDS Committee, development partners, and the highest elected officials of the various local governments were specifically targeted to encourage the greatest input and feedback. The CEDS Committee reviewed and adopted the content of the document. The NACOLG/EDD Board was involved through participation in local level public meetings, particularly in the latter discussions related to specific strategies, and through endorsement of the final CEDS document. Throughout the process, the general public was kept informed through media coverage and Internet publications found at the NACOLG web site.

The development of the plan began in earnest in January 2007 when a strategy was adopted for producing an economic audit, reviewing existing development efforts (strategies from previous CEDS and the strategic plans of partners and multi-jurisdictional agencies), and garnering feedback. Data-gathering began for the conduct of the economic audit portion of the plan (See Section 3) as did the development of the CEDS Committee and partnership structures. Two phases of public meetings and discussions were agreed upon, with the first encompassing the visioning and goal-setting portion of the plan and the latter to provide an opportunity to review and comment upon specific project proposals to be included as strategies for implementing the plan. The meetings were divided between local-level public meetings meant to obtain input and review of the plan at the county level and meetings of the CEDS Committee, which was intended to represent the region as a whole and to incorporate local initiatives into a broader framework for economic development.

1.3.3 Planning Priorities: Vision, Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Although the CEDS is primarily a short-range (3-5 year) plan, tremendous foresight and long-range planning must be accomplished before effective strategies can be undertaken to improve economic conditions.



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Phase I of CEDS development involved visioning for economic development at the local and regional level throughout the five-county NACOLG region. A series of six meetings were conducted for the purpose of discussing assets and weaknesses, goals and objectives across the region. The CEDS Committee represented a region-wide perspective, while local level public meetings were held in Franklin, Marion and Winston Counties. Colbert and Lauderdale County were treated together due to a high degree of integration. An overview of the comprehensive visioning process and its outcomes is presented below.

Visioning Process

The format of each meeting was relatively similar, beginning with an overview of the CEDS process and its importance, followed by the question “What is the top economic issue facing Northwest Alabama?” This question led to a discussion of assets and weaknesses; following a short break, the results of the economic audit (Section 2.0) were presented. The meetings closed with a questionnaire addressing strengths and weaknesses at the county and regional level. Participants were asked to write an economic vision and a specific strategy for obtaining this vision. A summary of discussions is presented below (see Appendix A for meeting materials).

CEDS Committee Meeting, June 5, 2007:

Quick Poll Question: What is the Top Economic Issue facing Northwest Alabama? *an educated workforce, transportation, quality jobs and higher paying jobs, infrastructure, and jobs and industrial jobs.*

Discussion: The representatives of the various geographic areas (counties) of the region shared similar concerns but prioritized concerns differently- depending on local needs. The statement *higher paying jobs* was discussed and expressed as a statement that was often used as shorthand for *quality jobs*, with significant variance in the importance of pay, benefits, and job security to the overall *quality of jobs* calculus. The quality of jobs in the local economy was, universally, lower than desired. The skills encouraged as leading to high quality jobs were not encouraged strongly enough, nor were “high quality jobs” recruited to the area with sufficient frequency. Jobs, such as skilled craftsmen (carpenters, masons, etc.) were represented as “low quality” when their earnings potential was viewed as higher in many cases than other “high quality” jobs. The choice for many with highly valued skills (e.g. higher education) was to leave the area or be underemployed relative to qualifications- i.e. there weren’t enough jobs for people with these skills. There was concern over investing in the right mix of jobs, to provide life-cycle and socioeconomic opportunities. There was concern about whether a local community could control the type of workforce it encouraged (i.e. whether the ‘right type’ of job could be recruited and whether local investment and recruitment could create an environment favorable to certain types of employment). Many thought that an effort should be made to identify the market for skills and the market for labor and to ensure that skills and jobs were matched accordingly to produce “quality” jobs.

Winston County Local Public Meeting, June 7, 2007:

Quick Poll Question: *transportation, higher paying jobs, workforce availability and development, industrial and commercial development and recruitment, housing, community knowledge and involvement, infrastructure, education, land use planning, quality of life, fuel costs*

Discussion: Physical resources- Smith Lake and Bankhead National Forest- were noted as important assets



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that were potentially under utilized. Low economic expectations among the populace were a noted problem. Changing age demographics presented opportunities as well as challenges. Middle income and life-cycle opportunities were needed to retain population and improve economic condition. Investment uncertainty may have an adverse affect, preventing capital investment, which was potentially present but under utilized, from being freed to work in Winston County. Current leadership was seen as a strong community asset and the leadership was undergoing leadership training, which produced had a similar SWOT analysis. County-wide cooperation was high in Winston County and was another major asset. Sprawling city services combined with acute infrastructure needs presented significant challenges. Of the counties in the region, Winston County was probably the most isolated, historically and presently, in terms of access to transportation routes, although I-22 access presented a significant opportunity to amend this deficiency.

Vision Statements (key words): Growth, local assets, non-traditional assets, participation and local buy-in, industry-- retain and grow industrial base, higher paying jobs, population retention, higher standard of living, maintain high quality of life, workforce matching industry, sustainable growth

Strategy Statements (key words): Infrastructure, roads, bypass completed, I-22 completed, public-private housing program, automotive manufacturing, cooperative improvement district industrial park, marketing strengths

Marion County Local Public Meeting, June 11, 2007:

Quick Poll Question: *Higher paying jobs, workforce development and education, transportation, population loss, industrial recruitment, drug abuse, team approach, small business development, area awareness, quality of life*

Discussion: Among Marion County's strengths were its improving transportation infrastructure (I-22), forestry and timber resources, and natural gas deposits. Weaknesses included access to multi-modal transportation links (water and air), lacking communications and wireless communications infrastructure, low graduation rates from high school and college (two- and four-year). Potential threats included a lack of surface water sources for improving water supply systems. Threats to workforce development included lower wages, low school graduation rates, and difficulty providing opportunities needed to retain workforce. Substance abuse was listed as a significant problem for the county.

Vision Statements (key words): Planned growth, beauty and natural resource preservation, cultural and family opportunities, support for existing industry, higher paying jobs, opportunities for higher skilled workers (e.g. college graduates), regionalism and cooperation among leaders, citizen participation, open spaces and urban spaces, quality of life, population retention, housing opportunities, steering growth

Strategy Statements (key words): Incentive package for existing industries, regionalism and cooperation in recruitment, planning and zoning (city), growth in entertainment and recreation opportunities, recruitment of major manufacturer(s)

Colbert/Lauderdale Counties Local Public Meeting, June 13, 2007:



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Quick Poll Question: *Workforce development, industrial recruitment, transportation, workforce expectations, state and federal spending, infrastructure, quality of jobs, land use planning*

Discussion: Shoals area strengths included river access and existing educational opportunities. A new asset for the area was the recently adopted capital incentive fund. Weaknesses included lack of access to an interstate and an under utilized airport. The existing transportation improvements and planning program was seen as an opportunity to change these weaknesses. Optimism and work ethic and a lack of programs to match skills to jobs were seen as threats to economic health.

Vision Statements (key words): Opportunity, diversity, sustainability, trained workforce

Strategy Statements (key words): Marketing plan for industry attraction, new industry, airport facilities improved

Franklin County Local Public Meeting, June 19, 2007:

Quick Poll Question: *Trained workforce, transportation infrastructure, better jobs, immigration, labor unions, economic development, tax incentives, levels of pay, locally owned businesses, funding for projects, education*

Discussion: Franklin County was seen as positioned geographically in a good location for development. Housing costs were low—a plus. The county needed industrial park infrastructure, transportation improvements, and middle income housing opportunities to support growth. Existing industries suffered from workforce shortages for both low skill and higher skilled labor. Demographic changes resulting from immigration were producing changes in the local economy, including dis-integration between ethnic groups and changes in the types of (public and private) services demanded.

Vision Statements (key words): Skilled workforce, workforce opportunities, recreation opportunities, retail opportunities, infrastructure development, business support, growing and expanding industrial base, cooperation between entities (cities, counties, schools, etc.)

Strategy Statements (key words): Capacity building between economic developers and industries (on the one hand) and educators (on the other), industrial park improvements, transportation improvements, speculative building development

CEDS Committee Meeting, June 26, 2007:

Discussion: The committee discussed the feedback obtained from local level public meetings and presented key concepts for the regional economic vision.

Vision Statements (key words): *Community, identity, quality of life, sustainable, money and timing, marketing, branding, future-oriented, leadership, participation, unity, competitive, collaboration, global, competitive, transportation*



1.3.4 Vision, Goals, and Objectives

The various public discussions produced a planning framework in which priorities were stated as goals, objectives, and strategies representing development priorities with different time requirements. The final stage of establishing a framework for economic planning was synthesizing feedback from various meetings and previous planning actions into an ongoing and adaptive framework to plan for economic growth. This was accomplished by establishing a planning framework classifying planning priorities in terms of priorities and time horizons for achievement. All planning activities outlined in the CEDS represent methods of achieving an overall Economic Vision in the following planning framework:

Vision: Statement of the priority or highest accomplishment of the plan.

Goals: What is to be accomplished in categorical terms.

Objectives: What must be done to meet goals, expressed in more specific terms.

Strategies: Specific, measurable activities designed to accomplish objectives.

To fill in the layers of this framework, both abstract, value-oriented positions and concrete, project-oriented approaches were considered. The Economic Vision was established, which represented the highest order economic values for the region, by reference to various Vision Statements collected during the Phase I public meetings. The goal of the first phase of CEDS meetings was to produce a definitive Vision for the region and to give definition to the goals and objectives that would accomplish this vision. From the various feedback gained, the Economic Vision endorsed by the Board and the CEDS Committee was the following:

Northwest Alabama shall be a regional community defined by a distinctive and recognizable identity, high quality of life, strong leadership and public participation, and unity in pursuit of a sustainable, globally and regionally competitive economy.

Next, the assets and weaknesses listed in discussion and questionnaire responses were examined for insight into the goals desired for regional development. These goals were designed to be comprehensive—that is, encompassing the broadest range of priorities for economic and community development that were necessary for economic growth and prosperity. From conversations, feedback, and questionnaire responses it became obvious that the goals of economic development could not be neatly segregated away from community development objectives. In other words, to support economic development and to provide the employment, wage and industrial opportunities needed to grow; the region must also consider the quality and content of its community development agenda. This meant that regional and local actors must provide for workforce, housing, education, neighborhood and infrastructure developments that were conducive to producing economic opportunities.

A cluster of four related goals surfaced in each of the four Phase I meetings. These were discussed and endorsed by the CEDS Committee and the NACOLG/EDD Board because of their broad support and repeated iteration in public meetings. Although prioritized differently at each of the four local levels, **Transportation (Safety and Connectivity), Community Development (Communities and Infrastructure), Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention), and Community**



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Development (Capacity and Civic Culture) were categories of similar activities that captured the essence of much of the interrelated actions needed for regional economic development. These categorical statements were expanded into broader statements and incorporated as development priorities in the CEDS plan. They are described more fully in Section 4.0.

Next, working from more concrete proposals to fill in the gaps in the planning framework, strategies from previous CEDS documents were examined in order to supply measurable benchmarks, or objectives. Strategies also tended to cluster in more narrow categories. Thus, clusters of related strategies from previous CEDS, from stated concrete development proposals, and from the strategic plans of partners were grouped together and presented as objectives. Finally, the individual projects, or strategies, were evaluated. The evaluation of specific goals, objectives, and policies provided the substance of the second round of local level public meetings (Phase II). A summary of Vision, Goals and Objectives is presented below.

Summary

The vision, goals and objectives of the Northwest Alabama Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy were identified as follows:

ECONOMIC VISION: Northwest Alabama shall be a regional community defined by a distinctive and recognizable identity, high quality of life, strong leadership and public participation, and unity in pursuit of a sustainable, globally and regionally competitive economy.

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that connect neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective (a): Identify and remove dangerous transportation conflict points throughout the region.

Objective (b): Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

Objective (c): Identify and complete improvements to the region's multi-modal transportation network to improve local and regional access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) - Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective (a): Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continued high quality of life by municipal and county residents.

Objective (b): Foster sharing of municipal services and public infrastructure where beneficial to area municipalities and counties.

Objective (c): Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed-use urban redevelopment fostering



compact commercial and residential forms.

Objective (d): Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

Objective (e): Initiate an urban and neighborhood planning process that provides master plans and infrastructure improvement assessments for municipalities and counties within the NACOLG region.

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective (a): Expand access to and understanding of technology resources in the region.

Objective (b): Identify opportunities to expand workforce development opportunities by coordinating agencies and industries and businesses and implementing appropriate educational and skills development and recruitment programs.

Objective (c): Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

Objective (d): Explore opportunities to support the expansion of existing businesses and the recruitment of additional businesses to the region.

Goal IV: Community Development (Capacity and Civic Culture) - Promote associational life and community identity necessary to leverage the economic benefits of physical and human capital.

Objective (a): Explore the application of asset based economic development principles of identity and sustainability to the development programs of the region.

1.3.5 Phase II Summary-Identifying Strategies

The most specific planning element of the CEDS was a listing of specific strategies or action-oriented projects that represented a narrow step toward larger goals, objectives, and ultimately the economic vision of the region. Phase II of the CEDS planning process was designed to identify and review specific objectives and strategies intended to implement the plan. In the pages that follow are the specifics of these strategies, their allied planning goals and objectives, and the stakeholders likely to take the lead implementing them. These projects were identified through local level public meetings at which a variety of strategies, largely drawn from previous CEDS planning and ongoing economic development initiatives, were presented for review and comment. Where needed, strategies were updated to incorporate new information regarding the project. New projects were added based on the criteria that they contain stakeholder information (see below and Section 4.0) and were identified as high priorities for economic development.



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Each of the Phase II public meetings followed a similar format. Poster-style presentations were made for the framework of the plan, including a discussion of the Economic Vision, goals and objectives of the plan. Local government officials, regional and county development partners, and members of the CEDS Committee were invited to review and comment on the vision, goals, and objectives that were the outcome of the first phase of public meetings. Following this brief presentation, attendees were encouraged to review the specific strategies proposed for the plan and to provide feedback in the following areas: identifying project priorities, including missing or incomplete projects; identifying stakeholders and points of contact; and identifying performance metrics. A summary of the feedback and comments received at these public is presented below.

CEDS Committee, June 26, 2007: The CEDS Committee, representing regional interests, was invited to review and discuss proposed “Regional Priorities”. Most of the strategies presented were regional transportation projects with long-term time horizons. Alabama Department of Transportation representatives were on hand to discuss the projects. Suggestions were made regarding expanding the workforce development initiative for Winston County to a regional workforce development strategy to include all five counties in an inventory of programs and data needs. Corrections to specific projects were offered for Winston County, as well as a proposal for 4-laning portions of 195 to connect to proposed I-22 and provide access to the Winston County Cooperative Improvements District Industrial Park.

Colbert/Lauderdale Counties Local Public Meeting, July 17, 2007: Suggestions were made for refining a strategy for implementing the Entertainment Industry Study proposals. Changes were suggested to regional transportation priorities that would re-cast transportation projects in terms of their effects on the five-county region, rather than statewide impact.

Franklin County Local Public Meeting, July 19, 2007: The development of an entrepreneurial center in Franklin County was discussed and will be included in the 2007-2008 CEDS. Stakeholders and points of contact were identified. Benchmarks for performance were discussed.

Winston County Local Public Meeting, July 23, 2007: Transportation priorities were discussed. Due to the impact of I-22 and the development of the Winston County cooperative improvements district, the County’s focus has largely shifted from northern roads to the development of a four-lane southern route along Highway 13 from the industrial park to I-22. ALDOT Division II officials were on hand to discuss these priorities. The project will be included in the 2007-2008 CEDS.

Marion County Local Public Meeting, July 26, 2007: Attendees stressed the need to coordinate planning priorities among different regional and state efforts. Capacity-building goals were discussed, with emphasis on the need for grass-roots involvement, public visioning, and understandable priorities. Several representatives of Winston County were also present and re-iterated a commitment to transportation improvements between I-22 and the cooperative district industrial park. Project priorities will be updated as specific infrastructure improvements are identified.

CEDS Committee and NACOLG/EDD Board Meetings, August 16, 2007: The final draft of the document was presented for the review of these bodies at separate meetings on this date. The draft was approved as the official “Northwest Alabama Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2007-2008” and was made available



for public review and comment via the NACOLG web site. The final draft was understood as a “working copy” to be expanded, updated, and changed by the CEDS Committee as new data or circumstances required. The capacity to amend the document would not extend to the vision, goals and objectives of the plan, but would apply to implementation strategies, performance reviews, and the factual data and interpretations of the CEDS.

1.4 Implementation and Performance Changes

Recently, the trend in economic planning has been toward streamlining short-range policies in order to apply greater emphasis and leverage to accomplishing a few, well-defined tasks. To assist in this task two important steps were made with the adoption of the 2007-2008 CEDS. First more stringent performance measuring and review recommendations were adopted that place responsibility for project implementation in the hands of local-level individuals and organizations. The eventual goal has been to identify points of contact within the community and offer assistance with implementation, while realizing that significant progress toward implementation was only possible where local demand and capacity produced (with or without outside assistance) consistent demand. Contrasted with an over-broad “wish list” of unfocused efforts, this highly concentrated approach allows a variety of resources to come to bear for the purposes of solving economic problems. Second, the CEDS Committee was established as a persistent sub-committee charged with holding regular meetings, updating the plan as necessary, reviewing progress toward implementation, and making suggestions for improving future CEDS planning efforts.

These changes were made to improve the force and effect of the CEDS as a tool for accomplishing short-range strategies and long-range priorities. In contemplating the significance of short-range strategies, a consensus formed early on that only those projects having an active agenda and representation in the community would be given priority; and that an entity—a point of contact-- would be essential to show progress and to maintain status as a regional economic development priority. Frequent contact with stakeholders and periodic updates to the CEDS document were endorsed as methods of ensuring the efficacy of the plan. Therefore, the CEDS presented specific strategies and information pertaining to timing, performance metrics for measuring progress on implementation, and the sponsoring agency and primary implementation organization for each. The changes were introduced to the CEDS Committee and the Board as part of the CEDS for 2007-2008.

1.5 Document Organization

The remainder of the CEDS document describes the background for economic planning in Northwest Alabama, including a description of the political and geographic environment (Section 2.0) as well as an economic audit of the region (Section 3.0). Both the background information and the economic audit are designed to provide relevant, timely material to economic developers throughout the region. The broad array of information, in particular the statistical information of Section 3.0, is meant to be a foundation for further inquiries undertaken by Planning Organization staff and other economic developers. These statements do not represent the definitive conclusions of the Planning Organization or its partners; instead, they are a point of reference and a beginning point for a continuous process of inquiry designed to provide greater understanding of the economic climate, its components, and its effects on the residents of Northwest Alabama. Then, in Section 4.0 the planning framework of the CEDS is reviewed and the goals and objectives of the plan are described in greater detail before presenting the specific project-oriented strategies included in the 2007-2008 CEDS. A



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number of performance measures and implementation features are included for each of the strategies, and these are described in greater detail in Section 5.0, which details the agency's efforts to implement the CEDS and to increase its potential to affect the efforts of other economic developers. As the plan matures, these elements will be further refined and strengthened.



Section 2: General Background

2.0 Background

This section of the CEDS addresses the existing conditions and trends in the economic development environment of the NACOLG Region/Economic Development District (EDD), comprised of the five northwest Alabama counties. This chapter provides an overview of the major economic forces shaping development in Lauderdale, Colbert, Franklin, Marion and Winston counties, including the geography, transportation and infrastructure, and outside forces that affect prospective economic development in the region.

2.1 Geography

The NACOLG region consists of Colbert, Lauderdale, Franklin, Winston, and Marion counties and is diverse in history, geography, and culture. The region is bounded in the north by the State of Tennessee and to the west by the State of Mississippi. The five counties together have an area of 3,336 square miles, all of which is located within the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) planning area. Map 2.1 gives an overview of the geography of the region, its political boundaries, and some of the key physical characteristics. Map 2.2 indicates the location of the region in the state, Alabama's ARC counties, and the counties in the North Alabama Rural Action Commission (see Section 2.4.2).

2.1.1 Geology

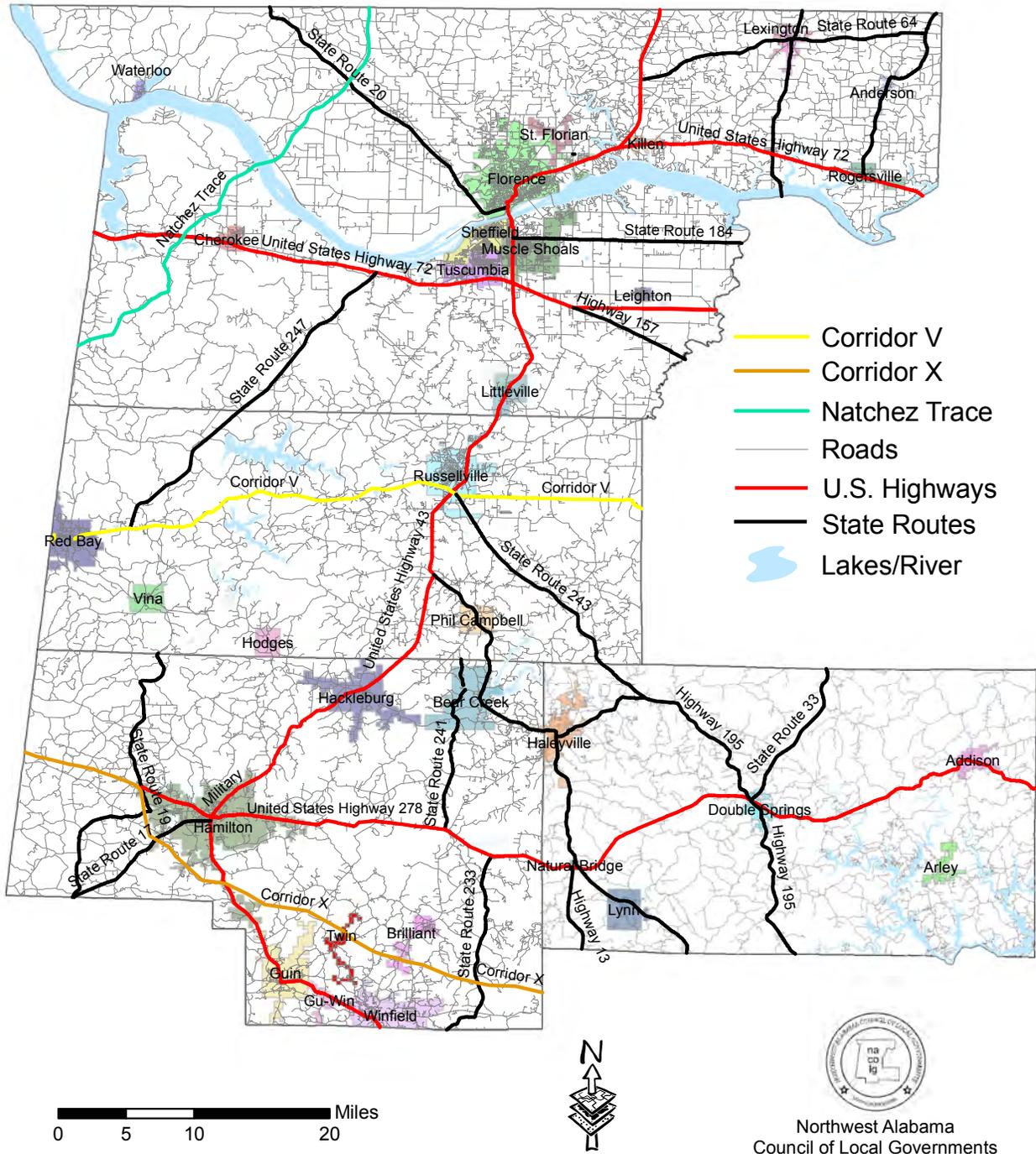
One of the most readily visible geographic elements of the Northwest Alabama region is the Appalachian foothills. The region is located at the convergence of three major geologic formations: the Highland Rim in the north, the Cumberland Plateau in the southeast and the East Gulf Coastal Plain in the southwest. The geologic forces shaping these intersecting features have also created a geologically and topographically diverse region in Northwest Alabama. Rock formations vary from Mississippian to Precambrian and establish the topographic contours of the region. Elevations in the region range from 250 to 500 feet above mean sea elevation (MSE) at the point where the Tennessee River exits the region to above 1000 feet above MSE in portions of Franklin County¹. In general, steeper hills and higher elevations are found in the southern part of the region, in Winston and Marion counties. Specific soil types, which are the product of geologic forces, vary significantly but are found in three general concentrations defined by parent material. Limestone valley and upland soils are found in much of central and eastern Lauderdale County. Small areas of Appalachian Plateau soils are found in Colbert County. Much of the remaining region is made up of soils from Coastal Plain materials.

2.1.2 Water Features

Northwest Alabama is divided by topography into two major river systems². In the north, the Tennessee River serves as the boundary between Colbert and Lauderdale Counties and is one of the region's most readily apparent features. Colbert, Lauderdale and most of Franklin counties are in the Tennessee River watershed and the Tennessee River serves as source of freshwater for numerous north Alabama communities as well as an inter-state shipping lane for river traffic. Numerous tributaries are the source of freshwater and recreation throughout the region. The second major river system in Northwest Alabama, the Sypsey River, is located largely in Winston County within the Bankhead National Forest. The Sypsey River and its tributaries are largely contained within Winston County and flow southeast before converging into the Black Warrior River.



Map 2.1 NACOLG Region and Economic Development District



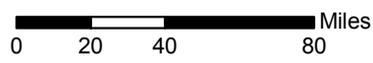
Map 2.2: NACOLG Region, ARC Counties, North Alabama Rural Action Commission Boundaries



-  North Alabama Action Commission Counties
-  Appalachian Counties
-  NACOLG Counties



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The Sypsey River and the surrounding national forest are a vital natural resource for the region.

The region is home to numerous reservoirs and lakes, providing recreation and power to the area. Pickwick and Wilson Lake are reservoirs to power producing dams and are among the more popular recreational destinations in the region. Lewis Smith Lake, an Alabama Power Company reservoir located partly in Winston County, is another sizeable recreational lake and source of power. The Bear Creek Lakes in Franklin and Marion counties are likewise popular for outdoor recreation. Marion County also is home to a public fishing lake located near Guin.

Much of the region's fresh water for consumption by business, industry and residences is supplied through wells and groundwater sources. The region's various geologic formations, largely karst formations, transmit precipitation to wellheads areas. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) has identified and mapped recharge areas for these wellheads and has begun encouraging development patterns that are sensitive to the dangers, including health risks and extreme infrastructure costs, associated with polluting these water sources.

Public meetings consistently pointed to water resources as recreational opportunities with significant economic benefits. Natural and scenic beauty were consistently identified as assets in need of preservation and as sources of economic development in need of leveraging.

2.1.3 Climate and Environmental Features

The area has a moderate climate with long summers and mild winters. Normal average temperatures range from 80.2 Fahrenheit in July to 39.9 Fahrenheit in January, as measured by the National Weather Service at the Muscle Shoals Regional Airport. Some variation in the extreme ranges, up to a normal high of 90.6 in July and down to a normal low of 30.7 in January, is normal. Monthly precipitation is consistent throughout the year, with an average monthly rainfall of 4.65 inches, but with relatively sharp increases in March, and a decline in rainfall in August. Snows are negligible and inconsistent in the winter months. Because of the favorable climate the region has a long growing season and few lost working days due to inclement weather, making it a favorable location for agriculture and industry. The region's potential for crop production is limited primarily by soil types, which vary in fertility and suitability for agricultural production throughout the region.

2.2 Demographic Overview

2.2.1 Total Population Trends

Statewide, population growth in Alabama from 1990 to 2000 was 10.1%, up by 406,513 people to a total population of 4,447,100 in 2000. By comparison, the five-county region grew by 9.1% in the same period, from 211,018 to 230,260, a total increase of 19,242 people according to Census counts (see Table 2.1). Table 2.1 also presents population forecasts for Alabama, the NACOLG region and each of the 5 counties. According to these forecasts, produced by the University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), statewide trends are expected to generate a 21% growth in Alabama's population by 2025; meanwhile the regional trend is predicted to be significantly less at 14.2% growth. Population trends for individual counties



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Table 2.1: Population Growth 1990-2000, Current Population, and Population Forecasts 2000-2025							
	Alabama	Region	Colbert	Franklin	Lauderdale	Marion	Winston
1990	4,040,587	211,024	51,666	27,814	79,661	29,830	22,053
2000	4,447,100	230,260	54,984	31,223	87,996	31,214	24,843
% change 1990-2000	10.1%	9.1%	6.4%	12.3%	10.5%	4.6%	12.7%
	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	Number	Percent
Alabama	4,644,503	4,838,812	5,028,045	5,211,248	5,385,997	938,897	21.10%
Region	238817	246645	253579	259587	264553	34323	14.91%
Colbert	56241	57311	58208	58934	59484	4500	8.20%
Franklin	32895	34513	36019	37357	38469	7246	23.20%
Lauderdale	91636	94983	98015	100749	103176	15210	17.30%
Marion	31809	32283	32593	32739	32710	1496	4.80%
Winston	26236	27555	28744	29808	30714	5871	23.60%
Note: Projections in this series are based on trends between the 1990 and 2000 censuses.							
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama, August 2001.							

vary, with Lauderdale County expected to grow by a significantly larger number in terms of total population, while Winston County is expected to experience the largest growth in population terms of percentage gained. No county is expected to experience a decline in population, although significant changes in the distribution of population are expected across several demographic groupings.

2.2.2 Age Profile and Trends

Table 2.2A: Population 65 and Over in 2000 and Projections 2005-2025							Change 2000-2025	
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	Number	Percent
Alabama	579,907	609,135	660,343	757,211	871,646	999,769	419,862	72.40%
Colbert	8,493	8,803	9,374	10,352	11,334	12,468	3,975	46.80%
Franklin	4,637	4,854	5,093	5,518	6,011	6,523	1,886	40.67%
Lauderdale	13,241	14,062	15,199	16,949	18,999	21,219	7,978	60.25%
Limestone	7,271	8,055	9,136	10,968	12,940	15,306	8,035	
Marion	4,934	5,296	5,787	6,416	6,887	7,431	2,497	50.61%
Winston	3,533	3,860	4,353	5,024	5,504	5,998	2,465	69.77%
	42,109	44,930	48,942	55,227	61,675	68,945	26,836	63.73%
Note: Projections in this series are based on trends between the 1990 and 2000 censuses.								
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama, August 2001.								



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Table 2.2B: Population by Age Cohort, 1990 and 2000				
	1990	2000	Numeric Change	Percentage Change
Total Population	211,024	230,230	19,206	9.10%
Under 5 years	13,598	13,979	381	2.80%
5 to 9 years	14,090	15,078	988	7.01%
10 to 14 years	14,519	15,545	1,026	7.07%
15 to 19 years	15,752	15,669	-83	-0.53%
20 to 24 years	15,203	14,426	-777	-5.11%
25 to 29 years	15,516	14,896	-620	-4.00%
30 to 34 years	15,912	15,324	-588	-3.70%
35 to 39 years	15,036	17,133	2,097	13.95%
40 to 44 years	14,732	17,121	2,389	16.22%
45 to 49 years	12,909	16,031	3,122	24.18%
50 to 54 years	11,467	15,422	3,955	34.49%
55 to 59 years	10,818	13,199	2,381	22.01%
60 to 64 years	10,561	11,569	1,008	9.54%
65 to 69 years	9,906	10,019	113	1.14%
70 to 74 years	8,072	8,906	834	10.33%
75 to 79 years	6,159	7,130	971	15.77%
80 to 84 years	3,976	4,787	811	20.40%
85 years and over	2,798	3,996	1,198	42.82%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama, August 2001.				



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Although total population grew from 1990 to 2000, not all age groups received the same share of growth and, in fact, some age groups experienced a decline in population. Table 2.2 illustrates the age distribution of population in the NACOLG region in 1990 and 2000. According to these measures, the largest growth occurred among individuals age 85 and older, which grew by 42.82% between 1990 and 2000. These statistics also indicate a growth in the overall population of individuals aged 65 and older, which will produce changes in economic climate in future years (see Table 2.2A and Table 2.2B). Meanwhile, between 1990 and 2000 population declined for all age groups between 15 and 34 years.

Table 2.2C: Current and forecasted working age population					
	1990	2000	Change, 1990-2000	2005	2025
Colbert	33,597	35,670	6.17%	36,677	36,209
% of total population	65.03%	64.87%	-0.16%	65.21%	60.87%
Lauderdale	52,457	57,981	10.53%	60,841	64,164
% of total population	65.85%	65.91%		66.39%	62.19%
Franklin	19,834	22,423	13.05%	23,914	27,302
% of total population	71.31%	71.82%	+0.51%	72.70%	70.97%
Marion	19,357	20,441	5.60%	20,789	19,994
% of total population	64.89%	65.49%	-0.6%	65.36%	61.13%
Winston	14,527	16,431	13.11%	17,358	19,262
% of total population	72.86%	72.92%	+0.06	72.93%	68.80%
NACOLG Region	139,772	152,946	9.43%	159,579	166,931
% of total population	66.22%	66.42%	+0.2%	62.93%	63.10%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Center for Business and Economic Research, The University of Alabama, August 2001.					



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Working age population, aged 15-64, increased numerically but remained relatively constant or slightly declined as a proportion of total population between 1990 and 2000. Table 2.2C shows the 1990 and 2000 working age population in the state, the NACOLG region and each county, as well as the forecasted trend in the proportion of the population aged 15-64 in each county. These estimates indicate a decline in the working age population as a proportion of the total population in the next two decades. Total working age population, i.e. the absolute number of individuals aged 15-64, is also expected to decline slightly in Colbert/Lauderdale Counties. Winston County's 15-64 population is expected to grow by less than 1%. Only Franklin County is projected to experience a substantial increase in working age population, up 13% by 2025, however, much of this increase may be offset by losses regionally.

An aging population and changing demographic/workforce characteristics were pointed to as potential sources of opportunity and as potential threats. Providing life-cycle opportunities to achieve a mixed age distribution were encouraged at a number of points in the feedback process. Providing opportunities for young workers, especially, was seen as important. The anecdotal pattern was for an individual to graduate (from high school or college) and seek entry-level employment elsewhere, with a desire to return when a local opportunity presented itself. Creating more opportunities for returning residents and retaining residents was a consistent priority.

Table 2.3: Gender and Race

	Region	Colbert/Lauderdale	Winston	Marion	Franklin
Gender					
Female	109610 (51.94%)	68551 (52.20%)	11296 (51.22%)	15243 (51.10%)	14520 (52.20%)
Male	101414 (48.06%)	62776 (47.80%)	10757 (48.78%)	14587 (48.90%)	13294 (47.80%)
Race					
White	191527 (90.76%)	114380 (87.10%)	21925 (99.42%)	28759 (96.41%)	26463 (95.14%)
Black	18536 (8.78%)	16263 (12.38%)	57 (0.26%)	967 (3.24%)	1249 (4.49%)
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	458 (0.22%)	302 (0.23%)	42 (0.19%)	57 (0.19%)	57 (0.20%)
Asian or Pacific Islander	385 (0.18%)	289 (0.22%)	26 (0.12%)	35 (0.12%)	35 0.13%
Other Race	118 (0.07%)	93 (0.07%)	3 (0.01%)	12 (0.04%)	10 (0.04%)
Hispanic or Latino	4560 (1.98%)	1512 (1.57%)	372 (1.5%)	360 (1.15%)	2316 (7.4%)
Source: U.S. Census Bureau					



2.2.3 Gender and Race

The distribution of population by gender and race for each county is shown in Table 2.3. Race and gender are associated with gaps in income levels and median income (see Section 3.2.2).

The effects of uncounted immigrant populations were noted as a concern, primarily by Franklin County participants. Inaccurate counts lead to distorted measures of economic performance and complicate planning for public services. Population counts affect measures used to determine eligibility for many competitive funding source and affect local street funds.

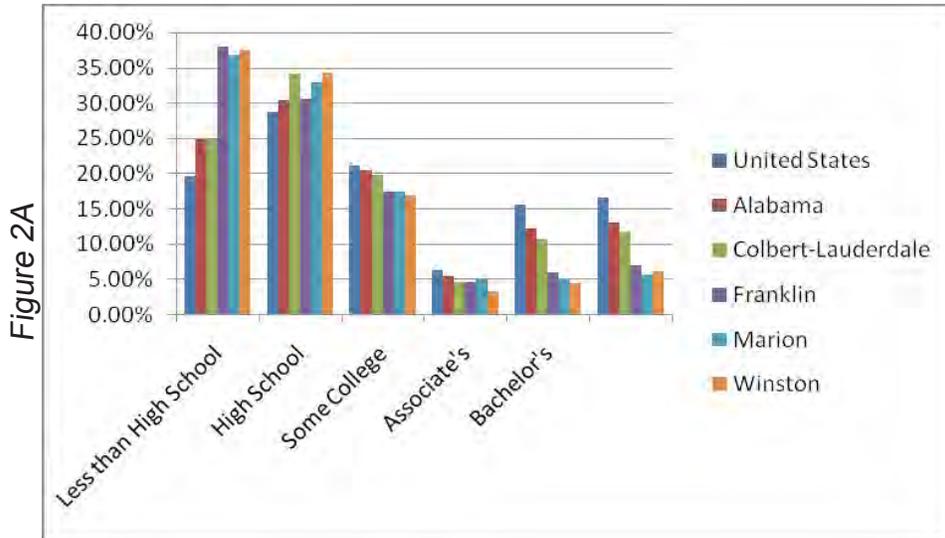
2.2.4 Education

Education is one of the primary characteristics of an economy’s workforce. Access to education, as measured by educational attainment, is one of the first statistics reviewed by potential employers. The region possesses a number of strong educational assets, from public school systems to its two community colleges and one university. An inventory of these assets is found in Appendix B.

Table 2.4A: Educational Attainment						
	United States	Alabama	Colbert-Lauderdale	Franklin County	Marion County	Winston County
Less than High School	19.60%	24.73%	24.81%	37.89%	36.84%	37.40%
High School	28.63%	30.38%	34.04%	30.50%	32.89%	34.28%
Some College	21.05%	20.47%	19.82%	17.43%	17.44%	16.83%
Associate’s	6.32%	5.38%	4.56%	4.49%	4.88%	3.23%
Bachelor’s	15.54%	12.18%	10.71%	5.93%	4.89%	4.37%
Graduate or Professional	16.56%	12.93%	11.59%	6.98%	5.57%	6.04%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau						

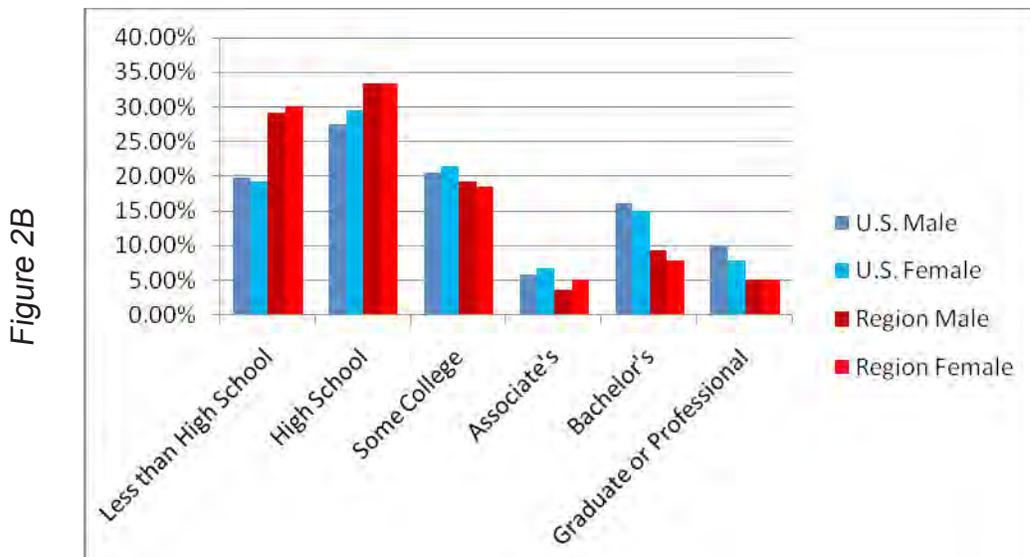


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Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 2.4A and Figure 2A display information on educational attainment in the United States and the study areas. This table illustrates the overall performance gaps between the region and the nation, as well as between different counties within the region. The distribution of population having less than a high school education is higher across the region than in the nation; the estimate of those possessing a high school or high school equivalency is likewise higher, being offset by a lower number possessing college education.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Underperformance in the arena of higher education, as indicated by estimates of “some college” or higher, is particularly acute in Marion, Franklin, and Winston Counties. Figure 2B and Table 2.4 B display educational attainment by gender across the region, which are similar to national trends. Males are more likely to have “some college” or a bachelor’s degree than females, however, the general trend toward lower education levels continues to hold true across gender. Improving educational attainment and the quality of life opportunities that it embodies should be a priority for the region.



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Table 2.4B Educational Attainment by Gender			
	United States	Alabama	Colbert-Lauderdale
Male			
Less than High School	19.90%	24.87%	29.11%
High School	27.60%	29.74%	33.44%
Some College	20.59%	20.19%	19.20%
Associate's	5.81%	4.93%	3.75%
Bachelor's	16.11%	12.97%	9.40%
Graduate or Professional	9.99%	7.31%	5.10%
Female			
Less than High School	19.33%	24.61%	30.06%
High School	29.58%	30.94%	33.42%
Some College	21.46%	20.72%	18.52%
Associate's	6.78%	5.79%	5.07%
Bachelor's	15.02%	11.49%	7.83%
Graduate or Professional	7.83%	6.45%	5.10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



Education and skills for workforce and to create a higher quality of life were central to the feedback received in the course of developing the CEDS. Workforce development, in terms of matching skills to employers needs, was a top priority. Conversations were mixed with regard to the ability of the region, or a county within the region, to use educational offerings to shape the type of employer locating in the region. Some observed that this type of skills-clustering was potentially an important tool, while others observed that local economies are shaped in large part by externalities and that concentrating on particular skills could lead to lost opportunities.

2.3 Infrastructure Capacity and Resources

2.3.1 Transportation System

The transportation system of the region varies from county to county with respect to access to adequate highway, rail, air, and water infrastructure for moving freight and people.

Highways

The Shoals area is the crossroads for two major regional arterials (U.S. Highways 72 and 43) and numerous state highways; however, interstate access is not readily available. Interstate 65 to the east is the closest interstate highway. However, I-22 will be a second interstate link to the south, but for the near term it will be accessible only by lengthy stretches of two-lane highway. In the Shoals area, long-term goals include access to interstate highways. Improvements to the four-lane highway system are likely to be intermediate and long term priorities throughout the region in order to more efficiently move goods and services.

Franklin County is crossed from north to south by Highway 43 and from east to west by Highway 24 (Appalachian Corridor “V”), both of which are major regional arterials. Minor arterials include Highway 247 which connects Red Bay to Highway 72 (in Colbert County) and Highway 13 leading southeast to Winston County. State Route 19 connects Red Bay to Vina and Hodges.

Marion County is crossed by Highway 43 north and south and by Highway 78 (soon-to-be U.S. Interstate 22) from east and west. As a result of regional developments (the location of a major automobile manufacturer near Tupelo, Mississippi), industrial development in the region has the potential to radiate outward from I-22 along major arterials, affecting virtually every community in the region. Additionally, Highway 278 runs west and east through Hamilton to Double Springs and continues east to Cullman, Alabama. Finally, Highway 19 connects Red Bay to Hamilton.

Winston County is commonly identified as the most isolated county of the region in terms of transportation infrastructure. The county is traversed north and south by Highway 13, which passes through Haleyville, Natural Bridge, and Lynn. Highway 195 passes north and south through Haleyville and Double Springs before exiting the county. Finally, highway 278 passes east and west through Winston County from Marion County, through Natural Bridge, Double Springs and Addison.

By and large, despite desire for numerous additional highway improvements, meeting participants agreed



that the transportation infrastructure throughout much of the region was improving. Recent successes in gaining highways and interstate access in many parts of the region have caused transportation improvements to move down in the list of overall priorities *in some parts of the region*. All over, however, participants pointed to the importance of continuing to plan for improvements to road systems as a means of producing growth. Many noted a lack of understanding about how decisions were made to build or improve roads.

Rivers

River access is more abundant in the Shoals than in other parts of the region. Both Colbert and Lauderdale Counties have potential access to river transportation via the Tennessee River. The only port facility in the Shoals is currently the Port of Florence, which is located along the riverfront south of downtown. The capacity of this facility to receive barges is limited and discussions have included numerous improvements to the facility³. Colbert County has recently discussed activating a port authority in order to improve access to the Tennessee River. From Wilson and Pickwick Lakes on the Tennessee River, to the Bear Creek recreational lakes in Franklin and Marion Counties, to Smith Lake and the Sypsey River basin in Winston County, significant recreational waters are present region-wide. These waters are important economic generators. However, outside of the Shoals area there is a lack of access to navigable waters for transportation purposes.

Rails

A major Norfolk Southern line traverses Colbert County and a spur line connects Florence Industrial Park to Columbia, Tennessee. At one time these routes connected across the Tennessee River railroad bridge, but since the railroad bridge was discontinued the alternative routes north from Colbert County lead west through Memphis, Tennessee and east through Decatur, Alabama. A second Norfolk Southern line runs south from Muscle Shoals through Franklin County, northeast Marion County, through Winston County and southeast to Birmingham, Alabama.

The relocation of the Norfolk Southern rail line through the Shoals area has been consistently included as a priority in the regional CEDS. The line is a potential hazard due to nine at-grade crossings in the Shoals area and the volume of materials, many potentially hazardous, handled by the line. Additionally, the line discourages commerce and industry in several cities due to frequent delays at crossings. Potential increases in volume along this line have led to a need for expansion to accommodate greater rail traffic; however, the preferred local solution continues to be moving the line.

Airports

The Northwest Alabama Regional Airport in Muscle Shoals is the region's only commercial airport. The airport is owned by Colbert and Lauderdale Counties and provides passenger flights to over 580 destinations through Memphis on Northwest Airlines. The airport also provides private aircraft facilities and air freight services.

Airport improvements were suggested as a means of improving access to goods and markets in the Shoals area. The Muscle Shoals Industrial Airpark has planned improvements linking the facility to the airport.



2.3.2 Water Systems

A comprehensive water system analysis is not available for the region at this time; however, planning for water system improvements should be coordinated on a regional basis from at least the county level, rather than in ad hoc projects in response to increases in demand. Particular attention is needed in the areas of drainage and recharge system integrity and provisions for adequate future source waters, in addition to common infrastructure improvements associated with economic development proposals.

2.3.3 Electrical Systems

A complete electrical system inventory and analysis is not available for the region at this time; however, both Alabama Power and the Tennessee Valley Authority are regional power suppliers in the area. Both entities are involved in economic development in the region and assist direct suppliers at the local level in meeting the needs of industry, commerce, and residences. Local planning initiatives should contain capital facilities planning sufficient to forecast projected electrical demand resulting from growth and to meet this demand.

2.3.4 Natural Gas Systems

A complete gas distribution inventory and analysis is not available for the region at this time. An inventory of major transmission pipelines should be accompanied by planning for local natural gas utilities, which should begin with an inventory of these local suppliers. Eventually demand and infrastructure requirements for these utilities should be incorporated into local and regional planning initiatives.

2.3.5 Telecommunications

A telecommunications system inventory and analysis is not available for the region at this time. Local planning initiatives should contain capital facilities requirements sufficient to improve access to telephone, cable, and wireless technologies.

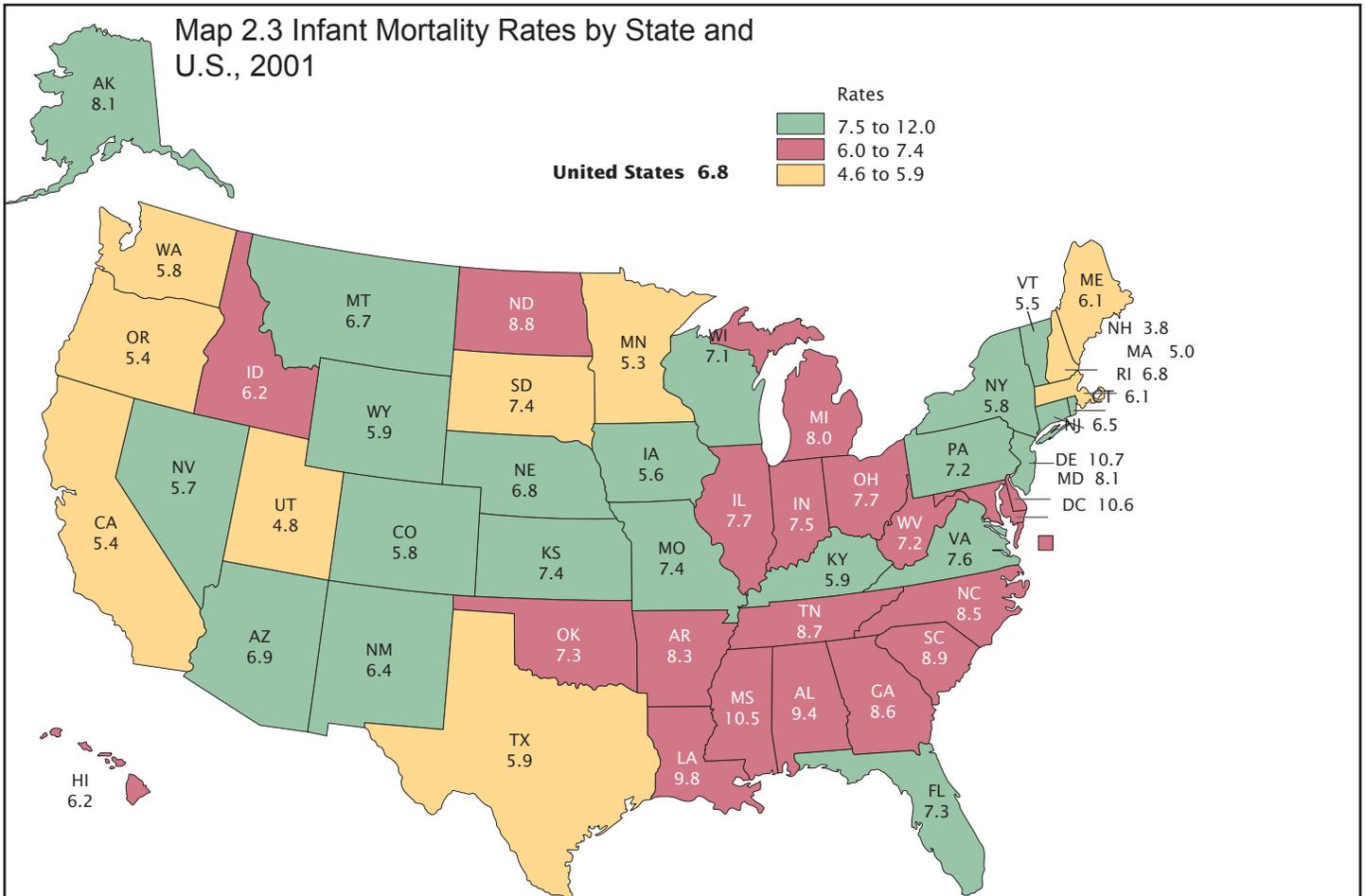
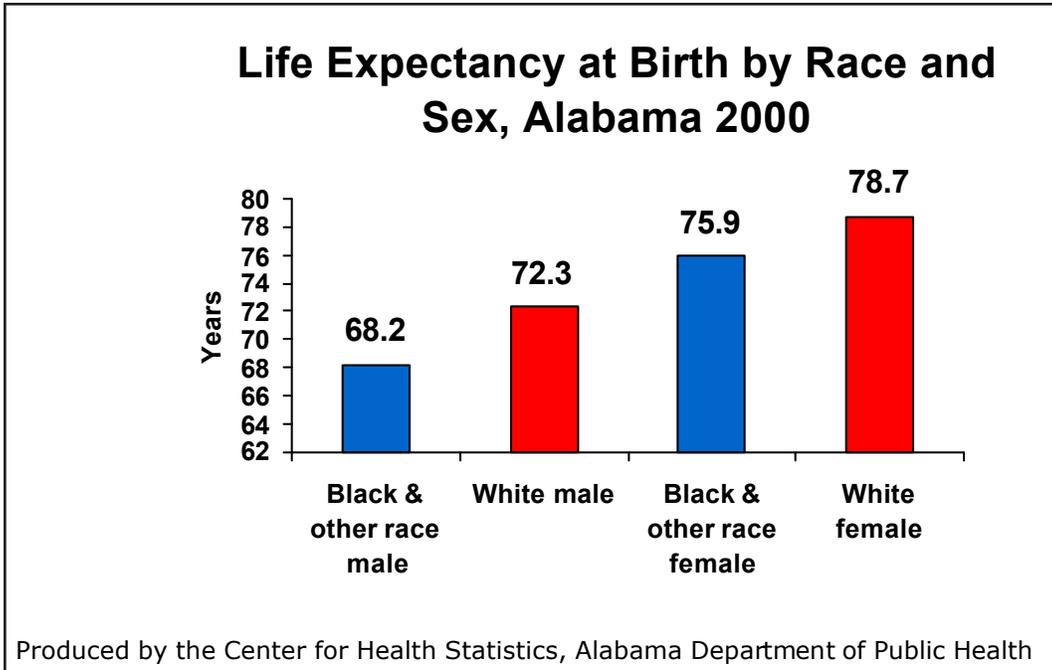
2.3.6 Solid Waste Disposal

An inventory and analysis of solid waste disposal and landfill operations is not available for the region at this time; however, these facilities should be inventoried and incorporated into local planning initiatives in order to meet demand resulting from growth and development.

2.3.7 Healthcare Profile

Life expectancy in the United States is estimated to be 77.9 years for both sexes. Infant mortality is approximately 6.8 deaths per 1000 births. In Alabama, life expectancy varies according to race and gender (see Figure 2.1). Statewide, infant mortality is approximately 9.4 deaths per 1000 births (see Map 2.3 below)-- just over 38% higher than the national rate. Table 2.5 displays infant mortality rates for the five-county region. A larger proportion of infants in Alabama are born with low birth weight than the national average (9.9% in Alabama vs. 7.% nationally in 2001). Teenage pregnancy is also higher, with 26.9 per thousand of Alabama's





Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Vital Statistics, 2004, pg. 71, available <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/03statab/vitstat.pdf>



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Table 2.5 Health Statistics	Alabama	Colbert	Lauderdale	Franklin	Marion	Winston
<i>Total Population</i>	4,478,896	54,616	87,064	30,848	30,321	24,642
<i>Birth Rate</i>	13	11.3	10.3	14.2	11.5	10
<i>Fertility Rate</i>	1876.5	1818.5	1511.5	2242.5	1942.5	1668.5
<i>% 1st Trimester Prenatal Care</i>	83.3	85.2	93.4	82.8	92.5	89.7
<i>% Inadequate Prenatal Care</i>	11	7.9	4.8	11.9	2.8	5.2
<i>% Low Birth Weight</i>	9.9	10	8.3	8.6	10.8	7.1
<i>Teenage Birth Rate</i>	26.9	27.2	17	37.7	28.8	25.2
<i>% Medicaid Births</i>	46.7	48	49	46.9	62.9	49.8
<i>% Below Poverty</i>	15.2	14	15.6	17.4	16.8	16.9
<i>Infant Mortality Rate</i>	8.9	9.5	5.2	10.4	10.3	9.9
<i># of Infant Deaths</i>	1572	17	15	13	11	8
<i>Life Expectancy</i>	74.8	75.3	76.9	73.7	72.4	75.6

Source: State of Alabama Department of Public Health, Alabama Center for Health Statistics

and 21.4 per thousand of the U.S.’s births attributed to teenage mothers (2001). In 2000, 55% of all women who reported having had a child in the previous year also reported being active in the workforce. The leading causes of death in Alabama- heart disease and cancer- are the same as those for the rest of the nation, but the rates of each are higher in the state than nationwide. These indicators point toward a need for improvement in the quality and accessibility of health care throughout Northwest Alabama.

Access to healthcare providers varies by county across the region. A complete inventory of healthcare facilities is available through the Alabama Department of Public Health⁴. Each county has access to at least one hospital facility, assisted living and nursing home facility, home health agency, independent physiological laboratory, independent clinical laboratory, and specialty care assisted living facility, other types of healthcare services are not as readily available. Ambulatory surgical services are available at two locations (both in Lauderdale County). There is one Sleep Disorders Center which is located in Lauderdale County, two Rehabilitation Centers both located in Colbert County, and only one Portable X-Ray Supplier in the region, also found in Lauderdale County. The lack of services leaves residents without convenient access to these facilities and many must travel outside of the NACOLG/EDD region to obtain them. See also Section 3.2.4.

2.4 The Planning Environment: Statewide Plans, Regional Planning Initiatives, Local Planning

The CEDS is designed to adhere to and complement broader statewide planning objectives and the objectives of local communities’ planning activities. In Alabama, statewide strategic plans generally address project implementation and support for local initiatives. Rarely do these plans go beyond this implementation role and enter into planning and the determination of project priorities. Rather, state-level entities in Alabama offer a wide range of support for implementing project priorities. This focus on implementation and support to local initiatives is evident in the strategic plans of the State’s economic and community development agencies. However, as described below, there are several noteworthy regional



programs that have been the result of State-initiated regional planning processes. Likewise, local planning activities vary across the region, with many communities lacking the administrative and technical personnel necessary to effectively plan for growth and development.

2.4.1 Alabama Planning

By and large, the State of Alabama does not establish wide ranging economic development priorities, instead relying on local-level planning initiatives to determine project priorities. Criteria that are established beyond the local and regional level largely address the procedures for applying for sources of state and federal funding. Therefore, to a large degree, state strategic plans contribute to the implementation environment, rather than to the planning environment, and are less concerned with producing projects and priorities than distributing resources among these. Although the state does provide direct support for planning through certain planning grants, state-level planning efforts do not dictate a means for selecting local project priorities, therefore, local planning initiatives are paramount in the process of determining which specific, local initiatives are selected for implementation. Statewide strategic plans are addressed more fully in Section 5.0, which discusses implementation strategies.

2.4.2 Regional Planning

Regional Planning Commissions

In contrast to statewide planning initiatives, the state has a number of planning tools available at the regional level. The first of these are the Regional Planning Commissions, which are organizations with a broad mandate to provide administrative, technical and planning support and services to local communities. The RPCs serve 12 regions statewide. Through communication, planning, policymaking, coordination, advocacy and technical assistance, the Commissions serve member governments and citizens of the region. They also provides a forum for member government representatives to discuss and resolve common problems, especially those that transcend political boundaries. Although not all RPCs are recognized as Economic Development Districts, NACOLG is recognized as both the RPC and the EDD for the five-counties of Northwest Alabama.

Resource Conservation and Development Districts

There is also a Resource Conservation and Development Council for Northwest Alabama. This body, which is established through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, encourages local elected and citizen volunteers to carry out strategic planning and community development, particularly in areas involving the conservation of natural resources. The RC&D Councils are volunteer led organizations that promote community development projects for improved general economic conditions and a higher standard of living. Private and public partnering, volunteerism, and local capacity are hallmarks of the program. All local RC&D Councils have area plans that describe their work and initiatives. The Northwest Alabama RC&D Council consists of five counties: Lauderdale, Franklin, Colbert, Marion, and Winston. The Council concentrates on four areas: rural job development, forestry, water quality, and community services. Major projects include: Wheels to Work, Progressive Farmer Safety Day Camp, Annual Economic Development Conference, and Double Springs Senior Center.



Transportation Planning

Two types of planning bodies are active at the regional level in transportation planning statewide, the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and the recently established Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs). The MPOs coordinate transportation improvements within Metropolitan Statistical Areas, as recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau and required by the Federal Highway Administration. These bodies are responsible for reviewing all proposed projects within the respective MPO area. Within Northwest Alabama, the Florence-Muscle Shoals MPO includes much of Colbert and Lauderdale Counties. For remaining non-metropolitan areas, the Rural Planning Organizations provide an opportunity for feedback and discussion of transportation related issues and questions.

Regional Workforce Development Initiatives- WIA and WIRED

In workforce development, the State of Alabama has established two other regional planning initiatives that have produced project initiatives. The ongoing CEDS planning process will attempt to coordinate with these activities incorporating the regional comprehensive economic planning initiatives in interactions with these bodies in order to clearly represent the region's priorities and produce effective planning initiatives, supported by broad constituencies.

The first of these regional economic development programs to have a potential effect on CEDS planning- and, in turn, to potentially be affected by the CEDS planning process- is the Workforce Investment Area (WIA) program, which is a state-sponsored regional planning project designed to identify local-level workforce development initiatives. The WIA has established regional advisory councils to identify and advise the state Board in the area of workforce development. The WIA Region I area corresponds to the footprint of NACOLG region and includes Lauderdale, Colbert, Franklin, Marion and Winston Counties. The governing WIA Board is a state-wide body representing 65 Alabama counties. Based on state-level indicators and local advisory council feedback, the agency has analyzed and evaluated workforce investment opportunities on the basis of growth in occupational opportunities, growth in wages, and skill needs. The WIA has recommended targeted investments in the occupational areas of automotive manufacturing, advanced manufacturing, distribution center operations, and aerospace manufacturing. These state-wide goals will be administered and overseen largely through local agencies, partnerships and implementation initiatives. In addition to supporting initiatives that complement statewide goals, the WIA Region I workforce advisory council has identified workforce development projects for the WIA Region I/ NACOLG area (See Section 2.5). The ongoing CEDS process recognizes these identified priority areas, has and will continue to deliberate toward complementary priorities and solutions.

A similar workforce development initiative is the Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) program. The WIRED program included Tennessee Valley WIRED Region, which includes 9 counties in North Alabama and 5 in southern middle Tennessee, in its second generation after the region. The project is funded through the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor. The region includes counties with relatively high living standards, mainly in and around the Huntsville-Madison county area, as well as periphery counties with much lower average household incomes. The program is directed through Calhoun Community College and has established goals that include the development



of a One-Stop Economic Development Center and increasing the effectiveness of local student training opportunities. Moving forward, the CEDS process will incorporate WIRED initiatives affecting the five counties of the NACOLG region and will also represent workforce development initiatives derived at the local level and designed for the benefit of the NACOLG/WIA Region I and greater Tennessee Valley WIRED Region.

Regional Planning- North District of the Alabama Rural Action Commission

Finally, the Rural Action Commissions, established due to the success of the Blackbelt Action Commission, a regional development commission formed to address economic dislocations in Alabama's Blackbelt Counties, were launched in Summer 2007. As the RAC for North Alabama meets and plans for economic development, the CEDS planning process will be a fertile source of information. Standing committees will discuss economic development, workforce development, education, and health care in the context of community-driven economic development. Both CEDS and RAC will be a source of additional leverage for regional economic development priorities. The RAC approach to economic and community development is consistent with the approach endorsed by the Northwest Alabama CEDS-- asset-based and community driven, focused on local capacity building and clear systems of prioritization.

2.4.3 Local Planning

Local planning activities are the fundamental source of economic and community development initiatives in the State. The extent to which formal planning techniques are incorporated and the primary actors involved determining local initiatives varies significantly across the region. Most communities do not possess formal plans for community development and priorities are determined informally by local public leaders. Many communities lack the basic personnel for planning, such as planning commissions. A complete inventory of local planning techniques and initiatives is not available; however, formal, participatory public planning should be encouraged and supported throughout the region with support and technical assistance for the establishment, training, and administration of planning commissions and other planning boards and committees.

2.5 Workforce Development and Use

Workforce development is the public and private process that supplies workers and skilled professionals to support businesses and industries. These skills are frequently supplied through public educational institutions such as high schools, trades schools and universities but they are also made available through on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and other such environments.

The Alabama Workforce Investment Area (WIA) Assessment was an economic inventory and analysis of national trends likely to affect occupational mix and workforce in Alabama in coming years. Among the notable observations within this report were the following:

- From 1992 to 2002, manufacturing employment declined almost 9% as a share of total workforce nationwide. From 2002 to 2012 as 0.1% annual loss is expected.



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Table 2.6 A: Fastest Growing Industries (2002-2012)		Employment				
	INDUSTRY TITLE	2002	2012	Net Change	Percent Change	Annual Growth Rate
3361	Motor Vehicle Manufacturing	5090	11350	6260	122.99	8.35
5181	ISPs and web search portals	390	770	380	97.44	7.04
5416	Management and technical consulting services	4960	7840	2880	58.06	4.68
6239	Other residential care facilities	1650	2560	910	55.16	4.49
5613	Employment services	41220	63190	21970	53.30	4.36
6216	Home health care services	6690	10240	3550	53.06	4.35
6233	Community care facilities for the elderly	5100	7800	2700	52.94	4.34
4922	Local messengers and local delivery	600	910	310	51.67	4.25
5415	Computer systems design and related services	14660	22000	7340	50.07	4.14
4859	Other ground passenger transportation services	210	310	100	47.62	3.97



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Table 2.6B: Growth in Automotive Occupations		
Automotive Manufacturing Occupation	2012 Employment	Percent change from 2002
Painters, transportation equipment	1350	26.2
Production, planning and expediting clerks	5870	24.4
Engine and other machine assemblers	1050	23.5
Electricians	14260	22.7

Table 2.6C: Growth in Occupations					
Occupation	Employment		Percent change	Annual average openings	Education/ Training/ Experience
	2002	2012			
Medical assistants	3410	5160	51.30	240	Moderate-term on-the-job training
Veterinary technologists and technicians	610	910	49.20	40	Associate Degree
Home health aides**	7480	11140	48.90	465	Short-term on-the-job training
Medical records & health info. Technicians	2280	3330	46.10	140	Associate Degree
Network sys. And data commun. analysts	1410	2050	45.40	80	Bachelor's Degree
Personal and home care aides	3880	5490	41.50	220	Short-term on-the-job training
Computer software engr., Sys. Software	2440	3430	40.60	125	Bachelor's Degree



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Table 2.6D: Occupations with Highest Separation Rate

SOC	Occupation	Annual Job Openings		
		Total	Growth	Separations
41-2011	Cashiers	3990	765	3225
41-2031	Retail salespersons	3320	835	2485
35-3021	Combined food prep. & serving workers	2610	845	1765
35-3031	Waiters & waitresses	2475	550	1925
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1835	200	1635
29-1111	Registered nurses	1615	850	765
43-9061	Office clerks, general	1595	510	1085
11-1021	General operations managers	1540	600	940
53-3032	Truck drivers, heavy and tractor-trailer	1370	735	635

- Motor vehicle manufacturing is expected to be the fastest growing manufacturing sector; the fastest growing industries (projected from 2002 to 2012), along with 2002 base (state) employment and 2012 projections, are shown in Table 2.6A. Table 2.6.B shows the fastest growing automotive industry occupations.
- Health care practitioner and technical occupations will lead growth through 2012. Table 2.6C shows the occupations with the highest projected growth, as well as base employment and projected employment, for Alabama.
- Many of the fastest growing occupations will be in lower-wage lower-skill jobs and will produce more separations as individuals change jobs in search of stable career opportunities (see Table 2.6D).
- Textiles will lead the manufacturing sector in terms of job losses, with an estimated 15,460 lost jobs between 2002 and 2012 (Table 2.6E).



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Table 2.6E: Industries with Largest Projected Decline in Employment, 2002-2012

	INDUSTRY TITLE	Employment				Annual Growth Rate
		2002	2012	Net change	Percent change	
3152	Cut and sew apparel manufacturing	7940	3110	-4830	-60.83	-8.95
3133	Textile and fabric finishing mills	2750	1310	-1440	-52.36	-7.15
3151	Apparel knitting mills	9270	5100	-4170	-44.98	-5.80
3132	Fabric mills	6640	3920	-2720	-40.96	-5.13
4247	Petroleum merchant wholesalers	2750	1790	-960	-34.91	-4.20
3131	Fiber, yarn and thread mills	6690	4390	-2300	-34.38	-4.13
2121	Coal mining	3450	2410	-1040	-30.14	-3.52
4245	Farm product raw material merchant wholesalers	800	610	-190	-23.75	-2.68
3253	Agricultural chemicals manufacturing	2250	1740	-510	-22.67	-2.54
3329	Other fabricated metal product manufacturing	3720	2980	-740	-19.89	-2.19

- Table 2.6F shows top occupational declines. Occupations marked ** indicate those occupations among the top 30 largest declining occupations according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Seven of ten of the top ten occupational groups included over 8000 Alabama workers in 2002 possessing transferable manufacturing skills.
- Table 2.6G shows the skills required for a number of these jobs.
- Alabama’s workforce has significant gaps in basic skills (such as applied reading, problem solving, applied mathematics, communication and applied technology), which must be mastered prior to an individual succeeding in the acquisition of technical skills.



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Table 2.6F: Top Ten Occupational Losses, 2002-2012

SOC	Occupation	Employment		Net Change
		2002	2012	
51-6031	Sewing Machine Operators	10760	7460	-3300
45-9099	Farming, Fishing and Forestry Workers, All Other (OES only)	15950	14000	-1950
51-6063	Textile Knitting and Weaving Machine Setters, Operators and Tenders**	5760	3910	-1850
51-6064	Textile Winding, Twisting and Drawing out Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders**	5260	3810	-1450
43-9022	Word Processors and Typists**	3200	2560	-640
51-2022	Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers**	2560	2380	-480
51-6061	Textile Bleaching and Dyeing Machine Operators and Tenders**	1120	700	-420
51-6099	Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Workers, All Other	2250	1840	-410
43-4131	Loan interviewers and clerks	2900	2540	-360



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Table 2.6G: Skills Needs for Available Jobs

Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	English language Education and training Medicine and dentistry	Speaking Instructing Coordination Time management	Oral comprehension Oral expression Near vision Speech recognition
Registered Nurses	Medicine and dentistry Psychology Customer and personal service English language Biology	Active listening Reading comprehension Critical thinking Instructing Speaking	Problem sensitivity Oral expression Oral comprehension Inductive reasoning Written expression
Personal and Home Care Aides	Customer and personal service English language	Active listening Social perceptiveness Coordination Service orientation Monitoring	Oral comprehension Problem sensitivity Speech clarity Oral expression Speech recognition
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	Education and training Customer and personal service English language Psychology Fine arts	Speaking Learning strategies Instructing Social perceptiveness Active listening	Oral expression Oral comprehension Speech clarity Problem sensitivity Time sharing
Dental Assistants	Medicine and dentistry Customer and personal service English language Clerical Chemistry	Active listening Reading comprehension Speaking Social Perceptiveness Coordination	Oral expression Oral comprehension Written expression Near vision Information Ordering



Section 3.0: Northwest Alabama Economic Profile

3.0 Economic Profile

An analysis of indicators of existing economic trends and conditions provides a useful frame for the discussion of economic development opportunities in the region. Indicators such as employment, unemployment, personal income, and industry employment and wages are useful for determining in the overall health of the economy, its vitality and diversity and, when viewed in a historical context, revealing clues about likely future trends. This sort of analysis also serves an important comparative function, allowing judgment about the strengths and weaknesses of the local economy when compared to the performance of similar geographies and similar past periods. The analysis relies on three principle units: the five-county study area, which is further divided into four geographic units; geographic comparison areas; and business cycle comparisons and includes an overview of labor force characteristics, major industrial sectors, industrial and workforce trends.

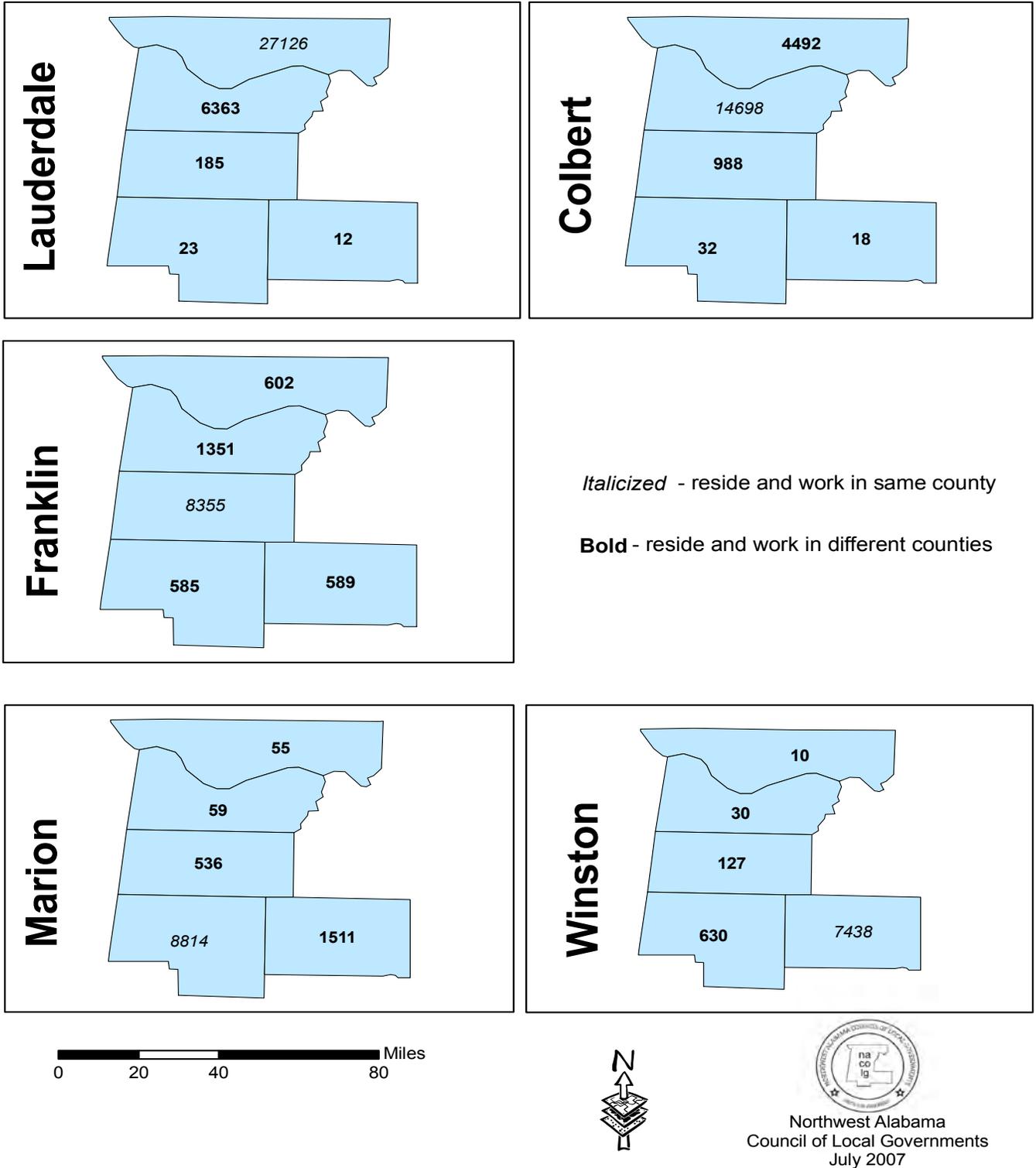
The five-county study area consists of Lauderdale, Colbert, Franklin, Marion, and Winston Counties in Northwest Alabama. These counties are interconnected by geography, culture, politics, and economics. In many ways, however, this interconnectivity is limited and each county continues to act as its own functional economic unit. A simple illustration of the level of economic interdependence (or lack thereof) in the region can be obtained by studying worker commuting patterns. While these patterns do not capture nearly all of the complexity of economic integration, they provide a rough estimate of some of these features since people's place of work can be linked to at least some of their other economic activities, such as recreation and shopping. As shown on Map 3.1: *Regional Commuting Patterns, 2000*, the highest degree of inter-county commuting occurs between Colbert and Lauderdale County. This connectedness is recognized also by the U.S. Department of Commerce, which groups these counties into the Florence-Muscle Shoals Metropolitan Statistical Area for the purpose of reporting many Census statistics. The remaining counties are considerably less integrated. Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, the five-county region is broken into four geographic units: Colbert-Lauderdale County (combined, as per the Census Bureau MSA), Franklin County, Marion County, and Winston County.

Geographic comparison areas are the second important analytical unit for judging economic health. Geographically comparison areas should be similar in location, population, and economic activity in order to control for as many effects as possible. Because no two areas are precisely the same in all features, choosing comparison areas based on similar conditions draw attention to potential causes of respective economic strengths and weaknesses. Put simply, similar geographies help to highlight the reason for differences in performance.

For much of the following analysis, three comparison geographies are presented to compare local performance to the performance of other parts of the state. All of the comparison areas were chosen with qualitative similarities in mind. Each pair of geographies share a number of qualitative characteristics such as location in North-Northwest Alabama, access to natural resources such as the Tennessee River (a vital natural resource), comparable geographic size, similar cultural and historical development, and similar political environments (due to state and local legislative environments). Additionally, each pair is selected to be roughly comparable in terms of population and employment characteristics.



Map 3.1 Regional Commuting Patterns 2000



As a comparison area for the Colbert-Lauderdale unit, the Decatur Metropolitan Statistical Area, consisting of Morgan and Lawrence Counties, was chosen. The primary geographic comparison area for Franklin, Marion and Winston counties was Lawrence County, which was chosen due to similar qualitative and quantitative characteristics as those described above. Additionally, although Lawrence County is included in the Decatur MSA, it is also located adjacent to two other MSAs (Florence-Muscle Shoals and Huntsville). Finally Clay County, Alabama was chosen as an additional comparison area for Winston County due to a potentially influential geographic consideration, namely, the presence of large tracts of national forest within the County. In addition to these geographies, statistics are also given for comparisons with the State of Alabama, the South¹ and the United States. Taken together, these several geographic comparisons allow a broad view of the performance of the region and individual counties within.

Business cycle effects, or periodic ups and downs in the national, regional and local economy, are also an important comparative consideration for the economic analysis. The most recent national business cycles identified by the National Bureau of Economic Research were from November 1982 to March 1991 and from March 1991 to November 2001². Each cycle began at a low point in the economy, a trough, continued through a recovery period to a high point or peak in the cycle and lasted through a decline or downturn, which ended at a second trough. The start and finish of each national cycle is determined by considering a variety of measures of national economic performance. Each phase of the cycle (recovery and downturn) and each point (peak and trough) provide an opportunity to evaluate economic performance through time. By comparing local and regional performance at different phases of the national business cycle, a measure of the robustness of growth periods and the severity of declines can be gauged. In conjunction with other comparative measurements, this time- and business-cycle sensitive review can present a more thorough understanding of the scope, character, and condition of the local and regional economy.

Finally, at points in the analysis that follows, there are references to the public feedback and input of the CEDS Committee obtained throughout the CEDS planning process. In combination with aggregate statistical measures, this information provides a more refined view of the performance of the local economy and the concerns of residents.

3.1 Labor Profile: Employment and Unemployment

3.1.1 Employment³

Employment, or the capacity of an economy to produce new jobs and new economic opportunities for a population, is one indicator of the economic health and vitality of a region. Primarily, in conditions of population growth a growth in employment opportunities is essential to provide jobs, income and quality of life to those entering the workforce. Steady employment growth is also necessary in order to buttress the overall economy against downturns, layoffs, and job losses in particular industries and sectors at various times in the business cycle. Additionally, healthy growth in employment opportunities is associated with lower unemployment and underemployment, as more workers find employment, and higher per capita incomes as vacancies in lower paying positions create demand for workers to fill those positions. In contrast, however, overly rapid employment growth may create rampant labor shortages in some sectors, leading to inflated wages, lost profitability and business closures. Thus, employment growth in an economy must be viewed in relation



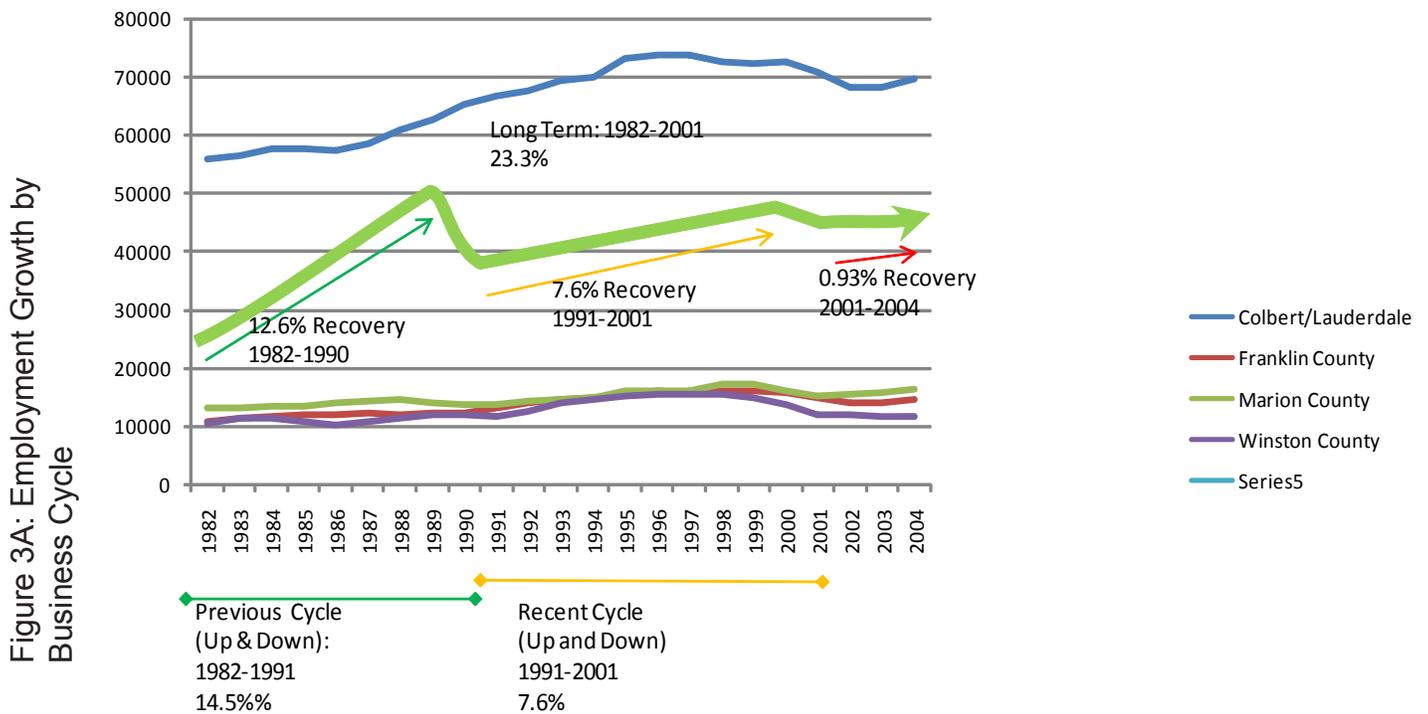
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to other indicators of economic health, such as population trends, unemployment and wages, and judged with regard to the effect of new jobs on the greater economy.

Local public meetings indicated that everywhere there was consensus that more jobs were needed, and that jobs should be matched with skills leading to higher quality jobs. In some places, quality was expressed primarily in terms of pay scale, while others discussed “blue collar” and “white collar/professional” opportunities. Many observed a disjoint between the skills encouraged in the workforce and the skills recruited to the area. There was consensus that skills and training should be tied to job-creation efforts in a coordinated way.

Figure 3A illustrates the trends in regional employment during the past two cycles. Between 1982 and 2001, across two cycles, total employment grew by 23.3% regionally. From 1982-1991, regional employment grew by an average of 14.5%; however, from 1991-2001 this average declined to 7.6%. Examining only the recovery period of each cycle reveals a similar trend, with first-cycle growth recovery at 12.6% and second-cycle recovery averaging only 7.6%. The decline in employment growth over successive business cycles signals a loss of economic potency that should be a significant concern for economic planning.

Table 3.1: Employment Growth presents employment data for the five-county region alongside comparable data for the nation, the southeast region, and the state (see also Section 3.3, which addresses employment by industrial sector). The trend in employment across the past two business cycles has been positive. Franklin



Source: National Bureau of Economic Research, Business Cycle Expansions and Contractions, and U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics



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Table 3.1: Analysis of Employment Growth

A. Total Employment, Selected Years

	1982	1990	2001	2005
United States	114557300	139380900	167014700	170091500
Alabama	1,692,494	2,061,101	2,392,552	2,444,266
Southeast	25,578,745	32,067,674	40,026,989	41,283,248
Florence- Muscle Shoals MSA	55,901	65,165	70,664	69,557
Decatur MSA	49,922	65,578	75,554	74,174
Franklin County	10,665	12,264	14,760	14,536
Marion County	13,127	13,598	15,056	16,177
Lawrence County	9,352	11,445	11,696	11,778
Winston County	2,244	2,616	2,211	2,316
Clay County	5,295	6,217	7,088	6,651

B. Percentage Change in Total Employment, Business Cycle

	Long-Term (1982-2001)	Prior Cycle (1982-1991)	Recent Cycle (1991- 2001)	Prior Recovery (1982-1990)	Current Recovery (2001-2004*)
United States	45.8	21	20.5	21.7	1.8
Alabama	41.4	22.1	15.4	21.7	2.2
Southeast	56.4	24.7	25.3	25.4	3.1
Florence- Muscle Shoals MSA	26.4	19.4	5.9	16.6	-1.6
Decatur MSA	51.3	31.8	14.9	31.4	-1.8
Franklin County	38.3	22	13.4	15	-1.5
Marion County	14.7	3.9	10.4	3.6	7.4
Lawrence County	25.1	24.9	0.13	22.4	0.7
Winston County	13.5	12.6	0.8	15.3	-0.6
Clay County	33.9	18.8	12.7	17.4	-6.2



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C. Annualized Rate of Employment Growth, by Period

	Long-Term (1982-2001)	Prior Cycle (1982-1991)	Recent Cycle (1991- 2001)	Prior Recovery (1982-1990)	Current Recovery (2001-2004*)
United States	0.02	0.021	0.019	0.025	0.006
Alabama	0.018	0.032	0.014	0.025	0.007
Southeast	0.024	0.025	0.023	0.029	0.01
Florence- Muscle Shoals MSA	0.012	0.02	0.006	0.019	-0.005
Decatur MSA	0.022	0.031	0.014	0.035	-0.006
Franklin County	0.017	0.022	0.013	0.018	-0.005
Marion County	0.007	0.004	0.01	0.004	0.024
Lawrence County	0.012	0.025	0	0.026	0.002

County area has led this growth (38.3%), followed by the Colbert-Lauderdale area (26.4%). Marion and Winston counties have trailed, with employment growth of only 14.7% and 13.5% respectively. Looking across business cycles, only Marion County outperformed the 1982-1991 cycle in 1991-2001; the remaining counties experienced significantly less growth in the second cycle than in the first.

Equally alarming, the magnitude of employment growth region-wide has been less significant than in comparable geographic areas. Whereas, nationally employment increased by 45.8% from 1982-2001, the regional average was only 23.3%. Compared to geographically similar areas, the region similarly underperformed. The Decatur MSA is somewhat similar to the Colbert-Lauderdale region, however, it registered a 51.3% increase in employment from 1982-2001. Likewise, Lawrence County is similar to Franklin, Marion, and Winston Counties, individually, and significantly outperformed 2 of 3 of these counties (25.1% growth) in employment growth in the years from 1982-2001. In fact, of all counties in the region, only Franklin County performed at near the national average for the period. Moreover, the performance gap is not attributable to historic underperformance of the South in any straightforward manner. Statewide, employment growth was 41.4%, much closer to the national average; while the Southeast as a region managed to outperform the national average, with a 56.6% growth in employment. The gap in performance between the five-county region and both the state and greater Southeast region indicates that, while the South is overcoming its legacy of economic difficulties, the benefits of growth are not uniformly distributed.

Altogether, while the region has experienced employment growth in recent decades, the rate of growth would appear to be leveling off significantly. This indicates a loss of economic vitality. Similar to a locomotive losing momentum on a steep incline, the region's economic engine appears to be losing some of its previous steam. The significance of this lost momentum is magnified when the region is compared to other geographies, which are experiencing greater rates of growth. None of this is to discount the region's achievements or to disparage recent activities geared toward development; however, it does point out the need to evaluate continuous efforts and identify augmenting strategies that will revitalize growth and development



in the region. The region has made significant strides toward overcoming high unemployment, and, in part, the success of these efforts at countering unemployment may have created an environment in which growth in total employment is constrained due to other limitations, such as workforce availability. Population trends indicating an older population with fewer working age individuals may increase constraints on workforce availability.

3.1.2 Unemployment⁴

Unemployment is a rough measure of the number of individuals lacking jobs in an economy. Unemployment statistics suffer from limitations due to their collection, and understanding these limitations is important to understanding the usefulness of the statistic as a measure of economic health. First, unemployment statistics represent only individuals *actively seeking employment through government placement agencies and receiving unemployment compensation*. Thus, they do not represent individuals lacking work who are seeking employment on their own nor do they represent individuals who have surpassed allowable periods for unemployment compensation and are no longer appearing in government unemployment records. Additionally, unemployment measures do not account for *discouraged workers*, who are individuals who have given up the search for work but are without jobs. Additionally, unemployment statistics are subject to fluctuations in population- that is, as the population increases or decreases (often as a result of the availability of jobs), unemployment rates change. The measure of unemployment, however, does not account for any gain or loss in population. Thus, while an area may experience slight population growth and maintain low unemployment rates, the reason for the low rate may be a loss of population due to a lack of employment opportunities in the region. Finally, unemployment statistics do not account for the incidence of *underemployment*, whereby a worker receives too few hours or too little compensation relative to skills, training or standard of living. Therefore, unemployment is a complicated measure and must be viewed in relation to other factors such as population growth and total employment.

In local public meetings, unemployment was mentioned less frequently than underemployment and population lost due to inadequate job opportunities as a source of economic hardship.

Table 3.2 Unemployment displays unemployment data for each of the geographies of the five-county region, the nation, the South, and comparable MSAs and counties. The data, reported monthly from January 1990 to February 2007, encompasses the past business cycle and the start of the current recovery period. Figure 3B presents a monthly graph of the four geographies in the study area, while Figure 3C presents the same data through 2006 in yearly averages. From these figures, it is clear that the trend in unemployment has been positive for all parts of the five-county region and that each county has generally followed the same trend in the growth and decline of unemployment. As a representation of the general trend in unemployment, Figure 3D provides an average for the five-county study area, based on these similar trends. Beginning at a level significantly higher than the national average in January 1990, unemployment rates have cycled downward to a present rate below the national average.

The early 1990s, in particular, saw a dislocation of workers in the five-county region, which was slow to correct. Even national unemployment trends improved, the five-county region continued to experience higher rates and recovered later than much of the nation. Figure 3E illustrates this gap in employment and significant progress that has since been made. The respite was short-lived, however, as unemployment rates rose again, in



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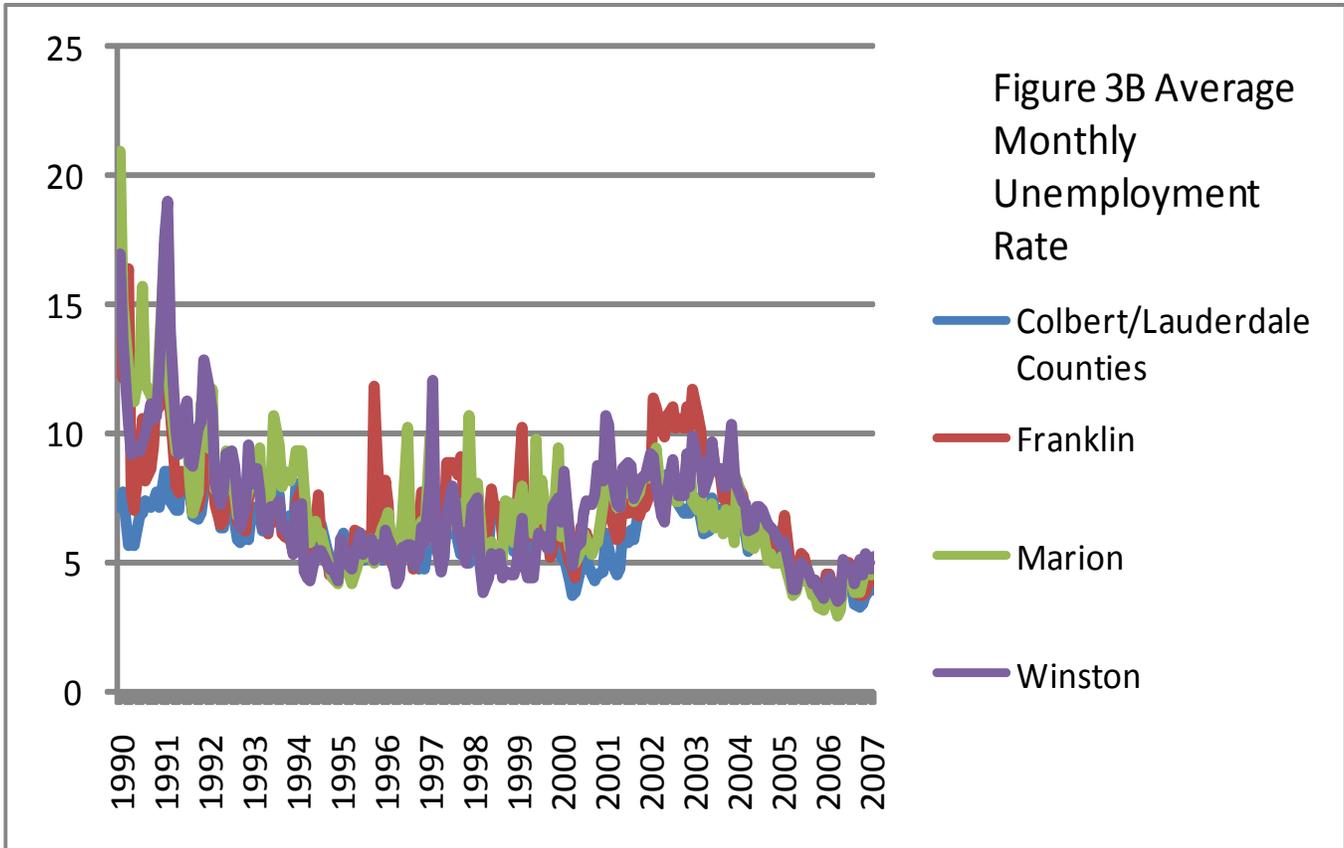


Table 3.2: Analysis of Unemployment

A. Annual Unemployment Rate, Selected Years

	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002	2004	2006
United States	5.6	7.5	6.1	5.4	4.5	4.0	5.8	5.5	4.6
Alabama	6.3	6.9	5.4	4.5	3.9	4.1	5.4	5.1	3.6
South	5.7	7.2	5.9	5.2	4.4	3.9	5.6	5.3	4.5
Colbert-Lauderdale Decatur MSA	6.9	7	6	5.5	6.5	4.6	7.8	6.1	3.9
Franklin County	10.6	7.4	5.9	6.3	6.7	5.8	10.3	6.5	4.2
Marion County	13.2	8.2	6.3	6.4	6.2	5.9	8.1	5.9	3.9
Lawrence County	7.8	9.4	6.9	5.7	4.9	4.4	6.3	6	4.3
Winston County	11.1	8.6	5.2	5.5	5.1	6.9	8.1	6.8	4.4
Clay County	6.6	6.2	4.9	4.2	3.2	5.4	5.7	5.9	4.1

keeping with national trends, to spike in 2002. Since 2002, however, rates have steadily declined region-wide. Presently, unemployment in the local economy is not a significant negative factor; in fact, by the common “rule of thumb” that 3% unemployment is as low as the indicator is likely to ever go, it would appear that the region is at or near full employment. This is a significant achievement for the five-county region considering the double-digit unemployment rates of 1990 and the prolonged dislocation of the region.



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B. Average Unemployment Rate, by Period

	Recent Cycle (March 1991- November 2001)	Recent Recovery (March 1991 - March 2001)	Recent Downturn (March 2001- November 2001)	Ongoing Recovery (November 2001- February 2007)
United States	5.55	5.6	5.35	5.47
Alabama	5.17	5.2	5.24	4.75
Southeast	5.39	5.43	5.29	5.27
Colbert-Lauderdale	6.13	6.13	6.65	5.93
Decatur MSA	5.39	5.43	5.34	5.21
Franklin County	6.79	6.79	7.6	6.97
Marion County	7.14	7.1	8.6	5.86
Lawrence County	6.6	6.69	5.91	5.62
Winston County	6.83	6.75	9.13	6.63
Clay County	5.6	5.6	6.16	5.43

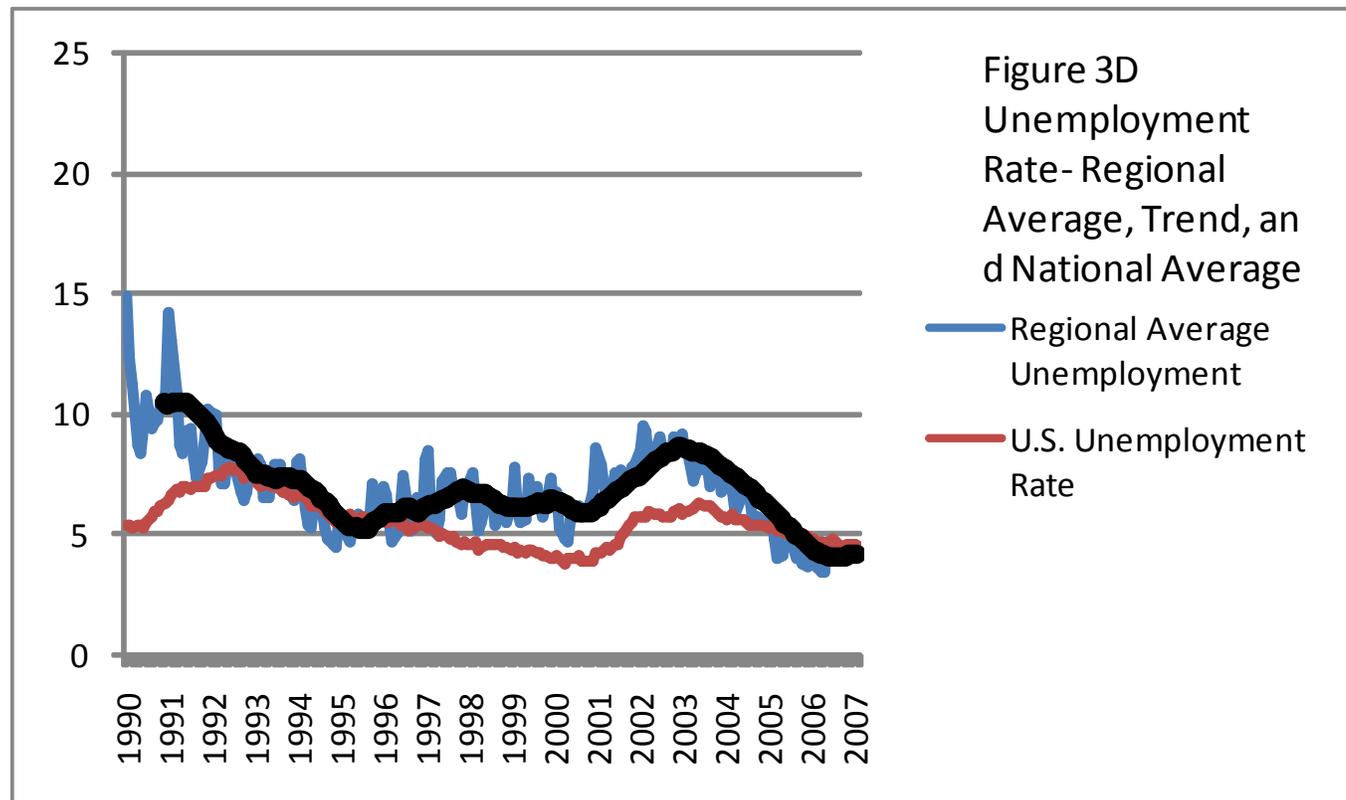
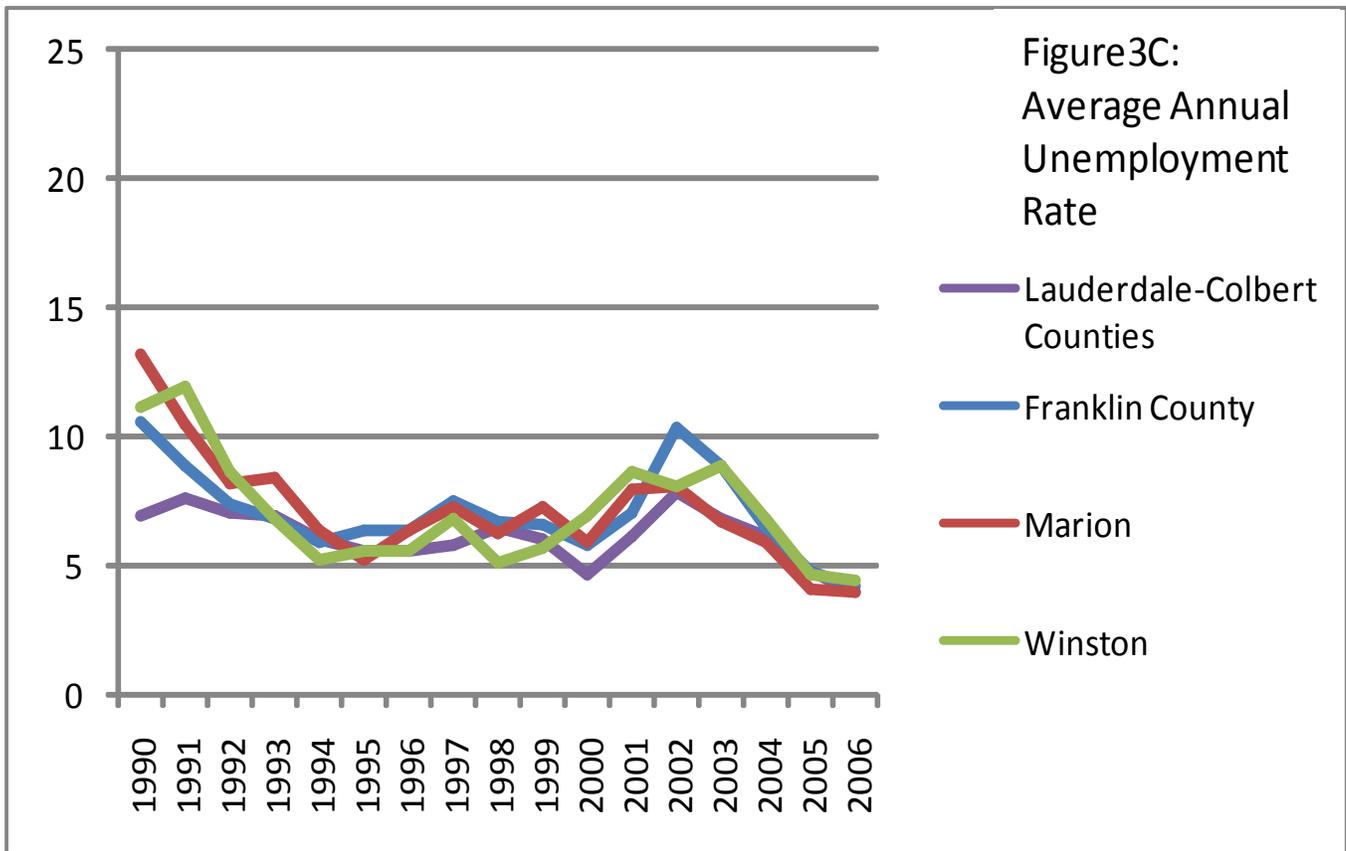
C. Percentage Point Change in Unemployment, Selected Periods

	Recent Cycle (March 1991- November 2001)	Recent Recovery (March 1991 - March 2001)	Recent Downturn (March 2001- November 2001)	Ongoing Recovery (November 2001- February 2007)
United States	-1.3	-2.4	1.1	-0.7
Alabama	-3.4	-3.9	0.5	-2
South	-2	-2.9	0.9	-0.5
Colbert-Lauderdale	-1.3	-2.9	1.6	-3.2
Decatur MSA	-2.7	-3.6	0.9	-1.8
Franklin County	-8.7	-8.3	-0.4	-1.2
Marion County	-4.9	-4	-0.9	-3.2
Lawrence County	-1.7	-2.9	1.2	-1.7
Winston County	-10.9	-8.7	-2.2	-3.3
Clay County	-5.3	-4.9	-0.4	-2

In regional comparisons, each of the study area geographies performed reasonably well alongside their geographic counterparts. As shown in Table 3.2, side-by-side comparisons of unemployment rates between study areas and comparison areas indicate in each case that study and comparison areas followed similar trends. Although the correlation is not exact, due to local economic variations unaccounted for in the analysis, the general trend was toward high early unemployment, slow recovery in the mid- to late-1990s, and a sharp increase after 2000. The only clear corollary between national and local trends appears around 2000, with the most recent economic downturn, suggesting a temporary alignment with national trends. In the aftermath, however, a clear- and clearly positive- divergence appears, with the local geographies (and the comparison



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areas) showing improvement that outperforms the national trend.

3.1.3 Underemployment

Underemployment is the condition of a worker who has skills that would allow him or her success in a higher paying job. Such workers tend to earn lower wages than they believe themselves qualified to earn, work fewer hours, and have less job security and tenure. Reasons for underemployment vary considerably, but include factors such as a lack of job opportunities, an unwillingness to commute, and an inability to relocate from a geographic location due to family or other considerations. According to a study of underemployment in Alabama, the statewide rate of underemployment was 24% in 2004, with approximately one underemployed worker for every five workers in the state. Most underemployed workers were willing to drive longer distances for better jobs. They were also more likely to change jobs and frequently seek other employment opportunities, looking for ways to utilize skills currently possessed but unused in their current employment. Based on survey responses, Region I of the Workforce Investment Advisory Area, made up of the five counties of the Economic Development District (the NACOLG Region), posted the lowest statewide rate of underemployment- 19.4%, with approximately 17617 available underemployed workers. County-level estimates are much less certain statistically

Table 3.3: Underemployment			
	Underemployment Rate (Among Workers)	Underemployment Statistics for Region I WIAA	
Colbert-Lauderdale	15.91%	Labor Force	97180
Franklin	6.35%	Employed	90810
Marion	28.13%	Underemployed Workers	17617
Winston	18.52%	Unemployed	6370
Region I WIAA	19.4%	Available Labor Pool	23987

due to lower response rates but are reported in Table 3.3.

Underemployment was cited as a significant and growing concern throughout the region. Individuals expressed concern that employment opportunities were limited for skilled workers, leading to lower earnings and population loss.

3.2 Household Income, Personal Income and Earnings, Benefits

Personal income and the earnings of workers is another important indicator of economic health. The wage earned by an employee translates into a standard of living in obvious ways. Also important is the relationship between earnings, the distribution of earnings, and such quality of life issues as economic fragmentation and affordable cost-of-living. An understanding not only of average wages, but also of wealth distributions, as well as cost of living and earnings relative to other geographic locations is necessary in order to understand the effect of earnings on the local economy. Many decisions such as whether to seek employment in the local economy or elsewhere (or whether to seek employment at all), the likely skill level needed by employees (assuming higher



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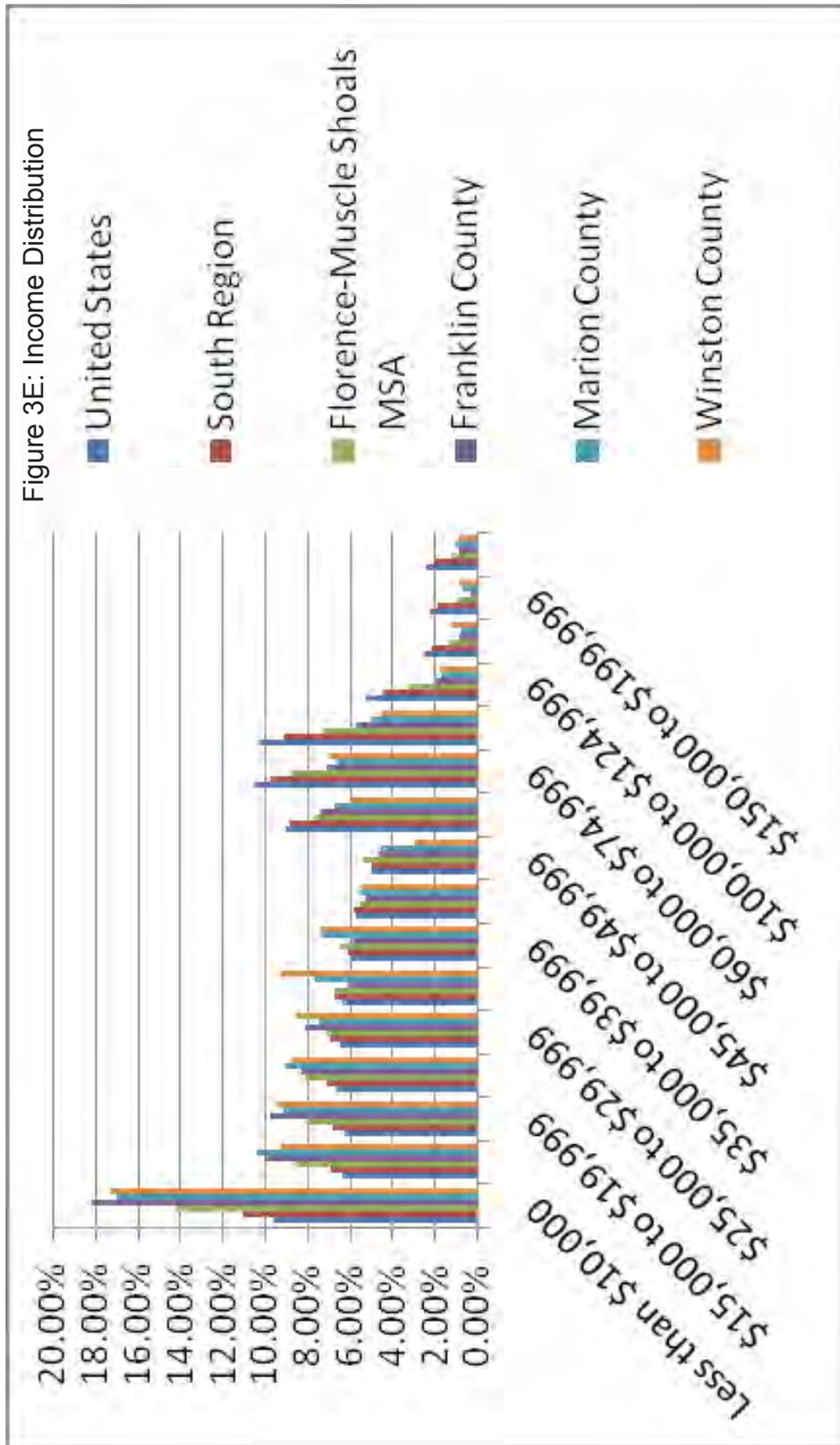
skills demand higher wages), and the attractiveness of jobs in the local economy (i.e. who decides to come to the region to work) are strongly influenced by wages and earnings.

3.2.1 Median Household Income and Income Distribution

Table 3.4 and Figure 3E provide information on the median income and the distribution of household income from the U.S. Census sample file. As reported in 1999, median household income for the region lagged behind that of the nation, the South, and the state. Additionally, incomes tended toward the lower end of the scale, compared to the nation, the South and the state, indicating a need to address issues related to the level of

Table 3.4: Median Income and Income Distribution	United States	South	Colbert-Lauderdale	Franklin County	Marion County	Winston County
Median household income in 1999	41,994	38,790	32,704	27,177	27,475	28,435
Less than \$10,000	9.54%	11.00%	14.17%	18.20%	16.95%	17.22%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	6.31%	6.85%	8.56%	10.00%	10.33%	9.27%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	6.25%	6.77%	7.95%	9.70%	9.06%	9.31%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	6.57%	7.07%	8.10%	8.21%	8.95%	8.71%
\$25,000 to \$29,999	6.44%	6.87%	7.04%	8.10%	7.42%	8.49%
\$30,000 to \$34,999	6.37%	6.66%	6.70%	6.04%	7.65%	9.26%
\$35,000 to \$39,999	5.91%	6.09%	6.42%	5.98%	7.30%	7.38%
\$40,000 to \$44,999	5.65%	5.74%	5.51%	5.19%	5.51%	5.44%
\$45,000 to \$49,999	4.97%	4.96%	5.34%	4.59%	4.50%	2.92%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	9.04%	8.78%	7.65%	7.37%	6.74%	5.93%
\$60,000 to \$74,999	10.43%	9.71%	8.75%	7.05%	6.56%	7.01%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	10.23%	9.08%	7.21%	5.68%	4.97%	4.49%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	5.20%	4.44%	3.23%	1.96%	1.67%	1.76%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	2.52%	2.11%	1.30%	0.83%	0.73%	1.18%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2.20%	1.84%	0.90%	0.30%	0.64%	0.79%
\$200,000 or more	2.37%	2.02%	1.16%	0.78%	1.00%	0.82%





earnings produced by available jobs in the region.

3.2.2 Personal Income, Earnings by Place of Work

Table 3.5 (A and B) display total personal income and change in personal income for the United States, the South, Alabama, the regional study areas, and regional comparison areas for various components of wealth for 1995 and 2005. The following statistics from Table 3.4 are referenced in the discussion that follows:

Personal Income is the income that is received by all persons from all sources. It is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements, supplements to wages and salaries, proprietors' income with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments, rental income of persons with capital consumption adjustment, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and personal current transfer receipts, less contributions for government social insurance.

Gross earnings by place of work is a measure of the total value of all incomes produced in a particular geographic location- regardless of the place of residence of the worker. (Includes only wages and salaries paid by employers, supplements to wages paid by employers, and proprietors' income.)

Net earnings by place of residence is a measure of the total earnings of all residents of the geographic area after withholding for contributions to SSI and commuting.

Adjustment for residence is a "commuting adjustment" that represents the amount of earnings exported from the county by residents working in one county and residing in another and the earnings imported to the county by residents employed outside of the county; it is the aggregate difference in incomes "brought home" by residents and those "sent out" with non-resident workers.

Payments from sources other than working are of two general types- either investments, savings (including pensions) and properties (*dividend interest and rent*) or social security, government retirement, unemployment or disability (*transfers*). This is a particularly important measure of income since net wealth is usually tied to income producing investments of various types. Therefore, this source of income is a measure of the approximate net value of the value of investments in various forms- from property to savings.

Per capita personal income is an indicator of community earnings, equalized by total population. Note: Aggregate per capita personal income does not measure the probable earnings or wage per worker!

Figure 3F displays the percentage change in per capita personal income and the average wage per job between 1995 and 2005.

United States: Gross and net earnings in the United States increased by 33.62% and 34.22%, respectively between 1995 and 2005. Income earned elsewhere and brought into the United States increased by 10.45% (it was, however, one hundredth of 1% (0.01%) of the total U.S. income). Dividends, interest and rent increased by 9.13% and transfer payments went up by 35.78% (likely a result of increasing numbers of retirees). Total personal income increased by 29.8%. Per capita personal income increased 16.57%, compared to an 11.35% growth in population, indicating that income (regardless of its distribution) increased more than population.

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Table 3.5A: Personal Income, Derivation of Personal Income, Employment per Job, 1995-2005
(2006 \$000s)

	United States (% change '95-'05)	South	Alabama	
Personal Income	10,550,649,806 (29.8%)	2,376,901,103 (32.64%)	139,082,477 (25.86%)	
Farm Personal income	51,023,484 (0.12%)	12,946,749 (-20.0)	1,359,597 (30.12%)	
Population	306,071,805 (-13.11%)	76,456,011 (-10.53%)	4,695,047 (-17.4%)	
Per capita personal income	35,583 (16.57%)	32,091 (15.69%)	30,579 (18.9%)	
<i>Derivation of personal income</i>				
Earnings by place of work	8,241,189,161 (33.62%)	1,782,028,676 (36.04%)	101,854,921 (24.9%)	
Less: contributions for government social insurance	907,549,935 (29.0%)	198,549,951 (33.59%)	11,502,538 (19.51%)	
Plus: Adjustment for residence	-1,304,774 (10.45%)	10,830,865 (2.27%)	1,487,531 (35.98%)	
Equals: Net earnings by place of residence	7,332,334,452 (34.22%)	1,594,309,590 (36.04%)	91,839,914 (25.77%)	
Plus: Dividends, interest, rent	1,642,478,452 (9.13%)	371,618,373 (8.61%)	21,299,113 (12.58%)	
Plus: Personal current transfer receipts	1,575,836,903 (35.78%)	410,973,141 (47.86%)	25,943,450 (39.76%)	
<i>Employment</i>				
Average wage per job	41,441 (14.18%)	37,037 (14.92%)	35,061 (10.82%)	



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Table 3.5 B. Percentage Change in Personal Income by Component, 1995-2005

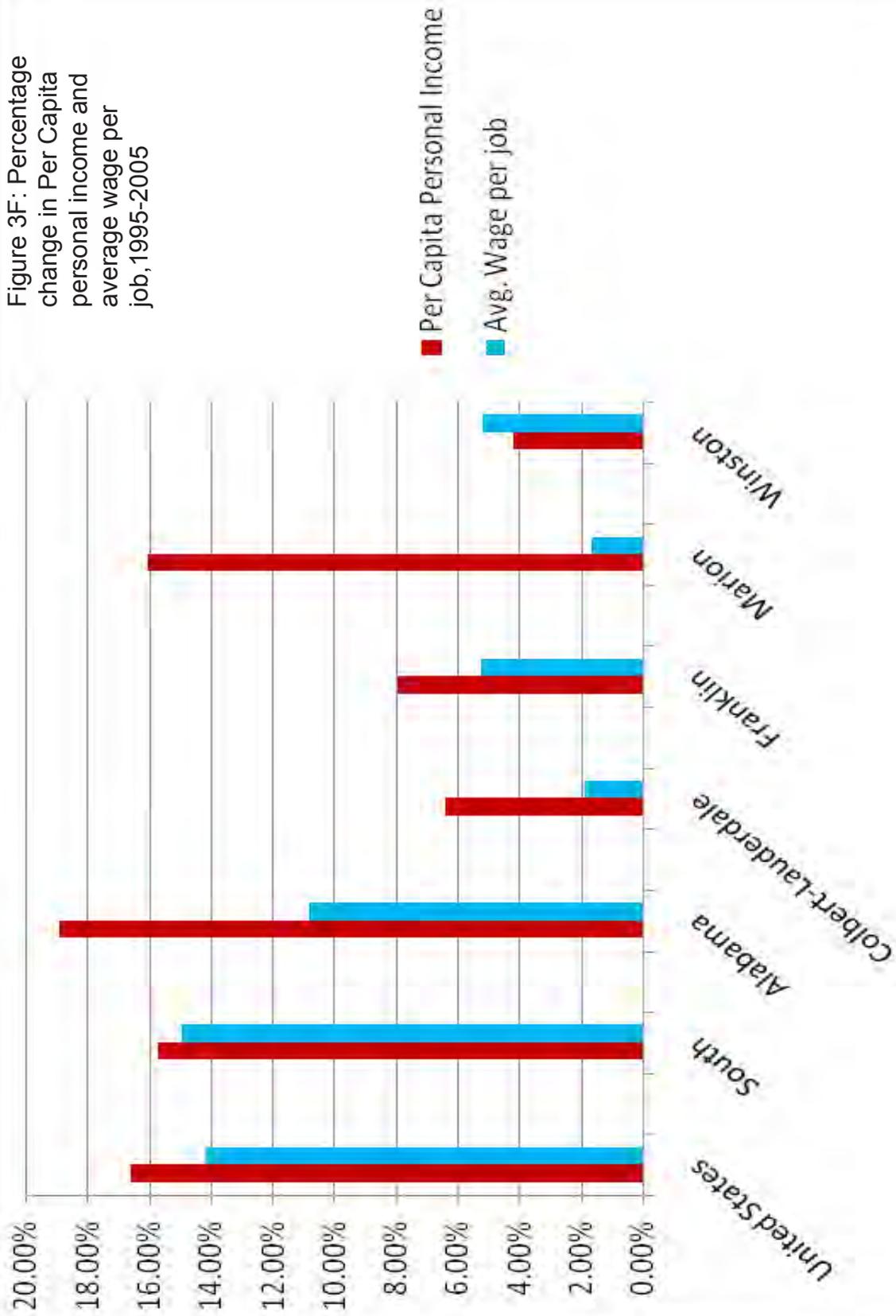
	Colbert-Lauderdale (% change '95-'05)	Franklin	Marion	Winston
Personal Income	3,818,252 (8.75%)	766,327 (10.73%)	753,283 (12.66%)	597,708 (8.68%)
Farm Personal income	29,138 (546.13%)	56,509 (88.09%)	29,428 (206.54%)	24,896 (-10.98%)
Population	146,623 (-20.24%)	31,718 (-19.94%)	30,996 (-24.22%)	25,294 (-18.9%)
Per capita personal income	26,881 (6.39%)	24,939 (7.92%)	25,087 (16.01%)	24,392 (4.18%)
<i>Derivation of personal income</i>				
Earnings by place of work	2,379,373 (-0.05%)	478,841 (14.83%)	530,082 (7.52%)	386,120 (-12.66%)
Less: contributions for government social insurance	282,484 (-3.64%)	51,445 (4.73%)	59,718 (-2.61%)	43,437 (-15.88%)
Plus: Adjustment for residence	222,187 (23.0%)	54,900 (-17.17%)	-3,908 (-1630.76%)	8,559 (-133.32%)
Equals: Net earnings by place of residence	2,319,077 (2.25%)	482,296 (11.09%)	466,456 (7.99%)	351,242 (-3.7%)
Plus: Dividends, interest, rent	627,736 (0.73%)	89,817 (-18.18%)	97,661 (4.43%)	80,069 (19.34%)
Plus: Personal current transfer receipts	871,439 (40.59%)	194,214 (31.1%)	189,166 (32.14%)	166,397 (40.87%)
<i>Employment</i>				
Average wage per job	29,607 (1.88%)	25,480 (5.22%)	27,805 (1.66%)	26,723 (5.16%)

Southeast Region: Gross and net earnings in the Southeast census region each increased by the same amount-- 36.04%, between 1995 and 2005. Income earned elsewhere and brought into the Southeast increased by 2.27%, rising to 0.46% of the total personal income of Southeast residents. Dividends, interest and rent income increased by 8.61%-- less than the national rate of increase. Transfer payments increased by considerably more than the national average -- 47.86% for the Southeast compared to 35.78% for the nation, indicating a larger



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Figure 3F: Percentage change in Per Capita personal income and average wage per job, 1995-2005



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number of payments from transfer sources such as military retirements, unemployment compensation, social security disability, and (perhaps most importantly) social security retirement payments. Total personal income increased by 32.64%, indicating more wealth concentrated in the Southeast. However, population growth was slightly less than growth in per capita income (14.65% and 15.69%), indicating that the overall personal earnings of residents (but not necessarily the distribution of wealth) increased at a pace capable of sustaining the standard of living.

Alabama: Gross and net earnings in Alabama increased by 24.90% and 25.77%, respectively between 1995 and 2005. Income earned elsewhere and brought into Alabama increased by 35.98%. Dividends, interest and rent increased by 12.58% and transfer payments went up by 39.76% (likely a result of increasing numbers of retirees). Total personal income increased by 25.86%. Per capita personal income increased 18.90%, compared to a 5.85% growth in population (i.e. income increased more than population).

Colbert/Lauderdale County: Gross earnings in Colbert and Lauderdale Counties decreased slightly, falling by 0.05%, yet the net earnings increased by 2.25% between 1995 and 2005— an indication that, while residents are seeing small advances in earnings, the income produced by economic opportunities located in Colbert and Lauderdale Counties is relatively stable despite a small decline between 1995 and 2005. Income earned elsewhere and brought into the Colbert and Lauderdale Counties increased by 23%, pointing toward a larger portion of the income of people living in Colbert and Lauderdale Counties being earned outside of these counties. Dividends, interest and rent income increased by 0.73%—significantly less than the national rate of increase (9.13%) or the South as a whole (8.61%), which indicates that earnings from investments are lagging in the Shoals area. Transfer payments increased by more than the national average—40.59% for Colbert and Lauderdale Counties, greater than the national increase (35.78%) but not so great as the Southern increase (47.86%), indicating potential growth in fixed income from transfer sources in the Shoals area. Total personal income increased by 8.75%, considerably less than the national or Southern trends. Population growth increased between 1995 and 2005 (2.22%), yet per capita income showed a larger increase (6.39%), indicating that community earnings as whole experienced a nominal degree of growth.

Franklin County: Gross and net earnings in Franklin County increased by 14.83% and 11.09%, respectively between 1995 and 2005. Commuting adjustments experienced a drop (-17.17%), representing trend in which income earned in the local area is being exported out of Franklin County. Dividends, interest and rent income also decreased by -18.18%, significantly less than the national rate (an increase 9.13%) or the South (8.61%). In terms of income from investments, this decrease is alarming. Transfer payments saw an increase (31.1% for Franklin County), but it was lower than the national increase of 35.78% but not so great as the Southern increase (47.86%), still indicative of a regional trend in the increase of possible fixed income recipients to the area. Total personal income increased by 10.73%, considerably less than the national or Southern trend. Population increased (2.60%), while increases in per capita income (7.92%) indicated growth in community earnings as a whole.

Marion County: Gross and net earnings in Marion County increased by 7.52% and 7.99%, respectively, between 1995 and 2005. A significant decrease in commuting adjustment (-1630.76%) is an indication that income earned locally is being exported out of Marion County, a large drop compared to the national rate and the South. Dividends, interest and rent income increased by 4.43%—slightly less than the national and the Southern rate of increase. Transfer payments increased 32.14% for Marion County—only slightly less than that of the national



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growth (35.78%) but not as great as the Southern increase (47.86%). Total personal income increased by 12.66%, considerably less than the national or Southeastern trend. Population declined (-2.89%) in Marion County between 1995 and 2005, yet per capita personal income increased by 16.01%, which is indicative of community economic growth as a whole.

Winston County: Gross and net earnings in Winston County decreased by 12.66% and 3.70%, respectively between 1995 and 2005. Winston County also saw a sharp decrease in commuting adjustments (-133.32%) representing an increase in income being exported out of Winston County. Dividends, interest and rent income increased by 19.34%--slightly less than the national rate of increase but considerably less than the South as a whole. Transfer payments increased by more than the national average—40.87% for Winston County, greater than the national increase (35.78%) but not as great as the Southern increase (47.86%). Total personal income increased by 8.68%, considerably less than the national or Southern trends. Population growth (4.32%) exceeded growth in per capita income (4.18%), indicating that personal income may be slightly lagging in terms of its effects across the population.

3.2.3 Earnings

Table 3.6 shows additional information on earnings, broken into trends over time, i.e. the long-term trend from 1982-2001, the two most recent complete business cycles (1982-1991 and 1991-2001), and the beginning of the most recent business cycle (2001-2005). Figure 3G and Figure 3H illustrate the trends in total regional earnings and earnings per job from 1982 to 2005.

Total Earnings is the total of all wages earned in a particular geography, reported annually.

Total earnings per job are the total earnings in the geographic area divided by the total number of jobs in the geographic area. Note: As an aggregate measure that does not address the distribution of earnings, total earnings per job does not measure the likely earnings or wage per job. Also note that differences between earnings reported here and income reported above result from capturing changes over different time periods in order to illustrate the effects of business cycles on trends over time.

As shown in Table 3.6, the region has lagged behind the nation, the South and the state in long term increases in earnings. Compared to the national average increase of 69.83% and the South as a region's increase of 82.16% Alabama too lagged, showing only a 56.85% increase from 1982-2001. In the same period, the region's earnings grew more slowly, with the lowest gains posted in Colbert and Lauderdale Counties (12.15%), likely due to higher beginning wages, and the highest gains shown in Franklin County (51.85%), followed by Winston County (22.8%) and Marion County (15.36%).

The long term trend in earnings per job, that is, the gross earnings of an area divided by the number of jobs in the geographic area, has also been slower than the national average. Growth in earnings per job was highest in Marion county (7.93%), followed by Franklin County (4.65%), Winston County (4.36%) and finally Colbert and Lauderdale Counties, which lost 9.75% of its aggregate earnings per job over the period from 1982 to 2001.

The potency of the local economy can also be viewed in terms of how it compares to performance in prior business cycles. In this respect, the results across business cycles are mixed. Compared to 1982 to 1991, the nation posted a 9.49% increase in its growth rate for total earnings and 7.73% increase in its growth in earnings per



Table 3.6: Earnings Comparisons (constant \$2006)

A. Total Earnings and Earnings per Worker, Selected Years

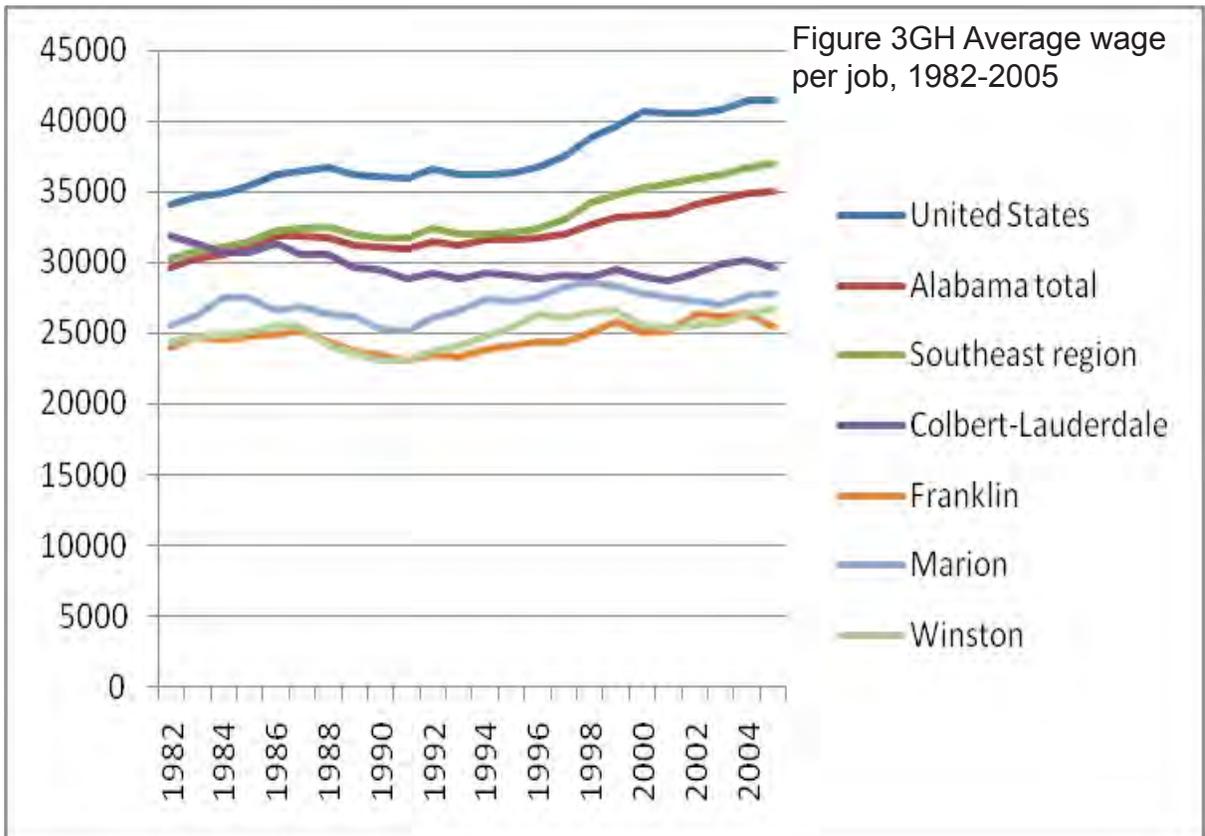
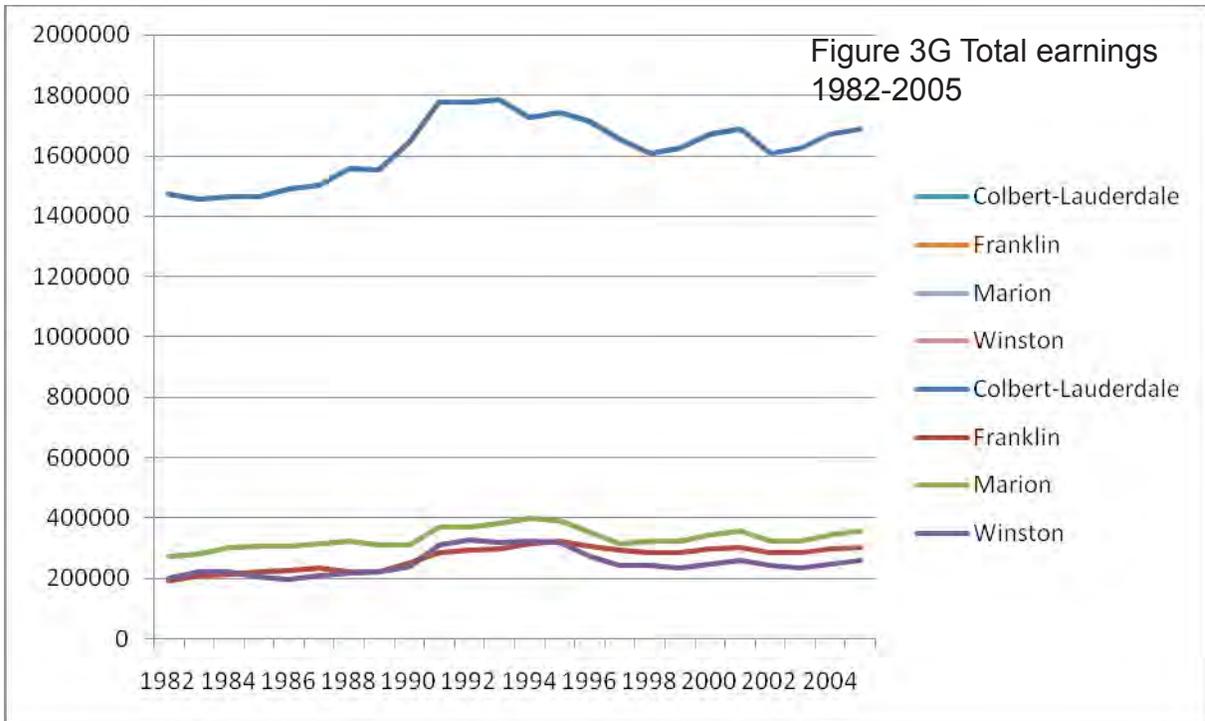
	1982		1990		2001		2005	
	Total Earnings	Earnings per Job						
United States	3311178678	34053	4231002491	35980	5623335462	40504	5841839484	41441
Alabama	42882121	29609	54722771	31020	67262201	33508	72139479	35061
Southeast	655808679	30321	869460841	31796	1194611008	35566	1285871581	37037
Colbert-	1475102	31830	1603642	29463	1654376	28726	1691225	29607
Lauderdale	1272967	30819	1647396	30755	2094593	34053	2031667	34154
Decatur MSA	193672	24065	218542	23456	294087	25185	303621	25480
Franklin	272801	25531	288863	25386	314694	27557	359650	27805
County	223655	31734	285251	34056	274269	37883	273046	36725
Marion County	199241	24439	216724	23129	244676	25503	259003	26723
Lawrence	94416	22479	107414	21903	129707	23725	134093	26612
County								
Winston								
County								
Clay County								

B. Percentage Changes in Earnings, by Period

	Long-Term (1982-2001)		Prior Cycle (1982-1991)		Recent Cycle (1991-2001)		Current Cycle (2001-2005)	
	Total Earnings	Earnings per Job	Total Earnings	Earnings per Job	Total Earnings	Earnings per Job	Total Earnings	Earnings per Job
United States	69.83	18.95	25.66	5.26	35.15	13.00	3.89	2.31
Alabama	56.85	13.17	27.81	4.63	22.72	8.16	7.25	4.63
Southeast	82.16	17.30	31.31	4.85	38.72	11.87	7.64	4.14
Colbert-Lauderdale	12.15	-9.75	8.73	-9.42	3.15	-0.36	2.23	3.07
Decatur MSA	64.54	10.50	32.71	2.21	23.98	8.11	-3.00	0.30
Franklin County	51.85	4.65	20.52	-4.03	25.99	9.05	3.24	1.17
Marion County	15.36	7.93	6.11	-1.34	8.71	9.40	14.29	0.90
Lawrence County	22.63	19.38	30.49	7.76	-6.02	10.78	-0.45	-3.06
Winston County	22.80	4.36	6.70	-5.16	15.09	10.03	5.86	4.78
Clay County	37.38	5.54	11.76	-6.02	22.92	12.31	3.38	12.17



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job. Similarly, the south saw an increase in its rate of growth in earnings and earnings per job in 1991-2001 as compared to the previous business cycle. In terms of total earnings, Alabama performed better in the first cycle, from 1982-1991, than in the second. In the second, however, earnings per job increased at a more robust pace in Alabama. A similar pattern was experienced by Colbert and Lauderdale Counties, with the rate of growth in earnings falling in the second business cycle, but the rate of earnings per job increasing. Elsewhere in the region, performance in the second cycle was higher than in the first, indicating that the aggregate economic environment affected local community economies in different ways throughout the region.

3.2.4 Employment Benefits: Health Insurance

Access to benefits such as health insurance is an additionally important labor force characteristics. Along with pay, these benefits are usually cited as among the top “job quality” features. According to recent surveys⁵, health insurance coverage in the U.S. was had by 84.75% of respondents, compared to 86.29% Alabama’s respondents. Among those with health insurance, however, private coverage was lower in Alabama, with 78.22% responding that their insurance was from private sources in the state compared to 81.09% nationally. Coverage differed among individuals of different age groups across the state, with higher coverage

Table 3.7: Health Insurance Coverage, 2004 :					
Type of Coverage (%)	U.S.	State	Under 18	18-64	65 older
Private Coverage	68.1	66.9	62.2	67.5	62.6
Government Coverage	27.2	30.6	35.9	22.5	95.6
Not Covered	15.7	13.5	7.4	15.2	0.2
Some Type	84.3	86.5	92.6	84.8	99.8
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2005 Annual and Economic Supplement.					

among the young and the elderly (see Table 3.7).

3.3 Industry Profile

The characteristics of the regional economy can also be described in terms of the concentration of industries found in the local economy. Measurements of the industrial sectors most influential to the economy can assist in describing present economic conditions, recognizing potential for investment and expansion, as well as identifying potential opportunities for reinvestment. In many ways, the tools available to identify



and describe industry are similar to those available to describe workers because the most common measures of industry are based on employment characteristics-- income (i.e. value of the payroll of all producers in a particular sector) and the number of employees in all producers in a particular sector.

The following section describes the industrial mix and concentration of industries in the region based upon these features. The statistics found in this section were supplied by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) through an economic assessment and planning software package- Economic Development Resource Group's Local Economic Assessment Package (EDR-LEAP). The program, which provides statistical information on each of the counties of the ARC, including 37 Alabama counties, contains statistics related to employment, income, value added through production, and production output. This information is available for study area(s) and comparison areas and is available at annual intervals from 1997 to 2005. Additionally, the package simplifies calculations for a number of commonly computed statistics that describe local economies in terms of industrial employment and income.

In the analysis that follows, EDR-LEAP is used to calculate a number of useful statistics, indicating trends in industrial employment and income potential, presented by industry sector. Appendix C presents the full statistics for the region and the individual counties of the region⁶. The base study area for the following analysis is the NACOLG Region/Economic Development District composed of the counties Colbert, Lauderdale, Franklin, Marion and Winston. The study period chosen is from 2002 to 2005, which represents the most recent (and ongoing) period of growth following a low-point in economic performance. Although data are available from 1997 to 2005, a shorter time period was chosen so as to avoid misrepresenting growth trends by encompassing a period that crosses between two business cycles. The United States and the 37 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) counties in Alabama are presented as comparison areas for the regional analysis. Where Alabama is cited in the analysis that follows, the trend, statistic or comparison is limited to the 37 ARC counties in Alabama.

The distribution of income and employment across industrial sectors can indicate the degree of specialization present in a local economy and indicate the industries that are most vital to the local economy. Comparisons based on growth trends over time can point toward the potential for growth or decline in an industrial. The current level of employment concentration and income produced in a particular sector, compared to trends in that sector (local, national and in a comparison area), can lend insight as to the need for policy changes to counteract decline in particular industries or to promote growth in existing and new sectors. This section describes these characteristics and the trends of the local economy in terms of income and employment distribution across industrial sectors. However, this quantitative approach does not supplant qualitative assessments in the process of deliberating policies. Such an analysis may point out a direction for further inquiry, but common sense and an understanding of local cultural and historical attitudes are still priorities when determining an appropriate course of action.

3.3.1 Distribution and Change in Employment by Industrial Sector

Table 3.8 displays employment patterns and trends in the twenty largest, in terms of employment, industrial sectors for the region (excluding "government and non-NAICS"). *Total employment* is reported from all sources, as measured by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (including private, public, farm and non-farm employment), and by industrial sector for the starting and ending years of the study period (2002 and 2005).



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Table 3.8: Employment Patterns and Trends by Sector										
		NACOLG/EDD Region		Adjusted Annual Growth	Alabama ARC counties		Adjusted Annual Growth	United States		Adjusted Annual Growth
		2002	2005		2002	2005		2002	2005	
NAICS	Sector	Region			AL ARC States					
441-454	Retail Trade	12,033	12,570	1.46%	276,737	265,217	-1.41%	18,026,532	17,154,490	-1.64%
621-624	Health Care & Social Services	6,822	7,524	3.32%	184,946	203,154	3.18%	15,594,260	16,965,965	2.85%
721-722	Accommodations, Eating & Drinking	6,784	7,086	1.46%	156,049	172,079	3.31%	11,403,112	12,412,763	2.87%
321	Wood Products	5,081	5,402	2.07%	23,218	22,093	-1.64%	597,618	615,138	0.97%
230	Construction	5,538	5,297	-1.47%	155,301	169,369	2.93%	10,415,780	11,765,470	4.15%
561	Administrative & Support Services	3,082	4,978	17.33%	116,954	139,543	6.06%	8,992,701	10,002,950	3.61%
811-812	Repair, Maintenance, & Personal Services	3,568	3,883	2.86%	79,553	88,840	3.75%	5,608,457	5,792,079	1.08%
420	Wholesale Trade	3,846	3,659	-1.65%	81,689	83,836	0.87%	5,899,209	6,120,235	1.23%
541-551	Professional Scientific, Technical, Services	2,245	3,406	14.89%	138,118	152,373	3.33%	12,569,269	13,533,404	2.49%
311	Food Products	3,185	2,950	-2.52%	38,793	36,728	-1.81%	1,615,037	1,564,938	-1.04%
112	Animal Production	2,882	2,779	-1.21%	31,397	32,506	1.16%	1,248,714	1,345,815	2.53%
481-487	Transportation	1,537	2,305	14.46%	53,216	53,354	0.09%	3,859,066	3,988,802	1.11%
337	Furniture & Related Products	2,593	2,273	-4.30%	13,903	15,160	2.93%	610,522	583,724	-1.49%
333	Machinery Manufacturing	1,687	1,969	5.28%	12,805	13,221	1.07%	1,214,485	1,181,228	-0.92%
326	Plastics & Rubber Products	1,450	1,865	8.74%	14,632	14,740	0.24%	836,899	804,787	-1.30%
521-523	Monetary, Financial, & Credit Activity	2,010	1,844	-2.84%	53,804	48,262	-3.56%	4,613,999	4,788,036	1.24%
813	Religious, Civic, Professional, Organizations	679	1,709	36.01%	30,350	54,184	21.31%	3,001,269	3,043,375	0.47%
336	Transportation Equipment	1,000	1,571	16.23%	36,304	44,793	7.26%	1,785,253	1,740,276	-0.85%
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	1,683	1,416	-5.60%	18,124	18,153	0.05%	496,800	460,655	-2.49%
332	Fabricated Metal Products	1,153	1,357	5.57%	27,466	27,831	0.44%	1,536,874	1,513,350	-0.51%

Adjusted growth rates are also given for the NACOLG/EDD Region, the State and the U.S.

EDR-LEAP also compiles rough projections of industrial performance and potential based upon trends in the study area, the comparison area and national trends. Table 3.9 reports these statistics. First, a rough indication of the *performance potential* of industrial sector performance is obtained by comparing growth rates in the local study area to national growth rates and noting the circumstances in which local industrial sectors did not grow at the same (or higher) rate as the sector did nationally. Assuming that the local area is capable of capturing the growth deficits while maintaining its comparative advantage in other industries, the national trend



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establishes a broad baseline for performance. Similarly, a *performance range* can be obtained by calculating the change in employment, should the study area or the national trend prevail. In cases where the study area outperformed the national average, local area trends establish the high range of the scale, assuming that the study area has the potential to keep up the support that has led to rapid growth in the sector. Where national trends are higher than local trends, the national trend sets the high end of the scale- and local policies are assumed to have the potential to affect similar growth rates in the local economy. An *average ten-year growth estimate* can be obtained based on the range of growth trends in the study area and nation-wide by taking the midpoint of this range. Next, by studying the deficit that exists between the study area's concentration of jobs and that of the comparison area, a measure of the *performance gap* in particular industries can be obtained- again assuming that the study area can, in fact, affect changes to bring growth without losing advantages elsewhere. Finally, as part of the EDR-LEAP package, an *Industrial Growth Rating* is calculated based on the relationship between national and study area trends, that is, whether the industry is growing faster or slower than the national average. This rating takes one of the following seven values:

1. Industry growing "faster" locally than nationally*
2. Industry declining locally while growing nationally
3. Industry growing locally while declining nationally
4. Industry declining locally "slower" than nationally*
5. Industry growing locally "slower" than nationally *
6. Industry declining locally "faster" than nationally*
7. Industry growing or declining locally at a rate "similar" to national trend* (or industry not present)

* Note: "Faster" denotes local growth or decline trend that is more than 20% greater than the national trend. "Slower" denotes local growth or decline trend that is more than 20% less than the national trend. "Similar rate" denotes trends that are less than 20% different.



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Table 3.9: Employment Growth by Industry Sector		10-Year Baseline Growth Range	Average 10-Year Growth Estimate	Additional Growth Potential	Perform Gap	Industrial Trend Rating
NAICS	Sector					
441-454	Retail Trade	0-984	492	No	0	3
621-624	Health Care & Social Services	2,441-2,903	2,672	Yes	1,124	7
721-722	Accommodations, Eating & Drinking	1,107-2,316	1,711	Yes	996	5
321	Wood Products	546-1,226	886	No	0	1
230	Construction	0-2,654	1,327	Yes	3,194	2
561	Administrative & Support Services	2,121-4,978	3,549	Yes	962	1
811-812	Repair, Maintenance, & Personal Services	440-1,267	853	No	0	1
420	Wholesale Trade	0-477	239	Yes	1,105	2
541-551	Professional Scientific, Technical, Services	951-3,406	2,178	Yes	3,080	1
311	Food Products	0-0	0	No	0	6
112	Animal Production	0-788	394	Yes	1,090	2
481-487	Transportation	269-2,305	1,287	No	0	1
337	Furniture & Related Products	0-0	0	No	0	6
333	Machinery Manufacturing	0-862	431	No	0	3
326	Plastics & Rubber Products	0-932	466	No	0	3
521-523	Monetary, Financial, & Credit Activity	0-242	121	Yes	807	2
813	Religious, Civic, Professional, Organizations	81-1,709	895	N/A	N/A	N/A
336	Transportation Equipment	0-1,021	510	Yes	336	3
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	0-0	0	No	0	6
332	Fabricated Metal Products	0-635	318	No	0	3
531	Real Estate	913-1,307	1,110	Yes	1,179	1



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3.3.2 Industry Profile: Location Quotient

Another method of analyzing the employment mix of the local economy is to compare location quotients, which represent a numerical comparison of the concentration of employment in the study area to the concentration of employment in the comparison area (typically the nation). The more heavily a sector is concentrated within the local economy, the higher the value of its location quotient. A value greater than 1 indicates that employment is more heavily concentrated in that sector within the study area than within the comparison area. Such concentration is typically referred to as a *specialization*, a term which recognizes the skills and knowledges of the local economy that are present along with a larger than average number of employees being in that sector. Typically, specializations are noted as strengths to the local economy, depending on the growth or decline in the national competitiveness of that sector (see 3.3.4 below).

Table 3.10 displays the industrial mix of the five county region (i.e. the percentage that each sector makes up of the total employment of the region) and the United States, the location quotient of the NACOLG/EDD Region compared to the U.S., the expected distribution of employment if the region's employment were concentrated in the same fashion as the nation's, and the difference between this expected distribution and the actual distribution of employment in the region. Specialized sectors are presented in bold text. Italicized sectors are within the top 20 total employment sectors for the region.

Table 3.10: Industrial Mix and Location Quotients							
NAICS	Sector	Percent of Total		Location Quotient	Expected Distribution	Actual Distribution	Mix Shortfall
		NACOLG/EDD Region	United States		NACOLG/EDD Region	United States	
111	Crop Production	1.13%	0.60%	1.89	631	1,194	0
112	Animal Production	2.63%	1.31%	2.01	1,384	2,779	0
113	Forestry & Logging	0.44%	0.32%	1.39	333	461	0
114	Fishing, Hunting & Trapping	0.03%	0.05%	0	47	29	18
115	Support for Agriculture & Forestry	0.23%	0.32%	0.71	341	241	100
211	Oil & Gas Extraction	0.01%	0.08%	0	86	10	75
212-213	Mining & Support Activities	0.12%	0.32%	0.38	341	131	210
221	Utilities	0.09%	0.49%	0.19	512	99	412
230	<i>Construction</i>	5.02%	6.84%	0.73	7,209	5,297	1,912
311	<i>Food Products</i>	2.80%	1.48%	1.89	1,563	2,950	0
312	Beverage & Tobacco Products	0.02%	0.12%	0	125	18	107
313	Textile Mills	0.01%	0.48%	0	505	5	499
314	Textile Product Mills	0.33%	0.44%	0.74	464	343	121
315	Apparel Manufacturing	0.98%	0.55%	1.77	582	1,029	0
316	Leather & Allied Products	0.01%	0.01%	0	11	6	5



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321	<i>Wood Products</i>	5.12%	0.89%	5.74	940	5,402	0
322	Paper Manufacturing	0.20%	0.57%	0.36	597	213	384
323	Printing & Related Support Activities	0.08%	0.24%	0	257	86	171
324	Petroleum & Coal Products	0.01%	0.09%	0	92	11	81
325	Chemical Manufacturing	0.34%	0.40%	0.86	419	359	60
326	<i>Plastics & Rubber Products</i>	1.77%	0.59%	2.97	627	1,865	0
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Products	0.29%	0.35%	0.83	369	307	62
331	<i>Primary Metal Manufacturing</i>	1.34%	0.73%	1.83	773	1,416	0
332	<i>Fabricated Metal Products</i>	1.29%	1.12%	1.15	1,185	1,357	0
333	<i>Machinery Manufacturing</i>	1.87%	0.53%	3.5	563	1,969	0
334	Computer & Electronic Products	0.00%	0.57%	0	601	3	598
335	Electric Equipment, Appliances, etc.	0.18%	0.24%	0.74	257	191	66
336	<i>Transportation Equipment</i>	1.49%	1.81%	0.82	1,907	1,571	336
337	<i>Furniture & Related Products</i>	2.15%	0.61%	3.52	645	2,273	0
339	Miscellaneous Manufacturing	0.17%	0.33%	0.52	351	183	168
420	<i>Wholesale Trade</i>	3.47%	3.38%	1.03	3,569	3,659	0
441- 454	<i>Retail Trade</i>	11.92%	10.70%	1.11	11,289	12,570	0
481- 487	<i>Transportation Mail, package delivery & warehousing</i>	2.19%	2.15%	1.02	2,271	2,305	0
491- 493	Publishing Industries (except Internet)	0.94%	1.38%	0.68	1,451	989	462
511	Motion Picture & Sound Recording	0.27%	0.32%	0.84	334	280	54
512	Broadcasting	0.07%	0.08%	0	80	74	5
513	Internet & data process svcs	0.36%	0.89%	0.41	936	383	553
514	Monetary, Financial, & Credit Activity	0.06%	0.09%	0	91	59	32
521- 523	Insurance Carriers & Related Activities	1.75%	1.95%	0.9	2,054	1,844	210
524	Funds, Trusts, & Other Financial Vehicles	0.84%	1.32%	0.64	1,396	891	506
525	Real Estate	0.00%	0.07%	0	78	0	0
531	Rental & Leasing Services	1.24%	2.36%	0.53	2,486	1,307	1,179
532	Lessors of Nonfinancial Intangible Assets	0.53%	0.62%	0.86	650	562	88
533	Professional Scientific, Technical, Services	0.00%	0.01%	0	7	0	0
541- 551	Administrative & Support Services	3.23%	6.15%	0.53	6,486	3,406	3,080
561	Waste Management & Remediation	4.72%	5.63%	0.84	5,940	4,978	962
562		0.20%	0.16%	1.22	172	211	0



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611	Educational Services	0.63%	1.13%	0.55	1,191	661	530
621-624	Health Care & Social Services	7.13%	8.20%	0.87	8,647	7,524	1,124
711-713	Amusement & Recreation	0.76%	1.26%	0.6	1,325	799	526
721-722	Accommodations, Eating & Drinking Repair,	6.72%	6.95%	0.97	7,325	7,086	238
811-812	Maintenance, & Personal Services	3.68%	3.59%	1.03	3,781	3,883	0
813	Religious, Civic, Professional, Organizations	1.62%	2.19%	0.74	2,306	1,709	N/A
814	Private Households	0.72%	1.19%	0.6	1,257	755	N/A
920	Government & non NAICs	16.81%	15.76%	1.07	16,624	17,730	N/A
TOTAL		100.00%	100.00%		105,463	105,463	14,934

3.3.3 Industry Profile: Shift-Share Analysis

A second tool for evaluating the local economy, shift-share analysis, indicates changes in the competitiveness of a sector by comparing the rate of change in employment in that sector, over time, between the study area and the comparison area. By evaluating the local employment trends in the context of both time and national trends, a clearer picture of the competitiveness of the local sector emerges. Table 3.11 summarizes several basic growth trends in the local and national economy. First, *adjusted annual growth* rates are presented for the period between 2002 and 2005 for the NACOLG/EDD Region and the United States. Second, the *shift-share* value is presented. A value of 1 indicates that the sector is growing at the same rate locally as nationally; a value greater or less than 1 indicates faster or slower growth locally than nationally; a negative value indicates that the sector is declining in the Region but growing nationally. Bold entries are those with growth in competitiveness. Next, *expected growth* is presented based on the region growing in the same manner as the nation, followed by *actual growth* in employment for the NACOLG/EDD Region. The difference between these values is presented as a *trend shortfall*, that is an amount of potential employment growth unrealized in that sector locally, compared to national trends. Finally, *slowing negative growth* is presented if the industry is declining faster than the national trend and has no growth potential (again relative to national growth). In some cases there may be opportunity to slow the decline and minimize the dislocations caused by a declining sector. Italicized entries are among the top 20 total employment sectors for the region.

3.3.4 Summary: Economic Base Profile

Combining the three basic information types presented above (growth rates, specialization/concentration, and shift-share/competitiveness) allows for a profile of the economic base of the region. This classification system divides economic sectors into 8 categories based on performance in terms of these characteristics. The top of Table 3.12 summarizes this profile, which proceeds in three steps:

Step 1: Derive location quotients to distinguish industry specializations. Specializations presumably include export opportunities (i.e. industries that produce a larger share of product than is consumed locally- an assumption based on the fact that employment is higher locally) and represent potential retention targets. Others represent import substitution opportunities (i.e. industries that are not fully meeting local demand and could,



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Table 3.11: Regional and National Growth Trends, Shift-Share Analysis, 2002 and 2005								
NAICS	Sector	Adjusted Annual Growth		Trend Ratio	Expected Growth	Actual Growth	Trend Shortfall	Slowing Negative Growth
		NACOLG/ EDD Region	United States	(Shift-Share)	(Study Area)	(Study Area)		
111	Crop Production	3.20%	-3.70%	-0.9	-117	106	0	0
112	Animal Production	-1.20%	2.50%	-0.5	224	-103	327	0
113	Forestry & Logging	0.90%	-3.70%	-0.3	-48	13	0	0
114	Fishing, Hunting & Trapping	-100.00%	-9.00%	0	0	29	0	0
115	Support for Agriculture & Forestry	-18.10%	0.20%	-93	3	-198	201	0
211	Oil & Gas Extraction	-100.00%	7.80%	0	0	10	0	0
212-213	Mining & Support Activities	-12.50%	5.60%	-2.2	34	-64	99	0
221	Utilities	-21.70%	-1.80%	11.9	-11	-107	0	96
230	Construction	-1.50%	4.10%	-0.4	718	-241	958	0
311	Food Products	-2.50%	-1.00%	2.4	-99	-235	0	136
312	Beverage & Tobacco Products	29.50%	-1.70%	-17.1	0	10	0	0
313	Textile Mills	-51.60%	-8.90%	5.8	-12	-42	0	31
314	Textile Product Mills	-20.70%	-3.30%	6.4	-65	-344	0	279
315	Apparel Manufacturing	-22.90%	-9.50%	2.4	-580	-1,218	0	638
316	Leather & Allied Products	-15.10%	-6.90%	2.2	-2	-4	0	2
321	Wood Products	2.10%	1.00%	2.1	149	322	0	0
322	Paper Manufacturing	153.10%	-3.40%	-44.5	-1	200	0	0
323	Printing & Related Support Activities	-18.40%	-2.40%	7.6	-11	-72	0	61
324	Petroleum & Coal Products	-39.20%	-1.40%	27.6	-2	-39	0	37
325	Chemical Manufacturing	3.20%	-1.40%	-2.3	-13	33	0	0
326	Plastics & Rubber Products	8.70%	-1.30%	-6.7	-56	415	0	0
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Products	27.30%	-0.50%	-54.8	-2	158	0	0
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	-5.60%	-2.50%	2.3	-122	-267	0	145
332	Fabricated Metal Products	5.60%	-0.50%	-10.9	-18	204	0	0
333	Machinery Manufacturing	5.30%	-0.90%	-5.7	-46	282	0	0
334	Computer & Electronic Products	-68.20%	-4.20%	16.3	-10	-78	0	68
335	Electric Equipment, Appliances, etc.	5.30%	-4.10%	-1.3	-19	28	0	0
336	Transportation Equipment	16.20%	-0.80%	-19.2	-25	570	0	0
337	Furniture & Related Products	-4.30%	-1.50%	2.9	-114	-321	0	207
339	Miscellaneous Manufacturing	14.40%	-1.20%	-11.8	-4	61	0	0



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420	<i>Wholesale Trade</i>	-1.70%	1.20%	-1.3	144	-187	331	0
441-454	<i>Retail Trade</i>	1.50%	-1.60%	-0.9	-582	537	0	0
481-487	<i>Transportation</i>	14.50%	1.10%	13	52	768	0	0
491-493	Mail, package delivery & warehousing	23.50%	5.60%	4.2	94	464	0	0
511	Publishing Industries (except Internet)	1.70%	-0.80%	-2.2	-6	14	0	0
512	Motion Picture & Sound Recording	-0.50%	0.20%	-2.6	0	-1	2	0
513	Broadcasting	-10.10%	-3.10%	3.2	-48	-145	0	96
514	Internet & data process svcs	-6.30%	-3.10%	2	-6	-13	0	6
521-523	<i>Monetary, Financial, & Credit Activity</i>	-2.80%	1.20%	-2.3	76	-166	242	0
524	Insurance Carriers & Related Activities	2.50%	0.90%	2.8	22	64	0	0
525	Funds, Trusts, & Other Financial Vehicles	0.00%	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0
531	<i>Real Estate</i>	7.70%	5.40%	1.4	180	262	0	0
532	Rental & Leasing Services	-5.30%	0.80%	-7	15	-101	116	0
533	Lessors of Nonfinancial Intangible Assets	-100.00%	-2.10%	48.3	0	-2	0	2
541-551	<i>Professional Scientific, Technical, Services</i>	14.90%	2.50%	6	172	1,160	0	0
561	<i>Administrative & Support Services</i>	17.30%	3.60%	4.8	346	1,896	0	0
562	Waste Management & Remediation	13.50%	2.20%	6.1	10	67	0	0
611	Educational Services	1.40%	3.90%	0.4	77	27	49	0
621-624	<i>Health Care & Social Services</i>	3.30%	2.90%	1.2	600	702	0	0
711-713	Amusement & Recreation	6.60%	1.70%	4	34	139	0	0
721-722	<i>Accommodations, Eating & Drinking</i>	1.50%	2.90%	0.5	601	302	299	0
811-812	<i>Repair, Maintenance, & Personal Services</i>	2.90%	1.10%	2.7	117	315	0	0
813	<i>Religious, Civic, Professional, Organizations</i>	36.00%	0.50%	77.4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
814	Private Households	-6.90%	2.70%	-2.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
920	Government & non NAICs	3.20%	0.60%	5.4	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
TOTAL		2.50%	1.40%		1,649	5,210	2,624	1,804



conceivably, expand production to meet local demand) or emerging industry targets.

Step 2: Are local sectors experiencing growth locally?

Step 3: Compared to national trends over the study period (i.e. shift-share), how do local sectors fare? Sectors that are growing faster locally than elsewhere are *Strong performers*; those growing slower than elsewhere are *lagging performers*; industries declining locally, but not as rapidly as elsewhere are *constrained performers*; and sectors that are declining locally and in the wider economy, but at a greater rate locally, are *poor performers*.

Table 3.12 shows the economic base profile for the region and also summarizes the employment profile in terms of total employment and percentages of employees found in various categories of sectors. Top employers are italicized. In the NACOLG/EDD Region, “Strong Performers” accounted for 55% of employment, “Lagging Performers” accounted for a combined 21.8% of employment (weighted heavily toward high priority retention targets), “Constrained Performers” accounted for only 8.2% of employment (weighted toward lower priority retention targets), and “Poor Performers” accounted for 14.5% of employment, divided between lower priority retention targets and “overall poor prospects”.

Naturally this purely quantitative classification should be tempered with common sense (and additional research). However, such a preliminary profile may point toward potential retention and attraction sectors and sectors in need of additional study because they are obvious retention/attraction targets or because they are obviously misrepresented in the profile. Much additional information and research is required in order to develop strategies for understanding, leveraging, and changing the economic base of the region for the benefit of area residents. In combination with the cluster analysis presented below, future research should expand upon these profiling methods and incorporate additional qualitative assessments, as well as explore “job quality” measures such as pay and benefits in meaningful ways.

3.4 Economic Clusters

An economic cluster is a core of related employment sectors that work together to produce goods and services. In contrast to a sector, which is defined based on similar industries categorized by *outputs*, a cluster is a group of activities located in a similar geography, which work together through all stages of production, from inputs (including goods and services) to outputs. Cluster-based economic development is founded in the concept of targeting investments to conform to the economic strengths of the region or to develop new economic strengths and increase the concentration of inter-dependent, growth-oriented enterprises in the regional economy.

Economic clustering allows industries to draw from deep resources in terms of available workforce (and the skill sets of workers), as well as favorable support structures such as education and knowledge-based resources and to leverage the synergy that exists between potential competitors in the national and global economy. Industrial recruiters benefit from specialized understanding and the ability to promote a skilled workforce. By targeting investments in workforce development to create a reliable source of workers with the skills and socialization necessary to do business, communities can create an environment favorable to those industries. Also, by developing the local economy in a way that induces clustered support networks (in terms of available materials, services, and specialists), industries are able to more efficiently access the specialized



services needed for the conduct of business. Additionally, by locating industries in close (or closer) proximity to one another, industrial sectors can benefit from an exchange of knowledge that results from the innovations in production and management techniques of their neighbors. Finally, by investing in competitive clusters, local communities can add insulation against economic downturns in locally important industrial sectors, reinforcing against losses resulting from competitive advances such as the advent of new technologies.

This latter point is best illustrated with diagrams showing the likely interactions of manufacturers, suppliers of specialized and general goods and services, knowledge workers and other service providers. The intersecting, shaded areas of the diagram represent the cluster- or the areas in which economic endeavors overlap from each of the larger sectors. Areas outside of the clusters are enterprises un-related (or at least not directly related) to the cluster. For the purposes of illustration, Figure 3N shows interactions among three broad categories representing economic activity in the local economy. Each of these sectors is likely to be composed of multiple individual enterprises, some of which are engaged in cluster-oriented activities exclusively, some partly, and some not at all. Manufacturers and the providers of the most specialized goods and services (specialized legal counsel, accounting services, or information technology for example) will tend to have greater interdependence. General service providers (medical services, food service workers, teachers, and others) will have less overlap with the cluster (and in some cases none), although these too are often somewhat specialized where necessary or possible.

Cluster-based activities are affected by the competitive fortunes of the sectors that compose them. An economic cluster can insure a community against job losses caused by new innovations where two competitors are side-by-side in three ways. First, the specialized workforce will be an asset to the innovating company because many innovations are changes in process, which require re-training workers- and an employee knowledgeable about older techniques will likely adapt well to newer ones (or at least better than an inexperienced one). Second, where the innovation causes the rise of one company at the expense of the competitor, the aggregate effect is diminished (that is, as one boat sinks, the other rises- providing opportunity for the occupants of the first). Finally, in cases where an innovation offers a competitive advantage, clustering promotes imitation among competitors, which can stabilize the local economy.

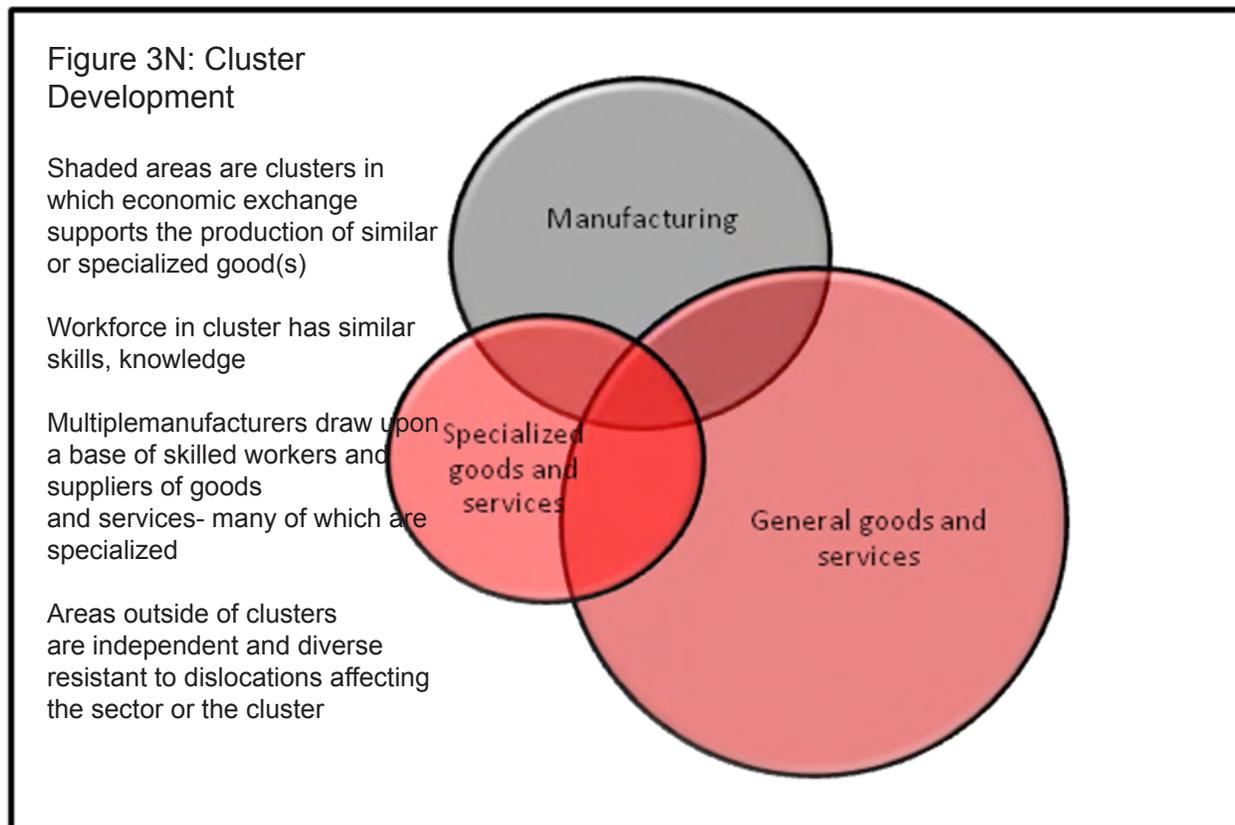
Meanwhile, cluster investments allow increased diversification since they are not attributed to any particular industry or industrial activity. And, to the extent that the economy is diversified (that is, not reliant any particular sector) particularly among suppliers and service providers, a loss of competitive advantage and overall productivity in any one sector of the cluster does not necessarily spread throughout the regional economy. The cluster is more capable of maintaining competitive advantage and adjusting to new economic models. All the while, economic activity outside of the cluster still carries on, providing additional support to the regional economy as adjustments occur within sectors or in the wider cluster.

3.4.1 Identifying Regional Clusters

The first step in an effective clustering strategy will likely be the identification and classification of economic cluster of interest to the region. The following analysis builds upon research conducted by Purdue University, University of Indiana, and Strategic Development Group, Inc.⁷, which explored the linkage between economic clusters and rurality. In their study, researchers categorized employment in 17 clusters, based on



similarity of economic activity and National Industrial Classification System (NAICS) sectors⁸. The 17 clusters include one “supercluster” composed 6 manufacturing sectors. Based on employment information in these clusters, the Purdue researchers identified clusters as those groups of industrial sectors having location quotients greater than 1.2⁹. The study then identified patterns in the correlation between the location of clusters, rurality, and overall economic performance. The findings are summarized below.



- Industry clusters vary in the extent to which they display patterns in spatial distribution.
 - Many of the more urban clusters, such as business and financial services, have larger distances between them- likely due to a “critical mass” at the urban core that is supported by adjacent populations and an ability among these clusters to conduct business without restraint from physical distance.
 - Some clusters appear to have stronger co-locating tendencies than others. “Biomedical/ biotechnical”, “Business and financial services”, “Advanced materials”, “Defense and security”, “Information and telecommunications”, and “Printing and publishing” are all clusters in which specialization in any one strongly correlates with specialization in one or more of the others- perhaps due to a common reliance on highly educated workforce. A second co-locating tendency

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was observed between any of the 6 individual sub-cluster components of the “Manufacturing supercluster” and the “Advanced materials” and “Chemical products” clusters. A third co-locating tendency was seen between the “Forest and wood products” and “Apparel and textile” clusters.

- Several clusters appear to have such weak locational relationships that no clear tendency to avoid or attract other clusters is observed. “Agribusiness, food processing, and technology” does not appear related to any other cluster. “Arts, entertainment, recreation and visitor”, “Biomedical/biotechnical (life sciences)”, “Energy (fossil and renewable)”, “Glass and ceramics”, “Mining”, “Transportation and logistics” clusters, and most of the manufacturing subclusters showed no strong tendency to co-locate with any other cluster.
- Some clusters appear to be biased toward urban areas, while others are largely absent from urban areas. Surprisingly few clusters are biased toward rural areas. For most clusters, there is evidence of a persistent positive relationship between urbanity and specialization (that is, specialization increases along with increased population). Urban orientation is particularly strong for “Business and financial services”, “Biomed/biotech”, “Information technology and telecommunications”, and “Printing and publishing”. Only agribusiness, mining, and wood products showed an opposite effect; however, the effect was not strong enough to say that rural areas are likely to specialize in these clusters- only to say that urban areas are *not* likely to specialize in them. For some clusters, such as the business and financial services cluster, the relationship was non-linear, meaning that small decreases in rurality produced larger effects for more rural areas than for more urban areas.
- There appears to be a complex relationship between the presence of certain clusters, economic performance, and degree of rurality.
 - The most rural counties tended to grow most slowly, along with those having a high concentration of manufacturing (largely urban counties). The fastest growth occurred in the counties of the urban-rural fringe (areas adjacent to metropolitan counties). Human capital affects growth positively in rural counties.
 - In urban counties, industry mix affects growth. More particularly, concentrations of “business and financial services”, positively affected growth while specialization in “information technology and communication” was associated with a decline in growth rates; but this relationship is not noticeable outside of the urban areas.
 - In the rural-urban interface, industry mix and degree of rurality do not predict economic success. Human capital, however, trends with economic growth- pointing out the need for education and skills investment in these areas.

Table 3.13 lists these clusters, their location quotients, and the total employment in the cluster for the five-county NACOLG/EDD Region¹⁰. The patterns largely reflect the patterns described above, due to the distribution of rural and urban areas in the region. Five specializations are present in “Agribusiness, food processing and technology”, “Chemicals and chemical-based products”, “Forest and wood products”, “Machinery manufacturing”, and “Mining”. The location of National Alabama in the Barton Riverfront Industrial Park,



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with a projected 1800 new jobs in the “Transportation equipment manufacturing” sector, will add an additional cluster specialization in that cluster, as well as elevating the “Manufacturing supercluster” to the status of a specialization. According to national trends, less than 12% of all counties specialize in five or more clusters. Specializations in agribusiness, mining and wood products are not surprising in an area with rural counties, although these are not necessary or widespread specializations. Remaining specializations do not reflect any of the “strongly urban” clusters. The results reflect the rural/urban fringe elements of the regional economy.

3.4.2 Toward a Regional Cluster Strategy

Unfortunately, the process of targeting competitive clusters can be daunting, particularly in a local economic environment characterized by economic dislocations that have resulted from a decline in low-skill, low-wage manufacturing employment. This is the condition of much of the region, which has seen job losses in lower-skill manufacturing due to external labor market competition. A lack of human capital in the form of workers with basic skills and advanced technical training and specialty knowledge-based skills makes clustering difficult in Northwest Alabama.

The development of viable economic clusters in a region where such they are not currently located is a difficult, expensive, and oftentimes unsuccessful endeavor. A recent, highly successful example illustrates the costs. The recruitment of National Alabama to the Shoals area was a year-long process that eventually involved

Cluster Name	Location Quotient	Total Employment	Percent of Total Employment
Advanced materials	0.37	702	.88
Agribusiness, food processing and technology	1.67	2541	3.19
Apparel and textiles	0.83	493	.62
Arts, entertainment, recreation and visitor industries	0.30	786	.99
Biomedical/biotechnical (life sciences)	0.67	2291	2.87
Business and financial services	0.26	1661	2.08
Chemicals and chemical-based products	1.24	1551	1.94
Defense and security	0.14	463	.58
Education and knowledge creation	0.68	2748	3.45
Energy (fossil and renewable)	0.90	3186	3.99
Forest and wood products	5.44	7746	9.71
Glass and ceramics	0.23	51	.06
Information technology and telecommunications	0.22	707	.89



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Manufacturing super cluster	0.80	2812	3.53
Primary metals	0.93	186	.23
Fabricated metal products	1.16	1026	1.29
Machinery	1.46	906	1.14
Computer and electronic products	0.00	0	0
Electrical equipment, appliances and components	0.00	0	0
Transportation equipment	0.77	694	.87
Mining	2.35	95	.12
Printing and publishing	0.30	426	.53
Transportation and logistics	0.51	1050	1.32

approximately \$130 million in incentives, including \$8 million of local money derived from Colbert and Lauderdale County residents. The new jobs will change the cluster dynamic of the region and are a potentially strong foundation for other cluster-based development, as investments are made into education and training and the production of secondary jobs. Meanwhile, as the region continues to develop- and particularly as the region capitalizes on the statewide initiatives in workforce development designed to increase investments in automotive manufacturing, advanced manufacturing, distribution center operations, and aerospace manufacturing investment- these clusters should be explored. This exploration of cluster-based economic development should not be limited to incentives for industries to choose the region as a location for new (or expanding) facilities. But it should also look for ways in which the industrial *cluster*, that is the entire network of manufacturers, managers, special trades, education and training opportunities, capital improvements, and opportunities for interaction among these—not merely the particular sector, can be expanded and improved. Several additional steps can be taken to continue the exploration of cluster development. Refining the measures provided in the foregoing analysis to reflect the finest possible distinctions in sectors that compose a cluster is an important first step toward identifying viable clusters in the region. This information, along with input from economic developers and industry leaders, may give leads to areas in which particular clusters can be enhanced. Expanding the analysis into the earnings and benefits of workers is also important in order to determine the most effective ways to enhance quality of life. Finally, extensive qualitative exploration will be required in order to map the supply networks for goods and services within significant clusters.

Once clusters are identified with some degree of certainty, the authors of the regional cluster study described above offer the following, inexhaustive, list of criteria for selecting regional clusters for a targeting strategy:

- Average payroll and wages higher than national industry average
- Industry’s resistance to recession
- High total earnings
- Potential tax generation



- Potential import substitution (i.e. will supply goods/services being brought into the region or sought elsewhere)
- High amount of value-added in the region
- High industry multiplier (secondary employment; economic leverage of each dollar spent by the industry)
- A high cluster location quotient
- High national and regional growth rates (a thriving industry)
- A cluster more influenced by regional factors of production than national or industry factors (“regional advantage” in shift-share analysis)
- Positive local employment projections
- Part of a larger, state clustering initiative

The list is by no means intended as the totality of reasons for selecting a cluster for study and investment, however it offers insight on the factor or combination of factors that can be leveraged through cluster development.

3.5 Summary: Economic Development Context

The context of economic development in the NACOLG/EDD Region is probably best summarized as one of “steady progress”. Despite past economic dislocations and a history of sluggish recovery and slow growth, the region has prospered of late. To a greater or lesser extent, each of the five counties of the region have shown signs of improving economic conditions in recent years. And new opportunities are presented on a regular basis, as the fruits of various labors come to bear. Regional transportation improvements have improved access to the region. Industrial recruitment activities have paid off in potential employers locating in the region. Workforce development activities are underway to improve the quality and quantity of skilled workers in the region. Communities are slowly becoming aware of the role of physical development in effective economic development. Much progress has been made, many opportunities are present or potential, and the outlook is generally positive.

However, the economic climate of the region has long been overcast and the effects of past dislocations, regional competition and lack of cooperation, and general attitudes toward development are difficult to overcome. In economic development, attitudes count. The economic “facts” point to improvements, but improvements translate into action via the attitudes and perceptions of area individuals. Recent successes will require time to change attitudes, generally described as “a lack of optimism” or “low economic expectations” among the region’s residents. The “facts” and various regional successes, therefore, require publication and celebration.

The choice of how to develop is a difficult one, particularly for an area largely within the “rural-urban interface” where industry mix appears to be less important than human capital for regional growth and development. However, developers are beginning to look ahead to improve workforce skills in accordance with the needs of existing industries (be these sectors, clusters, or individual enterprises); to train young workers to provide the support networks, goods, and services needed for increased economic prosperity; to promote import substitution and entrepreneurship; and to generally assess the comprehensive network of



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economic interactions in the NACOLG/EDD Region. While tremendous work has yet to be completed in this assessment, action is not being delayed in favor of study. The following sections detail the ongoing economic development efforts of the region and the implementation strategies and techniques utilized for development.



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Notes

¹ The South, as a region, consists of the States of Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

² National Bureau of Economic Research, "Business Cycle Expansion and Contractions", Online at <http://www.nber.org/cycles.html>, accessed June 1, 2007.

³ Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Labor Statistics, various sources. Available online <http://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm>

⁴ Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Labor Statistics, various sources. Available online Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Labor Statistics, various sources. Available online <http://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm>.

⁵ U.S. Census, The Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement, available http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstc/cps_table_creator.html. Data are presented based on three year averages from 2004-2006 drawn from an annual survey of 78,000. Age-related information is based on a small sample and should be viewed as an indication of general trends, rather than exact measurements.

⁶ Aggregate statistics presented here are for the entire NACOLG/EDD Region. Disaggregating to the county level is likely to alter concentrations and specializations since each county possesses differing economic strengths.

⁷ Center for Regional Development, Purdue University, Indiana Business Research Center, Indiana University, and Strategic Development Group Inc., *Unlocking Rural Competitiveness: The Role of Regional Clusters*, CD-ROM, 2007.

⁸ Under this categorization, clusters are somewhat similar to the sectors presented in Section 3.3, however, clusters are composed of narrower industry sectors. Whereas the sectors presented in Section 3.3 are based on 3-digit NAICS codes, clusters are based on 6-digit codes from multiple categories. For example, the 3-digit NAICS code 334 encompasses the computer electronics manufacturing sector, whereas narrower 6-digit sectors within the 334 classification form part of 5 different clusters and the manufacturing supercluster. Where data suppression occurs, which is common at the county level, 6-digit codes were aggregated to the 3-digit level, and the available 6-digit employment not belonging to the cluster were subtracted out. The authors note that the process of aggregating to the 3-digit level leads to a loss of distinction between clusters and their component sectors within the data set. See CRD, IBRC, and SDG pgs. 27-30.

⁹ In contrast to *sector specializations*, which refer only to narrowly defined sectors as used in Section 3.3 above, a *cluster specialization* is a group of related sectors having a higher concentration of employment than for specialized sectors (1.2 for clusters versus 1.0 for specializations).

¹⁰ Comparing the five-county region to the results for individual counties nationwide is potentially misleading, particularly if attempting to claim superior regional performance over the "average county". This is due to the broader network of employment opportunities available for a region, as compared to an individual county, particularly when the "average county" is likely to be located near another county in which those opportunities are present. Specific county to county comparisons are possible with the existing data, and may lend substance to particular county-level economic development strategies, however, the present focus is the regional development context.



Section 4.0: Economic Development Priorities
in Northwest Alabama

4.0 Economic Development Priorities in Northwest Alabama- Goals, Objectives and Strategies

This section reviews the goals, objectives and strategies identified by the CEDS Committee through economic audit and analysis and several rounds of public involvement meetings. In fulfillment of the Economic Vision for Northwest Alabama, restated below, the goals and objectives presented herein represent the “road map” for economic development endorsed by the CEDS Committee and the Economic Development District Board. These priorities are the abstract and concrete principles and projects identified as necessary to regional economic development. They are categorized based on four broad areas of involvement- Transportation, Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure), Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention), and Community Development (Capacity and Civic Culture).

4.1 Economic Vision

ECONOMIC VISION: Northwest Alabama shall be a regional community defined by a distinctive and recognizable identity, high quality of life, strong leadership and public participation, and unity in pursuit of a sustainable, globally and regionally competitive economy.

The vision statement was developed to encapsulate the highest goals of the plan and was drafted from statements of CEDS Committee members and public involvement participants including development partners and members of the public. Community and identity were identified as important components of the vision because of the vital role that these attributes play in connecting individuals and organizations together in sustainable, motivated endeavors. The focus on quality of life indicates an understanding that the primary concern of economic development is not a target number or improvements in some indicators or performance metric, but it is instead the increased standard of living, enjoyment of life, and access to opportunities that results from improvements in the local economy. Key features of development will be its sustainability, that is, economic development strategies will be pervasive and have longevity - which cannot be achieved in the absence of unity and competitiveness. Finally, the vision recognizes that economic development will not occur in either an exclusively top-down or bottom-up environment. Sustainable development, instead, will be the result of frequent interactions between members of the public, elected and appointed public officials, and civic and business leadership. Only through such interactions can development priorities be sufficiently inclusive, socially conscious and just, and possess the broad-based support necessary for success.

4.2 Goals and Objectives

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective (a): Identify and remove dangerous transportation conflict points throughout the region.

Objective (b): Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

Objective (c): Identify and complete improvements to the region’s multi-modal transportation network to improve local and regional access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.



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Access to transportation infrastructure was frequently identified as a primary concern for residents of Northwest Alabama. Access to goods, services, and opportunities for economic development are dependent upon the region's transportation routes. This goal and its objectives recognize two key characteristics of regional and local transportation networks. First, opportunities for growth and development are frequently concentrated at or along transportation routes, particularly the network of streets and surface transportation infrastructure. However, the importance of developing and leveraging multi-modal access to river, rail and air transportation facilities is not to be overlooked. Secondly, as an economic development goal, the linkage between community development and efficiently transportation networks cannot and should not be overlooked. The importance of safe, efficient, well-connected communities affects economic development prospects every imaginable way and sound principles of community design are necessary in order to expand and preserve these routes.

Objective (a): Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continued high quality of life by municipal and county residents.

Objective (b): Foster sharing of municipal services and public infrastructure where beneficial to area municipalities and counties.

Objective (c): Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed use urban redevelopment fostering compact commercial and residential forms.

Objective (d): Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

Objective (e): Initiate an urban and neighborhood planning process that provides master plans and infrastructure improvement assessments for municipalities and counties within the NACOLG region.

Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) - Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective (a): Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continued high quality of life by municipal and county residents.

Objective (b): Foster sharing of municipal services and public infrastructure where beneficial to area municipalities and counties.

Objective (c): Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed-use urban redevelopment fostering compact commercial and residential forms.

Objective (d): Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.



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Objective (e): Initiate an urban and neighborhood planning process that provides master plans and infrastructure improvement assessments for municipalities and counties within the NACOLG region.

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective (a): Expand access to and understanding of technology resources in the region.

Objective (b): Identify opportunities to expand workforce development opportunities by coordinating agencies and industries/businesses and implementing appropriate educational and recruitment programs.

Objective (c): Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

Objective (d): Explore opportunities to support the expansion of existing businesses and the recruitment of additional businesses to the region.

This goal recognizes the centrality of industrial and business support and recruitment to economic growth and development in the region. The objectives and strategies associated with this goal seek to provide services to existing business and industry by supplying support for expansion through coordinated investment in infrastructure improvements, access to capital and knowledge resources, and workforce development. Infrastructure, workforce development and capacity building investments are intended to offer measurable assistance to business and industry. Such investments are meant to promote additional private investment leading to new business and industry locations and the expansion of existing enterprises. Strategies designed to locate, build upon and enhance the support network available for private enterprises, including access to adequate industrial and commercial sites, as well as access to appropriately trained and skilled workers are included as priorities for achieving this goal.

Goal IV: Community Development (Capacity and Civic Culture) - Promote associational life and community identity necessary to leverage the economic benefits of physical and human capital.

Objective (a): Explore the application of asset based economic development principles of identity and sustainability to the development programs of the region.

This goal is a statement of commitment on the part of local and regional economic developers to the principles of asset-based economic development. This approach concludes that targeted, sustainable economic development is founded upon connections between local leaders and organizations, which act in a cooperative manner to identify regional assets and to devise strategies for leveraging such assets. Although frequently affected by external funding and financial support, successful development begins at the local level, is community driven, and is the result of clear networks of associations and participatory deliberations.



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy **• 2007-2008 •**

Objectives and strategies aimed at locating and leveraging local capacity and local assets will be incorporated into the economic development fabric of the region. By finding and utilizing local networks, strengths and accomplishments to achieve stronger community identity, morale and cooperation, this goal expresses the desire of the regional economic development community to invest in developing the human capital infrastructure and support networks necessary for economic success. As such, pursuit of this goal requires that these principles be formally introduced into the planning and execution of each of the economic development goals, objectives, and strategies throughout the region in pursuit of the region's overall Economic Vision.

4.3 Strategies

The following pages contain information on specific economic development strategies designed to accommodate and accomplish the stated goals and objectives. These strategies are categorized based on two criteria. First, they are grouped according to geographic focus, that is, by the county in which the strategy is to be implemented. Despite this categorization, however, each strategy is recognized as important to regional economic development due to the effects of economic integration in the region. Additionally, each CEDS strategy is classified according to the main objective and goal that it implements. In this way, each specific strategy is tied to the overall comprehensive framework of the plan.

Additionally, although not ordered as such in the following pages, each strategy can be classified with respect to their timeline for implementation. This "Planning Horizon" defines strategies as short term (5 years or less for implementation), intermediate term (6 to 15 years for implementation) and long-term (15 or more years for implementation). In general, short term strategies should receive greater and more imminent attention and represent the most significant strategy components of the plan. Intermediate and long term priorities generally represent "big picture" improvements, which will result in sweeping changes in the economic environment of the region. This temporal classification by no means indicates a distinction of importance, however; rather, short term strategies are presented as such because they are easier to obtain or are vital to long term economic viability.

Various additional pieces of information are included in the strategy descriptions that follow. First, each strategy has an entry that identifies stakeholders with a direct interest in the project, where available. Second, within the stakeholder entry is information on the local contact(s) for the project, which is the entity or individual(s) connected to the project. The contact will be primarily responsible for maintaining the momentum of the project through its implementation. Next, the strategy entries present visual and spatial information related to the project, often in the form of project locator maps. Finally, the entries contain a performance update with a brief synopsis of the background of the strategy. This block of text identifies the nature of the strategy and the actions that have been taken to implement it. It also presents a numeric scale based on the implementation timeline (from 1 to 5 for short term priorities, for example), which is then translated into a rough percentage of the project that is complete. As the CEDS is updated, this information will likewise be updated, moving forward or backward depending on the progress of implementation.



The Shoals Area: Colbert & Lauderdale County Strategies

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

- Objectives:
- Identify and remove dangerous transportation conflict points throughout the region.
 - Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.
 - Identify and complete improvements to the region's multi-modal transportation network to improve local and regional access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

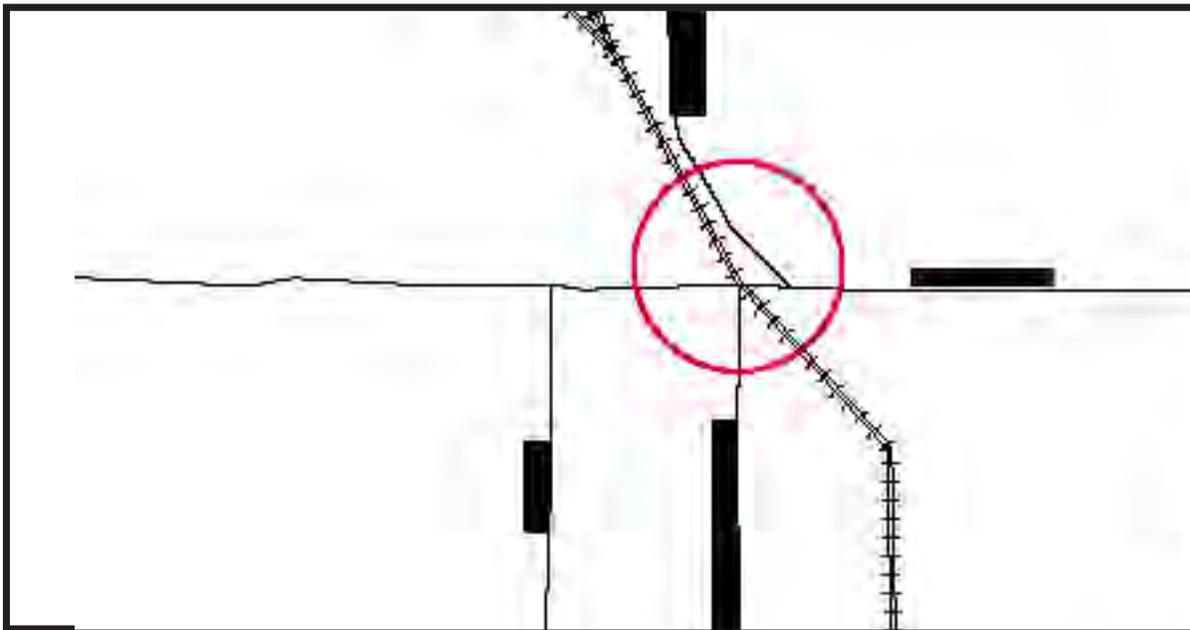
Strategy: Continue to seek funding that provides an equitable dollar match to relocate the Norfolk Southern Rail Line running within the commercial areas of Sheffield, Tuscumbia and Muscle Shoals.

Horizon: Intermediate (6-15 years) to Long Range (16+ years)

Stakeholders: Norfolk Southern Railroad, MPO, ALDOT (Division II)

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/15+

Progress: Total cost for relocation was estimated at \$28 million in 1994. Until recently, there was a \$5 million dollar allocation with a 75% match for a total of \$8 million for preliminary engineering. An environmental document was produced, but no further progress was made due in large part to the high match requirement, and the money was released by ALDOT and the project was deleted in 2007. Recent announcements by Norfolk Southern indicate that the line will be expanding to accommodate increased rail travel, with work to be completed by 2013 (Times Daily, July 1, 2007). Conversations with local officials indicate that this project remains a priority.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

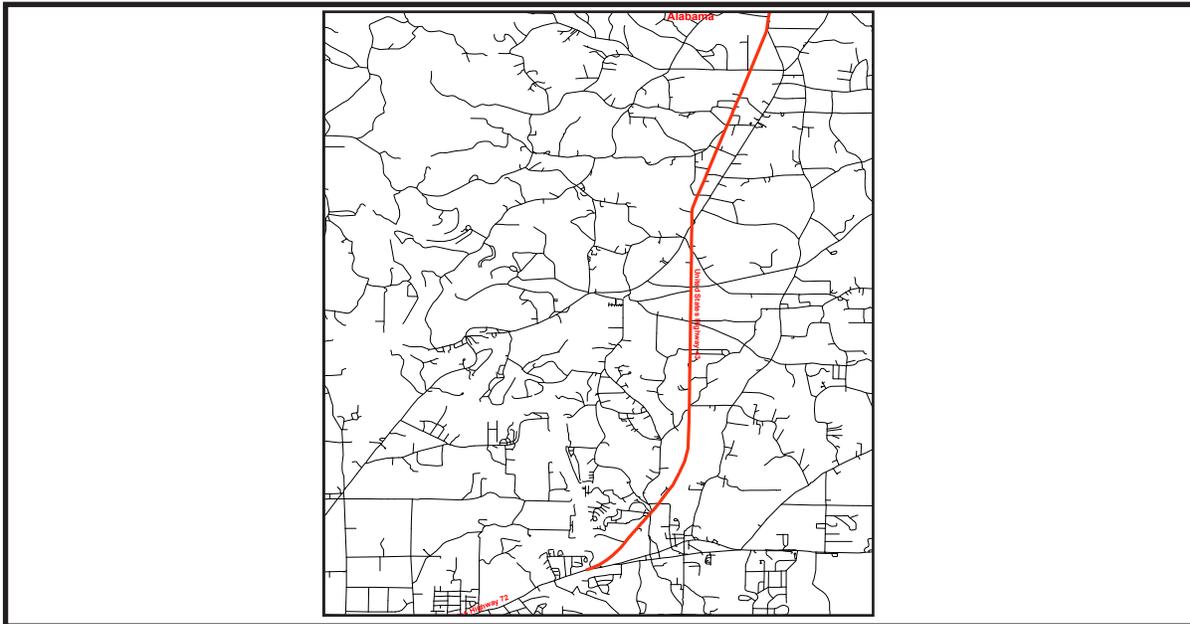
Strategy: Widen US 43 from Killen to the Tennessee State Line.

Horizon: Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: This project is divided into three sections. Section A. is State Highway 72 to Alabama 64. Currently, completion from Killen to SR 64 is estimated for FY 2009. Section B. is from Alabama 64 to Lauderdale County Road 140. The right-of-way is estimated for completion in FY 2010 for the section of SR 64 to County Road 140. Completion for this area is estimated for FY 2014. Section C includes the area from County Road 140 to the Tennessee State line. The right-of-way for this area is estimated to be completed by FY 2013 and the final completion scheduled for FY 2014.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Identify and complete improvements to the region's multi-modal transportation network to improve local and regional access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

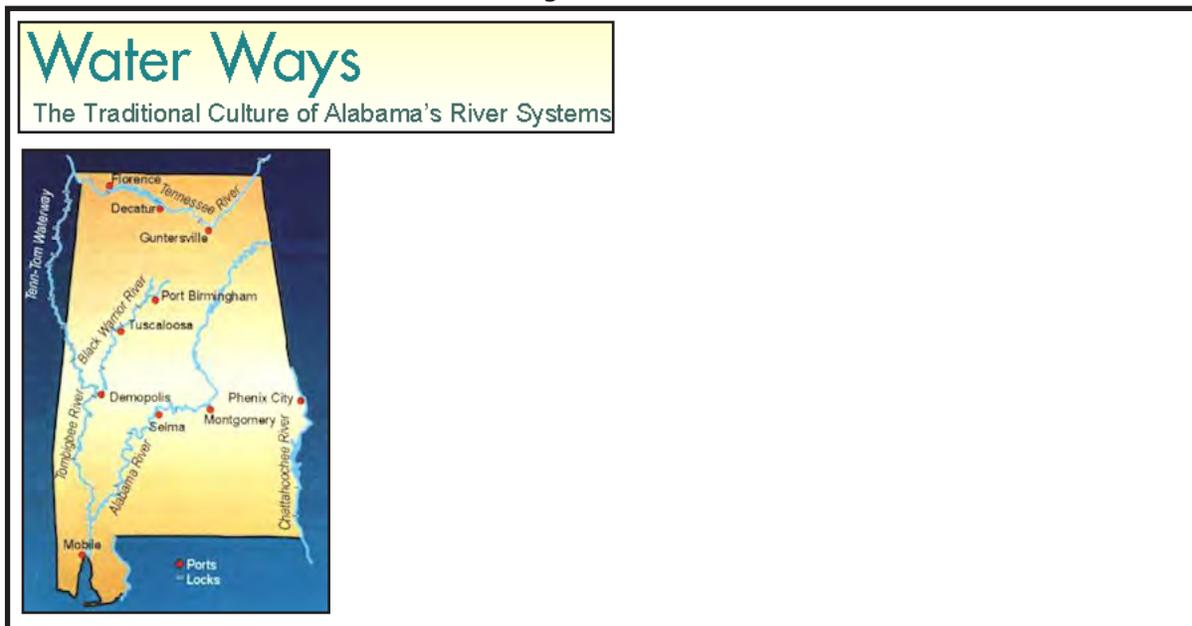
Strategy: Improve marketing of and access to the Port of Florence; extend the overhead bridge, expand capacity and equipment to make the port capable of handling containers delivered by barge.

Horizon: Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholders: Florence City Council, Lauderdale County Commission, Port of Florence

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: These strategies and objectives were one of the objectives proposed. Due to limited resources and a need for focused development efforts, the following strategies have been identified for this 5 year CEDS period.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Foster sharing of municipal services and public infrastructure where beneficial to area municipalities and counties.

Strategy: Initiate a comprehensive recycling facility to process the solid waste in the Shoals.

Horizon: Intermediate (6-15 years)

Stakeholders: Colbert County Solid Waste Authority, Lauderdale County Solid Waste Authority, Local Public Works/Solid Waste Disposal

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/15

Progress: The Colbert County recycling facility operated by the Shoals Solid Waste Authority is no longer in operation. The existing solid waste authority currently recycles 25% of equipment type materials entering the facility. Opportunities may exist for a solid waste digester that produces natural gas in a continuous flow with a by product of ash. No progress was made toward implementing the expansion of existing facilities or the construction of new facilities in the past year.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed use urban redevelopment fostering compact commercial and residential forms

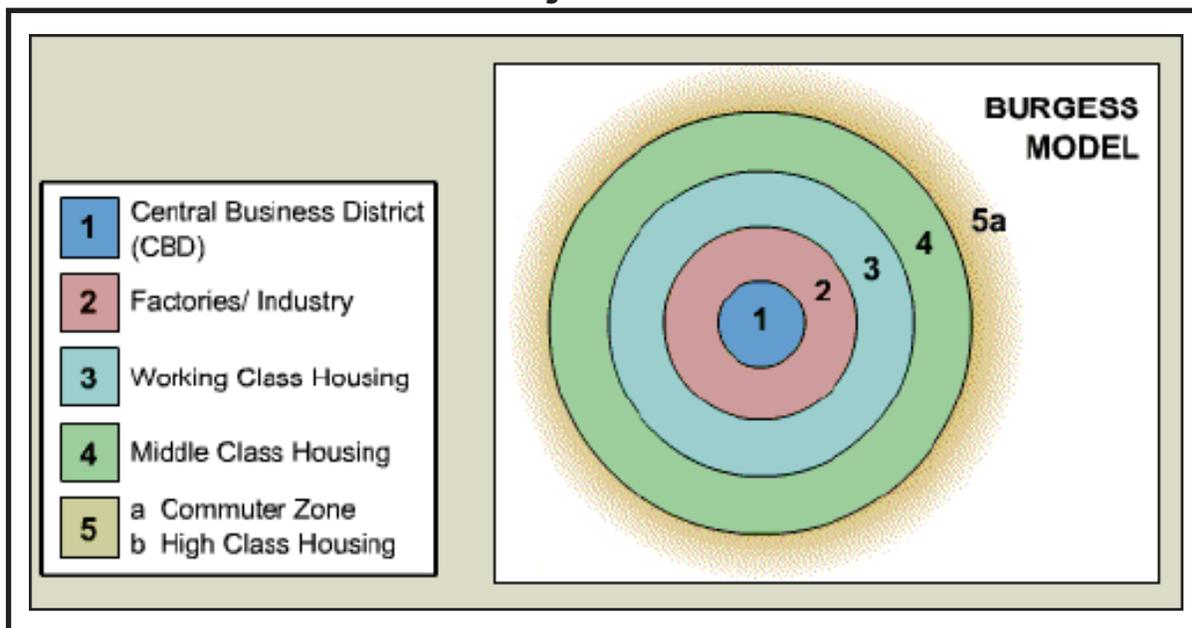
Strategy: Coordinate the redevelopment of the Sheffield CBD redevelopment plan with the Sheffield Redevelopment Authority the Sheffield Housing Authority and private sector investment.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years) to Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholders: Sheffield Redevelopment Authority, Sheffield City Council

Contact: Steve Stanley, SRA Chairman

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 1/10

Progress: The Sheffield Downtown Revitalization and Redevelopment Plan was completed in 2005 with assistance from ADECA. The Sheffield Redevelopment Authority was established in 2006. Individual projects within the redevelopment plan are underway. In 2006-2007, the SRA worked toward acquiring properties in the CBD, to provide streetscape renovation on Third Street (including facade renovation for the Ritz Theatre), and to complete plans for allowing local bank financing (private investments) to allow borrowers to renovate historic structures.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008: Property acquisition and renovation of structures should begin in the next year, along with preliminary engineering for streetscape improvements on Third Street. Property redevelopment will lead to temporary employment in construction trades. Final plans for CDB properties include business incubation and retail trade enterprises connected with entertainment themes, as called for in the plan, creating an estimated 12 jobs in these sectors and enhancing vitality of other employers within the CDB.



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continued high quality of life by municipal and county residents.

Strategy: Establish a centralized sewer service in the Ford City community.

Horizon: Intermediate (6-10 years)

Stakeholders:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: The Ford City Wastewater Treatment Study was completed in 2002. Funding was supplied by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM). The plan is on file at NACOLG and is under review by representatives from the Ford City Community. The project is currently at a standstill, awaiting action from community representatives.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008: Identify Ford City community representatives willing to meet with County Engineer, County Commission, and others; conduct exploratory/stakeholder meeting to discuss available funding and interest.



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed use urban redevelopment fostering compact commercial and residential forms.

Strategy: Create community center capital improvements list and then seek funds for construction and renovation of local senior and community centers.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 3/5

Progress: The need for a regional community center/senior center capital improvements list came through discussion during the 2006 CEDS process. An informal community center list was constructed in 2006-2007, and numerous projects contained therein are complete (1), under construction (4) with a mix of local, state, and federal funds, or in review/application stages (5). Funding and strategy for the plan should be pursued on a regional level and the plan should be reviewed and adopted by the NACOLG Board.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed use urban redevelopment fostering compact commercial and residential forms.

Strategy: Complete phase 1 environmental assessments and site development plans for known brownfield sites in Shoals area CBDs.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Brownfields redevelopment projects have become a priority within the urban areas of the NACOLG region. Brownfield sites exist in built out underutilized areas. The City of Florence has identified several locations for brownfields projects and has applied for funding to inventory and propose development alternatives for these. Redevelopment sites have also been identified in Sheffield.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed use urban redevelopment fostering compact commercial and residential forms.

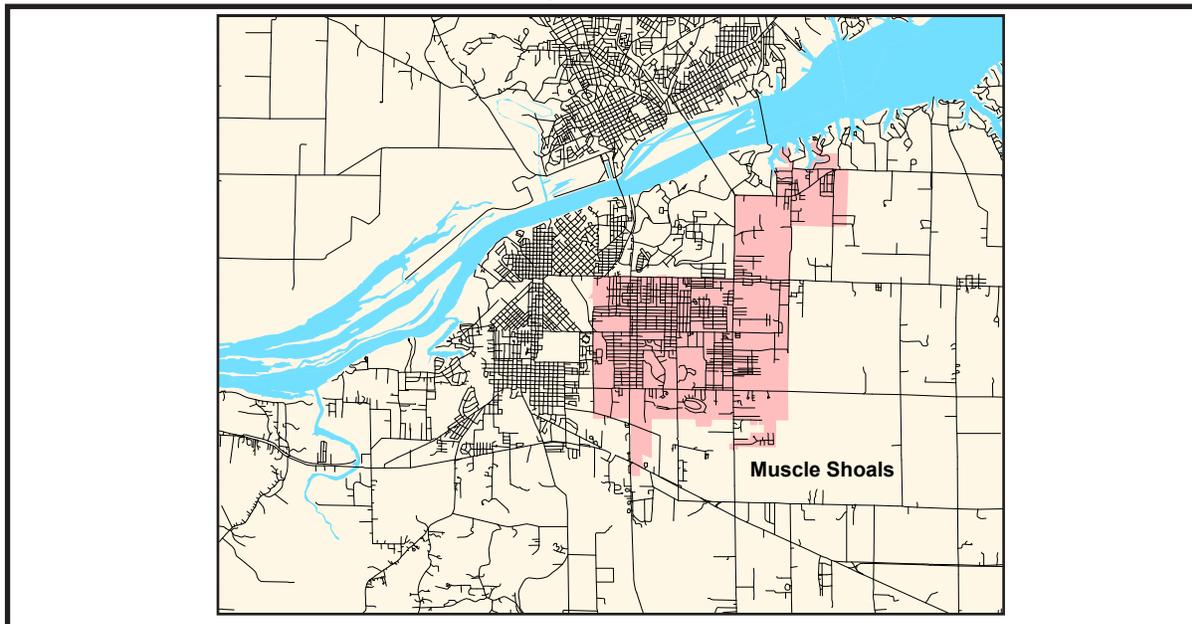
Strategy: Create public and private opportunities for establishing a CBD master plan for Muscle Shoals.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Muscle Shoals City Council, Muscle Shoals Planning Commission

Contact: Bill Howard, Muscle Shoals City Planner

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The City of Muscle Shoals is a young and vibrant municipality that has developed around automobile oriented commercial activity. Citizens and leaders of Muscle Shoals have indicated they would like to continue developing through strategies that enhance the existing CBD.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

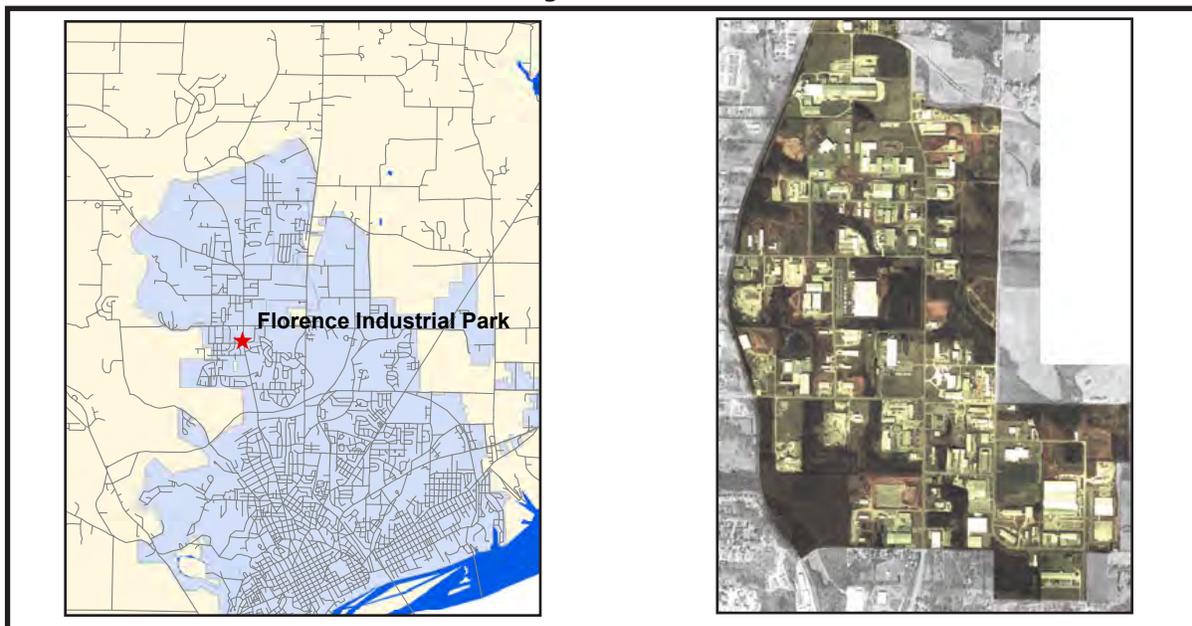
Strategy: Evaluate underutilized industrial properties for brownsfield opportunities and redevelop abandoned industrial sites.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: City of Florence, SEDA

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: In conjunction with SEDA, City of Florence, ADEM and local stakeholders properties within the Florence Industrial Park should be evaluated for remediation and reuse.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

Strategy: Complete the development at the Barton Riverfront Industrial Park to include the following: Roadway widened from bridge north, lighting, slopes flattened to 4:1, interchange at Highway 72, water and wastewater improvements to serve National Alabama Corp. site.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Colbert Co. Commission, Colbert Co. Engineer, National Alabama Corporation, SCA Tissue

Contact: John Bedford, County Engineer

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 4/5

Progress: The Barton Industrial Park was constructed in 2000. Current industries within the park employ 300+ persons. The National Alabama company, a railcar manufacturer, has announced its intent to locate within the park, which will require extensive additional improvements, including water and wastewater expansions and access improvements. The construction of the \$350 million site will create temporary employment in construction trades and approximately 1800 permanent positions. The proposal will likely fill out the park's available land, requiring the purchase of additional land or the location of another site for further industrial park land. ALDOT is moving forward with improvements to access at the intersection of Haley Drive and Highway 72.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008: The National Alabama corporation site should be completed and manufacturing should commence by FY 2009.



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

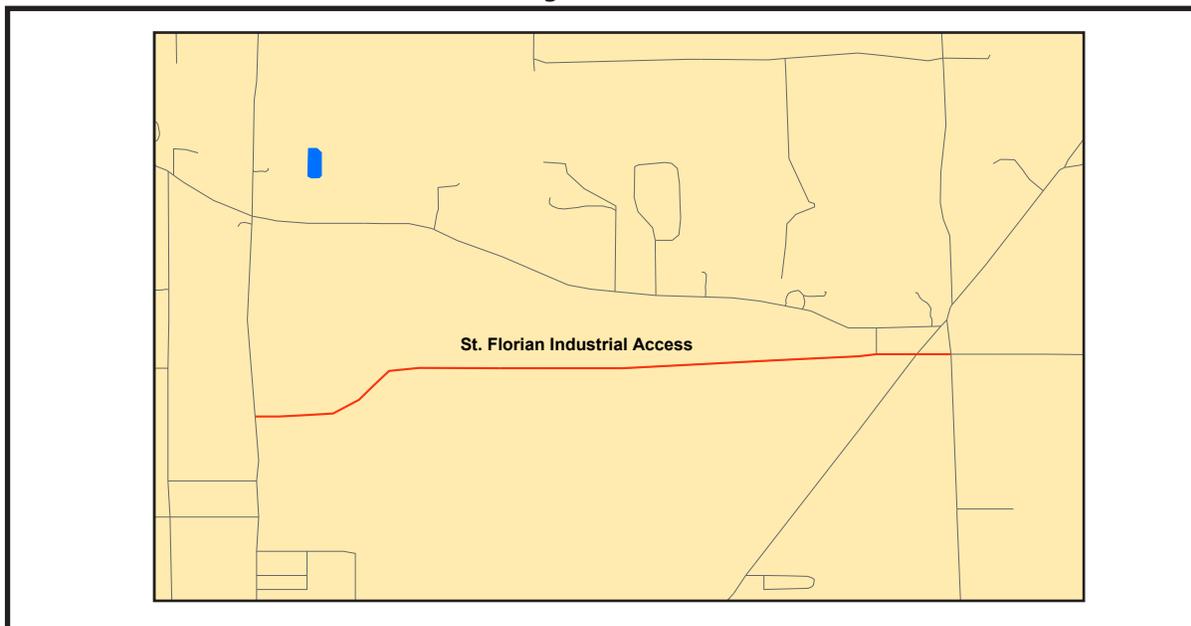
Strategy: Complete the development of the St. Florian Industrial Access Road interconnecting with the Florence-Lauderdale Industrial Park.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: St. Florian City Council, Florence City Council, MPO, ALDOT Division II

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 1/5

Progress: The Preliminary Engineering has been authorized and the county is now in the process of contracting for the project design. Right-of-way is scheduled for January 1, 2008 at a cost of \$175,000.00. Utilities is scheduled for May 1, 2008 with construction estimated to start in 2010 at a cost of one million dollars.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

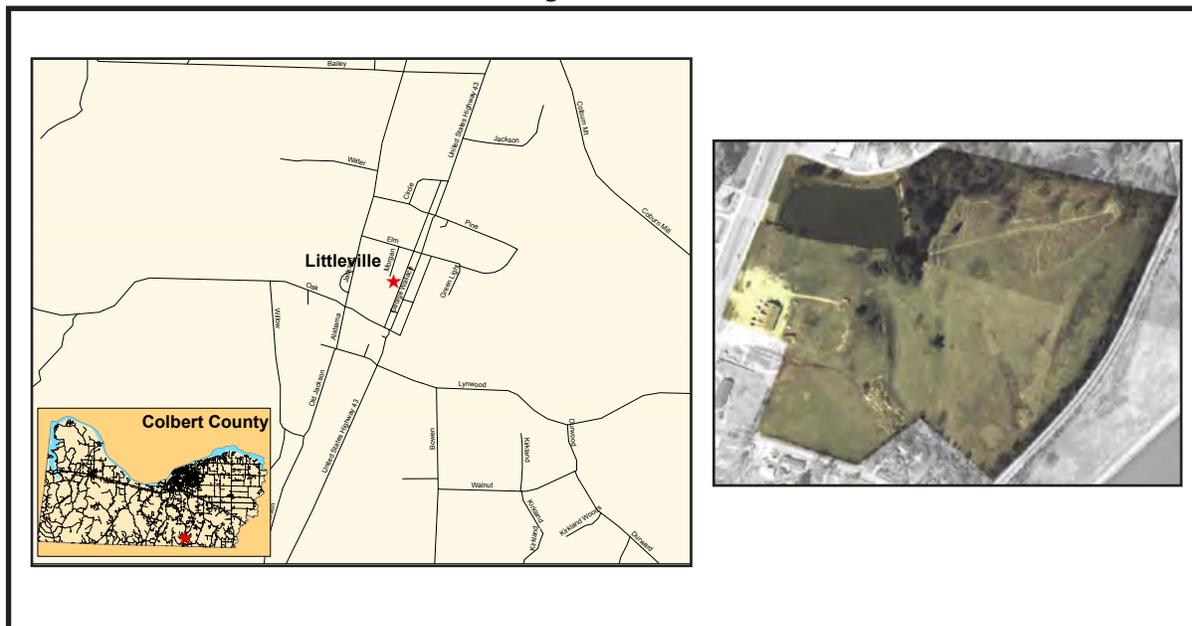
Strategy: Construct the improvements needed for the Littleville Industrial Park as outlined in the Littleville Wastewater Treatment Study.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Littleville City Council

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The Littleville Wastewater Treatment Study was completed in the summer of 2006. Implementation strategies and project viability need to be considered as evaluated in the wastewater study.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Explore opportunities to support the expansion of existing businesses and the recruitment of additional businesses to the region.

Strategy: Explore the implementation of wireless technologies within CBDs of the Shoals area by obtaining cost estimates for specific project sites.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: City Councils, Planning Commissions, Wireless Service Providers

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The initial development of wireless technology within the urban areas of the Shoals has been identified. Selection for an appropriate community and project community will occur over the next fiscal year.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Identify opportunities to expand workforce development opportunities by coordinating agencies and industries/businesses and implementing appropriate educational and recruitment programs

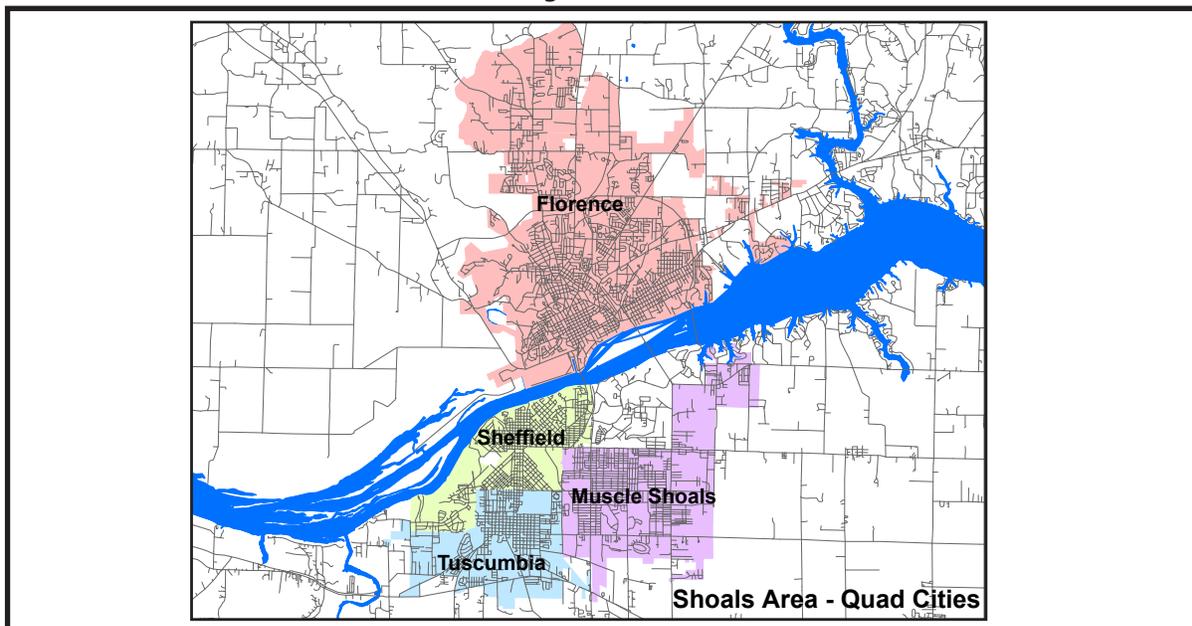
Strategy: Conduct roundtable discussions exploring possibilities to connect the biomedical academic programs in the region with Huntsville employers via improvements to infrastructure and wireless technology.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Stakeholders for this strategy should include identified employers in Huntsville/Decatur/Shoals as well as higher education administrators and workforce development professionals.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

Strategy: Identify local and regional partners for the creation of a task force to address the development of a non-governmental business and industrial park on the TVA Reservation in the Shoals.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Tennessee Valley Authority, Shoals Area City Councils, NACOLG

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Economic development opportunities for the TVA reservation range from mixed use residential development to the creation of a Shoals Digital Media Center and a proposed Environmental Research Park.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Colbert/Lauderdale •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Explore opportunities to support the expansion of existing businesses and the recruitment of additional businesses to the region.

Strategy: Implement the Entertainment Industry Study proposals for the Shoals Area, including the film production guide as outlined in the Entertainment Industries Strategic Development Plan.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The Entertainment Industry Strategic Development Plan was completed in October 2005. The plan contains specific strategies for advancing the entertainment industry in the NACOLG region.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

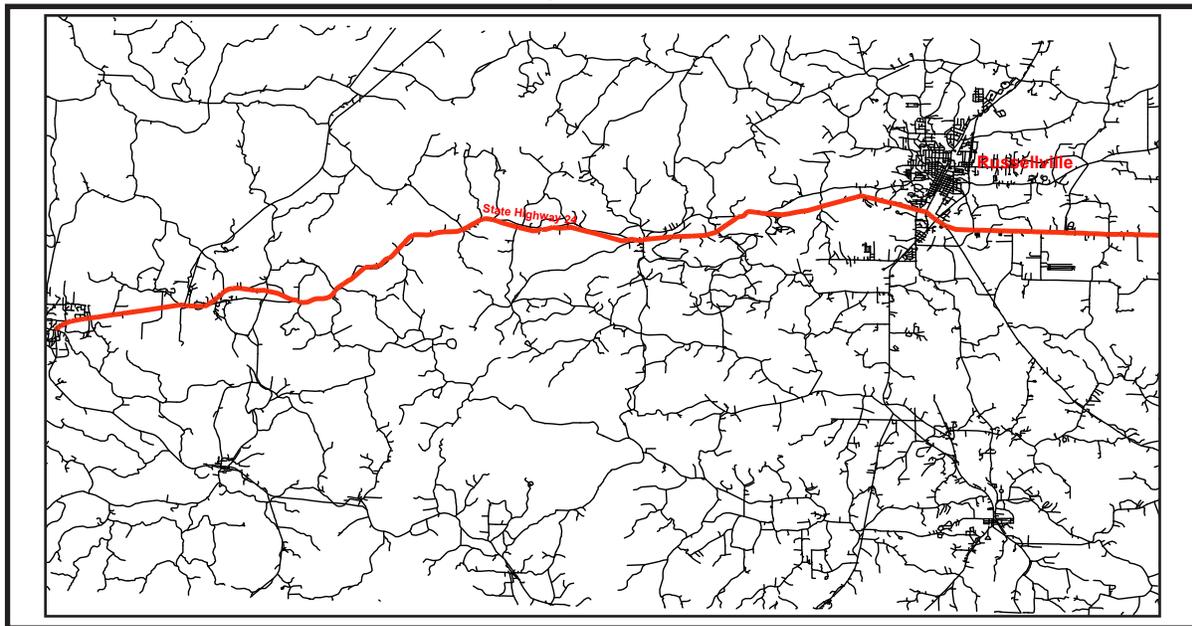
Strategy: Complete Alabama State Highway 24 (Appalachia Corridor V).

Horizon: Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholders: MPO, RPO, ALDOT Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: This project is funded through the Appalachian Regional Commission transportation fund. The area from the Mississippi line to SR 247 and the area from 3 miles west of Russellville to U.S. 43 are currently under construction. Construction for SR 247 to Dempsey is scheduled for FY 2007 and the area from Dempsey to 3 miles west of Russellville is scheduled for FY 2008.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

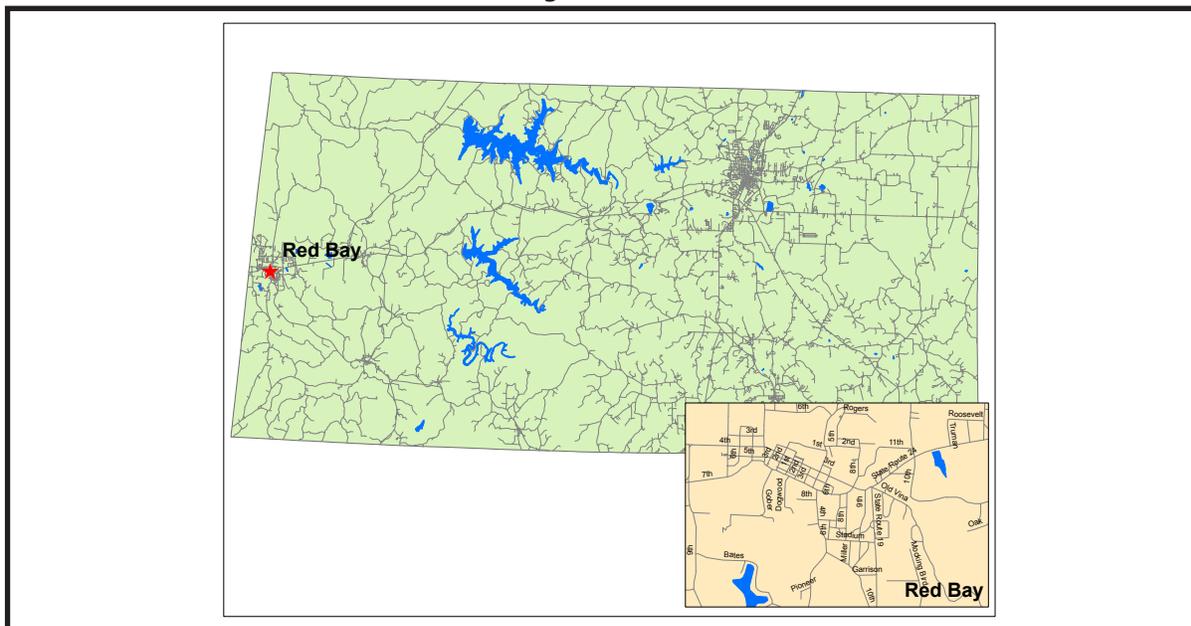
Strategy: Complete the construction of the Red Bay Bypass.

Horizon: Long (0-5 years)

Stakeholders: MPO, RPO, ALDOT Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 3/5

Progress: The project is currently under construction. The Base and Pave portion of the project are scheduled for FY 2010.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Identify and complete improvements to the region's multi-modal transportation network to improve local and regional access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

Strategy: Conduct five stakeholder meetings per year within the NACOLG region to identify new and coordinate existing home to work transportation routes.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: NACOLG Public Transit, Franklin County Local governments, ALDOT Division II

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Coordination should be planned with private industries, the NACOLG RPO, NACOLG Transit, and the Franklin County Officials. Coordinator should be the NACOLG Public Transit Department.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed use urban redevelopment fostering compact commercial and residential forms.

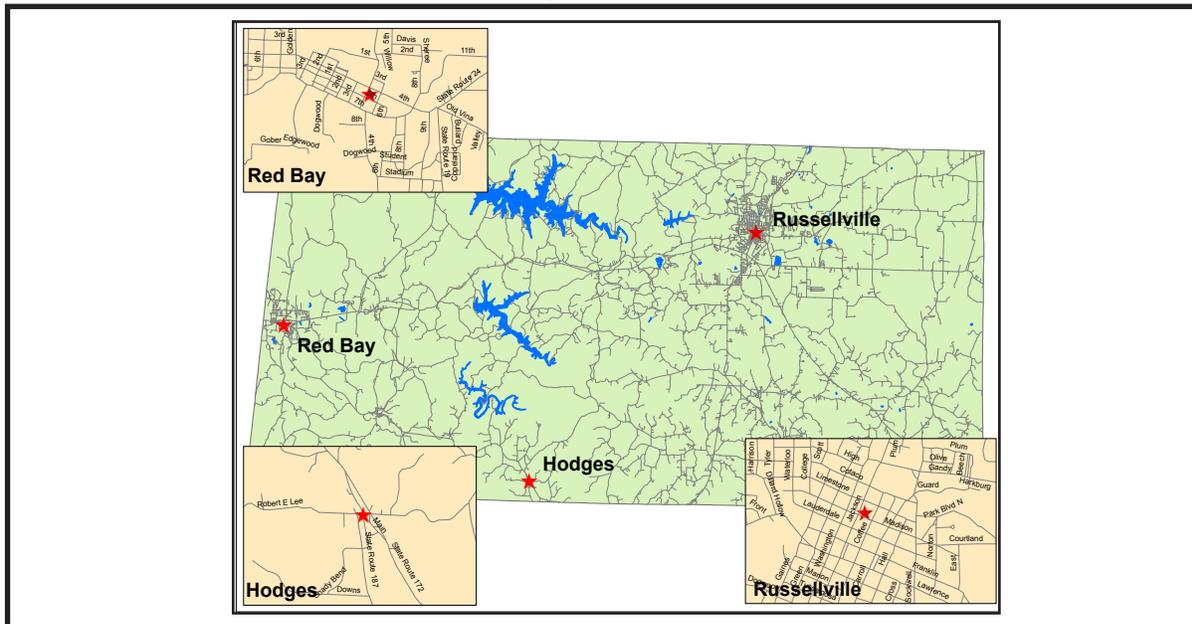
Strategy: Complete economic development and community master plans for Hodges, Red Bay and Russellville in conjunction with the Center for Architecture and Urban Studies.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: City Councils and Planning Commissions

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The City of Red Bay has initiated their community master plan process. Hodges has received funding for the completion of an economic development strategy based on existing local assets. Russellville has completed their downtown master plan but should evaluate local housing and commercial corridor opportunities.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Franklin •

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed use urban redevelopment fostering compact commercial and residential forms

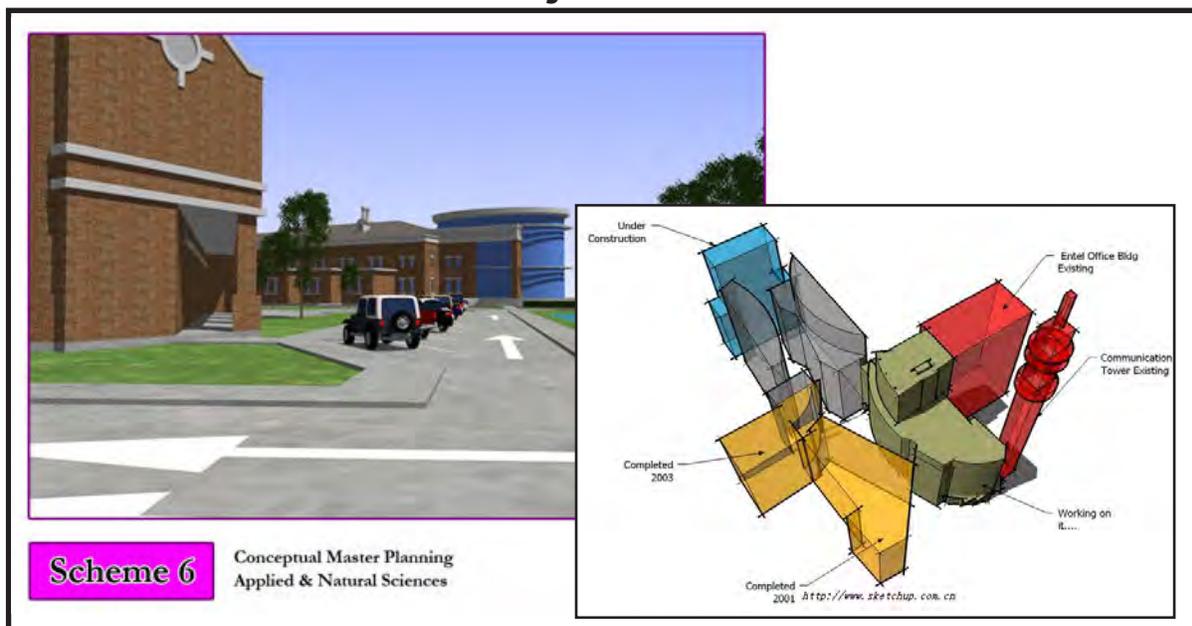
Strategy: Conduct stakeholder meetings to identify retail centers and commercial retail corridors and identify funding sources for master planning of CBD and retail corridors.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The Town of Red Bay has initiated the development of a downtown masterplan in conjunction with the Center for Architecture and Urban Studies in the Spring of 2006.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

Strategy: Regularly update the Bear Creek land management plan.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Bear Creek Development Authority, Franklin County Development Authority, Franklin County local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Involvement of the NACOLG regional planning agency within the Bear Creek Redevelopment Authority will need to be at the BCDA'S Board request. Involvement of NACOLG would be in relation to urban and rural community planning strategies and was identified as a need by CEDS participants.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Explore opportunities to support the expansion of existing businesses and the recruitment of additional businesses to the region.

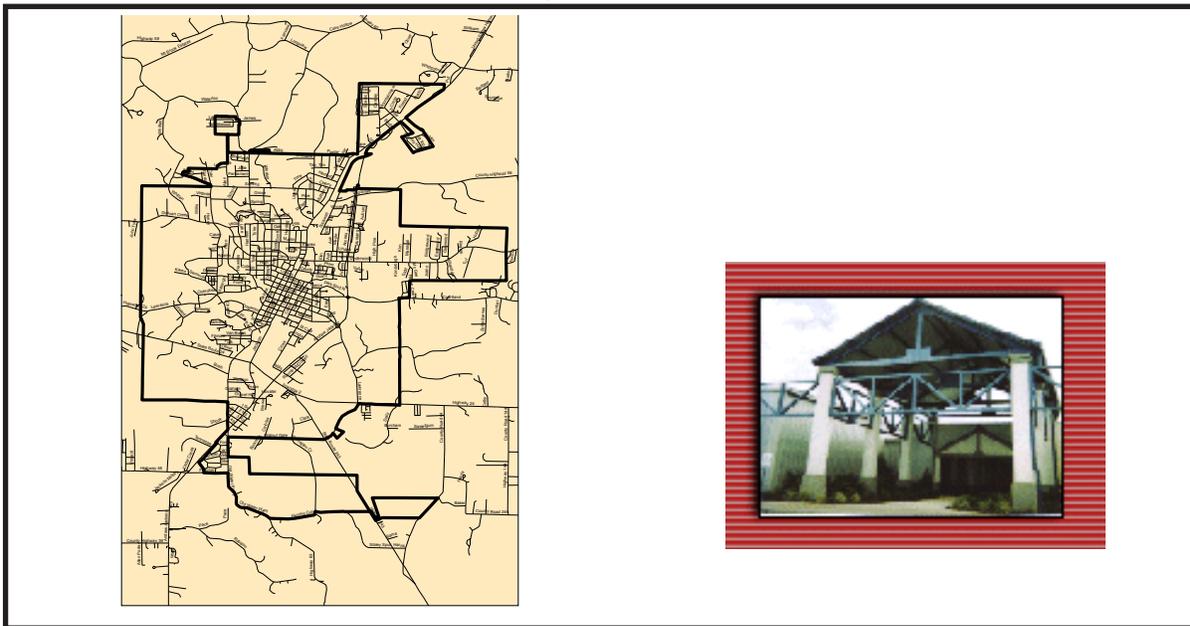
Strategy: Identify potential sites, site-specific occupants, and capital and operating expenses associated with the operation of an entrepreneurial center for Franklin County.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Franklin County Development Authority, Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, Shoals Entrepreneurial Center, Shoals Small Business Development Center.

Contact: Susan Hargett

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The development of a business incubator at a site in Franklin County was identified as a priority for economic development during the 2007-2008 Local Public Meetings. Previous discussions had involved Chamber representatives, local citizens, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the Shoals Entrepreneurial Center.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008: Identify potential sites for the development of a business incubator in Franklin County.

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Expand access to and understanding of technology resources in the region

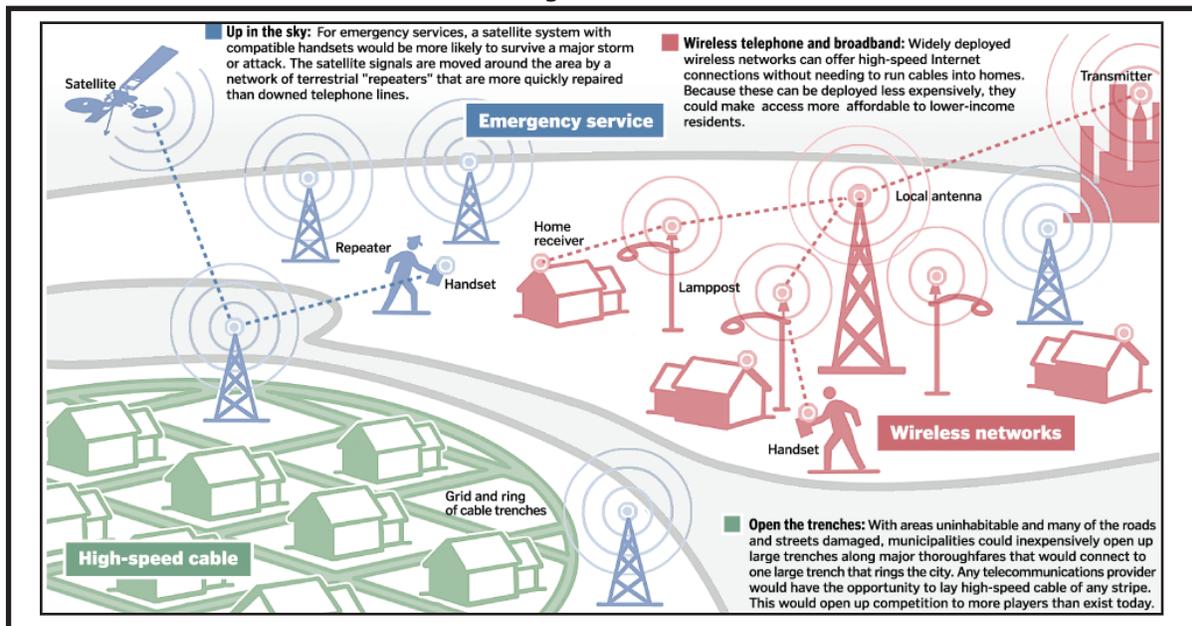
Strategy: Identify telecommunications stakeholders and conduct a telecommunications needs assessment for residential and industrial users.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Local governments, Franklin County Development Authority, telephone (wireless and home) service providers

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: This strategy promotes the improvement of telecommunications resources as a important and viable infrastructure for today's economy. Specific projects should be identified and adapted within local plans or pursued as priorities for local, state and federal funds for the CEDS period.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Explore opportunities to support the expansion of existing businesses and the recruitment of additional businesses to the region.

Strategy: Draft a cooperative partnership strategy that identifies social capital for community, business, and economic development and includes projects for cooperative development.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Franklin County Development Authority

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Cooperative partnerships are the foundation of good economic development. This strategy was identified at the Franklin County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy meeting on June 19, 2006.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Identify opportunities to expand workforce development opportunities by coordinating agencies and industries/businesses and implementing appropriate educational and recruitment programs.

Strategy: Identify funding opportunities for the development of an environmental computer lab for the Bear Creek Education Center.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Bear Creek Development Authority, Franklin County Development Authority, Franklin County local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The BCDA and the TVA Authority oversees the economic development opportunity within the Bear Creek Reservoir. Further action items need to be identified by the BCDA to continue with this effort.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Identify opportunities to expand workforce development opportunities by coordinating agencies and industries/businesses and implementing appropriate educational and recruitment programs.

Strategy: Conduct stakeholder meetings with land owners, foresters, and industry managers to identify workforce training needs and opportunities for expansion in the forestry sector.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Franklin County Development Authority

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Evaluation of the Franklin County Forest Products Industry needs to be coordinated with the Alabama Center for Advanced Wood Working Technology and private sector stakeholders.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Franklin •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Identify opportunities to expand workforce development opportunities by coordinating agencies and industries/businesses and implementing appropriate educational and recruitment programs.

Strategy: Establish an action plan for documenting industrial needs and expanding trade and technical college capacity to support supply workers meeting these needs.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: **Franklin County governments, Franklin County and Russellville City Schools, Beville State Community College, Northwest Shoals Community College, Franklin County Development Authority, local industries**

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Action items need to be identified by Franklin County Commission and Higher Education Representatives within the county.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Marion •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

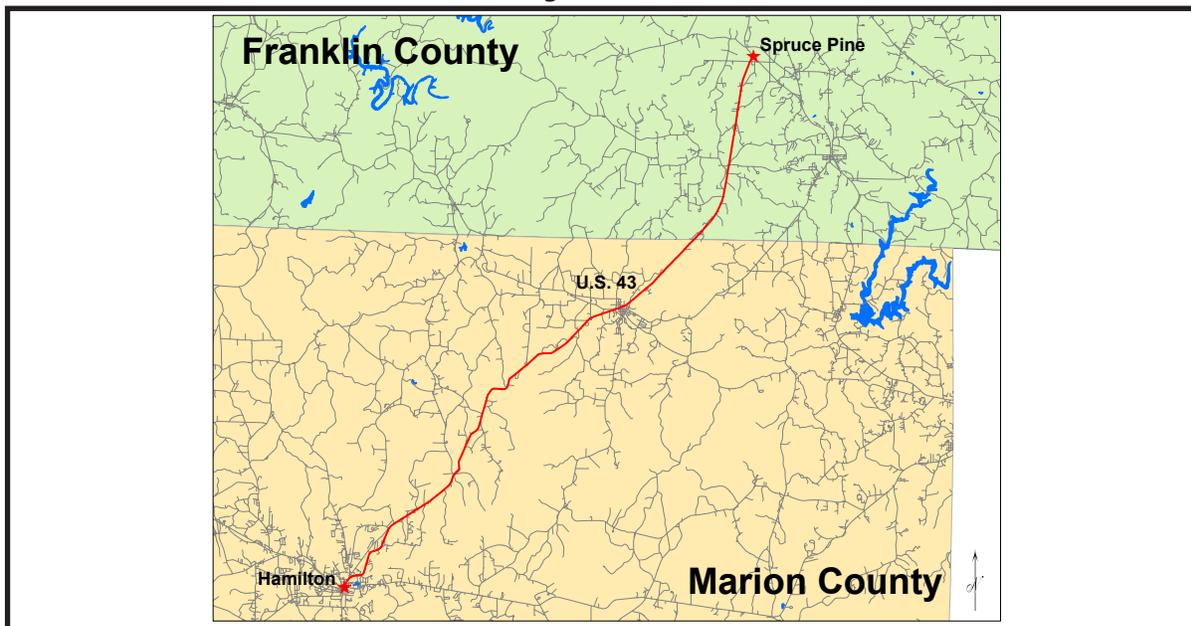
Strategy: Widen and improve U.S. 43 from Spruce Pine to Hamilton.

Horizon: Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholders: Marion County local governments, RPO, ALDOT Division II

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: This strategy has been identified in previous CEDS strategies and should be evaluated for prioritization against limited local and federal financial resources. Funding should be pursued through the ALDOT and the NACOLG RPO for transportation. Preliminary Engineering has authorized a corridor study to add additional lanes on U.S. 43 from U.S. 278 to Hackleburg. Preliminary Engineering from Hackleburg to Spruce Pine is scheduled for FY 2009.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Marion •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

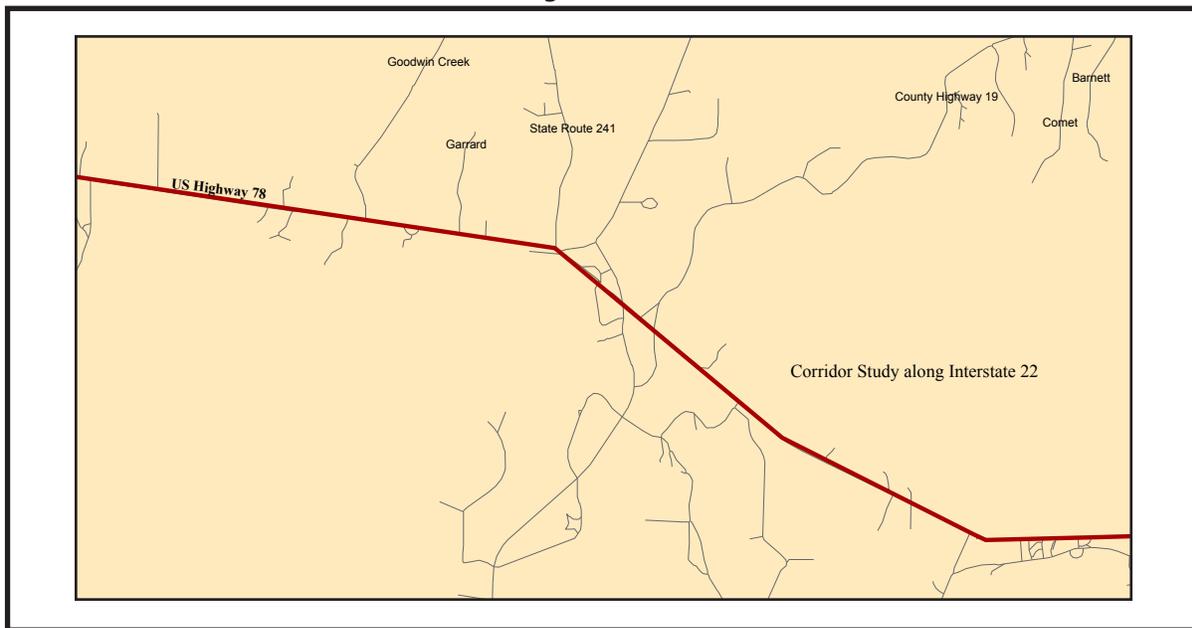
Strategy: Install lighting along future Interstate 22 entrance and exit ramps in Marion County.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Marion County local governments, RPO, ALDOT Division II

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: This strategy is being pursued through possible implementation via ALDOT resources as well as special appropriations funding. Partnership funding could be created through ALDOT and capital improvements funding from Hamilton and Marion County. Currently under design is Interchange lighting at Corridor X and SR 129. Completion of the project is estimated for FY 2012.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Marion •

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

- Objectives:
- Identify and remove dangerous transportation conflict points throughout the region.
 - Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.
 - Identify and complete improvements to the region's multi-modal transportation network to improve local and regional access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

Strategy: Four lane County Road 35 from Rankin-Fite Airport to Interstate 22.

Horizon: Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholders: Marion County local governments, RPO, ALDOT Division II

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: This strategy is also being pursued through possible implementation via ALDOT resources as well as special appropriations funding. Partnership funding could be created through ALDOT and capital improvements funding from Hamilton and Marion County. This has been identified as the shortest, flattest, and safest route to the airport.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

• 2007-2008 Marion •

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Identify and complete improvements to the region's multi-modal transportation network to improve local and regional access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

Strategy: Complete improvements to the Marion County-Rankin Fite airport for industrial and commercial use, including purchasing the Alabama Power hanger, runway extensions and renovations to both airport hangers.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Marion County local governments, Community Development Foundation of Marion County, RPO, Marion County-Rankin Fite Airport

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: This strategy is also being pursued through possible implementation via ALDOT resources as well as special appropriations funding. Partnership funding could be created through ALDOT and capital improvements funding from Hamilton and Marion County. This has been identified as the shortest, flattest, and safest route to the airport.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Marion •

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Initiate an urban and neighborhood planning process that provides master plans and infrastructure improvement assessments for municipalities and counties within the NACOLG region.

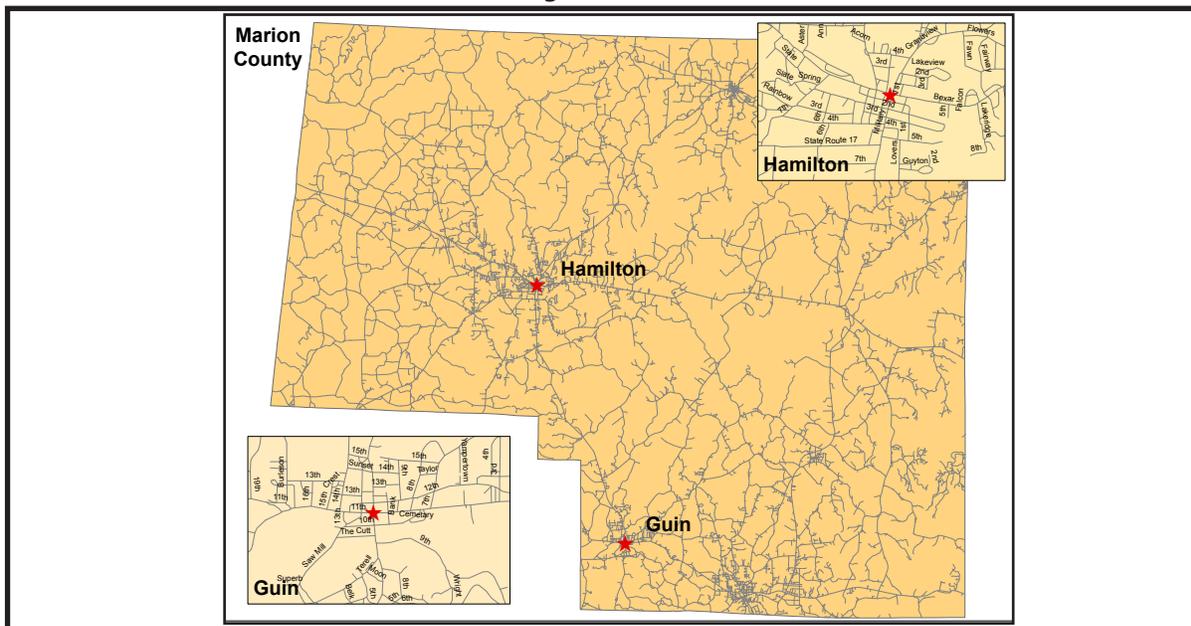
Strategy: Initiate comprehensive planning and urban design master plans for Marion County, the City of Hamilton, and Guin through the Alabama Communities of Excellence Program.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Marion County Commission, Hamilton City Council and Planning Commission, Guin City Council and Planning Commission, Guin Industrial Development Board, Chambers of Commerce

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Municipalities within Marion County have begun redevelopment and comprehensive planning for economic improvements. This strategy identifies a specific interest expressed in sponsoring technical assistance for a comprehensive planning process.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Marion •

Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) - Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continued high quality of life by municipal and county residents

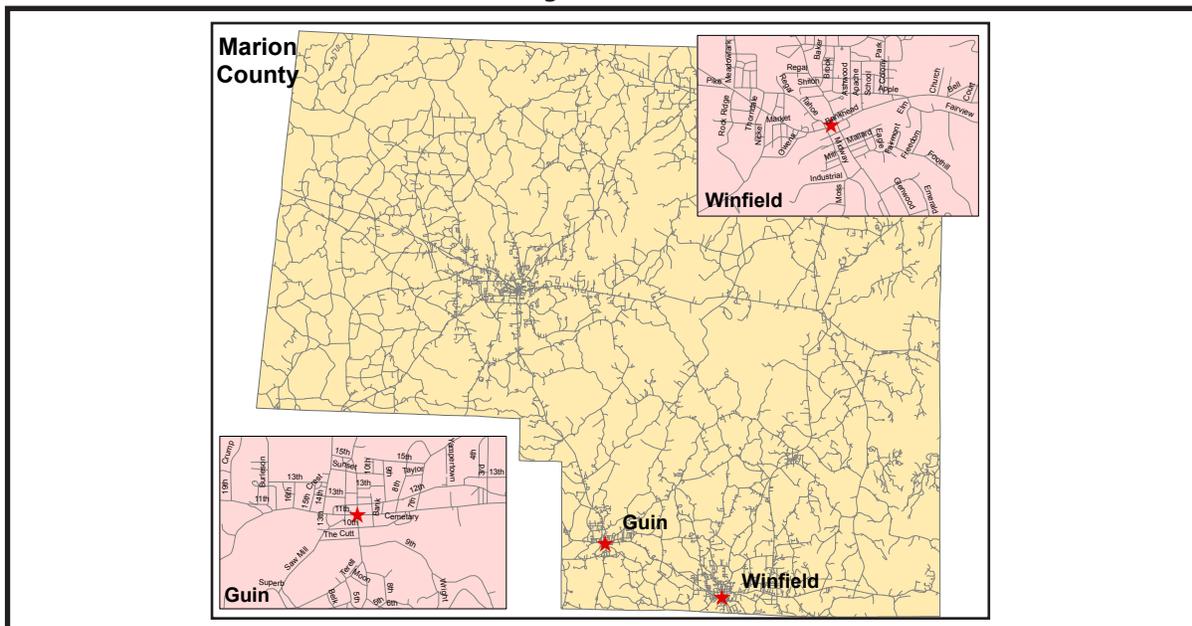
Strategy: Renovate and expand the Guin and Winfield wastewater treatment facilities.

Horizon: Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholders: Guin City Council, Winfield City Council

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: Evaluation and expansion studies have been completed for the sharing of wastewater treatment facilities within Winfield and Guin. Prioritization of this project needs to be completed by both municipalities due to limited local and state financial resources.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Marion •

Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) - Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continued high quality of life by municipal and county residents.

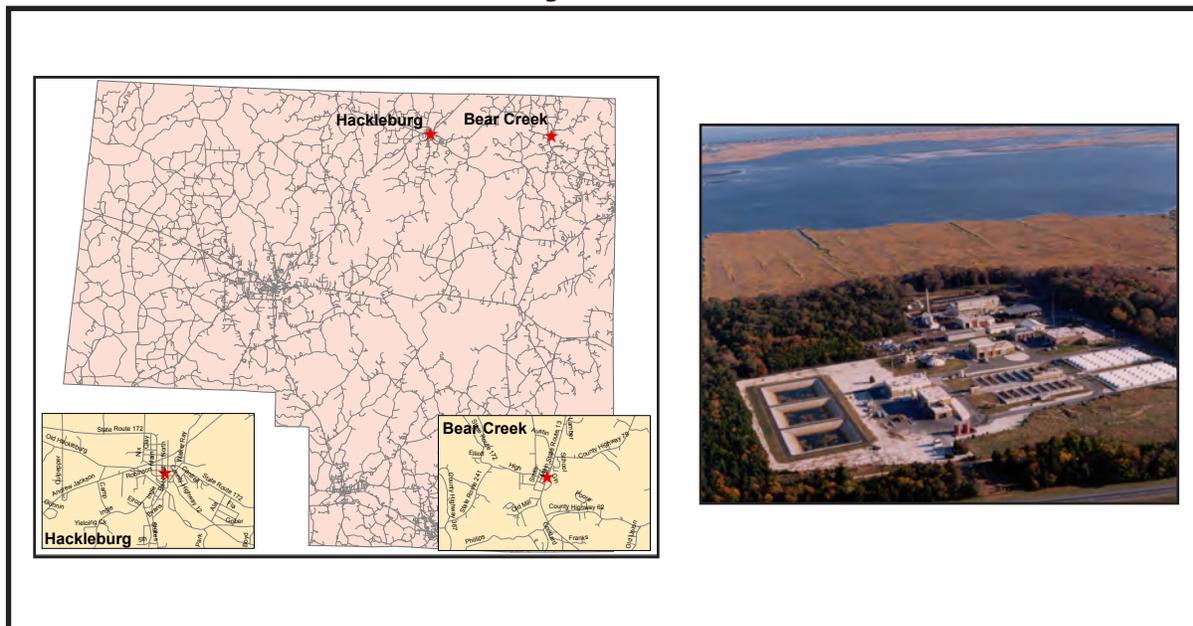
Strategy: Construct wastewater treatment facilities in the Towns of Hackleburg and Bear Creek.

Horizon: Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholder: Hackleburg City Council, Bear Creek City Council

Contact: Drennon Veal, Mayor of Bear Creek

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: Waste water facilities studies have been completed for these two towns. Funding for the projects is currently under evaluation by municipal leaders.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Marion •

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed use urban redevelopment fostering compact commercial and residential forms

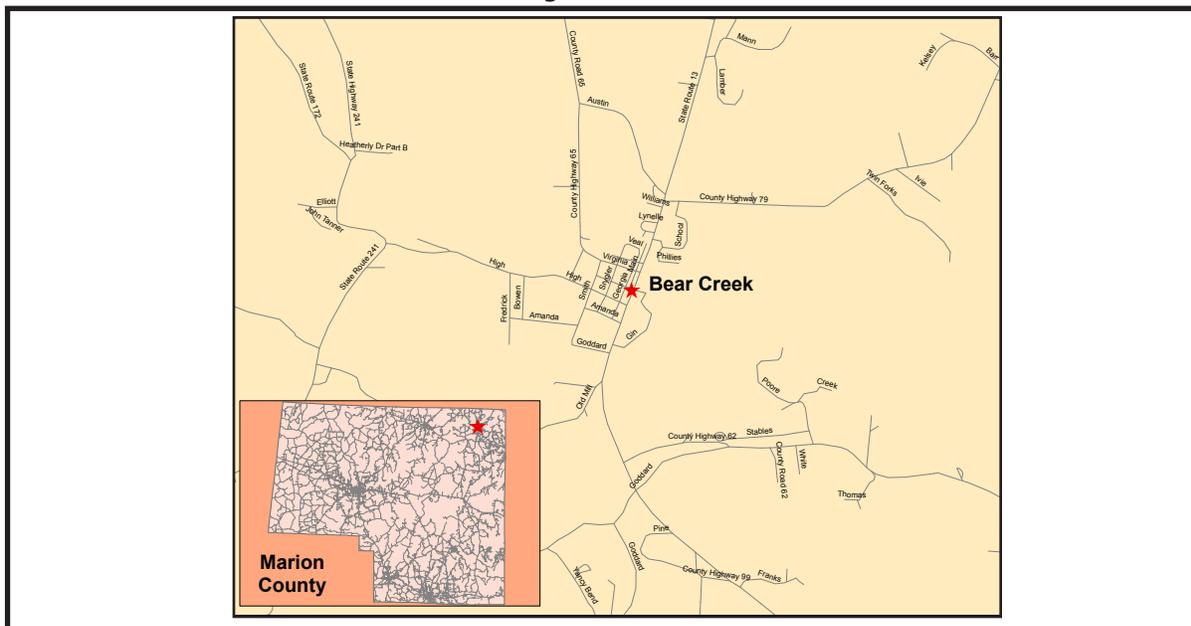
Strategy: Construct a community center for the Town of Bear Creek.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Review for appropriate funding and site location is under way by NACOLG staff and municipal officials. Appropriate funding matches and program funding are being considered.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Marion •

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

Strategy: Explore with the Alabama State Legislative Delegation and the Citizens of Marion County the creation of a bill for distribution and sale of alcoholic beverages within Marion County.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: This specific strategy has been identified as a topic for discussion and may need to be approached on a municipal level rather than a county wide level. It was introduced from citizens and leaders of the community in Marion County as a current road block to economic development. In addition today's commercial businesses are competing within the region for market share against a modern transportation network as well as retail chain restaurants.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Marion •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

Strategy: Identify stakeholders and potential revenue sharing arrangements for a Northwest Alabama Civic exhibition center.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Site location for the exhibition center should be chosen in relation to existing amenities like commercial venues and residential neighborhoods. Appropriate placement and site design will allow the center to become an additional amenity not only the region but to downtown businesses and residential neighborhoods. Corinth, MS is an example.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Marion •

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

Strategy: Expand and improve the Guin Industrial Park located on Corridor X (I-22).

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Guin City Council, Marion County Community Development Foundation

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Expansion of the Hackleburg Industrial Park is under evaluation by consulting engineers and municipal officials.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Marion •

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

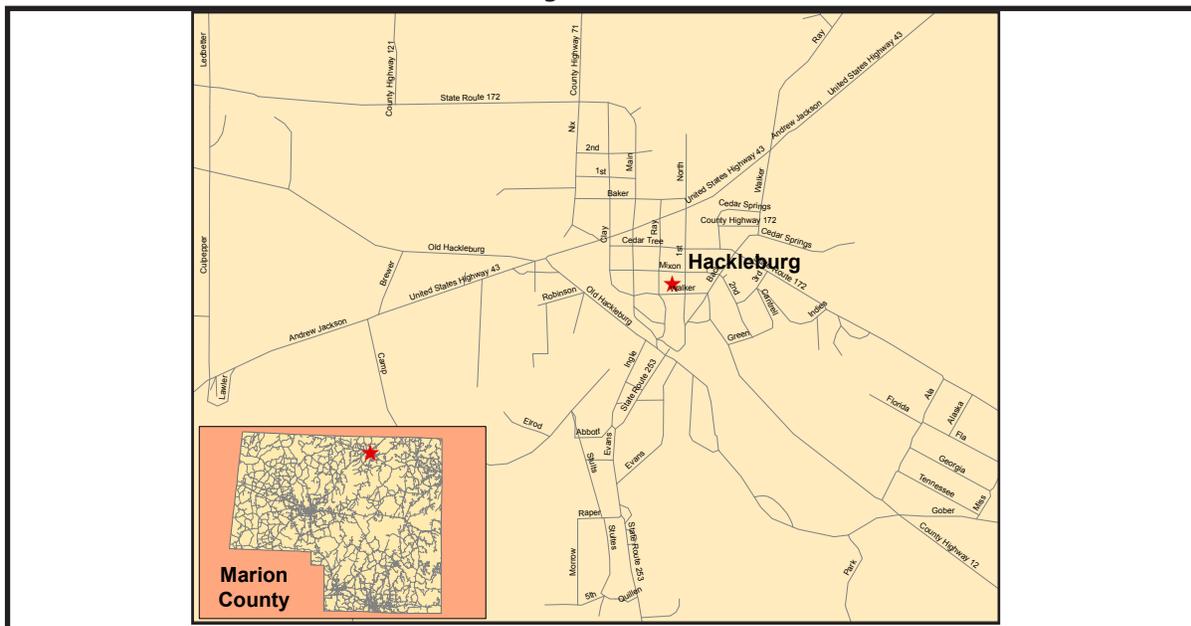
Strategy: Expand the Town of Hackleburg's industrial park.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Hackleburg City Council, Marion County Community Development Foundation

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Expansion of the Hackleburg Industrial Park is under evaluation by consulting engineers and municipal officials.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Marion •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

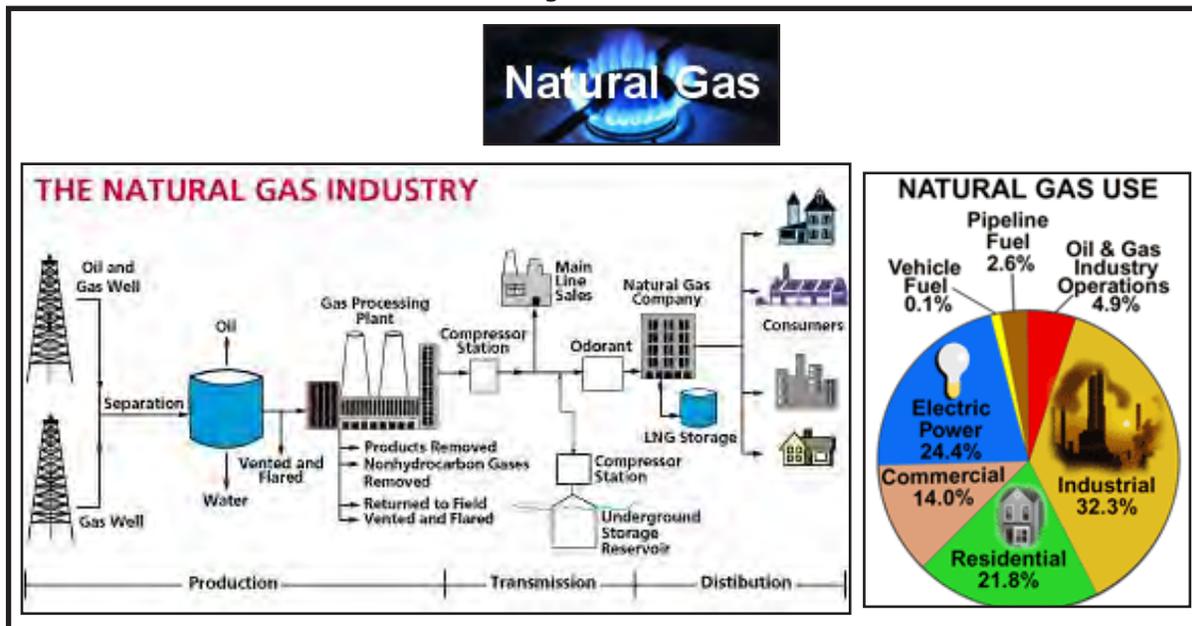
Strategy: Complete a natural gas resource assessment for Marion County, including specific benefits, environmental impact, and specific development strategies.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Further stakeholder discussion should be completed in conjunction with appropriate resource consultants, community stakeholders, and gas industry managers. This discussion should identify initial methods for further leveraging natural gas in the county.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Marion •

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Identify opportunities to expand workforce development opportunities by coordinating agencies and industries/businesses and implementing appropriate educational and recruitment programs.

Strategy: Identify stakeholders to develop a career educational strategy for schools to begin by at least sixth grade and to include career education reinforcing industry goals in the community.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Current efforts should identify stakeholders and benchmarks for implementing career education programs and pursue additional funding if necessary.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Winston County Strategies

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

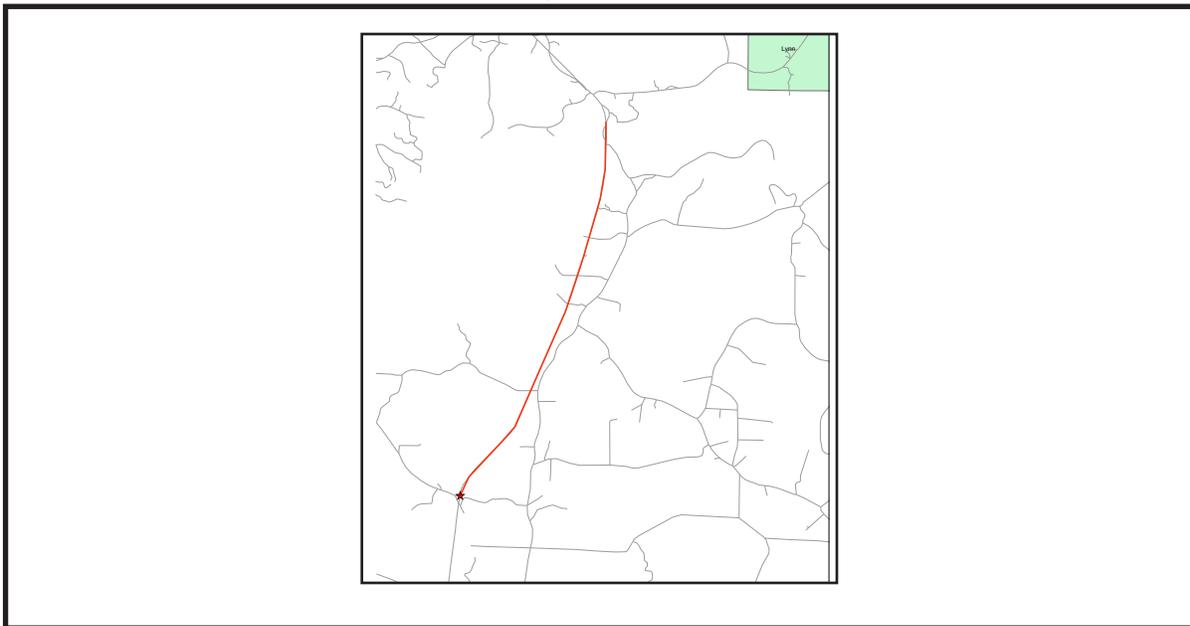
Strategy: Construct two additional lanes on Highway 13 from Corridor X/I-22 interchange north approximately 5.2 miles to Winston County Cooperative Improvements District Industrial Park.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Winston County Commission, Haleyville, Double Springs, Arley, Addison, Lynn, Natural Bridge, Winston County Industrial Development Authority, ALDOT Division II.

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Preliminary Engineering is scheduled to begin FY 2013 for section from Corridor X to the Winston County line and completion is estimated for FY 2017. Section from Walker County line to U.S. 278 is estimated for completion FY 2015. Preliminary Engineering has been authorized on this section.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Winston •

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

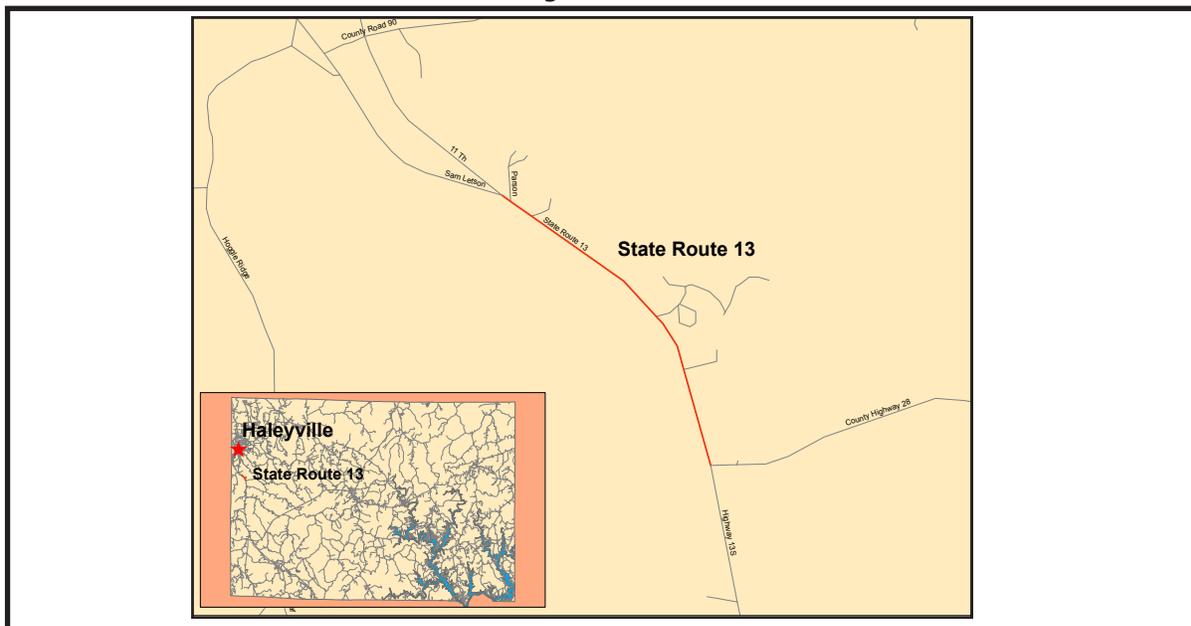
Strategy: Construct an additional lane on Alabama State Route 13 in Haleyville.

Horizon: Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholder: Winston County Commission, Haleyville, Double Springs, Arley, Addison, Lynn, Natural Bridge, Winston County Industrial Development Authority, ALDOT Division II.

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: This strategy has been identified as an important safety and transportation link to communities and commercial exchange for the city. Review and further developments should be coordinated with the NACOLG RPO. Design for this project has been authorized by Preliminary Engineering and is approximately 50% complete. Right-of-way is scheduled for completion by FY 2011 and estimated completion of construction of the project is FY 2012.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

Strategy: Complete the construction of the Haleyville Bypass.

Horizon: Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholder: Winston County Commission, Haleyville, Double Springs, Arley, Addison, Lynn, Natural Bridge, Winston County Industrial Development Authority, ALDOT Division II.

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: The project is scheduled to begin with right-of-way in November of 2008 with a cost of 4.1 million. Construction costs are estimated at 17,216,000.00. The right-of-way from Delmar to SR 195 and construction is to be completed by FY 2013. Right-of-way from SR 195 to Dime is estimated to be completed FY 2012 and construction ending in FY 2014. Base and Pave from Dime to Spruce Pine will be completed in FY 2013.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Winston •

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

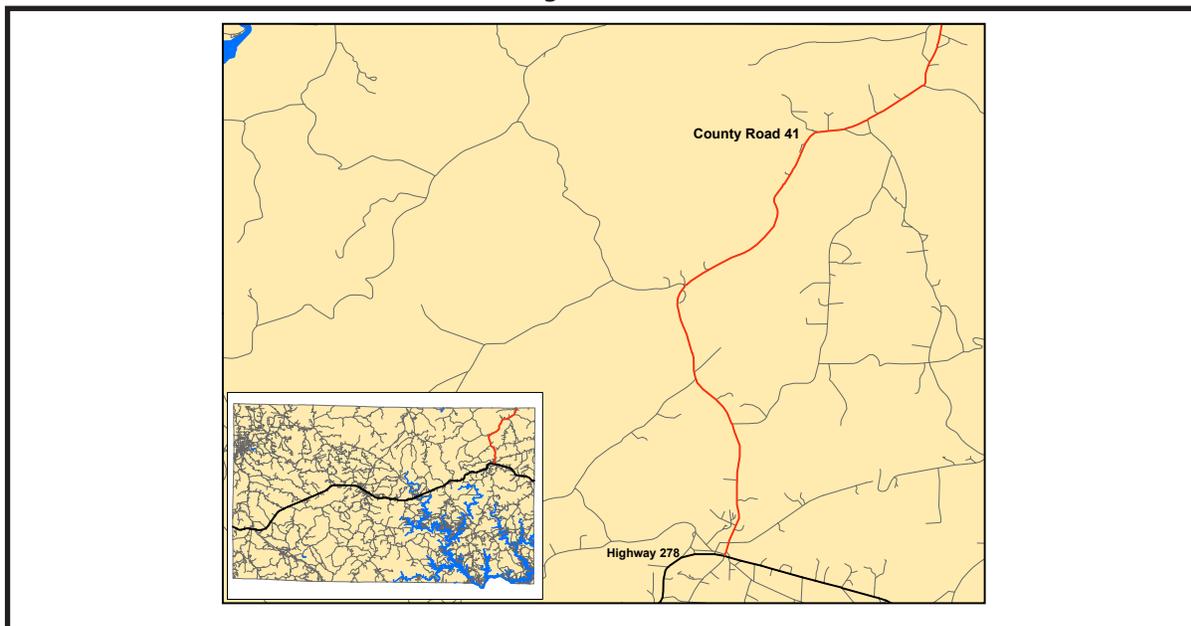
Strategy: Widen and resurface Highway 41 from 278 to Highway 157.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Winston County Commission, Haleyville, Double Springs, Arley, Addison, Lynn, Natural Bridge, Winston County Industrial Development Authority, ALDOT Division II.

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: Highway 41 from Highway 278 to Highway 157 is currently designated as Forestry Service Access Road. This designation provides a unique opportunity with unusual constraints in order to complete the project.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

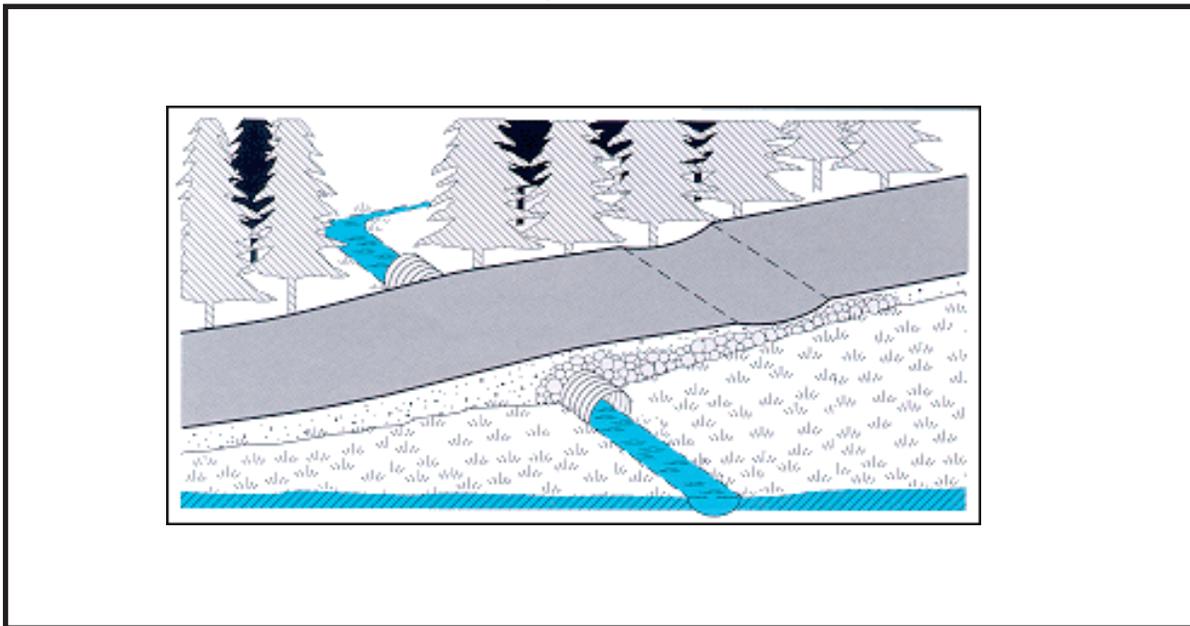
Strategy: Complete the drainage project on Highway 13.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Winston County Commission, Haleyville, Double Springs, Arley, Addison, Lynn, Natural Bridge, Winston County Industrial Development Authority, ALDOT Division II.

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Current status of the project centers around ground water contamination. An expensive cleanup may be involved in order to locate the culvert in its proposed location. Project funds do not currently budget for the contamination cleanup.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Initiate an urban and neighborhood planning process that provides master plans and infrastructure improvement assessments for municipalities and counties within the NACOLG region.

Strategy: Complete the three to five year Haleyville Strategic Plan review and update in conjunction with completion of the Haleyville Comprehensive Plan.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Haleyville Planning Commission

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The City of Haleyville will complete the Haleyville Comprehensive Plan once the existing landuse analysis is complete. Completion has been placed on hold until the parcel data for the county is converted to a digital shapefile.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Winston •

Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) - Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continued high quality of life by municipal and county residents.

Strategy: Expand the wastewater treatment facilities to serve residents of Addison.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Addison City Council, Winston County Industrial Development Authority

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The need for expanded wastewater treatment facilities has been previously acknowledged within Addison. The difficulty lies in the population density and number of customers ready to hook up additional facilities.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continued high quality of life by municipal and county residents.

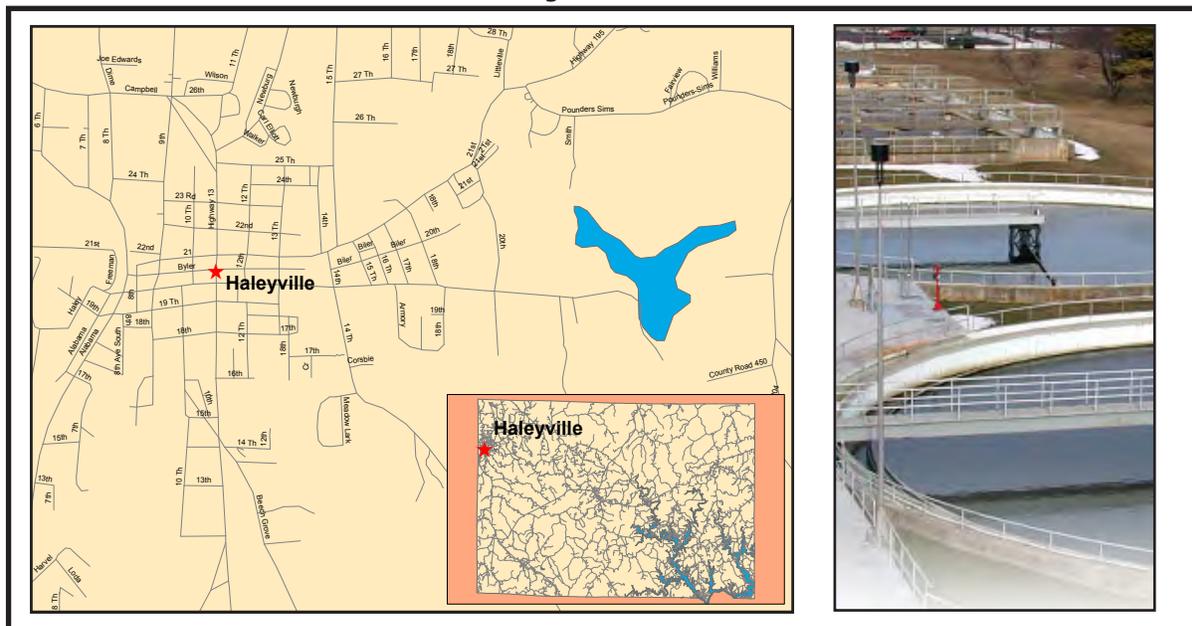
Strategy: Upgrade and expand the Haleyville Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Haleyville City Council

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: This strategy has been identified in previous CEDS strategies. Funding and project priorities should be evaluated against limited local and federal financial resources.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

Strategy: Identify and hold a community wide culture and arts symposium to initiate interest in a community foundation for the arts.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The city of Haleyville and Winston County have a thriving cultural arts and Heritage community. This community has not successfully collaborated in a collective manner in order to promote cultural arts goods and services. The symposium is designed in order to initiate collaboration by the Winston County arts community.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Seek funding for housing initiatives and mixed use urban redevelopment fostering compact commercial and residential forms.

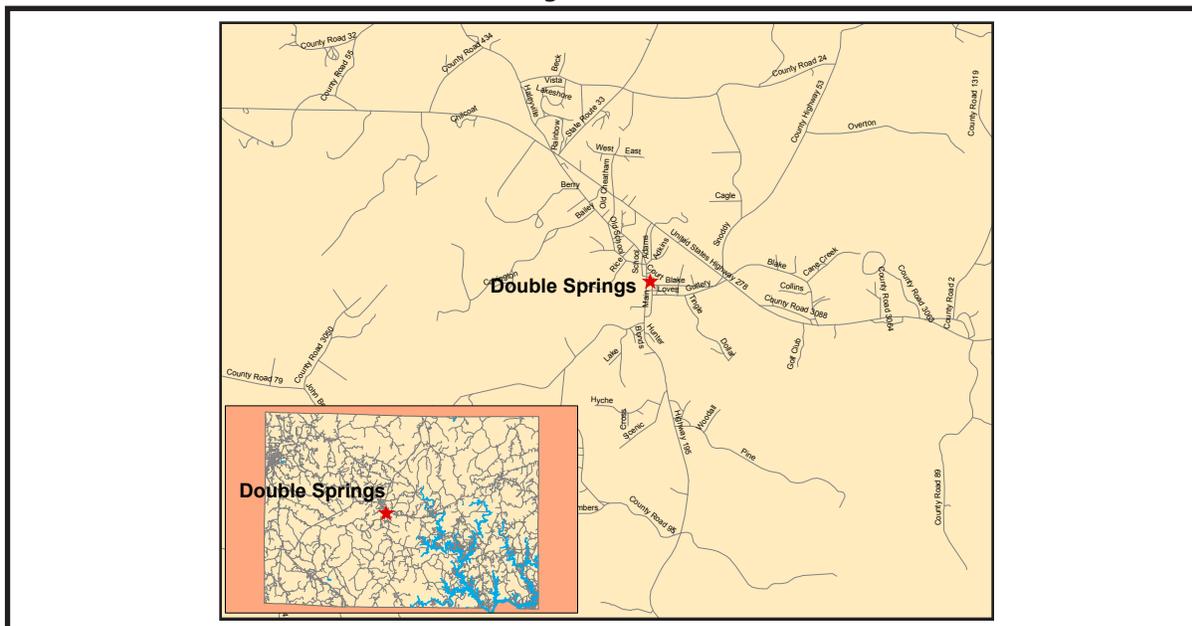
Strategy: Construct a community center in the Town of Double Springs.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The Town of Double Springs is actively pursuing the construction of a senior center within the city. Appropriate placement of the center within the commercial district will enhance commercial activity through pedestrian movement and commercial traffic.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

Strategy: Design and construct the Winston County Horse Park and Show Grounds for celebration of county and regional equestrian assets.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Winston County Commission, Haleyville, Double Springs, Arley, Addison, Lynn, Natural Bridge, Winston County Industrial Development Authority, ALDOT Division II.

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Site location for the showgrounds should be chosen in relation to existing amenities like commercial venues and residential neighborhoods. Appropriate placement and site design will allow the arena to become an additional amenity to downtown businesses and residential neighborhoods.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Winston •

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

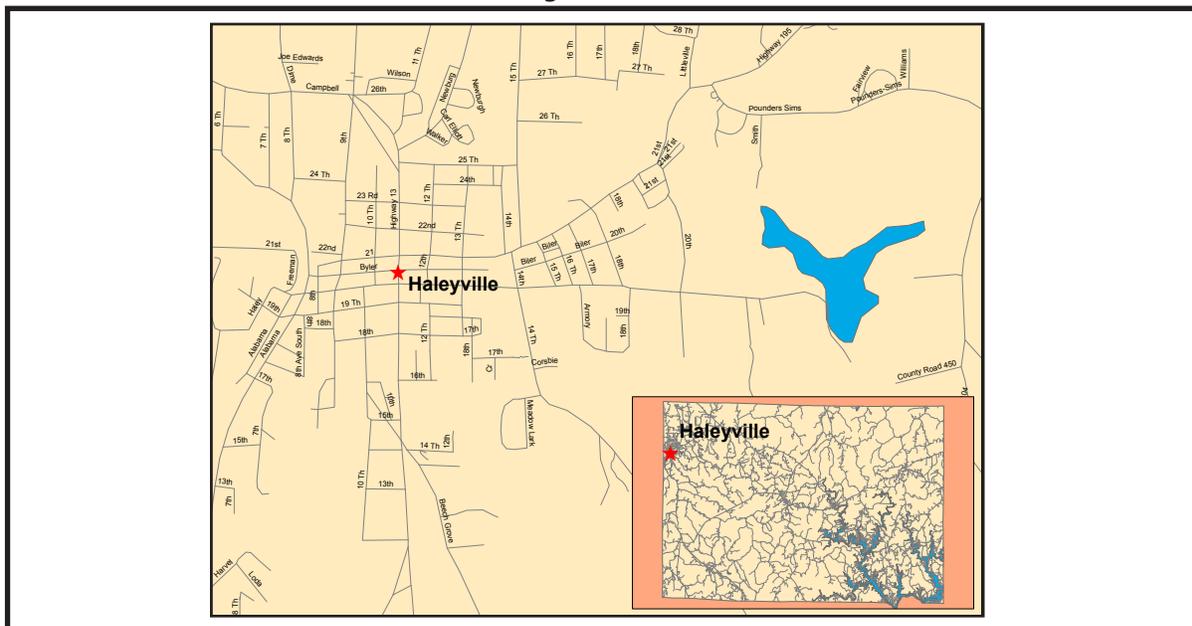
Strategy: Complete upgrades to the youth baseball fields in the City of Haleyville.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: City of Haleyville, Haleyville Planning Commission

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Upgrades for the field should be listed and prioritized for implementation within the Haleyville Capital Improvements Program. Upgrades should act as action items for this strategy.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

Strategy: Complete a needs assessment and promotional strategy for development of the Bankhead National Forest as a tourist destination.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: National Park Service, Winston County Commission, Haleyville, Double Springs, Arley, Addison, Lynn, Natural Bridge, Winston County Industrial Development Authority, ALDOT Division II.

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: This strategy should evaluate the Bankhead National Forest as an economic generator and recreational amenity for the southeast. Consideration should be taken to include eco-tourism and forestry products as compatible industries for a unique community. Smith Lake is actively undergoing residential development.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 Winston •

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continued high quality of life by municipal and county residents.

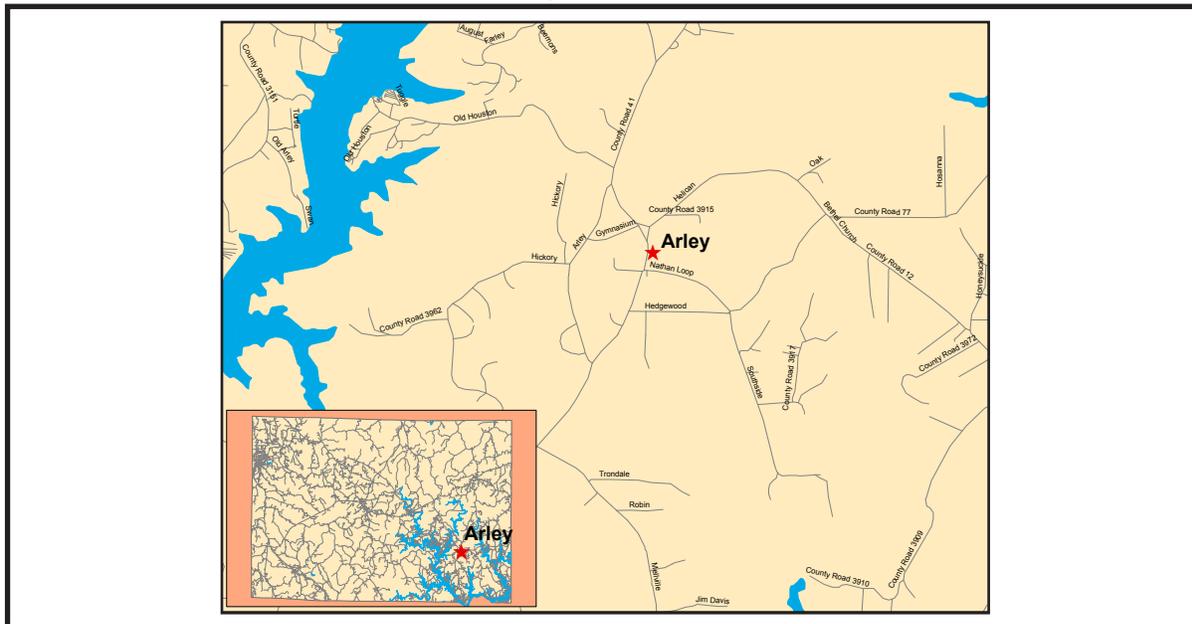
Strategy: Evaluate wastewater treatment options for the Town of Arley.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder:

Contact: Arley City Council

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Expansion of residential development along Smith Lake has increased the need for expansion of the Arley Water Treatment Facility. Current capacities are not contained within this report. Solutions are to evaluate hook up to Cullman County water system or the Town of Addison public water system.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

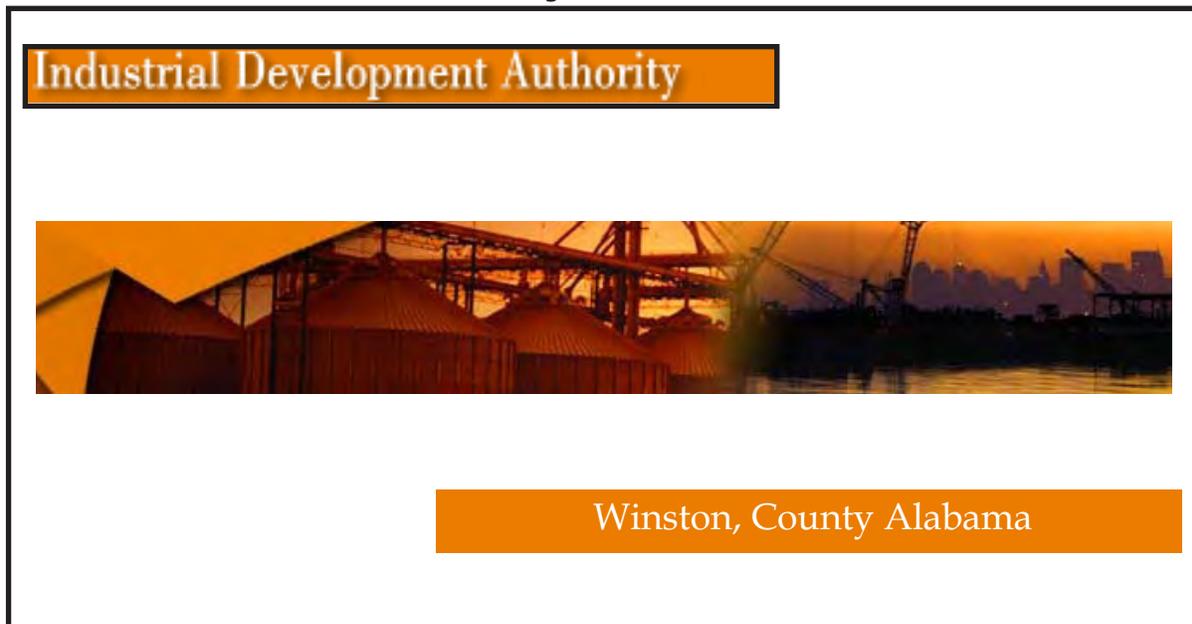
Strategy: Develop a process for evaluating county industrial websites' advertising strategies and promotional activities.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Winston County Commission, Haleyville, Double Springs, Arley, Addison, Lynn, Natural Bridge, Winston County Industrial Development Authority, ALDOT Division II.

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: This strategy should consider the most accessible site for the traditional and non-traditional economic development within Winston County. Update to the site should also be taken into consideration as well as who can submit information to the site.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 Winston •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Identify opportunities to expand workforce development opportunities by coordinating agencies and industries/businesses and implementing appropriate educational and recruitment programs.

Strategy: Complete the Winston County Workforce Development needs assessment.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Winston County Commission, Haleyville, Double Springs, Arley, Addison, Lynn, Natural Bridge, Winston County Industrial Development Authority, Beville State Community College, Northwest Shoals Community College

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: Workforce development needs for Winston County have been discussed by municipal officials. In order to identify comprehensive needs, private sector and public officials should collaborate on the workforce development plan for Winston County.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

Strategy: Complete the North-South corridor study and initiate road construction of the West Alabama Freeway from Mobile (I-10) to Tuscombma (U.S. 72), with priority toward the northern section giving limited access travel from U.S. 72 to I-22.

Horizon: Long (16+ years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/16+

Progress: The Alabama Department of Transportation is completing the corridor and alignment study for the West Alabama Freeway. Environmental and archeological studies are being discussed to refine possible alternates.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

Strategy: Complete the Memphis to Atlanta highway with specific focus on the section from Decatur to the Alabama/Mississippi boundary.

Horizon: Long (16+ years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/16+

Progress: Corridor alignment has been chosen for the limited access highway. Preliminary engineering has begun for three sections within the State of Alabama, however none of these sections are within the Northwest Alabama Region. Preliminary Engineering has been authorized on the section from SR 20 at Hillsboro to I 565.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

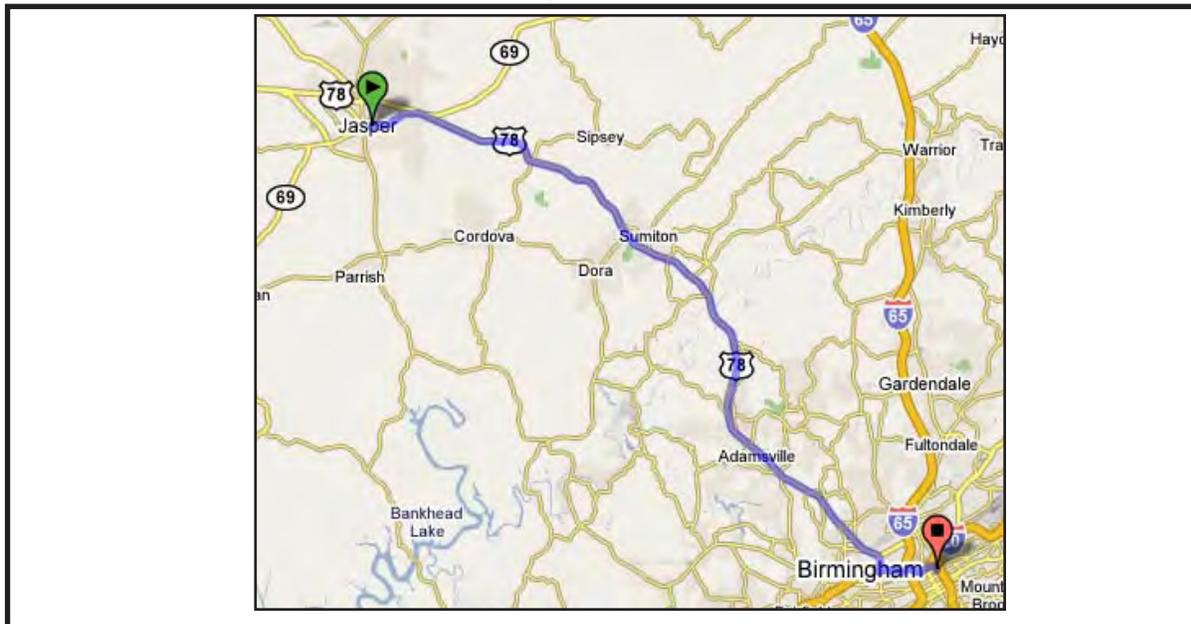
Strategy: Complete I-22 from Jasper to Birmingham.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The section from Jasper to Birmingham includes greater costs due to the overpass being constructed in the Birmingham section.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

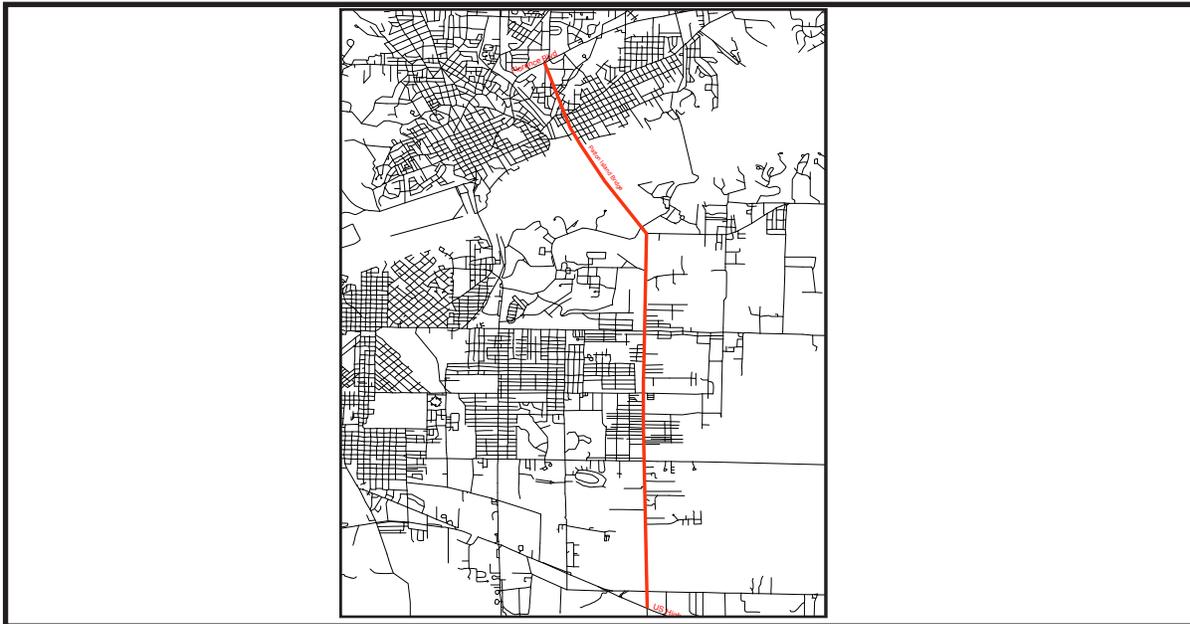
Strategy: Complete the North-South corridors leading to Patton Island Bridge.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The north approach for the Patton Island Bridge is 1.1 miles in length. This section is within the TIP for the Shoals Area MPO. Estimated cost 23,000,000.00. The south approach is located in the Long Range Plan. The Completion of SR 133 from the railroad to Avalon is estimated for FY 2008. The right-of-way for SR 133 from SR 157 to the railroad is projected to be finished in FY 2012 with the final completion in FY 2013. The completion of Helton Drive from Hermitage to Cox Creek Parkway is set for FY 2011.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

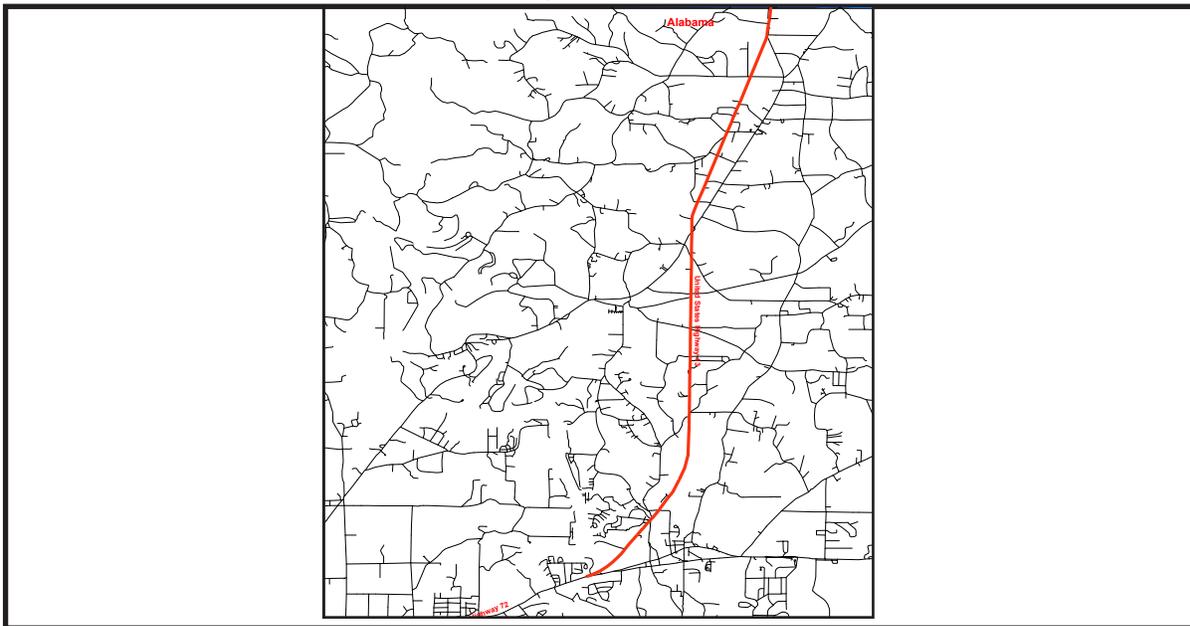
Strategy: Complete improvements to US 43 from the Tennessee State Line to the Marion/Fayette County line.

Horizon: Intermediate (16+ 10 years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: This project is divided into three sections. Section A. is State Highway 72 to Alabama 64. Currently, completion from Killen to SR 64 is estimated for FY 2009. Section B. is from Alabama 64 to Lauderdale County Road 140. The right-of-way is estimated for completion in FY 2010 for the section of SR 64 to County Road 140. Completion for this area is estimated for FY 2014. Section C includes the area from County Road 140 to the Tennessee State line. The right-of-way for this area is estimated to be completed by FY 2013 and the final completion scheduled for FY 2014.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

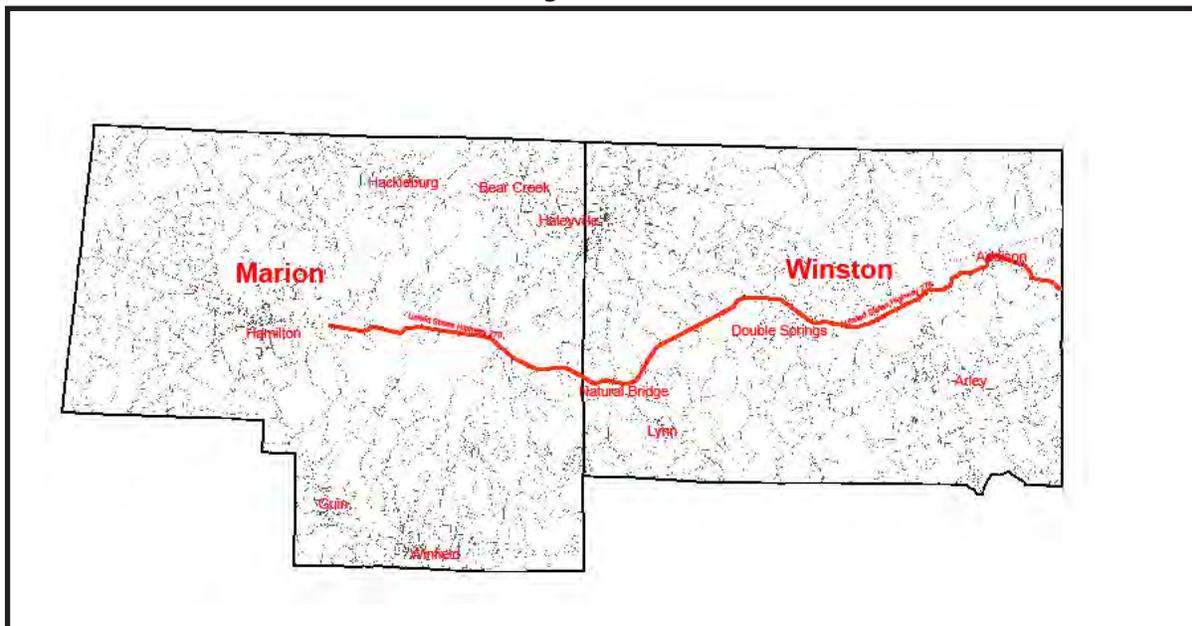
Strategy: Secure funding for the U.S. 278 Corridor Study from Cullman to the Mississippi line.

Horizon: Intermediate (6 to 10 years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/10

Progress: Meetings with Winston County officials and NACOLG representatives have been held in conjunction with Cullman County and ALDOT. Funding through Congressional requests has been applied for the 2007 to complete the corridor study for an estimated one million dollars. Preliminary Engineering has been authorized from Sulligent to near Corridor X. Preliminary alternate studies are underway.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Improve regional and local (street) transportation networks to increase access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

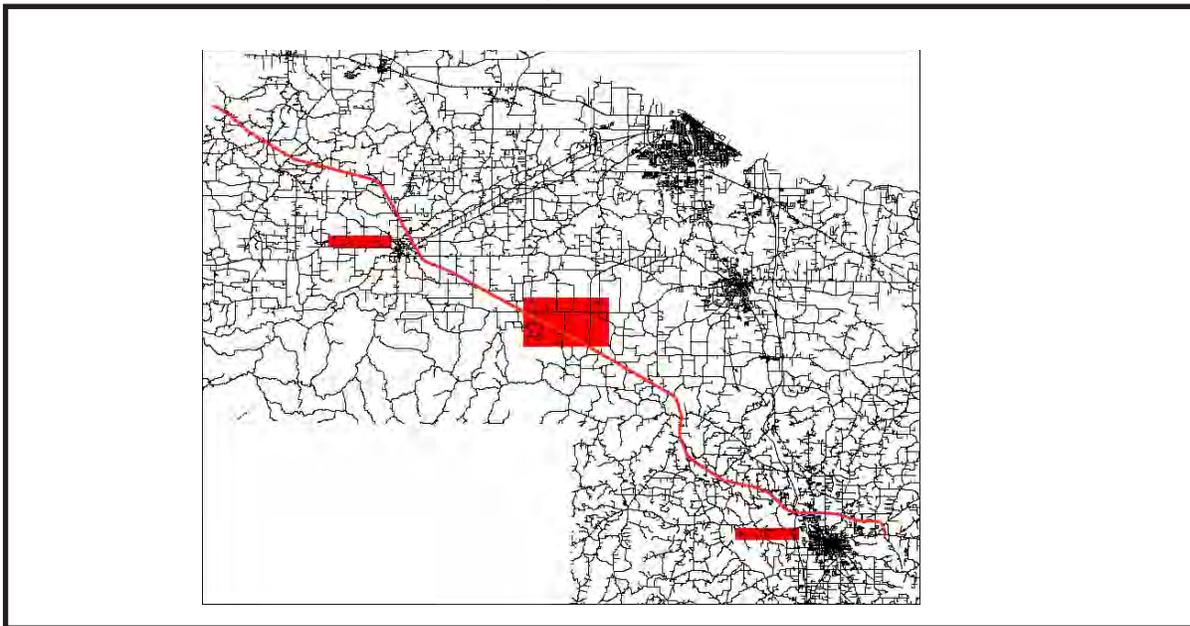
Strategy: Complete the widening of Alabama State Route 157 from Moulton to Cullman.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: This project is near completion.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Identify and complete improvements to the region's multi-modal transportation network to improve local and regional access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

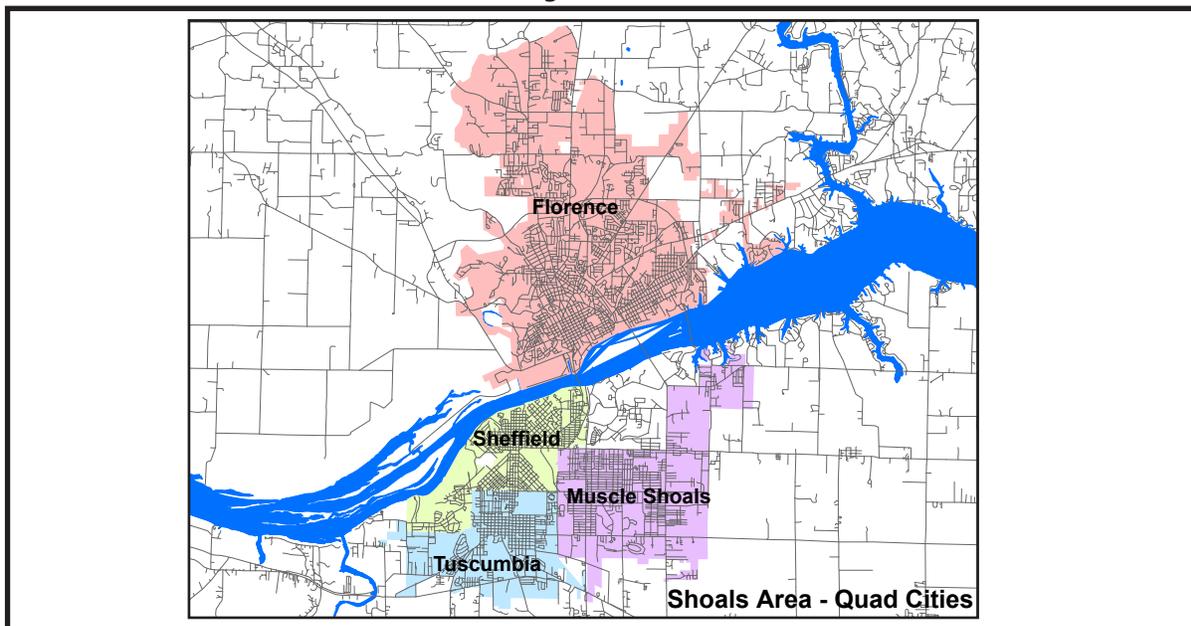
Strategy: Initiate the study and analysis of a Shoals area urban mass transit system that interconnect the four cities in the Florence-Muscle Shoals MSA.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: This strategy should be evaluated in conjunction with the Shoals Area MPO. The implementation of quality mass transit will interconnect the urban areas of the shoals and reduce local trip demands.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Identify and remove dangerous transportation conflict points throughout the region.

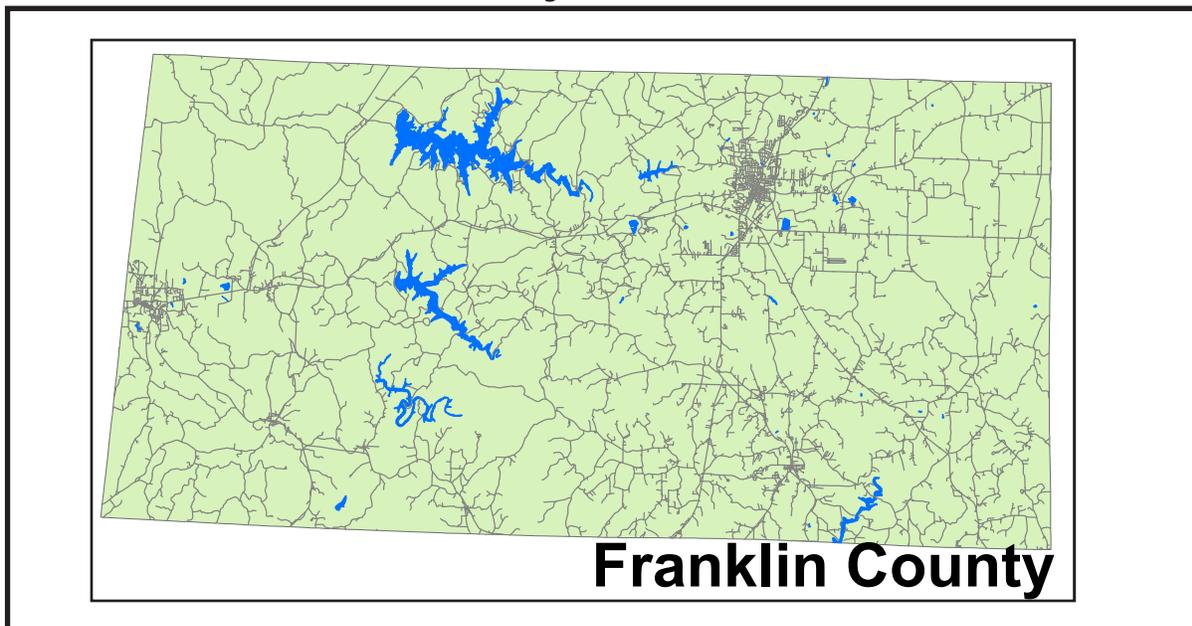
Strategy: Continue to encourage Rural Planning Organization consultation regarding traffic safety issues and the development of county and regional needs assessments for rural highways.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders: Rural Planning Organization, ALDOT Division II

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The Northwest Alabama Council of Local Government's Rural Planning Organization (RPO) was initiated in the Fall of 2006. The RPO is charged with completing a transportation needs assessment formed around stakeholder involvement in Franklin County.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal I: Transportation- Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Identify and complete improvements to the region's multi-modal transportation network to improve local and regional access to goods, services, markets, and employment opportunities.

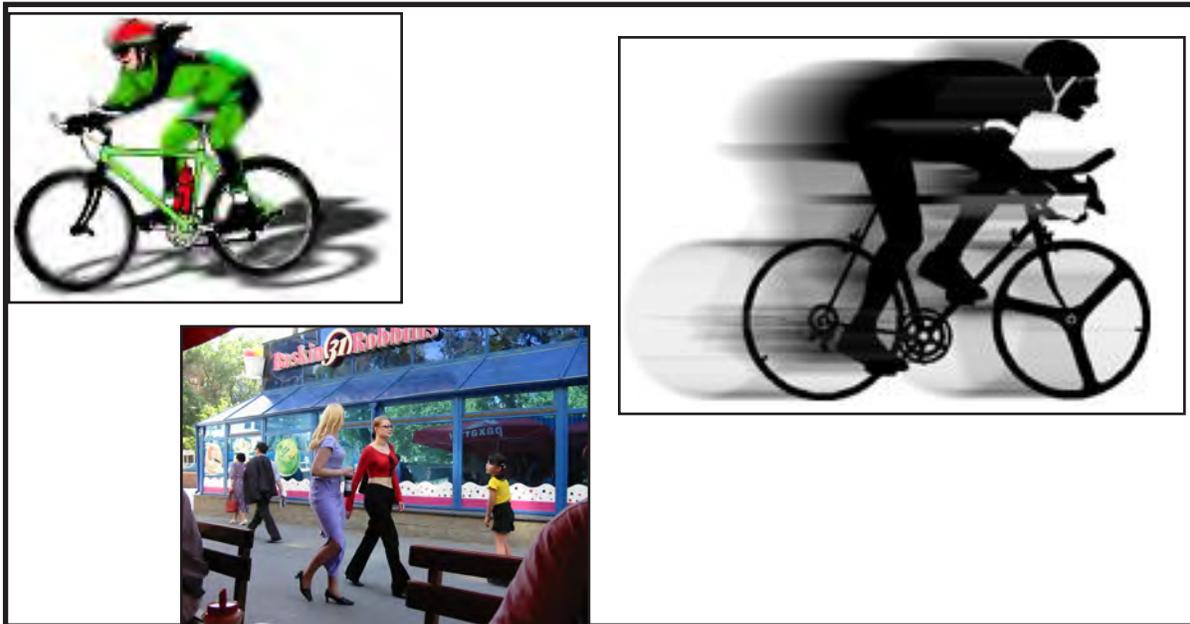
Strategy: Complete the development of the Shoals area Bike and Pedestrian Plan(s) through the Shoals Area MPO.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The Shoals Area MPO is drafting the Shoals Bike and Pedestrian Plan. Current work involves restructuring of the Bike and Pedestrian committee and initial data gathering and precedent study analysis.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •

Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) - Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective: Initiate an urban and neighborhood planning process that provides master plans and infrastructure improvement assessments for municipalities and counties within the NACOLG region.

Strategy: Assist local-level planning organizations with the preparation of detailed 5-year work programs to include strategic planning projects and a system for identifying and prioritizing investments in local strategic plans.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: Local governments and planning commissions

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: This strategy has been identified from the roots of American Music Trail Plan and strategy and should be completed in order to move forward to complete implementation.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

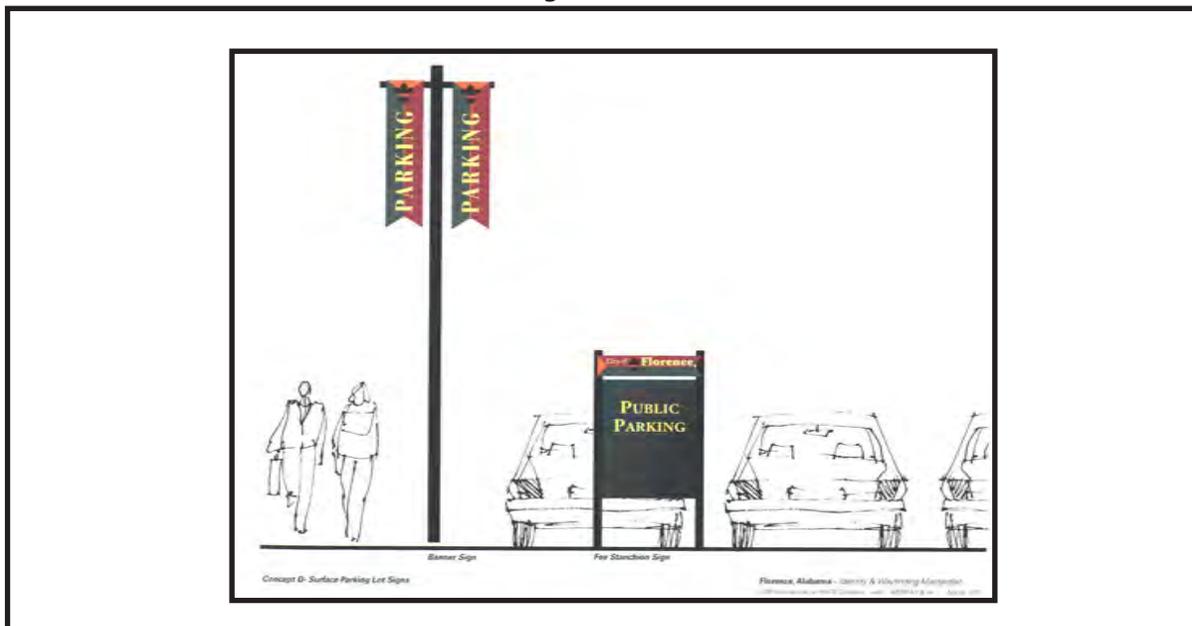
Strategy: Establish a framework for evaluating community symbology related to community heritage and incorporating culturally significant markings into public messages, including publications and (wayfinding and street) signage.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The City of Florence has completed their wayfinding plan and are actively implementing the plan. Collaboration by each municipality should lower overall costs and allow for corresponding dignage where appropriate.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

**Goal II: Community Development (Neighborhood and Infrastructure) -
Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe,
sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.**

Objective: Improve resident and visitor recreational and cultural opportunities as a means of facilitating population growth and retention and increased economic opportunity.

Strategy: Update municipal officials quarterly on the pursuit of the National Heritage Designation for the Shoals.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: MPO, RPO, ALDO T Division II, Local governments

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: The NHD proposal recieved reductions in funding from the original managment plan. Full funding should be \$10 million over ten years, allcoated by congressional leaders in Washington D.C. The development of the Roots of American Music Trail (Alabama portion) is a significant component. Also as part of the NHD management, a complete Shoals Archives is proposed, to collect, archive and conserve significant historical materials.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal III: Support for Business and Industry (Workforce Development, Recruitment and Retention) - Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Promote industrial development as a means of attracting higher-skill and higher-wage employment opportunities.

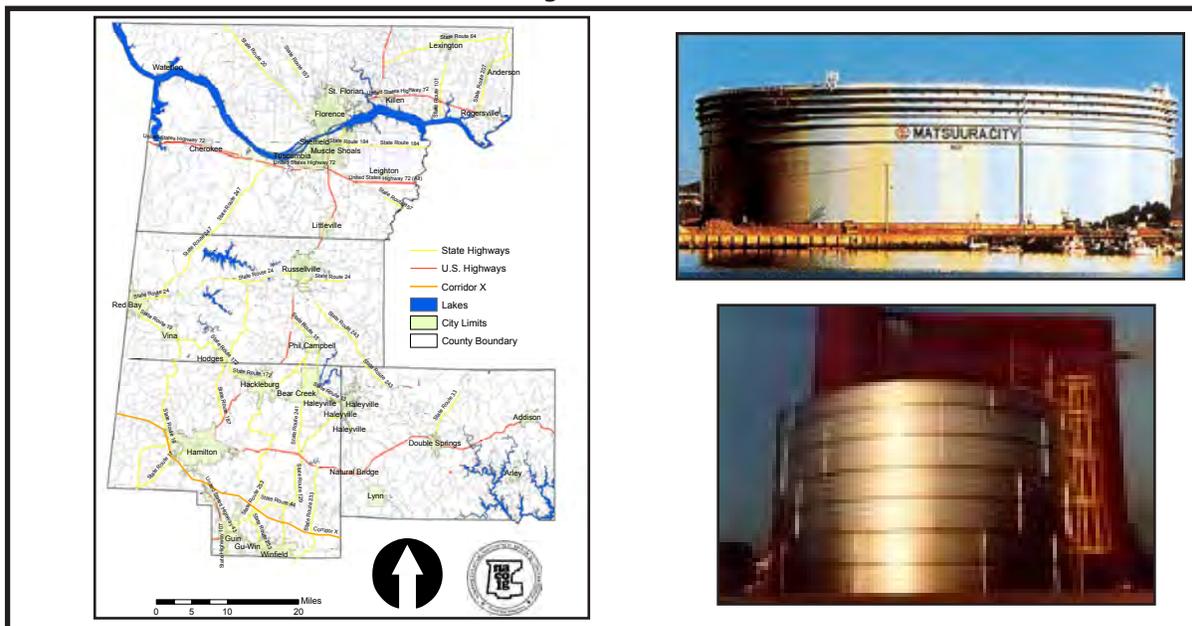
Strategy: Identify stakeholders and revenue sharing partners for a mega industrial park for the NACOLG region.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholders:

Contact:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 0/5

Progress: This strategy was identified through stakeholder discussions in order to collective focus finite resources in a manner that focuses on the economic development resources of the entire region.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:

**Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 NACOLG Regional •**

Goal IV: Community Development (Capacity and Civic Culture) - Promote associational life and community identity necessary to leverage the economic benefits of physical and human capital.

Objective: Explore the application of asset based economic development principles of identity and sustainability to the development programs of the region.

Strategy: Construct a detailed inventory of place-based community assets and an interactive map of community assets.

Horizon: Short (0 to 5 years)

Stakeholder: NACOLG, local arts and entertainment organizations, historical societies, chambers of commerce, governments and planning commissions

Contact:

Project Area

The image shows a screenshot of a software application titled "PVC Pipe Info Tool" by "©2005 The Pressure Pipe Inspection Co. Ltd.". The interface includes a satellite map on the left, a data entry form on the top right, and a detailed property table on the bottom right. The table lists various pipe attributes such as SLOPE, PIPE CLASS, PIPE MANUFACTURER, DATE, DIAMETER, COVER, PRESSURE, CORE THICKNESS, BRUSHING THICKNESS, BELL RINGING, BELL THICKNESS, HOLES DIAMETER, NUMBER OF TURNS PER, and MANHOLE OUTSIDE DIAMETER. To the right of the software screenshot is a diagram titled "Community Assets" showing a grid of asset categories: Business & Industry, Local Institutions, Schools and Colleges, Churches, Citizen Associations, Block Clubs, Health Services, Social Group, Gifts of Individuals (with sub-categories: Networking, Training, Talent, Skills), Cultural, Recreation, Occupational, Social Services, Economic Development, and State Parks.

Performance Measure

2006-2007 Performance: 3/5

Progress: This strategy has been identified from the discussions among leaders involved in planning for and operating structural, cultural, and natural resource assets from the five-county region. An inventory of these assets has been completed, the assets have been surveyed for information regarding content, hours of operation, and point of contact. Mapping is incomplete.

Performance Measure, 2007-2008:



Section 5.0: Implementation and Performance Measures

5.0 Implementation and Performance Measures

As stated in the Introduction, the CEDS is intended to be comprehensive, participatory, and effective, which means not only should it identify elements necessary for economic development in the region, but it should also identify the means available for implementing planned initiatives and for measuring the success of the plan. Implementing a comprehensive plan requires a similarly comprehensive approach, therefore, the CEDS includes information from a variety of sources- not simply those available through the Economic Development Administration, although these are an important resource. The CEDS should be closely allied with the comprehensive range of economic development activities of the EDD Planning Organization (NACOLG) and should be introduced and distributed to agencies as well. By promoting the CEDS in the full range of activities undertaken by the Planning Organization and interacting with public and private partners for implementation and performance review, NACOLG strengthens the role of the CEDS and the EDD behind a consolidated, comprehensive system of prioritization for economic development.

Also, the CEDS includes suggestions for monitoring the success of implementation efforts by including recommendations for follow-up activities designed to increase regional understanding of which projects are, or may develop as, priorities. Additionally, a key characteristic of the CEDS implementation recommendations is increased communication between economic developers throughout the region, including communication between stakeholders for individual projects as well as communication regarding regional development activities and successes.

Throughout the CEDS process there was widespread recognition that community development- that is, the development of sustainable policies for how communities will grow and expand in the physical environment, are integral to economic development; and also community development proceeds alongside and interdependently with economic development so that any attempt to artificially separate community development programs from the economic development context, or vice versa, would be detrimental to both.

5.1 Implementation

Implementation of the CEDS will require a variety of resources and commitments from multi-jurisdictional sources. The tools for implementation are disbursed widely among local, regional, state, and federal entities, each possessing different areas of expertise, resources, and capacity for specific projects. The following section provides an overview of the tools available for implementing the CEDS and offers recommendations for utilizing these tools with respect to many of the objectives and strategies contained in the plan.

5.1.1 Local Implementation Techniques

Effective implementation begins and ends in local communities. Identifying and capitalizing upon local community capacity is therefore necessary to economic development. Positive and negative externalities affect development opportunities—for example, changes in fiscal policy leading to greater competition for grants or increased international labor competition damaging heretofore stable industries. These events establish a framework of challenges and opportunities, however, it is local activity that overcomes or succumbs to these



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challenges. Outside assistance may come; or it may not. But with consistent commitment to a community-driven development program, communities are more likely to help themselves and, not coincidentally, are more likely to demonstrate the resolve and efficacy necessary for outside recognition. To a large extent, successful economic development requires an understanding of the tools, or assets, available for implementation, which begin locally with connections among individuals having shared goals and priorities and then grow to encompass others in a network that connects various capacities to an effective, motivated and mobilized local constituency.

Community Planning

One of the most powerful tools available to local communities for implementing the Economic Vision of the CEDS is an active community planning process. Counties and cities in Northwest Alabama often overlook the connection between planning and economic development. On the one hand, there is economic development, which is a comprehensive project with a number of interrelated parts—land use, transportation, infrastructure and facilities, as well as factors such as population growth and retention, which affects available workforce. On the other hand is the process by which communities come to conclusions about how to prioritize and fairly allocate resources for community and economic development. In its simplest form, community planning can be divided into two parts—deliberation toward a decision and the implementation of that decision. Also overlooked is the fact that, despite the need for governmental involvement for the use of certain regulatory tools, community planning can take on a variety of forms and be led by any of a variety of local agencies, such as local civic groups, chambers of commerce, industrial development agencies, or private enterprises. As the name implies, the only necessary components of *community planning* are a forward-looking approach and an involved, active, and participatory community-driven process. For economic development these two elements must combine to first prioritize and decide upon initiatives and then to utilize their resources to make desired changes.

When effectively utilized, community planning offers an opportunity to identify local priorities and to activate and mobilize a constituency to begin implementing these priorities. The CEDS process incorporated these principles in the development of its planning framework. By refining the goals, objectives and strategies contained in the CEDS, community planning can greatly aid the implementation of the CEDS, producing initiatives—often regional initiatives—with broad-based, multi-jurisdictional support. Once decided upon, the community planning process provides a number of means for local communities to implement policy initiatives. Policies such as subdivision regulations and capital facilities planning, which are available to both counties and municipalities in Alabama, can affect the economic development environment by ensuring sustainable, fiscally and environmentally responsible development practices that accord with the Economic Vision, as well as the local community's vision for growth and development. Similarly, the use of zoning in a municipal setting can affect the economic development environment by ensuring that investments made in the community are being made in stable, sustainable communities and districts. Finally, an often overlooked implementation benefit that results from community planning is the ability to identify and target stakeholders, volunteers, and local organizations and residents who are willing and capable of helping to improve the investment and development climate in the local community. Identifying, nurturing and developing this community can lead to sustained activity in a variety of areas, from litter control to crime prevention, that promote economic and community development.

5.1.2 Implementation Techniques Available to the Planning Organization



A number of regional planning initiatives were identified and discussed as part of the background for the CEDS plan. These agencies and organizations possess resources and capacities that can be utilized to effectively implement economic development projects. The Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments is involved in many of these activities and will continue to endorse CEDS planning priorities in the agency's interactions through these forums. In this way, the agencies activities and network of contacts and partners will be leveraged to implement the goals, objectives, and strategies produced of the comprehensive economic plan.

Continuing agency implementation activities take on a variety of forms. Foremost, the agency possesses expertise available to assist local governments identifying local capacity and developing networks among and between local actors and between local and regional, state, and federal actors. NACOLG is heavily involved in workforce development as a coordinator for WIA Region I and a participant in WIRED program development. NACOLG staff is also involved in the development and implementation of policies through the Rural Action Commission. The Government Services Department offers assistance identifying and completing grant applications for a variety of programs, including Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), Economic Development Administration (EDA), as well as Transportation Enhancement Grants, in conjunction with the Transportation Planning Department. Additionally, NACOLG and the Government Services Department administer and operate the Revolving Loan Fund, which makes gap financing available to spur private investments. The Community and Regional Planning Department offers services and technical assistance for community planning and the development of programs for public involvement and implementation through both public and private resources. Finally, the Transportation Planning Department offers planning services through the Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Rural Planning Organization. Each of these activities will carry forward the CEDS plan by endorsing and designing program elements to meet the identified needs of the region.

5.1.3 Measuring CEDS Performance- Stakeholders and Contacts, Activity

The CEDS is a comprehensive plan and as such focuses on planning priorities that extend from short range to long range. The performance of the CEDS as a regional economic development plan depends on the capacity of local-level actors, agencies and individuals, to identify those priorities with the greatest potential to accomplish economic development goals and to continually work toward refining and implementing those goals. Therefore, the measures of performance for the CEDS must incorporate mechanisms designed to maintain momentum and activity for each priority and strategy contained in the plan.

As detailed in Section 4.0, each strategy included in the CEDS plan contains a planning horizon that identifies the desired timeframe for implementation, a list of stakeholders and contacts (currently incomplete) and an activity summary. As time passes and the plan matures, strategies will be updated and performance will be measured based on these criteria. Although many projects have been ongoing, with the updated 2007-2008 CEDS every project will begin with a clean slate for the purposes of measuring implementation. Starting in 2007-2008, each strategy will be tied to community stakeholders and contacts, which will be contacted regularly. Those for which no stakeholders or contacts are identified will be evaluated closely with the next update to the CEDS, which will take place no more than 2 years hence. Level of activity will be measured qualitatively by the level of overall interest in the strategy and the concrete results (funding, cooperation, construction, etc.) of that



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007-2008 •

activity. Activity measures will be identified and refined, with those strategies unable to develop measurable outcomes (i.e. remaining too vague) or unable to meet targets being re-evaluated. Projects with longer planning horizons will be allowed more time to meet objectives.

5.2 Implementation and Performance Recommendations

The changes in the CEDS process described above will require several changes in the way the document has been approached. The following recommendations for changes to the CEDS are vital to the success of the plan:

- Establish the CEDS process as a *continuous planning process* designed to maintain communication between the local, regional, state and federal actors involved in economic development.
- Establish the CEDS Committee as a standing sub-committee of the NACOLG/Economic Development District Board.
 - Maintain an active CEDS Committee membership composed of public and private representatives, as required by EDA.
 - Conduct regular (at minimum bi-annual) meetings to report and discuss CEDS priorities.
 - Provide regular (at minimum bi-monthly) updates to the NACOLG/EDD Board regarding the status and activity of CEDS priorities.
- Implement a regional economic development newsletter for distribution to NACOLG/EDD Board members, CEDS Committee members, development partners, and other interested parties.
- Identify stakeholders and contacts for individual CEDS strategies and, where possible, larger development objectives, as defined in the CEDS.
 - Conduct regular interviews with development contacts to determine what, if any, activity has occurred and to ensure local support and resources are available for implementation.
 - Develop, in conjunction with the CEDS Committee, a system for prioritizing strategies based upon the involvement of stakeholders and local contact- to include a mechanism for de-emphasizing dormant strategies and, eventually, removing these from the CEDS.
- Complete annual performance updates for each strategy and objective included in the CEDS. Updates may be more frequent as activity requires.
- Update and expand the content of the CEDS as new data become available. Present an updated CEDS for approval on at least an annual basis.

These recommendations are intended to provide a means of maintaining the CEDS as a central economic development tool for the region by ensuring that the planning priorities included in the plan retain lasting



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007-2008 •

importance, momentum, and activity. Because it is comprehensive and variable in terms of planning timeline, the CEDS planning process risks losing much of its usefulness to economic development as a result of stated priorities becoming dormant and stale. Likewise, there is a need to maintain and develop a mechanism to account for changes in the development environment that might lead to a need for update and amendment. These recommendations are intended to implement a comprehensive economic planning process that is forceful, effective, and responsive.



Appendices

Appendix A: Meeting Materials

ed. workforce - 8 |||||

Transportation - 7 |||||

- multimodal

- local / regionally

high paying jobs - 4 ||||

infrastructure - 3 |||

jobs / industrial jobs - 3 |||

Housing

loss of population - 1

off shore competition - 1

united front - 1

~~ind~~ dependence on

Sales tax - 1

Quality of life

perception by outsiders - 1

Top Issue

Workforce w/ Skills → Flow to ID the

Market?

What drives the skills?

Regional Opportunity

Perception + Quality

Sustainability

Benefits

Health Care
Retirement
Vacation

Innovations



Quality of Life

Life Cycle Opportunities

Transportation

Multimodal (Pai) (Water)

Primary } Shift in info priorities

intra - inter regional routes

Secondary

Project Implementation + Time line

Highways

* Regional Opportunities

Transportation: 9

Workforce

Higher Paying Jobs: 7

Availability + Development: 7

Industrial/Commercial Development + Recruitment: 6

Housing: 5

Education: 2

Community Knowledge + Involvement: 4

Federal/State Aid: 2

Infrastructure: 3

Land Use Planning: 1

Quality of Life: 1

Fuel Costs: 1

Population Loss		3
Higher Paying Jobs		9
Industrial Recruitment		2
Transportation		4
Workforce Dev./Education		7
Housing		2
Elder		
Small Business Dev.		1
Drug Abuse		2
Area Awareness		1
Team Approach		2
Quality of Life		1

Northwest Alabama
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies, 2007-2008
Community Facilitation Poster



Vision

-
-
-

Definitions:
 Vision: A statement of the highest priority or highest accomplishment of the plan
 Goals: What you want to accomplish in categorical terms.
 Objectives: What you need to do to meet your goals expressed in more specific terms.
 Strategy or Action: Specific measurable activities designed to accomplish objectives.

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Strengths:	Weaknesses:	Opportunities:	Threats:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-22 • LAND • Forestry • NATURAL GAS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications (Wireless/Fiber?) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions • - Workforce App • - Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Supply • High School 2-year • 4-year • Landfill
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•

① Higher Paying Jobs

② Workforce Development / Education

③ Transportation
 - Connections to multi-modal/airport
 - Intra-regional + inter-regional

WAGES

Education: High School

2-year

4-year

Substance Abuse

Workforce: Retention,

Skills, Opportunities

Strengths

I-20

Land Available

Gas

Timber

Immigration 1

✓ Trained employees 1111

✓ transportation 1111

labor unions 1

✓ jobs 111

economic developments 1

tax incentives 1

level of pay 1

local owned business 1

Funding 1

Education

Strong Geographic Location

Transportation: *needed facilities*

Speculative Properties:

I. Park Infrastructure

TVA / Outside Control of Resources

Transportation

High Housing Costs (Strong) *Need more*

Social / Demographic Change

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 •

Vision and Strategy Summary

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Vision:
Intergovernmental communication
Expanded industrial base
Improved retail
Vacation/recreation area
Workforce development

Strategy:
Create industrial parks in Red Bay and Phil Campbell
Infrastructure for Vina Industrial Park and Phil Campbell Industrial Park
Complete 4-lane highways between Red Bay and Russellville and connecting Franklin County to I-22
Build spec building
Build relationships between Economic Development Authority/Industries and Education community

MARION COUNTY

Vision:
Economic development/managing growth
Improved quality of life, housing and cultural opportunities
Cooperation
Youth retention
Quality jobs- higher skill requirements/higher wages
Quality of life
Industrial hub
Urban spaces
Farmsteads (150+ acres)
Participation
Leadership
Planned growth
Natural resource preservation
Industry (existing) support

Strategy:
Manufacturing recruitment
Promote cooperation
Regionalism in recruitment/selection
Zoning and city planning
Entertainment and recreation opportunities
Network and incentive package for current industries

COLBERT/LAUDERDALE

Vision:
Labor, education, skills
Workforce training connected to industry needs
Sustainable growth
Living, work and leisure opportunities

Strategy:
Enlarge airport
Marketing

WINSTON COUNTY:

Vision:
Place to work, play and raise a family
Faith based community
Economic opportunities
Opportunities for all
Growth
Sustainability
Industrial growth and retention
Industrial diversity
Workforce matching industry needs
Quality of life
Identify assets
Higher paying jobs
Transportation
Participation
Non-traditional assets

Strategy:
Infrastructure
Youth retention
Improve transportation
Middle-income housing opportunities
Develop CID park infrastructure
Market area strengths to recruit people to the area
Automotive plant
Initiate public/private housing programs
Haleyville bypass

Workforce Dev.		6
Industrial/Commercial Recruitment		5
Transportation		3
State/Federal Funding		1
Workforce Expectations		2
Infrastructure		1
Quality Jobs		1
Land Use Planning		1

Northwest Alabama
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies, 2007-2008
Community Facilitation Poster



Vision

-
-
-

Definitions:
Vision: A statement of the highest priority or highest accomplishment of the plan

Goals: What you want to accomplish in categorical terms.

Objectives: What you need to do to meet your goals expressed in more specific terms.

Strategy or Action: Specific measurable activities designed to accomplish objectives.

Strengths:

- *Broad Access*
- *Capital*
- *Existing Educational Opportunities*

Weaknesses:

- *Arterial Access*
- *Airport*

Opportunities:

- *Trans. Program*

Threats:

- *Youth Optimism / Ethic Opportunities*
- *Lack of programs for matching skills: jobs.*

① Workforce Development

- *work*
- *ethic*
- *gap in education*

② Industrial Recruitment

- *Quality of Jobs. ^{Advanced} Industry*

③ Transportation

- *airport*

Housing

Quality of Life

Capital / Funding

Training / Workforce

Transportation

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 •
Challenges Facing Northwest Alabama Summary

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Trained workforce
Transportation and infrastructure
Better jobs

MARION COUNTY

Higher paying jobs
Workforce development/education
Transportation
Population loss

COLBERT/LAUDERDALE:

Workforce development
Industry/business recruitment
Transportation
Workforce expectations

WINSTON COUNTY:

Transportation
Jobs/higher paying jobs
Workforce availability
Industry recruitment
Housing
Commercial recruitment

REGIONAL:

Educated workforce
Transportation
Higher paying jobs (quality jobs)
Infrastructure
Job/industrial job opportunities
Workforce expectations

FRANKLIN COUNTY
 Rural character
 Small towns
 People
 Lakes and farms
 Climate, clean air and water
 Good work for and good place to live
 Friendly environment

MARION COUNTY

I-22
 Friendly people
 Community college
 Industrial opportunities
 Attitudes about improving quality of life
 Beauty
 Safe environment
 Natural resources

COLBERT/LAUDERDALE:

Leadership
 Supportive of incentives for jobs
 People
 Scenic beauty
 Tennessee River
 University of North Alabama

WINSTON COUNTY:

Quality of life
 Space and scenic beauty
 Little traffic
 Low cost of living
 Location
 Recreation opportunities
 Rural character
 Crime rate
 Schools
 Geographical resources
 Small town/rural atmosphere
 Leadership

REGIONAL:

Quality of life
 Small towns
 Infrastructure availability
 Rural character
 Airport access
 Availability of housing, goods
 and services
 Location

FRANKLIN COUNTY

Trained workforce
 Transportation and infrastructure
 Better jobs

MARION COUNTY

Higher paying jobs
 Workforce development/education
 Transportation
 Population loss

COLBERT/LAUDERDALE:

Workforce development
 Industry/business recruitment
 Transportation
 Workforce expectations

WINSTON COUNTY:

Transportation
 Jobs/higher paying jobs
 Workforce availability
 Industry recruitment
 Housing
 Commercial recruitment

REGIONAL:

Educated workforce
 Transportation
 Higher paying jobs (quality jobs)
 Infrastructure
 Job/industrial job opportunities
 Workforce expectations

Transportation ✓

Sustainable

Marketing

Money

Global

Leadership

Competitiveness

Vision

Collaboration ✓

Quality of Life

Branding / Identity ← Susan's

Future-oriented

Unity

Participation

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

• 2007 •

NACOLG Region

Goal I: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective III:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

Goal: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Strategy: Complete the development of the Shoals area (Bike and Pedestrian Plan) through the Shoals area MPO.

StratAdvisor:

Project Area:



Performance Measure:

2007-2010 Performance: 85% complete

2010-2015 Performance: 95% complete

2015-2020 Performance: 100% complete

2020-2025 Performance: 100% complete

2025-2030 Performance: 100% complete

2030-2035 Performance: 100% complete

2035-2040 Performance: 100% complete

2040-2045 Performance: 100% complete

2045-2050 Performance: 100% complete

2050-2055 Performance: 100% complete

2055-2060 Performance: 100% complete

2060-2065 Performance: 100% complete

2065-2070 Performance: 100% complete

2070-2075 Performance: 100% complete

2075-2080 Performance: 100% complete

2080-2085 Performance: 100% complete

2085-2090 Performance: 100% complete

2090-2095 Performance: 100% complete

2095-2100 Performance: 100% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Goal II: Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective IV:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

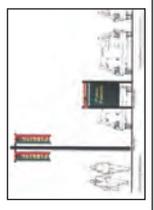
Goal: Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective: Improve inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Strategy: Improve inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

StratAdvisor:

Project Area:



Performance Measure:

2007-2010 Performance: 85% complete

2010-2015 Performance: 95% complete

2015-2020 Performance: 100% complete

2020-2025 Performance: 100% complete

2025-2030 Performance: 100% complete

2030-2035 Performance: 100% complete

2035-2040 Performance: 100% complete

2040-2045 Performance: 100% complete

2045-2050 Performance: 100% complete

2050-2055 Performance: 100% complete

2055-2060 Performance: 100% complete

2060-2065 Performance: 100% complete

2065-2070 Performance: 100% complete

2070-2075 Performance: 100% complete

2075-2080 Performance: 100% complete

2080-2085 Performance: 100% complete

2085-2090 Performance: 100% complete

2090-2095 Performance: 100% complete

2095-2100 Performance: 100% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Goal III: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies in and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective III:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

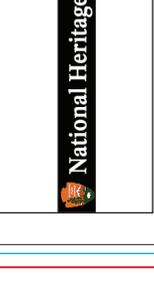
Goal: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies in and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies in and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Strategy: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies in and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

StratAdvisor:

Project Area:



Performance Measure:

2007-2010 Performance: 85% complete

2010-2015 Performance: 95% complete

2015-2020 Performance: 100% complete

2020-2025 Performance: 100% complete

2025-2030 Performance: 100% complete

2030-2035 Performance: 100% complete

2035-2040 Performance: 100% complete

2040-2045 Performance: 100% complete

2045-2050 Performance: 100% complete

2050-2055 Performance: 100% complete

2055-2060 Performance: 100% complete

2060-2065 Performance: 100% complete

2065-2070 Performance: 100% complete

2070-2075 Performance: 100% complete

2075-2080 Performance: 100% complete

2080-2085 Performance: 100% complete

2085-2090 Performance: 100% complete

2090-2095 Performance: 100% complete

2095-2100 Performance: 100% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Goal IV: Promote associational life and community identity necessary to leverage the economic benefits of physical and human capital.

Objective V:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

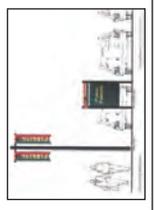
Goal: Promote associational life and community identity necessary to leverage the economic benefits of physical and human capital.

Objective: Promote associational life and community identity necessary to leverage the economic benefits of physical and human capital.

Strategy: Promote associational life and community identity necessary to leverage the economic benefits of physical and human capital.

StratAdvisor:

Project Area:



Performance Measure:

2007-2010 Performance: 85% complete

2010-2015 Performance: 95% complete

2015-2020 Performance: 100% complete

2020-2025 Performance: 100% complete

2025-2030 Performance: 100% complete

2030-2035 Performance: 100% complete

2035-2040 Performance: 100% complete

2040-2045 Performance: 100% complete

2045-2050 Performance: 100% complete

2050-2055 Performance: 100% complete

2055-2060 Performance: 100% complete

2060-2065 Performance: 100% complete

2065-2070 Performance: 100% complete

2070-2075 Performance: 100% complete

2075-2080 Performance: 100% complete

2080-2085 Performance: 100% complete

2085-2090 Performance: 100% complete

2090-2095 Performance: 100% complete

2095-2100 Performance: 100% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Strategy 1: Construct a detailed inventory of place-based community assets and an interactive map of participating community assets.

Strategy 2: Conduct meetings and provide asset development services to raise awareness and interaction.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

• 2007 •

NACOLG Region

Goal 1: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective 1:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

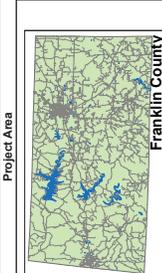
Goal: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Identify and move strategic transportation corridors/parts through the region.

Strategy: Continue to encourage Smart Planning Organizations/committees regarding setting and the development of study and regional needs assessments for strategic transportation.

State/actor:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2005-2006 Performance: 10% complete

2007 NACOLG Regional Performance: 10% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Objective II:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

Goal: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Strategy: Complete the North-South corridor study and include road construction of the West section along Federal Avenue from US 72 to US 92.

State/actor:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2005-2006 Performance: 15% complete

2007 NACOLG Regional Performance: 15% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

Goal: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Strategy: Complete the Memphis to Atlanta highway with specific focus on the section from Birmingham to the Andalusia/Enterprise boundary.

State/actor:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2005-2006 Performance: 30% complete

2007 NACOLG Regional Performance: 30% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

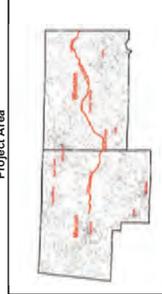
Goal: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Strategy: Share funding for the U.S. 274 Corridor Study from Calhoun to the Mississippi line.

State/actor:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2005-2006 Performance: 10% complete

2007 NACOLG Regional Performance: 10% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

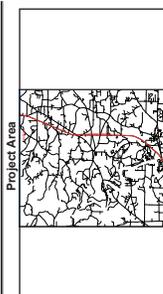
Goal: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Strategy: Widen US 43 from Kellen to the Tennessee State Line.

State/actor:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2005-2006 Performance: 15% complete

2007 NACOLG Regional Performance: 15% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

Goal: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Strategy: Complete I-22 from Jasper to Birmingham.

State/actor:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2005-2006 Performance: 15% complete

2007 NACOLG Regional Performance: 15% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

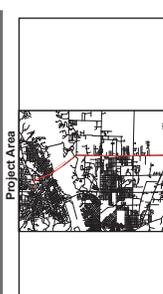
Goal: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Strategy: Complete the North-South corridor leading to Prichard/Starbuck.

State/actor:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2005-2006 Performance: 30% complete

2007 NACOLG Regional Performance: 30% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 NACOLG Regional •

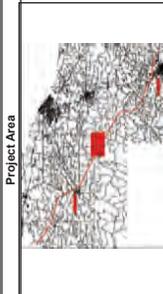
Goal: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Objective: Increase and improve the transportation opportunities that link up neighborhoods, cities, and counties.

Strategy: Complete the widening of Alabama State Route 117 from Milledge to Calhoun.

State/actor:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2005-2006 Performance: 25% complete

2007 NACOLG Regional Performance: 25% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

• 2007 •

Franklin County

Goal III: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective I:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
2007 Franklin

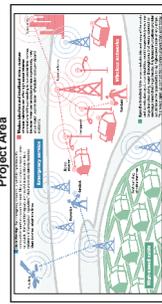
Goal: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Expand access to and understanding of technology resources in the region.

Strategy: Identify telecommunications stakeholders and conduct a telecommunications needs assessment for residential and industrial users.

Stakeholders:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

2006-2007 Performance: 0% complete

2008-2009 Performance: 0% complete

2010-2011 Performance: 0% complete

2012-2013 Performance: 0% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Objective II:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
2007 Franklin

Goal: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Identify opportunities to expand workforce development opportunities by coordinating agencies and institutions, businesses and implementing appropriate educational and recruitment programs for the Area's Critical Education Corridor.

Strategy: Conduct stakeholder meetings with local government, business, and industry managers to identify existing needs and opportunities for expansion of the industry parks.

Stakeholders:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

2006-2007 Performance: 0% complete

2008-2009 Performance: 0% complete

2010-2011 Performance: 0% complete

2012-2013 Performance: 0% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Objective IV:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
2007 Franklin

Goal: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Explore opportunities to support the expansion of existing businesses and the recruitment of additional businesses to the region.

Strategy: Draft a cooperative partnership strategy and identify a social capital network to coordinate the expansion and retention of existing businesses and the recruitment of additional businesses.

Stakeholders:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

2006-2007 Performance: 0% complete

2008-2009 Performance: 0% complete

2010-2011 Performance: 0% complete

2012-2013 Performance: 0% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Objective III:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
2007 Franklin

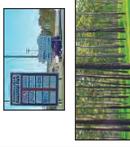
Goal: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

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Strategy: Conduct stakeholder meetings with local government, business, and industry managers to identify existing needs and opportunities for expansion of the industry parks.

Stakeholders:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

2006-2007 Performance: 0% complete

2008-2009 Performance: 0% complete

2010-2011 Performance: 0% complete

2012-2013 Performance: 0% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Objective III:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
2007 Franklin

Goal: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

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Strategy: Conduct stakeholder meetings with local government, business, and industry managers to identify existing needs and opportunities for expansion of the industry parks.

Stakeholders:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

2006-2007 Performance: 0% complete

2008-2009 Performance: 0% complete

2010-2011 Performance: 0% complete

2012-2013 Performance: 0% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007 • Marion County

Goal II: Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective I:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 Marion •

Goal: Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continuing quality of life by municipal and county residents.

Strategy: Renew and expand the Glen and Whitfield wastewater treatment facilities.

Standard:

Project Area

Performance Measure

2007	2010	2015	2020
0%	25%	50%	75%
Not Started	In Progress	Completed	Completed

2007-2010 Performance: 25% complete

Measure Update: Not available. Measure update information: Goal set for 2010. Measure update information: Not available. Measure update information: Not available.

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 Marion •

Goal: Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continuing quality of life by municipal and county residents.

Strategy: Construct wastewater treatment facilities in the Town of Hartsburg and Bear Creek.

Standard:

Project Area

Performance Measure

2007	2010	2015	2020
0%	25%	50%	75%
Not Started	In Progress	Completed	Completed

2007-2010 Performance: 0% complete

Measure Update: Not available. Measure update information: Goal set for 2010. Measure update information: Not available. Measure update information: Not available.

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 Marion •

Goal: Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continuing quality of life by municipal and county residents.

Strategy: Construct a community center for the Town of Bear Creek.

Standard:

Project Area

Performance Measure

2007	2010	2015	2020
0%	25%	50%	75%
Not Started	In Progress	Completed	Completed

2007-2010 Performance: 0% complete

Measure Update: Not available. Measure update information: Goal set for 2010. Measure update information: Not available. Measure update information: Not available.

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Objective IV:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 Marion •

Goal: Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continuing quality of life by municipal and county residents.

Strategy: Explore with the Alabama State Legislative Delegation and the Citizens of Marion County the creation of a bill for distribution and use of funds to leverage within Marion County.

Standard:

Project Area

Performance Measure

2007	2010	2015	2020
0%	25%	50%	75%
Not Started	In Progress	Completed	Completed

2007-2010 Performance: 0% complete

Measure Update: Not available. Measure update information: Goal set for 2010. Measure update information: Not available. Measure update information: Not available.

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Objective V:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 Marion •

Goal: Establish inclusive planning and development practices that provide safe, sanitary and affordable neighborhoods and communities.

Objective: Identify and complete infrastructure improvements that allow for a continuing quality of life by municipal and county residents.

Strategy: Explore with the Alabama State Legislative Delegation and the Citizens of Marion County the creation of a bill for distribution and use of funds to leverage within Marion County.

Standard:

Project Area

Performance Measure

2007	2010	2015	2020
0%	25%	50%	75%
Not Started	In Progress	Completed	Completed

2007-2010 Performance: 0% complete

Measure Update: Not available. Measure update information: Goal set for 2010. Measure update information: Not available. Measure update information: Not available.

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy • 2007 • Marion County

Goal III: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective II:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 Marion •

Goal: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Increase industrial development as a means of attracting high-wage employment opportunities.

Strategy: Identify at all levels to develop a career educational strategy for schools to begin by at least sixth grade and to include career education reflecting industry goals in the community.

Standards:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2004	2006	2008
0%	100%	200%

2005-2006 Performance: 65% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Objective III:

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 Marion •

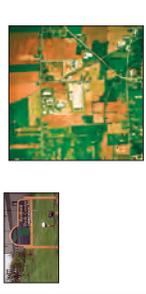
Goal: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Increase industrial development as a means of attracting high-wage employment opportunities.

Strategy: Complete the development of Marion Developmental Park to include the following features: 1) 100,000 sq. ft. of office space; 2) 100,000 sq. ft. of light industrial space; 3) 100,000 sq. ft. of warehouse space; 4) 100,000 sq. ft. of retail space; 5) 100,000 sq. ft. of parking; 6) 100,000 sq. ft. of landscaping; 7) 100,000 sq. ft. of signage; 8) 100,000 sq. ft. of utility space; 9) 100,000 sq. ft. of water supply; 10) 100,000 sq. ft. of sewer service.

Standards:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2004	2006	2008
0%	100%	200%

2005-2006 Performance: 65% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 Marion •

Goal: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Increase industrial development as a means of attracting high-wage employment opportunities.

Strategy: Expand the Town of Hartsburg's industrial park.

Standards:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2004	2006	2008
0%	100%	200%

2005-2006 Performance: 65% complete

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Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
• 2007 Marion •

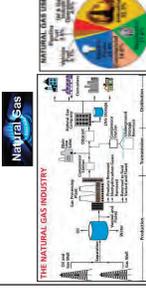
Goal: Establish strategies that coordinate multiple agencies and private entities in a cooperative effort to attract and retain business and industry.

Objective: Increase industrial development as a means of attracting high-wage employment opportunities.

Strategy: Complete the development of Marion Developmental Park to include the following features: 1) 100,000 sq. ft. of office space; 2) 100,000 sq. ft. of light industrial space; 3) 100,000 sq. ft. of warehouse space; 4) 100,000 sq. ft. of retail space; 5) 100,000 sq. ft. of parking; 6) 100,000 sq. ft. of landscaping; 7) 100,000 sq. ft. of signage; 8) 100,000 sq. ft. of utility space; 9) 100,000 sq. ft. of water supply; 10) 100,000 sq. ft. of sewer service.

Standards:

Project Area



Performance Measure

2004	2006	2008
0%	100%	200%

2005-2006 Performance: 65% complete

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

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Appendix C:
County-Level Economic Data