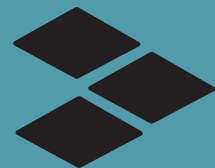


BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE 2022-2027

COMPREHENSIVE
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY



NORTH CENTRAL ALABAMA REGION



NARCOG
POSITIVELY IMPACTING
PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE 2022-2027

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NORTH CENTRAL ALABAMA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NARCOG is a designated Economic Development District (EDD) through the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) and includes Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan Counties, along with 24 municipalities, referred to as the Region throughout this report. As the Region's EDD, NARCOG is responsible for developing and maintaining a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) through a continuous planning process. A CEDS must be updated at least every five years for a region to qualify for EDA grant assistance and is required for EDD designation. A CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for guiding regional economic development that is sustainable and resilient. The NARCOG EDD followed the latest guidelines released by the EDA in February of 2015 in developing the new five-year update of our Region's CEDS. Of note, the new guidelines require the CEDS to incorporate economic resilience as an influence on our strategic planning.



Cover page image of Decatur

Source: https://www.cityofdecatur.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/slide_downtownnight1.jpg

CEDS STRATEGY COMMITTEE



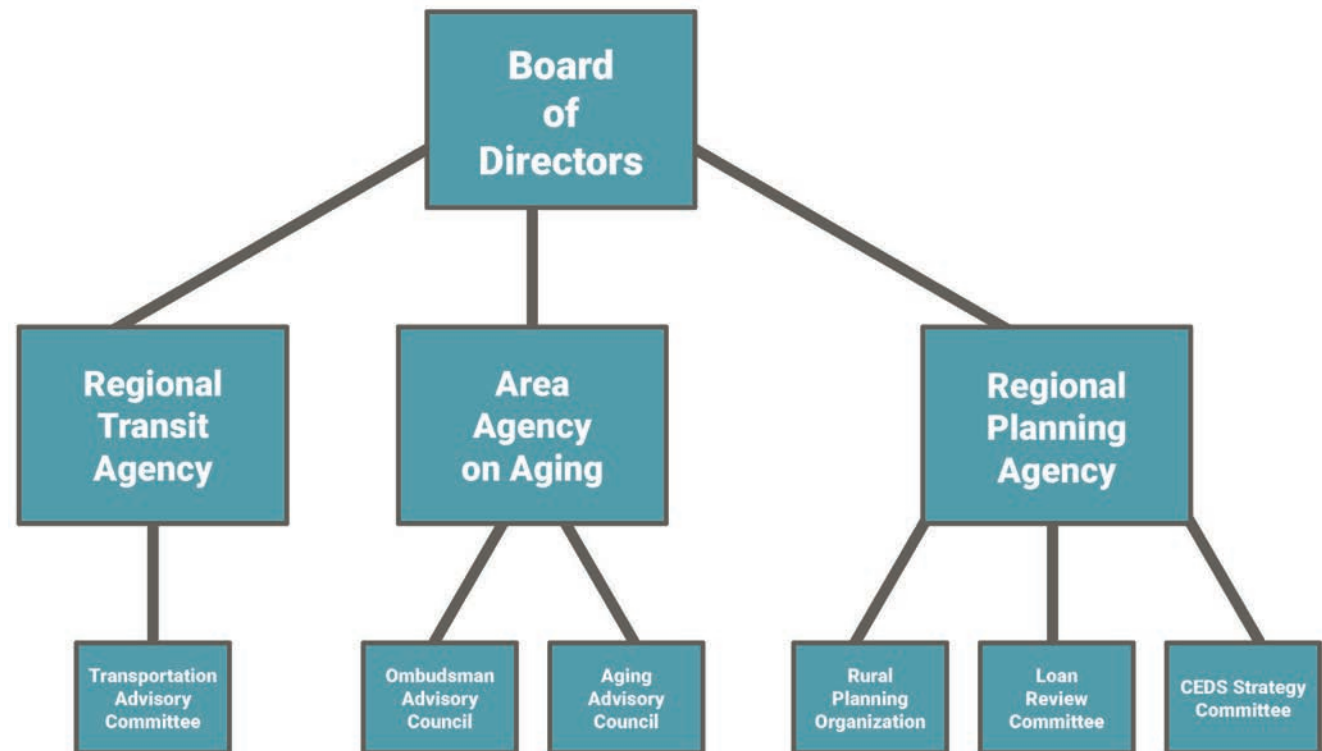
The CEDS Strategy Committee is comprised of various stakeholders representing economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, tourism, entrepreneurs, education, workforce development, utilities, and local business owners in the Region. The purpose of the committee is to provide input and information on the future economic direction of the Region and to offer guidance on potential future initiatives of NARCOG.

Kristi Barnett	Wallace State Community College
Harry Schmidt	Tennessee Valley Authority
Missy Evans	Hartselle Chamber of Commerce
Bradley Williams	Cullman County Economic Development
Jerry Felks	Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce
John Joseph IV	Decatur–Morgan County Entrepreneurial Center
Dale Greer	Cullman Economic Development Agency
Brooks Kracke	North Alabama Industrial Development Association
Jeremy Nails	Morgan County Economic Development Agency
Doug Brazier	Calhoun Community College
Tami Reist	North Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association
Crystal Brown	Decatur–Morgan County Chamber of Commerce
Keith Varden	Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce
Tabitha Pace	Lawrence County Industrial Development Board
Danielle Gibson	Decatur Morgan County Tourism
Kelly Thomas	Downtown Decatur Redevelopment Authority

ORGANIZATION

The North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) was originally created in 1966 as the North Central Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission. NARCOG was re-established with its new name and subsequently certified by Governor George Wallace on November 1, 1971. NARCOG operates under the authority of Section 3 of Act No. 1126 of the 1969 Regular Session of the Legislature of Alabama. This Act, as amended, can be found in Sections 11-85-50 through 11-85-73 of the 1975 Code of Alabama. It provides for the creation and operation of regional planning and development commissions, which have among their many purposes, to “carry on continuous, comprehensive planning for the Region, assessing needs, resources, and development opportunities and formulating goals, objectives, policies, and standards to guide physical, economic, and human resource development.” NARCOG offers a multitude of services to the people and communities in our Region, as illustrated in the organizational structure diagram.

NARCOG ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



MISSION, VISION, & GOALS



MISSION

Dedicated to improving the quality of life for the citizens of Cullman County, Lawrence County, and Morgan County.

VISION

Build a sustainable and resilient regional economy that is vibrant, collaborative, diversified, entrepreneurial, forward-thinking, embraces change, and aggressively pursues new businesses, and high-tech industry, a skilled workforce, residential growth, tourism, and quality of life amenities that support and build upon our existing assets.

GOALS

- 1. Build Resilient Regional Businesses through Innovation & Entrepreneurship**
- 2. Build a Resilient Regional Workforce Ecosystem**
- 3. Build Resilient Infrastructure for the Region**
- 4. Build a Resilient Regional Tourism Based Economy to Leverage Our Assets**
- 5. Build Resilient Regional Community Leaders and Capacity**
- 6. Build a Regional Economy that is Resilient and Sustainable**

CEDS TIMELINE

The CEDS Strategy Committee was confirmed by NARCOG over the course of the spring and summer of 2022. The committee held two meetings at NARCOG on June 23 and August 24. All committee meetings were open to the public, and the CEDS-required 30-day public comment period was available on NARCOG's website. The committee also participated in a survey in August of 2022, to gather input for the direction of the CEDS vision, goals, objectives, and strategies.

Additionally, NARCOG received EDA CARES Supplemental funding in 2020, in advance of and parallel to the CEDS update (2020-2022) and developed the EDA T-4 Plan, or the North Central Alabama Economic Development Disaster Recovery & Resiliency Plan. The four "T"s were Transportation, Tables, Tourism, and Teachers. This was very timely in regards to the update of the CEDS and the requirement of incorporating economic resiliency, as well as providing an additional opportunity for input from community and industry stakeholders.

The following five sections form the framework of the 2022 CEDS:

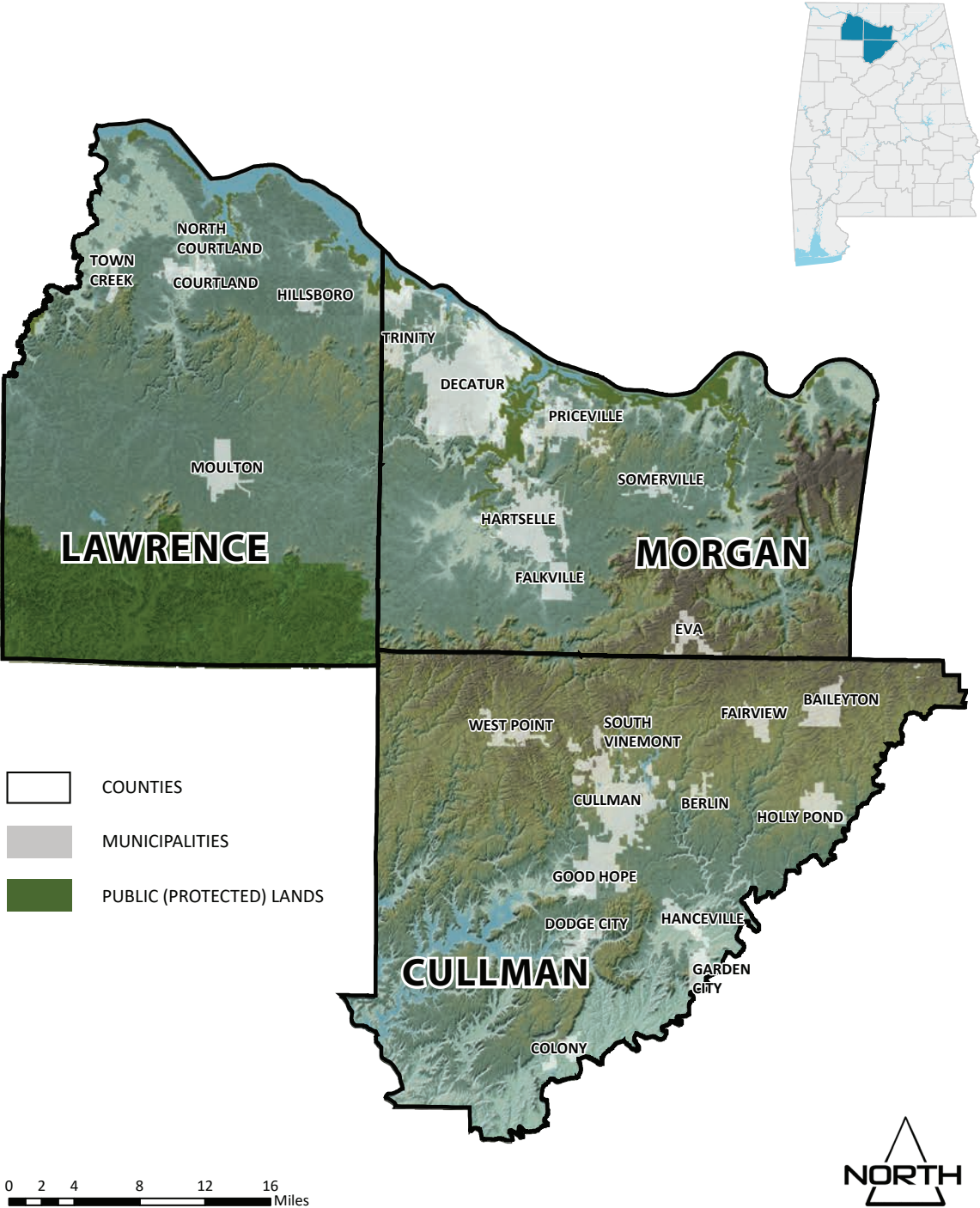
- 1 SUMMARY BACKGROUND
- 2 SWOT ANALYSIS
- 3 STRATEGIC DIRECTION & ACTION PLAN
- 4 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK
- 5 ECONOMIC RESILIENCE



OUR REGION¹

Our Region consists of Cullman, Lawrence, and Morgan Counties and twenty-four municipalities. The Region also includes the Decatur Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) consisting of the City of Decatur and the rest of Morgan and Lawrence Counties. Our Region is also a part of the Huntsville–Decatur Combined Statistical Area that includes Morgan and Lawrence Counties, along with Limestone and Madison Counties. Geographically speaking, our Region is located along the south bank of the Tennessee River and within the mountains and valleys of North-central Alabama, which is home to an abundance of natural resources. Together, they add an excellent quality of life for our residents, while also providing opportunities for our Region to capitalize on tourism from visitors.

Our Region has a long history of being an industrial center in North-central Alabama due to its strategic location at the convergence of a true multi-modal transportation system that includes I-65, U.S. 31, 72 Alternate (AL 20), 231, and 278, AL 24 (Appalachian Development Highway System Corridor V), the CSX railway, the Norfolk Southern railway, the Tennessee River, the Port of Decatur, and several airports. Also, the NARCOG EDD is conveniently located near Redstone Arsenal, the Huntsville International Airport, and the Port of Huntsville.



1 SUMMARY BACKGROUND

This Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) will guide NARCOG's work in the Region over the next five years. To develop an effective plan, the CEDS Strategy Committee sought to gain an understanding of the Region's current standing across numerous dimensions. One of the tasks was to identify the strategic assets that can be leveraged to create wealth in our Region's communities, as well as the challenges that we must overcome to take full advantage of those assets.

ASSET-BASED MAPPING

NATURAL ASSETS
Environment & water

SOCIAL ASSETS
The social act of living in a community

BUILT ASSETS
Physical built things including infrastructure

ECONOMIC ASSETS
A varied economy that people & communities draw on

SERVICE ASSETS
Health & education services

- Churches & Other Religious Sites
- Historical & Cultural Sites
- Parks & Recreational Sites
- Museums, Arts & Mural Trails, etc.

- Manufacturing Cluster
- Agribusiness & Farmland
- Business & Economic Support Services
- Auto/Aviation/Aerospace
- Accelerate Business Growth Fund/E-Center

STRATEGIC ASSETS

- The Tennessee River
- Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge
- Smith & Wheeler Lakes
- Bankhead National Forest & the Sipsey Wilderness

- I-65 Corridor & Other Transportation Infrastructure
- Industrial Parks & Lands
- Traditional Downtowns
- CSX & NS Railways
- Airports & Ports
- Trails

- Community Colleges & Local K-12 Schools
- Health Care Facilities
- Philanthropic Community & Nonprofits

NATURAL ASSETS

Nestled in the Tennessee River Valley amongst the rolling foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, the natural beauty of the NARCOG Region draws many visitors to explore our lush forestlands and sparkling waterways. Lands under forest-cover in the Region comprise approximately 583,000 acres (see map on page 10). These valuable natural resources furnish wildlife habitats, recreation and outdoor opportunities, and raw materials for industry. Forest lands exercise a balancing effect on water resources of the Region by diminishing erosion, sedimentation, and flooding. Bankhead National Forest offers a wide array of outdoor pursuits, such as hiking, horseback riding, hunting, boating, fishing, and canoeing. The Sipsey Wilderness, which lies within Bankhead, contains more than 24,000 acres to explore, and was the first designated wilderness area east of the Mississippi River.

Created by the Wheeler Dam along the Tennessee River, the 67,100-acre Wheeler Lake stretches across 60 miles of the northern border of our Region. Wheeler Lake attracts about four million visitors a year for fishing, boating, and camping. Visitors also enjoy the Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge upstream from the dam. Designated as a waterfowl refuge, the area is home to a wide spectrum of wildlife. Another popular waterway in our Region is Smith Lake. At 21,000-acres with over 500 miles of shoreline, Smith Lake welcomes weekend visitors from Birmingham and

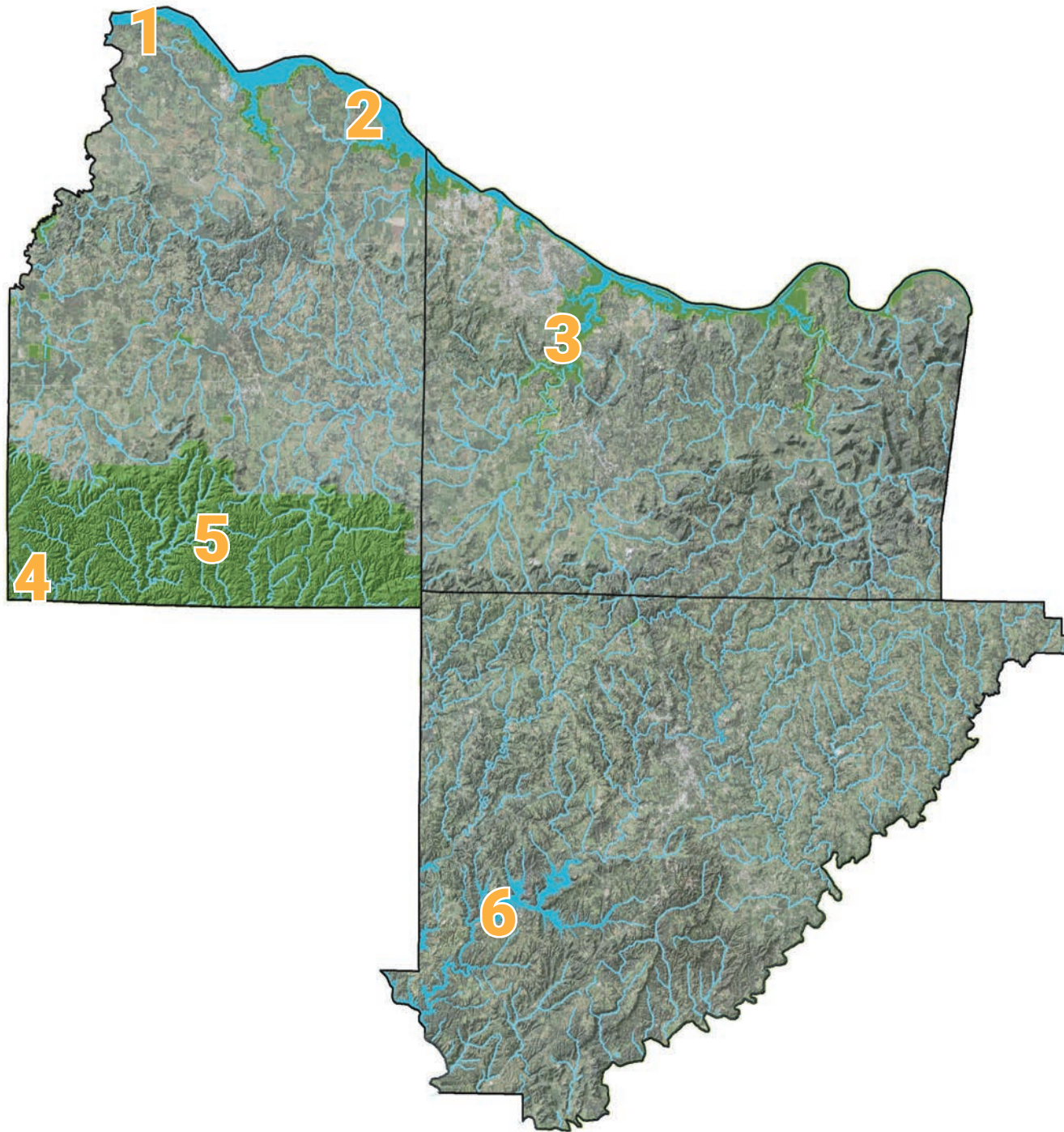
Huntsville, as well as vacationers from around the state to enjoy fishing and water sports.

Tourism represents an important industry in our Region. According to the Alabama Tourism Department, direct and indirect travel-related earnings in the NARCOG Region totaled \$154,156,616 for 2021. All three counties have enjoyed growth in tourism over the last several years. Over the next five years, building upon our past success in tourism with increased promotional efforts will allow this thriving industry to continue to represent a major revenue source for our Region's economy.

Not only do our waterways bring in revenue from tourism with projects like the Singing River Trail and the Tennessee RiverLine, the Tennessee River continues to influence the agricultural and industrial growth of the Region. The Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway gives direct access to the Gulf Coast and the Port of Mobile, the 10th-busiest in the nation, as well as other major ports in the East and West. The City of Decatur operates one of the busiest ports along the Tennessee River, handling a large portion of the more than five million tons of river freight that moves through the City. Over the next five years, the transportation advantages provided by the Tennessee River are expected to exert considerable influence on industrial locations and economic growth in the Region.



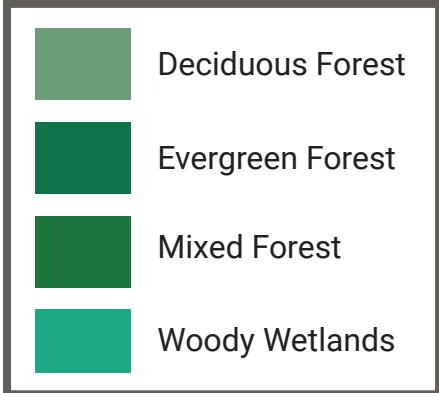
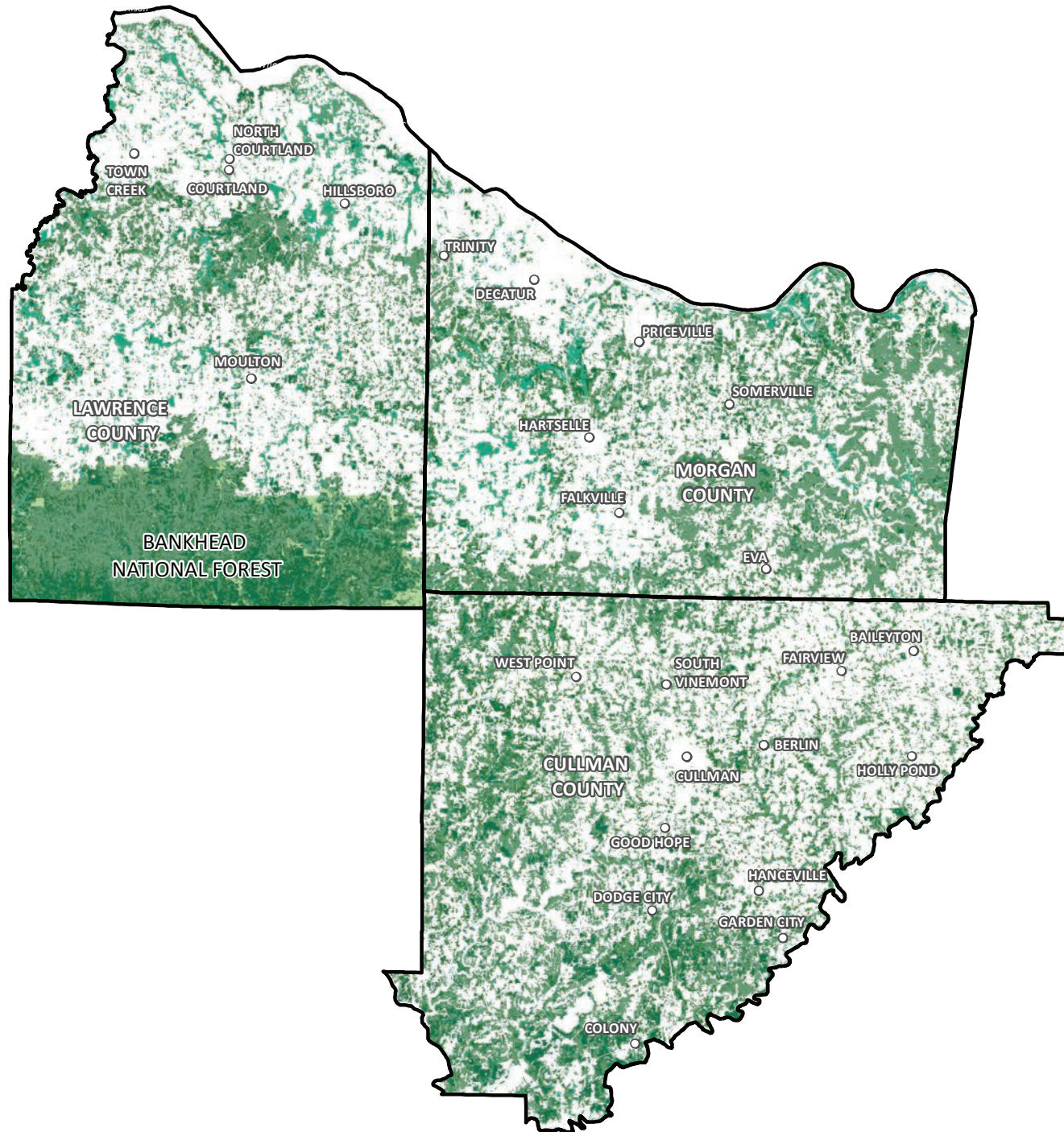
Top A walking trail in the Sipsey Wilderness.
Bottom Wheeler National Wildlife Preserve.



NATURAL ASSETS²

- 1** Tennessee River
- 2** Wheeler Lake
- 3** Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge
- 4** Sipsy Wilderness
- 5** Bankhead National Forest
- 6** Smith Lake

FOREST LAND COVER³



SOCIAL ASSETS

CHURCHES & RELIGIOUS SITES

A 2016 study by the Pew Research Center found that 51% of Alabamians attend church at least weekly. Religion is an integral part of the Region's culture, with over 550 congregations in the NARCOG Region alone. A notable religious site is the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament. The Shrine welcomes pilgrims from around the world who attend Holy Mass, receive the Sacrament of the Confession, and enjoy quiet contemplation while strolling the beautiful grounds. Another popular site is the Ave Maria Grotto, affectionately nicknamed "Jerusalem in Miniature." The four-acre park includes 125 miniature replicas of world-famous historical buildings and shrines, painstakingly re-created by Brother Joseph Zoettl, a Benedictine monk of St. Bernard Abbey.



Top Shrine of The Most Blessed Sacrament near Hanceville
Bottom Left St. John's Evangelical Church in Cullman.

PARKS & RECREATION SITES

Approximately 3,792 acres of park and recreation areas contribute to a range of recreational opportunities for those living in, and visiting, the NARCOG Region. Some of the larger recreational facilities include Point Mallard Park, Wilson Morgan Park, and the Jack Allen Soccer Complex in Decatur, Sparkman Park in Hartselle, H. A. Alexander Park in Moulton, the KOA Campground in Lawrence County, and Sportsman Lake Park, Stony Lonesome OHV Park, Smith Lake Park, and Heritage Park in Cullman.

Some other smaller or more passive recreation parks include Delano Park, Rhodes Ferry Park, and the Decatur Dog Park in Decatur, Hurricane Creek Park and Depot Park in Cullman, and Joe Wheeler State Park and Doublehead Resort in Lawrence County. These park and recreation sites also provide enhanced quality of life and economic development opportunities through sports tournaments and tourism.



Above Delano Park in Decatur
Source: <http://www.decaturoparks.com/account-album.php?accountid=54&cn=139>
Below Decatur/Wheeler Lake KOA Campground near Hillsboro in Lawrence County



HISTORICAL & CULTURAL SITES

The Region boasts a rich history and a thriving cultural scene. Within the three counties, there are thirty-six properties and districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including the Bank Street Old Decatur Historic District and the Cullman Downtown Historic District. Cultural attractions include the Princess Theatre for the Performing Arts, Carnegie Visual Arts Center, and the Alabama Center for the Arts. Museums range from the Jesse Owens Memorial Park and Museum, which honors the Olympic track star, to the Oakville Indian Mounds Park and Museum which preserves and displays artifacts dating back to 10,000 B.C. The Evelyn Burrow Museum displays more than 5,000 objects primarily of porcelain, pottery, glass, and bronze from the Victorian era to modern times. The new Cook Museum of Natural Science in downtown Decatur has been a major economic engine for downtown and its revitalization efforts by providing a premier tourism and education destination, as well as a venue for meetings and events.



Jesse Owens statue located at the park.



Above Cook Museum of Natural Science

Left Oakville Indian Mounds



Old Morgan County Courthouse in Somerville

BUILT ASSETS

A low tax structure, modern infrastructure, market access, and generous incentives make the NARCOG Region one of the most favorable business climates in the country. Our regional economic development organizations foster a supportive network for businesses and industries relocating to the area by providing aggressive incentives packages such as TVA Incentive Programs, Industrial Development or Site Prep Grants, and Tax Abatements. While we offer an attractive environment for business and industry in our Region, we recognize the need for infrastructure improvements, such as broadband. While generally available in our urban centers, some of our rural communities lack the broadband access necessary to remain competitive in today's economy. Broadband is vital to business communications, education (such as virtual learning and digital textbooks), and workforce development, which was highlighted by the COVID pandemic. NARCOG recognizes that areas with low-density, low-growth populations present limited potential revenue to commercial communications entities. Therefore, one of our primary goals is to develop critical infrastructure, such as broadband, through strategic use of wireless systems and/or smart grids that are partially funded by federal and state initiatives.

I-65 CORRIDOR & OTHER TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

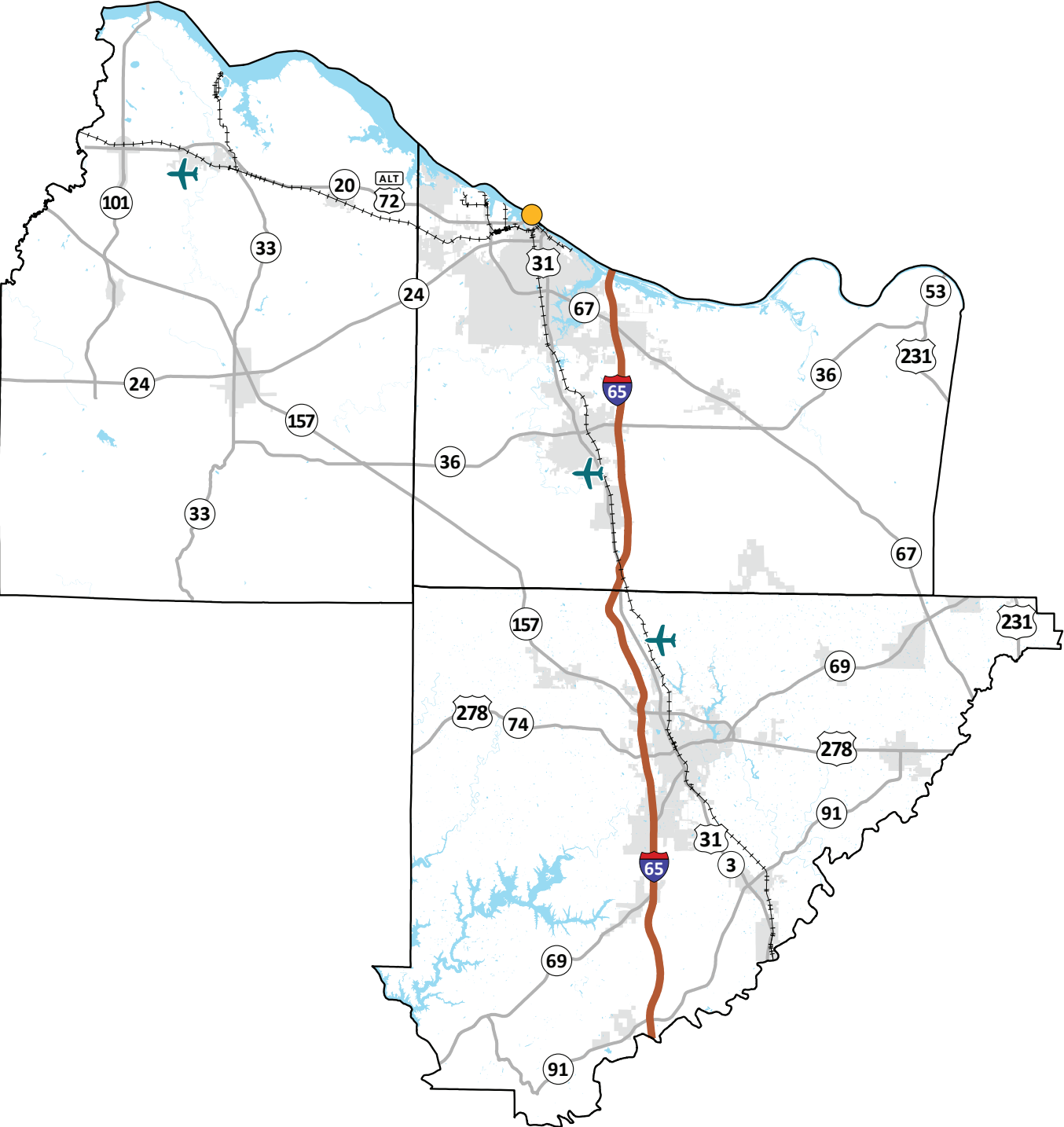
The I-65 Corridor is a major north-south corridor in the United States and our Region. It begins in Mobile, Alabama, providing access to Mobile Bay and the Gulf of Mexico and runs north terminating in Gary, Indiana, along the shores of Lake Michigan and just south of Chicago, Illinois. Along its path, it connects large cities such as Montgomery, Birmingham, Nashville, Louisville, and Indianapolis. In our Region, it traverses both Cullman and Morgan Counties, while providing access to Decatur, Priceville, Hartselle, Falkville, Cullman, Good Hope, Dodge City, and Colony. The I-65 Corridor can be viewed on a larger scale within our Region to include U.S. Highway 31 and the CSX Railway, which both run parallel along the interstate's path.

The NARCOG Region is fortunate to possess an extensive multi-modal transportation system that includes major highways, railways, airports, and the Tennessee River. The Region has both state (Alabama Highways 24, 33, 36, 67, 69, 91, 101, and 157) and federal (Interstate 65 and U.S. Highways 20, 31, 72, 231, and 278) highways along with county and local roads. Rail service is provided to the Region by the Norfolk Southern Railway, which runs east to west, and the CSX Railway, which runs north to south. A major part of the state's navigation system is the Tennessee River, which serves as the northern boundary of the NARCOG Region and includes the state docks and the Port

of Decatur. The Tennessee River, a part of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, provides access to the Gulf of Mexico, the Port of Mobile, and other major ports in the East and West. Additionally, there are four small non-commercial airports offering various of services in our Region. These include Pryor Field in Decatur, Hartselle-Morgan County Regional Airport in Hartselle, Folsom Field in Cullman, and the George C. Wallace Airpark, a former Army air base in Courtland, with two 5,000-foot runways.

International air transportation is provided by the Huntsville International Airport (HSV), with non-stop or direct flights to most of the major cities in the United States, including non-stop transcontinental flights. With the increasing interest in the worldwide manufacturing process and international marketing and sales, HSV is now designated as a U.S. Customs Port of Entry and authorized to operate as a Foreign Trade Zone. HSV also features a unique cargo inter-modal terminal for receiving, transferring, storing and/or distributing containerized cargo by and among air, rail, and highway transportation modes at a single site. This transportation infrastructure will continue to greatly benefit and influence the existing agricultural, industrial, and manufacturing operations, while driving future growth and economic development in the Region.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS⁴



	Interstate
	US Highways
	AL Highway/State Routes
	Primary Roads
	Secondary Roads
	Railroads
	Decatur Port
	Airports

INDUSTRIAL PARKS & LANDS

All three of our counties offer attractive industrial and business park locations. Cullman County continues to make capital investments in new and expanding industries. Lawrence County has commercial property available in the Courtland Industrial Airpark, the Mallard Fox West Industrial Complex, as well as undeveloped industrial sites on the Tennessee River, including the former IP plant site. Mallard Fox West is an Advantage Site located within a designated Foreign Trade Zone and U.S. Customs Port of Entry, which affords local industries with shipping and customs-related advantages. Morgan County has properties available in various industrial parks such as Mallard Fox Creek Industrial Park and Morgan Center Business Park, as well as privately owned industrial facilities and acreage.



The Town of Courtland's picturesque downtown square.

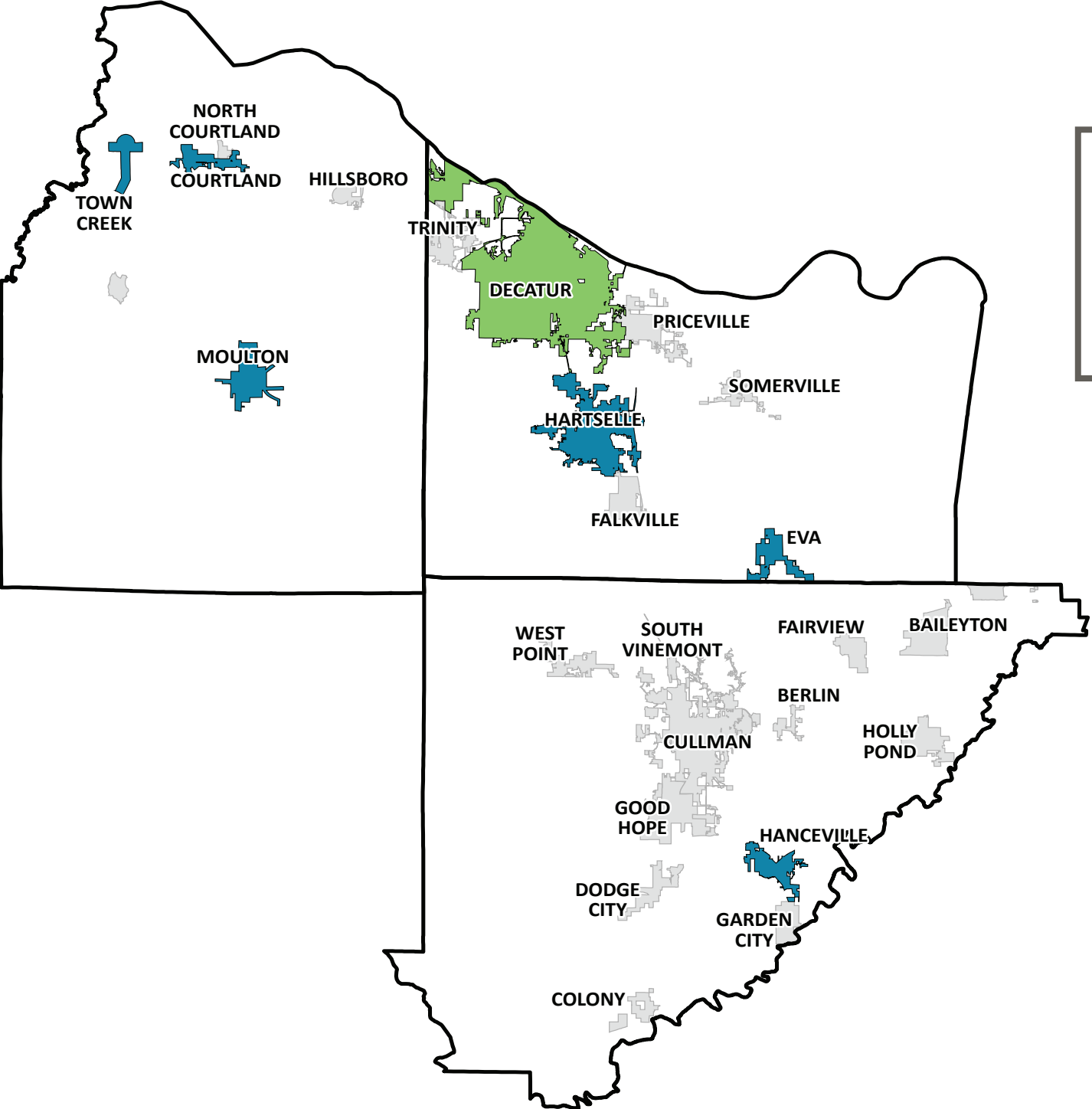





TRADITIONAL DOWNTOWNS

Many of the historic downtowns in the Region are being revitalized to attract a variety of restaurants, shops, and professional offices, thereby renewing a sense of community pride and increasing local prosperity as contributors to the regional economy.

In 2016, NARCOG partnered with Main Street Alabama to establish the Regional Downtown Network Initiative to extend the nationally recognized Main Street 4-Point Approach® for downtown revitalization to communities with an identified traditional downtown. The program focuses on design, organization, promotion, and economic vitality. NARCOG believes that the regional approach to Main Street Alabama's Downtown Network program will help these communities and the Region as a whole with economic development and downtown revitalization efforts. The following seven communities agreed to participate in the program: Courtland, Eva, Falkville, Hanceville, Hartselle, Moulton, and Town Creek. Decatur became a designated Main Street Alabama community in June of 2014. While the partnership with MSAL ended in 2020, NARCOG has continued the Regional Downtown Network initiative.

TRADITIONAL DOWNTOWNS⁶



	Counties
	Designated Main Street AL Community
	Downtown Network Community

ECONOMIC ASSETS

ECONOMIC CLUSTERS

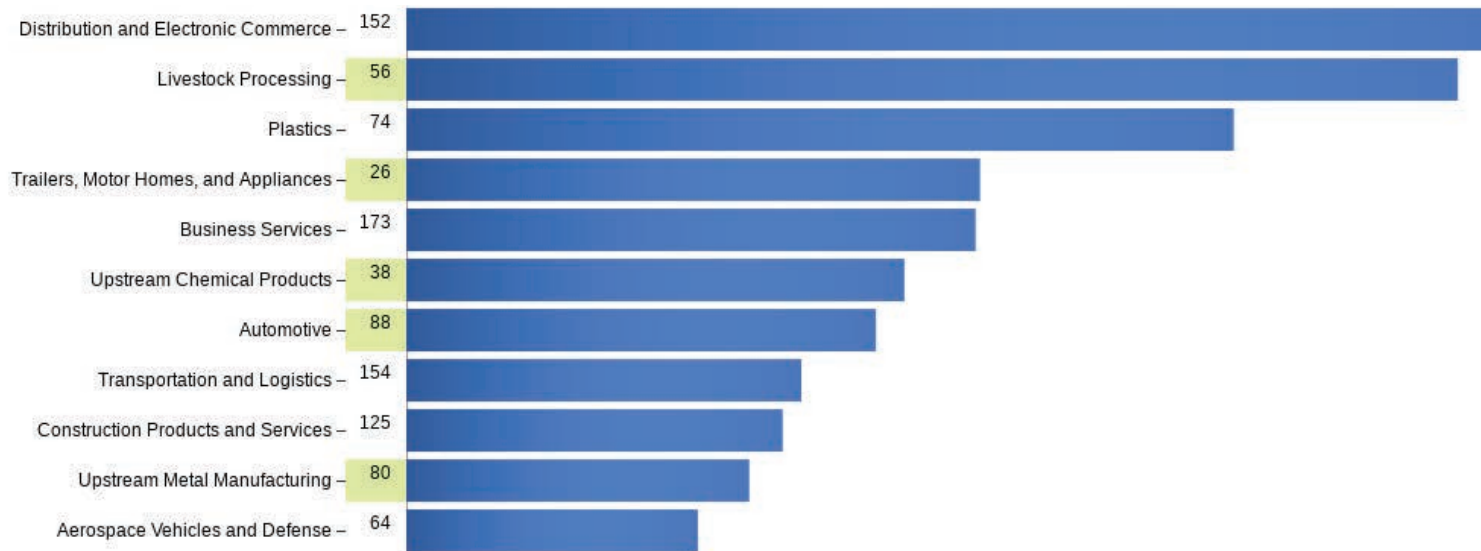
An economic cluster is a core of related business entities in a similar geography that work together to produce goods and services. They can include companies, suppliers, service providers, government organizations, and academic institutions. These clusters take advantage of the economic strengths of the Region to offer the following benefits:

- Growing skilled employees
- Promoting knowledge and innovation sharing
- Encouraging new businesses to set up operations in an area to take advantage of existing clusters
- Providing a shared infrastructure to create greater operating efficiencies

The “Cluster Linkages and Economic Diversification” illustration on the next page shows how our Region’s clusters are inter-related, as well as the economic diversification in the Region. The dark green clusters in this illustration have been identified by the U.S. Cluster Mapping Project as “Strong Clusters” that yield high employment specialization and generate higher growth in new business formation and start-up employment. The illustration below, “Private, Non-agricultural Employment”, shows the largest clusters in our Region and their ranking in the U.S. based on employment numbers. This data has not been updated on a county level since 2016, so this is the most recent data.

By creating joint marketing efforts with existing local businesses, we can work to convince the members of their supply chains to relocate to our Region to take advantage of the benefits of economic clustering. Expanding and strengthening economic clusters in this way will help to build a more diversified, resilient economy.

PRIVATE, NON-AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT BY TRADED CLUSTER: NARCOG REGION, 2016⁸

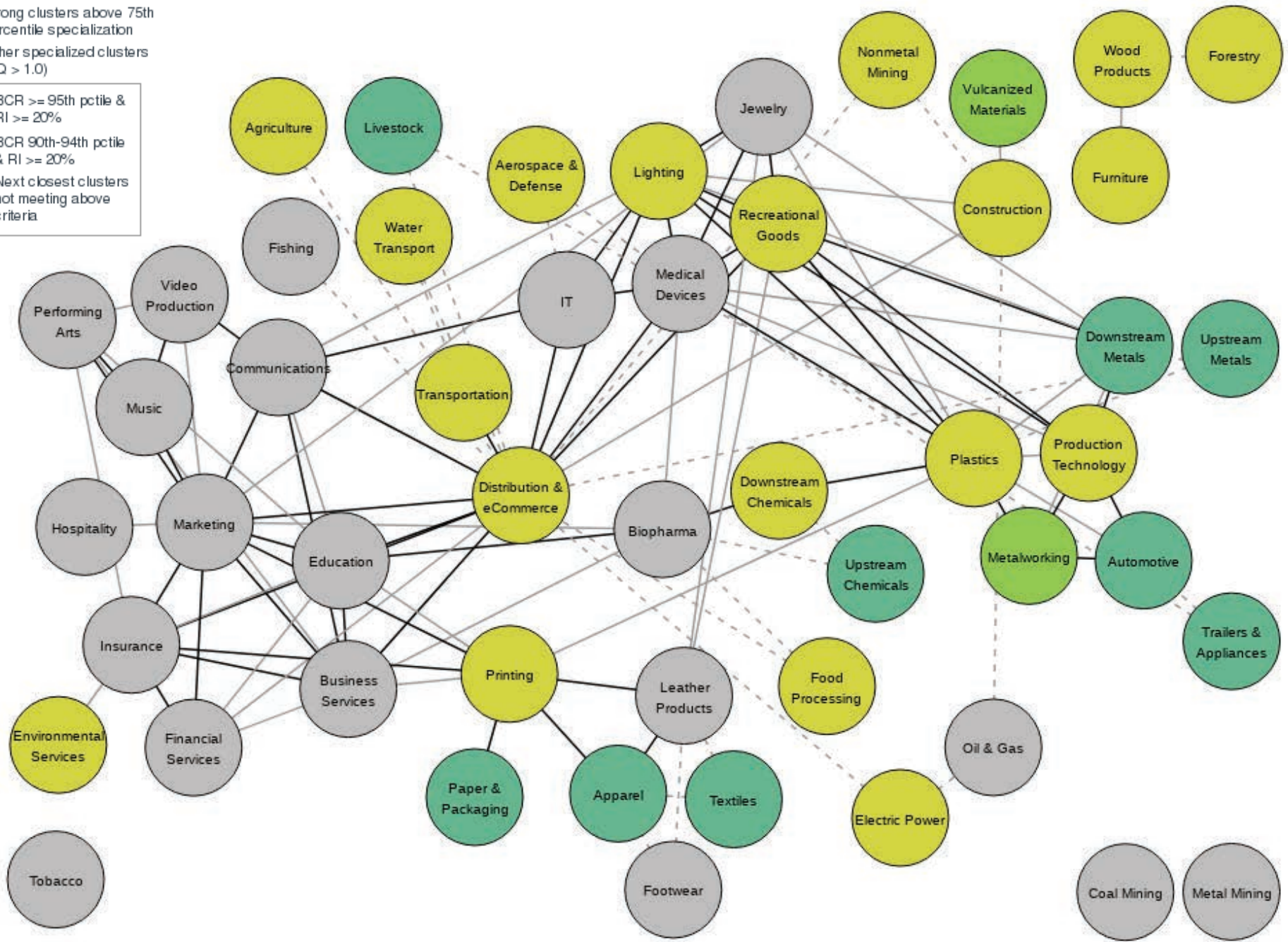


CLUSTER LINKAGES & ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION: NARCOG REGION, 2016⁸

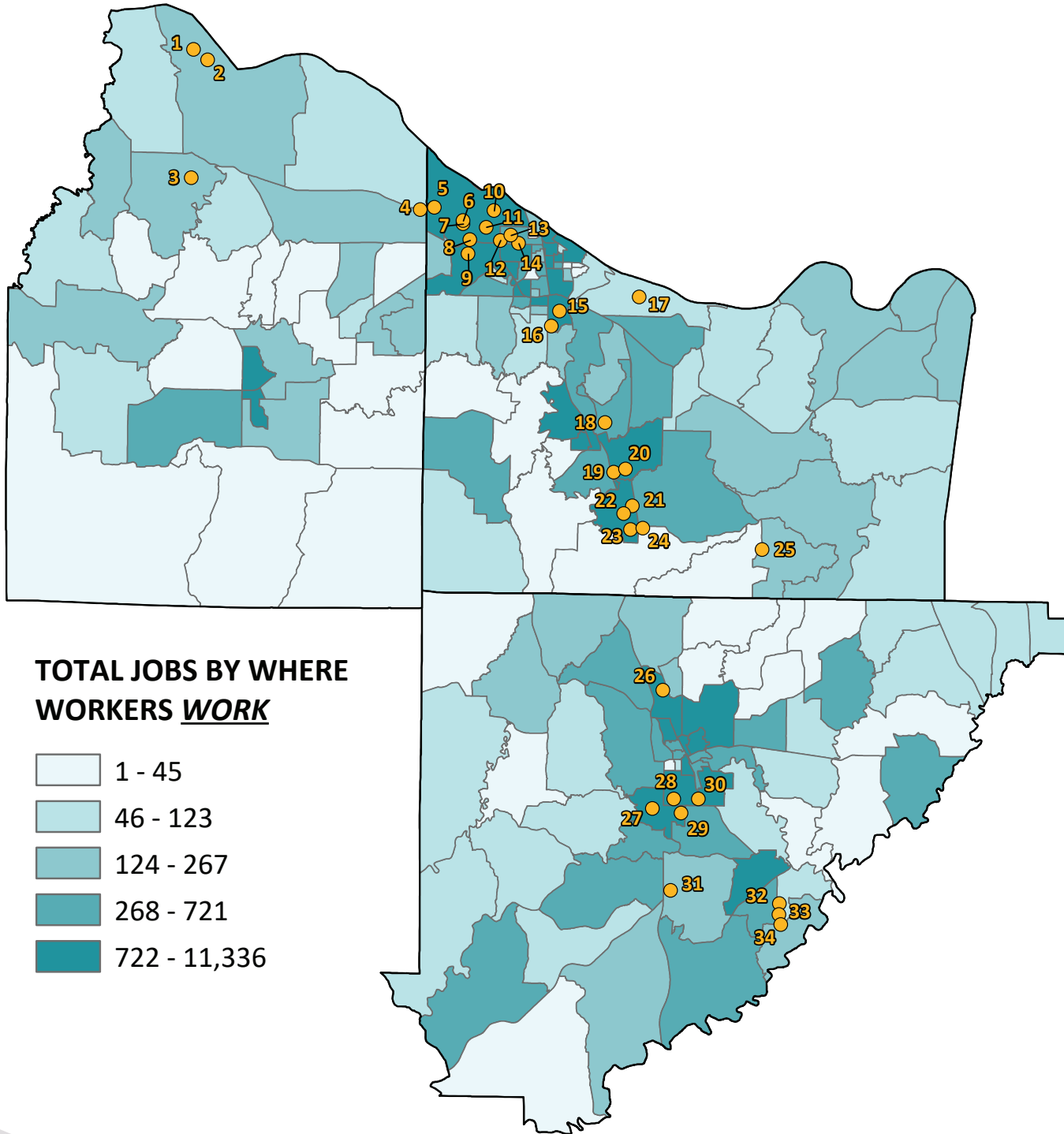
Cluster Specialization

- Strong clusters above 90th percentile specialization
- Strong clusters above 75th percentile specialization
- Other specialized clusters (LQ > 1.0)

- BCR >= 95th pctile & RI >= 20%
- BCR 90th-94th pctile & RI >= 20%
- -** Next closest clusters not meeting above criteria

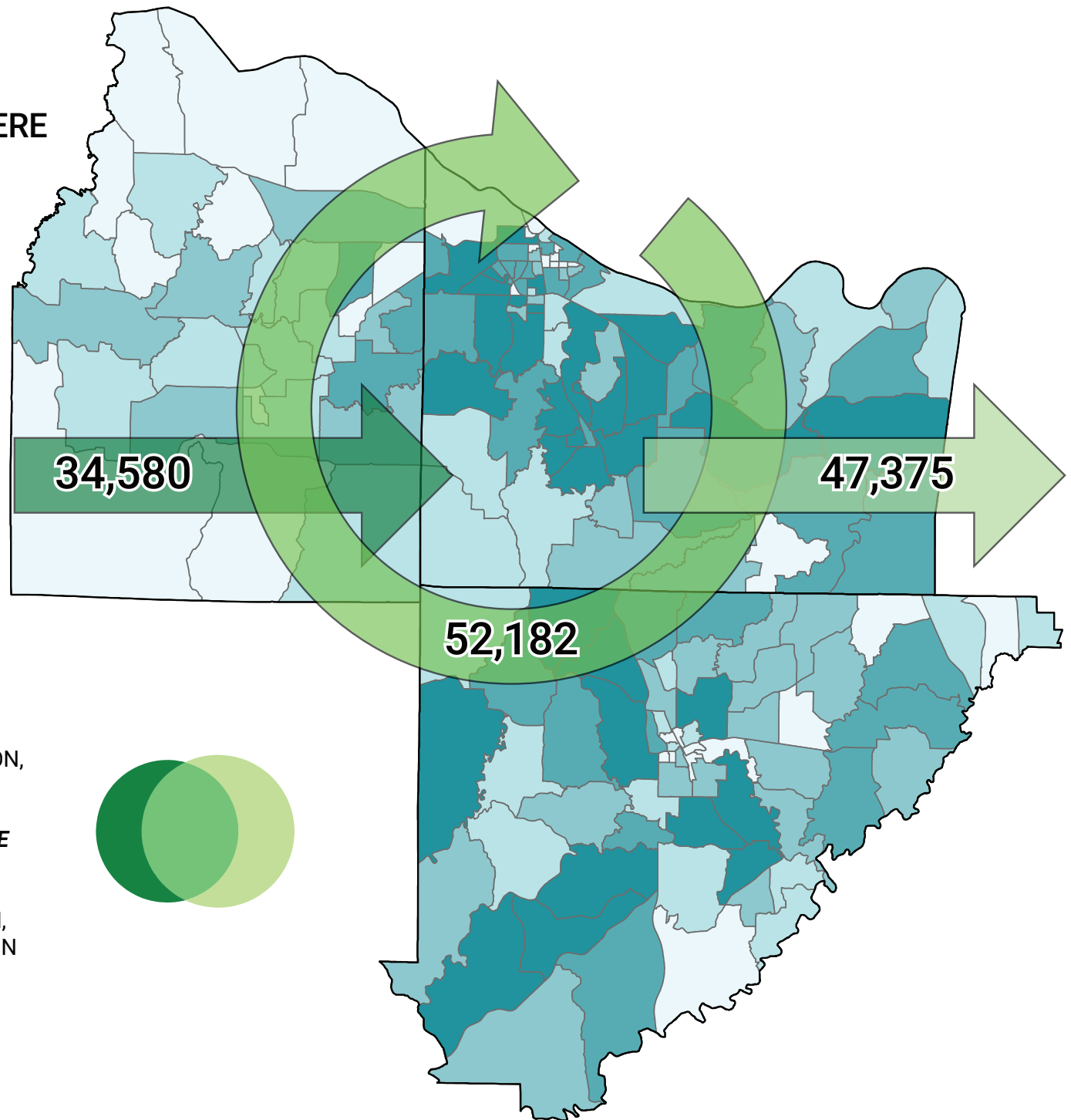
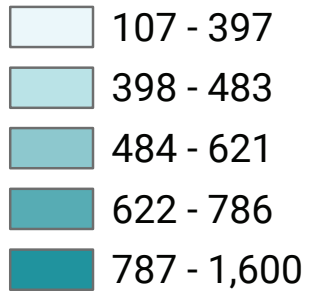


INDUSTRIAL PARKS & AREA PROFILE ANALYSIS OF WORKERS⁵

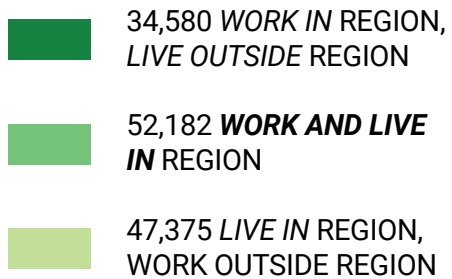


- | | |
|----|--|
| | Counties |
| | Industrial Parks |
| 1 | Rebman Site |
| 2 | Hood Harris |
| 3 | Industrial Airpark |
| 4 | Mallard Fox West Industrial Complex |
| 5 | Glenn Site-Mallard Fox Creek Industrial Park |
| 6 | Watermark Business Park |
| 7 | Red Hat Rd. Taylor Site |
| 8 | Eyster/Steed Site |
| 9 | Williard Hill Property |
| 10 | 1030 State Docks Road |
| 11 | Davis Site |
| 12 | 183 Old Trinity Road Site |
| 13 | Neal Holland Property |
| 14 | Nelms Site |
| 15 | Decatur Business Park |
| 16 | Jeff Parker Central Pkwy Site |
| 17 | Sharp Farm - Priceville |
| 18 | PRIMARY DATA CENTER SITE - Morgan Center Business Park |
| 19 | Hartselle Industrial Park |
| 20 | Morgan Center Business Park |
| 21 | Falkville I-65 @ Culver Road Site |
| 22 | Nelson Site |
| 23 | Morgan West Site |
| 24 | Falkville 93 Acre Site |
| 25 | George Crawford Industrial Site |
| 26 | P.C. Partners Property |
| 27 | Burrow Property |
| 28 | York Property |
| 29 | J & J Properties |
| 30 | Ege Property |
| 31 | Buster Property |
| 32 | Hanceville Industrial Park #1 |
| 33 | Fisher Property |
| 34 | Tinney Property |

TOTAL JOBS BY WHERE WORKERS *LIVE*



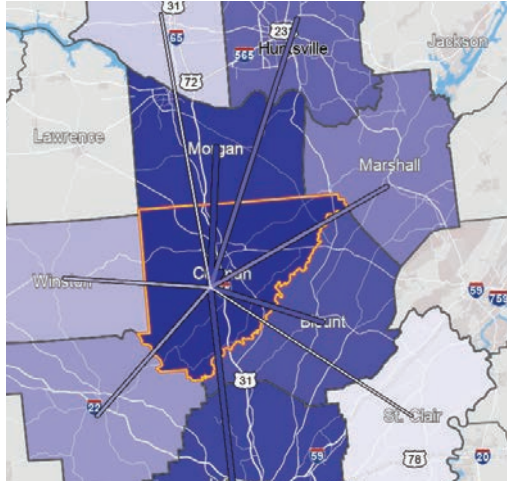
WORKER FLOWS



Distance and Direction from Work Census Block to Home Census Block, Employed in Selection Area

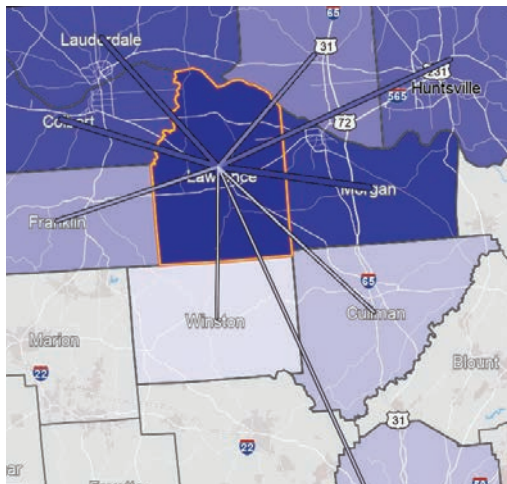
Job Count

- 16,741
- 1,932
- 1,352
- 1,309
- 1,157
- 906
- 690
- 528
- 455
- 337



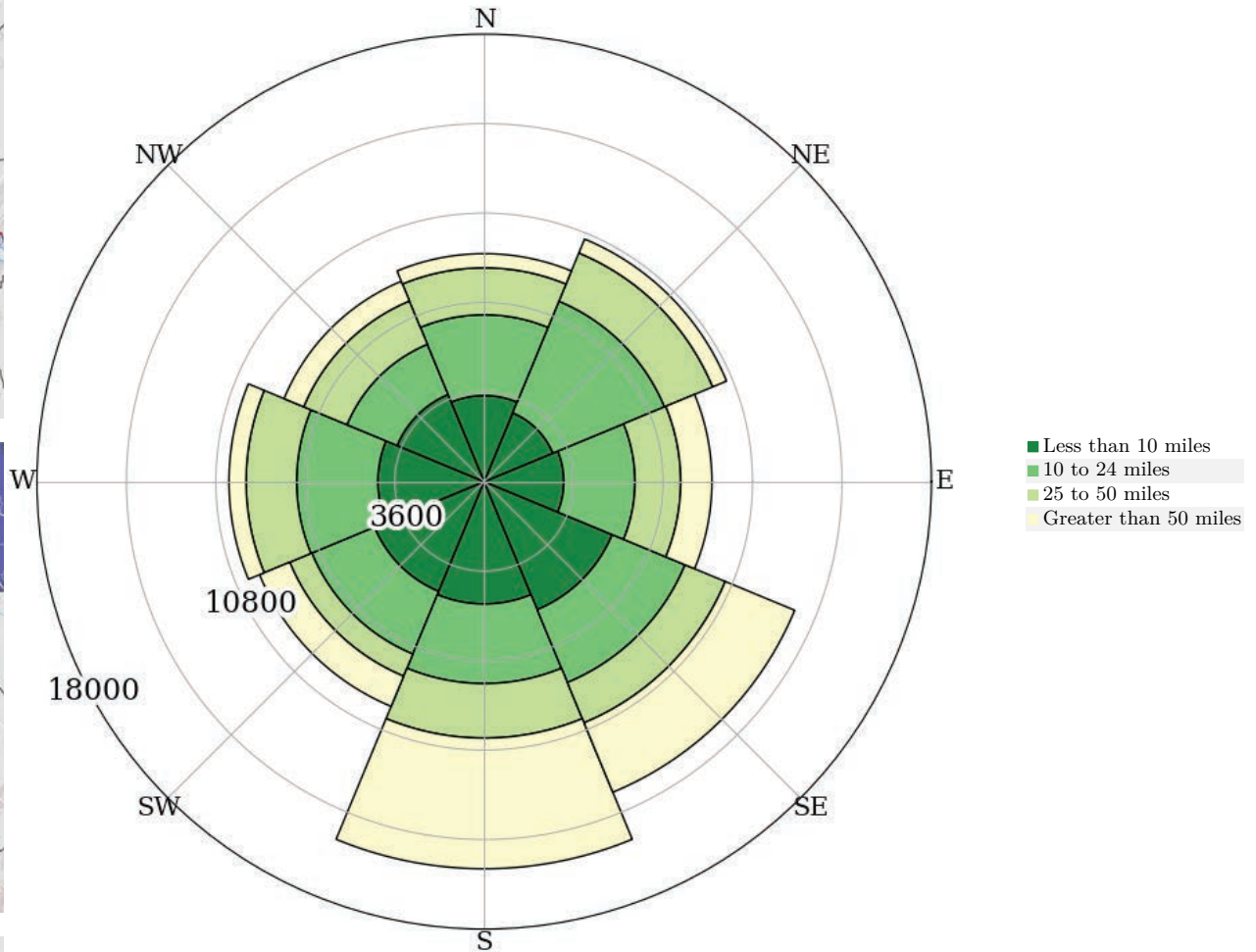
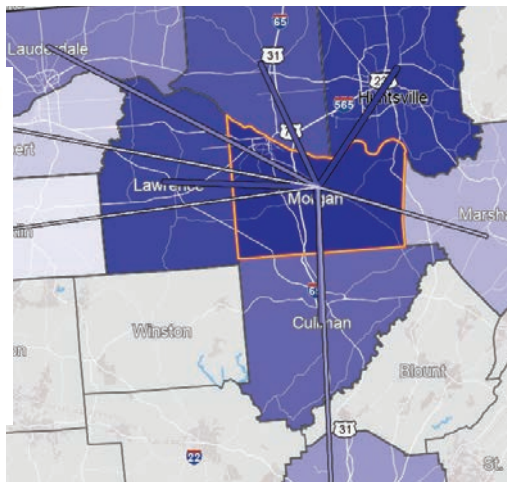
Job Count

- 2,303
- 543
- 262
- 227
- 150
- 129
- 117
- 70



Job Count

- 23,148
- 5,162
- 4,902
- 3,823
- 2,217
- 1,558
- 1,161
- 1,140
- 902
- 455

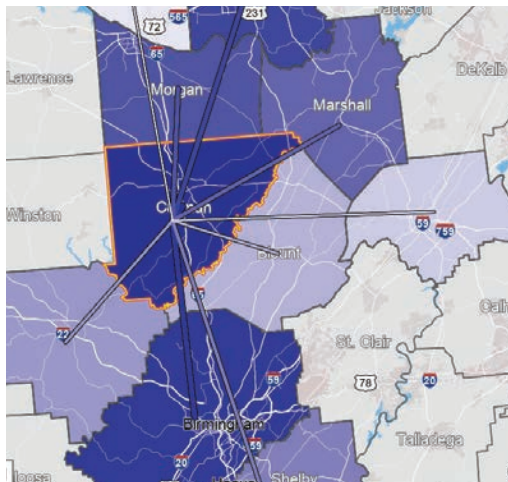


All Jobs for All Workers in 2019

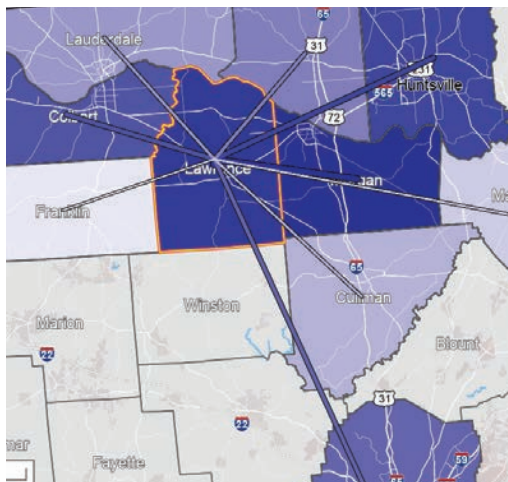
Distance from Work Census Block to Home Census Block, Employed in Selection Area

Distance	2019	
	Count	Share
Total All Jobs	86,762	100.0
Less than 10 miles	33,014	38.1
10 to 24 miles	25,528	29.4
25 to 50 miles	14,653	16.9
Greater than 50 miles	13,567	15.6

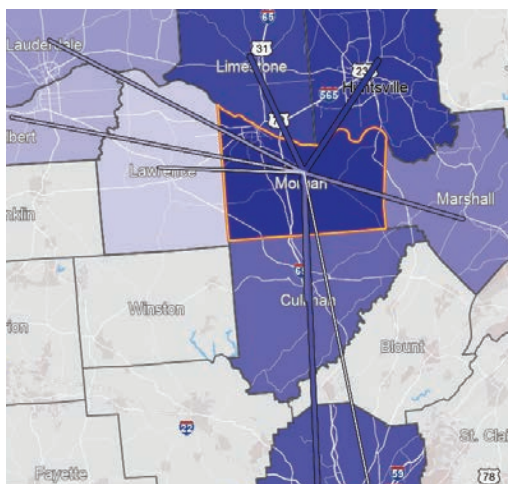
Distance and Direction from Home Census Block to Work Census Block, Living in Selection Area



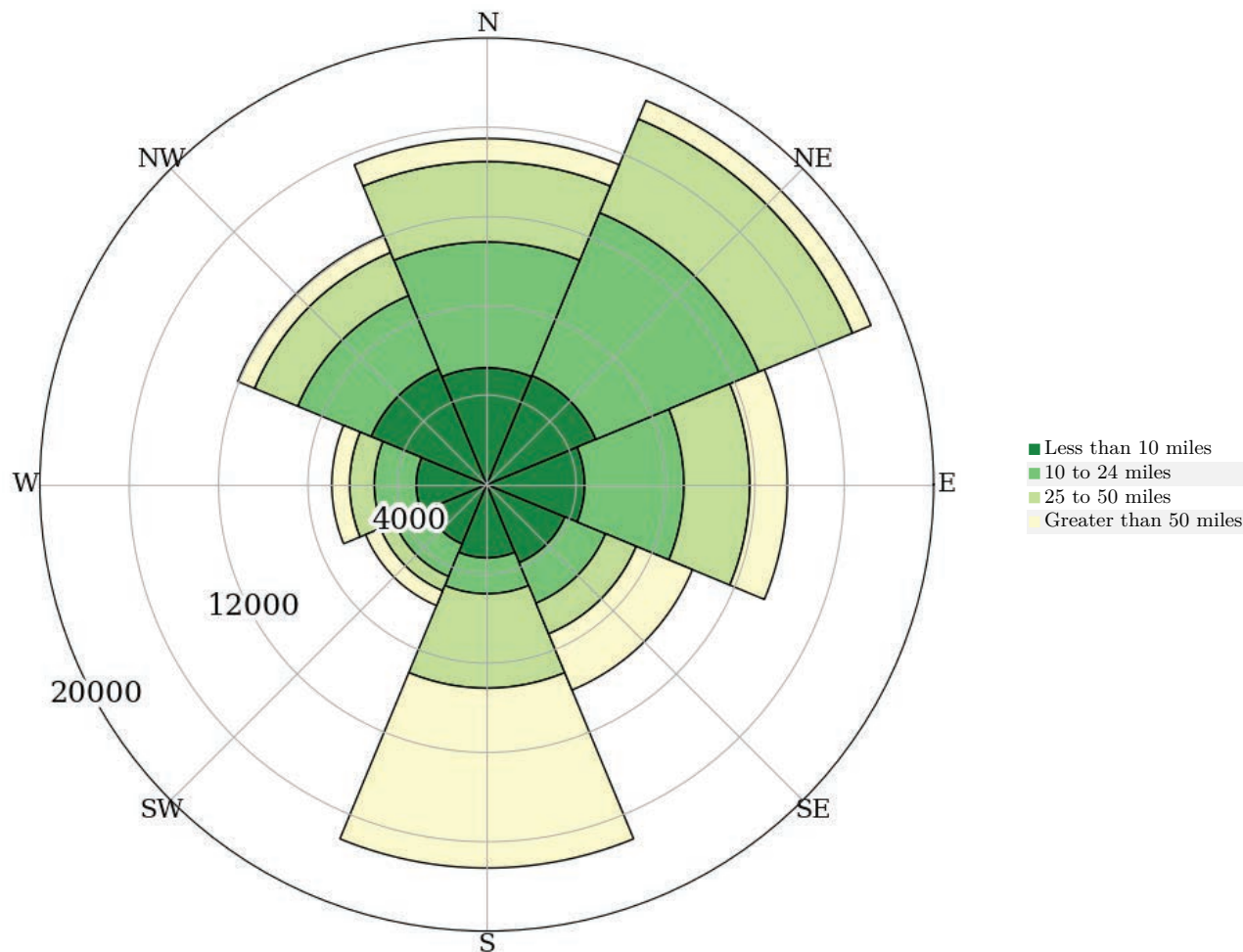
- Job Count**
- 16,741
 - 5,262
 - 2,819
 - 2,217
 - 1,266
 - 746
 - 597
 - 577
 - 558
 - 497



- Job Count**
- 4,902
 - 2,303
 - 1,542
 - 854
 - 678
 - 495
 - 412
 - 279
 - 194
 - 171



- Job Count**
- 23,148
 - 11,578
 - 2,339
 - 2,329
 - 1,932
 - 959
 - 798
 - 661
 - 543
 - 541



All Jobs for All Workers in 2019

Distance from Home Census Block to Work Census Block, Living in Selection Area

Distance	2019	
	Count	Share
Total All Jobs	99,557	100.0
Less than 10 miles	33,610	33.8
10 to 24 miles	28,559	28.7
25 to 50 miles	20,687	20.8
Greater than 50 miles	16,701	16.8

AGRIBUSINESS & FARMLAND

Although no current data exists, a report released by Auburn University’s Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology in February of 2013, revealed that agriculture, forestry, and agribusiness make up \$70.4 billion of Alabama’s gross domestic product, or 38% of the state’s annual economic output. The study also showed that these sectors employ about 580,000 people. On average, 1 out of every 4.6 jobs in Alabama is related to agriculture or forestry. Likewise, agribusiness is a crucial component of our Region’s economy. A report published by the Alabama Cooperative Education System (ACES) in 2013 shows that Lawrence County, in particular, depends heavily upon agricultural resources (see table below).

According to USDA estimates, 42.7 million acres of US farmland were lost from 2002 through 2012, the data for which has not been updated since that time. The USDA estimates that Alabama lost over 200,000 acres of farmland during the same timeframe. While our national and state farming bases are shrinking, the world population is growing. The United Nations estimates that the world population will grow from its current level of 7.6 billion to 9.8 billion by 2050. The productivity and efficiency of agribusiness must markedly improve to meet the demand of a burgeoning global population. A significant investment in agricultural technology innovation must be made. With multi-generational agricultural operations, our Region possesses a unique depth of knowledge and experience that can be leveraged in developing agricultural technology. Currently, plans are underway to open a satellite location of the Decatur-Morgan Entrepreneurial Center in Lawrence County to inspire entrepreneurs—particularly innovators in agricultural technology.



AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY & RELATED INDUSTRIES IN THE NARCOG REGION⁹

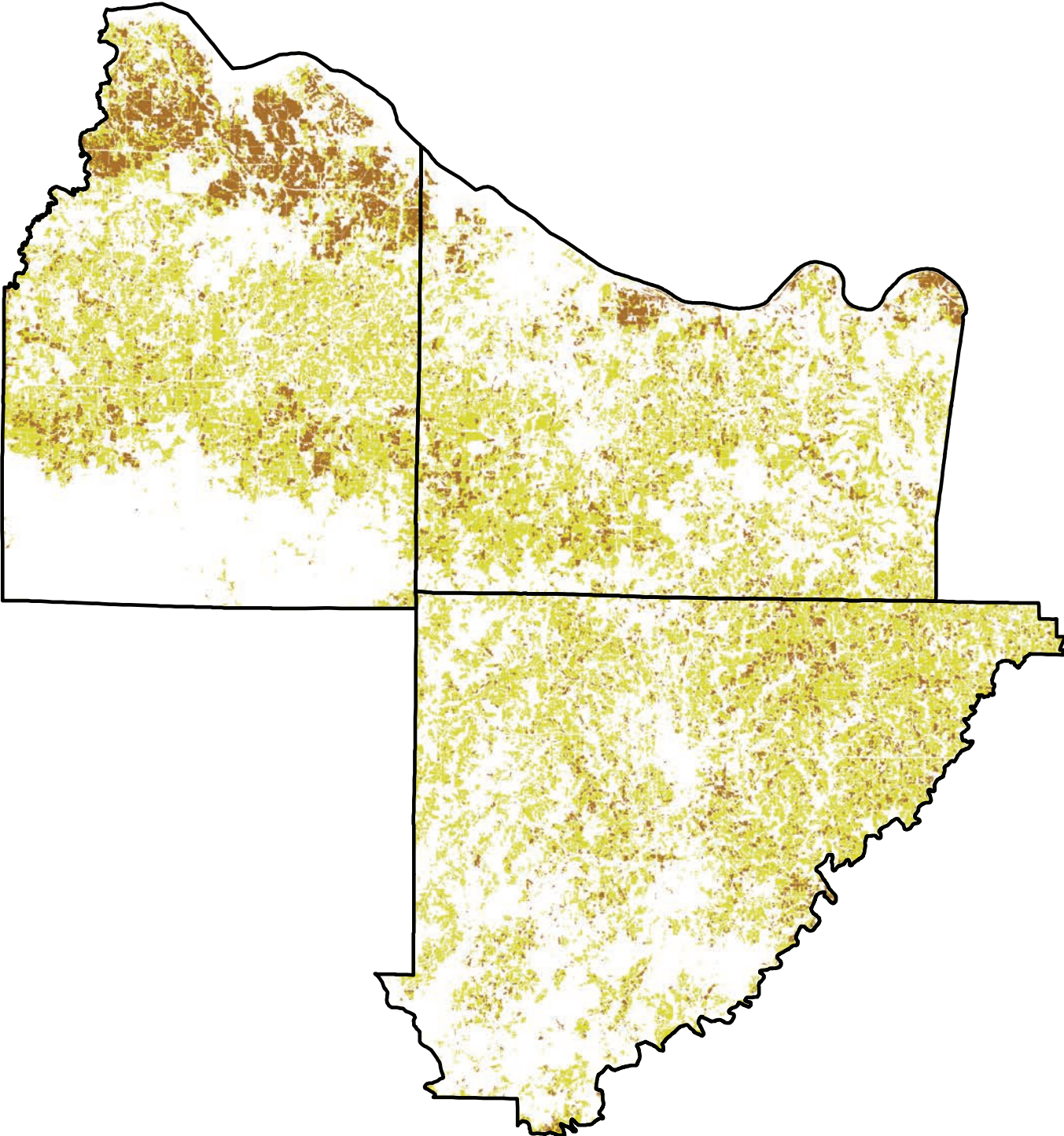
Counties	Full & Part-time Jobs	% of Workforce	Total Economic Impact	% of Total Economic Activity
Lawrence	8,444	67.70%	\$1.4 billion	84%
Cullman	15,555	39.90%	\$2.4 billion	50%
Morgan	18,841	30.20%	\$2.8 billion	24%



Top A farm in the Town of Falkville
Bottom A farm in the Town of Courtland

AGRICULTURE LAND COVER⁷

-  Hay and/or pasture
-  Cultivated crops



COST OF LIVING

The average wage of a region gives an indication of the overall quality of jobs available and the financial well-being of the residents. In our Region, the average of the median household incomes for each county is \$49,479 compared to \$52,035 in the State of Alabama, and \$64,994 nationally. The development of a more skilled workforce will increase our median income. Of course, the lower median income is somewhat offset by a lower cost of living. According to Sperling's Best Places, the overall cost of living in our Region is only 80.9% of the national average. Housing is significantly more affordable in the NARCOG Region at only 50.8% of the national average.

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

To assist small businesses and start-ups with gap financing and microloans, NARCOG operates a Small Business Fund (SBF). The SBF is funded by monies from the ARC, EDA, USDA, and state bond. To date, the SBF has closed on over 145 loans, using \$13,267,010 in loan fund dollars and leveraging \$73,736,593 in private investment. Approximately 1,903 jobs have been created and/or retained in the NARCOG Region as a result of the program. NARCOG plans to expand this program through increased marketing efforts.

The Decatur–Morgan County Entrepreneurial Center (E–Center) seeks to “Encourage, Enthuse, and Empower” start–ups, small businesses, and businesses in transition. In addition to regularly hosting classes and networking opportunities for entrepreneurs and small business owners, the E–Center houses a variety of office spaces at below–market rates. Since opening in 2010, the E–Center has counseled over 600 business owners, generating more than 500 jobs and \$10 million in new payroll revenue. In 2016, the E–Center expanded operations into a second facility located in Lawrence County, with help from a USDA RBDG grant obtained by NARCOG. It has already reached full capacity, and the E–Center is planning further expansion.



REGIONAL COST OF LIVING AS COMPARED TO THE UNITED STATES¹⁰

COST OF LIVING	Decatur, AL	Hartselle, AL	Decatur MSA	Morgan County	Lawrence County	Cullman County	NARCOG Region	U.S.
Overall	80.4	83.9	81.7	83.1	78.2	81.3	80.9	100
Grocery	93.7	94.3	93.8	94.3	93	94.8	94.8	100
Health	115.9	115.9	116.1	115.9	116.9	115.8	116.2	100
Housing	53	60.6	54	56.6	42.3	53.6	50.8	100
Utilities	93.4	97.3	99	101.2	100.2	99.9	100.4	100
Transportation	79	82.7	80.6	85.9	81.3	79.6	82.3	100
Miscellaneous	80.6	80.4	77.5	71	65.3	69.5	68.6	100

To inspire the evolution of a technology entrepreneurship culture in our Region, the E–Center plans to create a council of successful entrepreneurs to collaborate on new ventures, then work with venture capitalists, angel investors, and revolving loan funds to financially support business start–up and expansion. The E–Center envisions an Innovation District to include a tech accelerator supported by corporate R&D units and academic institutions. NARCOG supports the E–Center’s efforts, and will supply research and technical assistance in seeking state and national government financial support.

SERVICE ASSETS

COMMUNITY COLLEGES & LOCAL SCHOOLS

One of NARCOG’s primary goals is to “improve the education, knowledge, skills, and health of residents for a ready workforce to strengthen community and economic development opportunities.” Currently, our Region lags behind the nation and the State of Alabama in numbers of high school and college graduates. As of the ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates, high school graduates represent 88.5% of the national population, 86.9% of Alabamians, and 82.9% of our Region. The percentage of the population with a bachelor’s degree in the U.S. is 32.9%, 26.2% in Alabama, and only 18.4% in our Region.

Quality of education will determine the success of our workforce, thereby impacting the economic prosperity of our Region. Therefore, school districts in our Region are actively working to increase education quality and graduation rates. Many of our elementary schools meet College and Career Readiness Standards by providing Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI) and Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, & Math (STEAM) activities. By high school, most of our students can take advantage of flexible education opportunities, such as dual enrollment options and free public virtual schools.

Wallace State Community College is located within the Region, and Calhoun Community College is located on our Region’s border in Tanner, AL, with satellite campuses in Decatur and Huntsville. These institutions offer technical and vocational training along with a general college curriculum. Wallace State offers more than 50 majors leading to degree, certificate, and transfer opportunities, and provides programs such as dual enrollment, the FastTrack Academy, and Tech-Prep. Fast Track and Fast Track for Industry (FTI) are joint partnerships between Wallace State and the local school system that allow high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to complete up to two years of college coursework before high school graduation. FTI is an accelerated dual enrollment program that allows high school juniors and seniors to pursue degrees and obtain entry into high demand, skilled positions in the workforce.

Both colleges also work with the local business community to develop industry-specific training programs. For example, Calhoun offers the Alabama F.A.M.E. (Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education) Advanced Manufacturing Technician Program (AMT). This cutting-edge two-year program teaches advanced manufacturing technology and provides paid working experience with sponsor companies. Calhoun also offers the SpaceTEC Certified Aerospace Technician program, sponsored by aerospace industry leaders such as Boeing, ULA, ATK, Jacobs Engineering, and ERC.

The area’s technical schools are of increasing importance, as are the vocational educational programs offered by the area’s high schools. The State of Alabama also implements industrial training through the Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT) program, a member of the Alabama College System. This program is aimed at new and expanding industry within the state, and is housed in the activities of the Alabama Department of Commerce.

INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING WITHIN 50 MILES OF THE NORTH-CENTRAL ALABAMA REGION

Athens

Athens State College

Birmingham Area

Birmingham—Southern College

Jefferson State Community College

Samford University

University of Alabama Birmingham (UAB)

Decatur Area

John C. Calhoun Community College

Florence Area

Northwest-Shoals Community College

University of North Alabama (UNA)

Hanceville

Wallace State Community College

Huntsville

Alabama A&M College

University of Alabama Huntsville

Jasper

Bevill State Community College

ROBOTICS TECHNOLOGY PARK

The Robotics Technology Park (RTP) is a collaboration between the state of Alabama, Calhoun Community College, AIDT, and robotics industry leaders nationwide. The RTP consists of three training facilities representing an investment of approximately \$73 million. The RTP's mission is "to provide a technically trained, highly skilled, and educated workforce for automation and robotics, to assist public and private entities in developing new robotics systems and technologies, and to promote the creation, growth, or expansion of companies through innovative technology solutions."

According to a 2017 National Association of Manufacturers report, Alabama ranked 5th in the nation for percentage of employment in manufacturing (13.3%)¹¹. As manufacturing becomes increasingly automated, greater demand will arise for technologists who are skilled at robotic innovation and repair. RTP stands at the forefront of that trend, giving a tremendous advantage to our local workforce.

A short distance from the NARCOG Region are two more education powerhouses that are developing future leaders in technology. In September of 2017, the US Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville received a \$10 million economic development grant to expand the campus and establish a U.S. Cyber Camp for high school students. An inaugural camp was held in the summer of 2017 and covered the basics

of computer science, ethics of computer use and hacking, network security, programming and coding, encryption, systems engineering, and applications of cybersecurity in technology.

For students who choose to continue their cybersecurity education at a college level, the University of Alabama in Huntsville is designated as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education, a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense, and a National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Research.

With high-quality STEM education initiatives beginning at the elementary school level, then building as students reach high school and beyond, our Region's workforce will be well-prepared for robotics and other high-tech career paths.



Top One of the RTP training facilities.¹²

Bottom The CNC Lab for Machine Tool Technology at Calhoun Community College.

AGING PROGRAMS

Population trends will affect our workforce. As the following regional data sheets indicate, our regional population growth is expected to stagnate. At the same time, our population is aging. Due to advances in healthcare, Americans are living longer and more active lives. Instead of retiring, many older Americans are retraining for new careers or finding volunteer opportunities in their communities. NARCOG is the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for our Region and manages many programs to help our local aging population. One of the AAA's most successful programs, the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) offers unemployed, low-income individuals 55 and older with job training opportunities at non-profit and public facilities in the Region. The AAA just completed their 5-year plan, and the agency's goals can be found in *Appendix D*.

HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

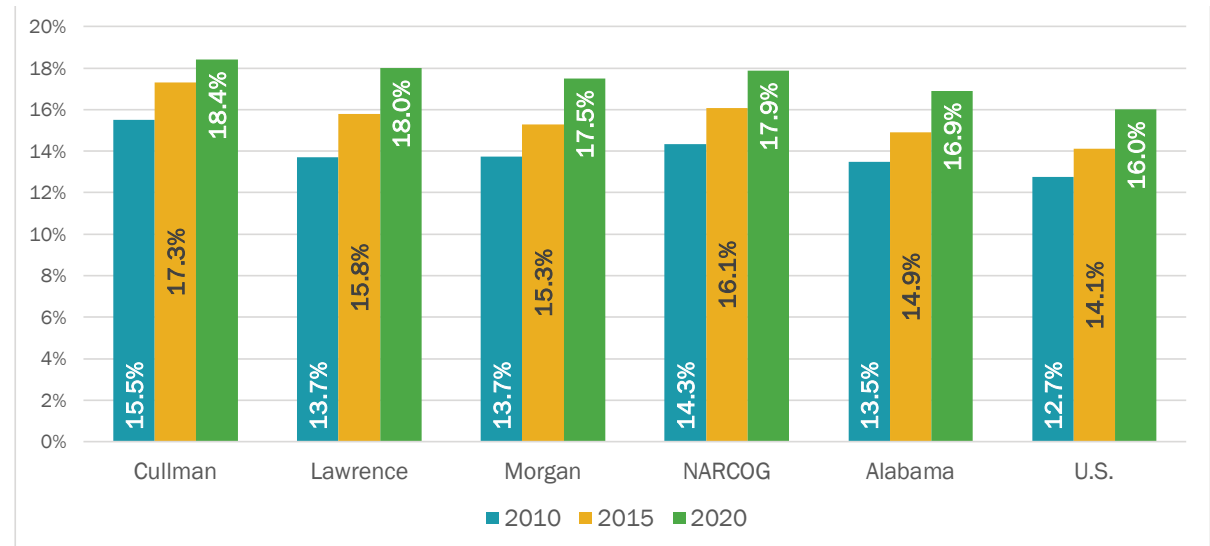
As the economic growth of the Region expands, the standard of living goes up, thereby increasing the ability to purchase and receive a higher level of health care. Conversely, the improved health of the population contributes to enlarging the output of the economy. According to the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Region is fortunate to possess four general hospitals with approximately 640 combined beds. There are also two specialty psychiatric hospitals with approximately 100 beds. Ambulatory surgery centers that provide same-day outpatient surgical care, including diagnostic and preventive procedures, represent a growing trend in health care. There are 3 ASC facilities in our Region.

The greatest challenge facing the health care industry nation-wide is meeting the needs of an aging population. Our region is no exception. As shown on the adjacent chart, the percent of the population aged 65 and over in the NARCOG Region has increased from 14.3% in 2010 to 17.9% in 2020. This trend is expected to continue as the baby boomer generation ages. To address this trend, many assisted living facilities and nursing homes are available in the Region—nine nursing home facilities with over 1300 beds and 15 assisted living facilities with 488 beds. Along with providing health care services to support our aging population, NARCOG is working to address the economic and social implications of this trend through our Aging Services programs.

PHILANTHROPIC COMMUNITY

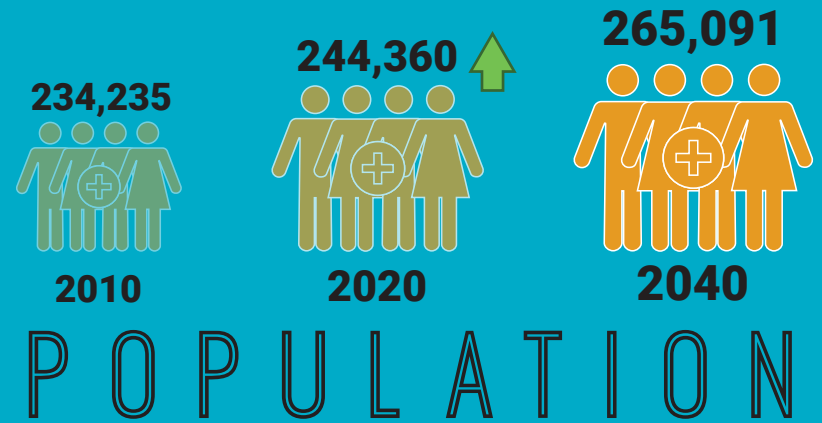
The community spirit in the NARCOG Region inspires an exceptional amount of volunteerism and philanthropy, thereby enhancing our quality of life and providing support to those in need. The Volunteer Center of Morgan County matches people and their passions to opportunities to serve the community through 200 different organizations. To highlight just a few of our local philanthropic organizations: The Community Action Partnership of North Alabama offers numerous programs for children and senior citizens, while the Community Action Agency provides emergency energy bill assistance, emergency cooling assistance, and rent assistance. Both groups work diligently to reduce or eradicate poverty. Other agencies, such as the Good Samaritan Health Clinic in Cullman and the Cullman Regional Foundation, focus on providing for the health care needs of low income or uninsured individuals.

PERCENT OF POPULATION 65+: 2010, 2015, 2020





NARCOG REGION

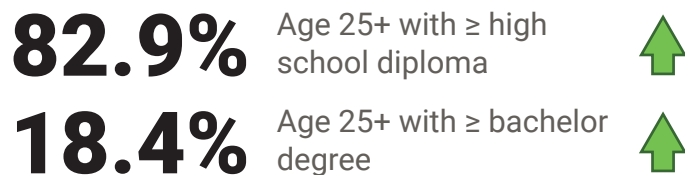


HOUSING



Housing units	105,637	↑
Vacancy	14.2%	↓
Housing units with no vehicle	4.0%	↓

EDUCATION



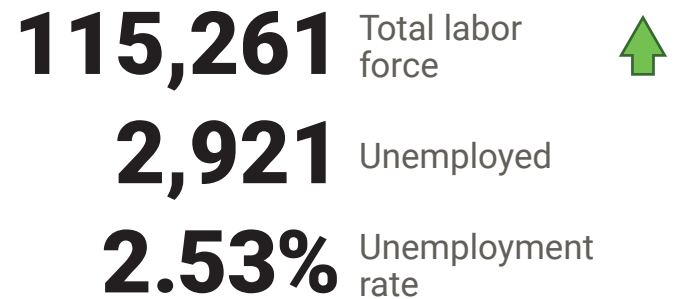
HEALTH



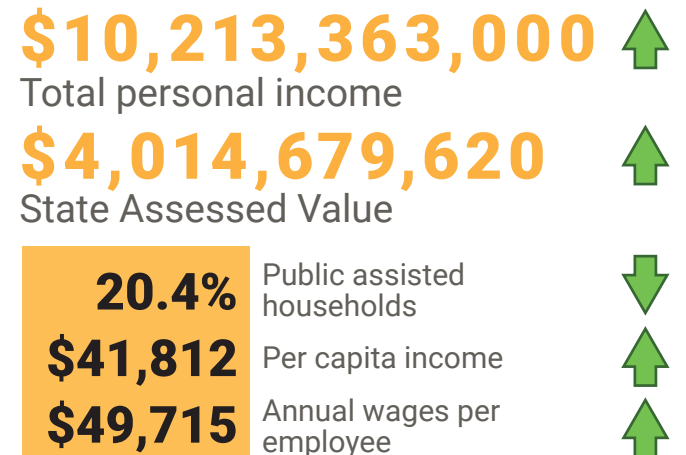
TOP 10 EMPLOYERS

- Decatur Morgan Hospital
- Wal-Mart Distribution
- GE Appliances, a Haier company
- Cullman Regional Medical Center
- Decatur City Schools
- Cullman County Schools
- Wayne Farms Prepared Foods
- Topre America Corporation
- Morgan County Schools
- 3M Company

EMPLOYMENT

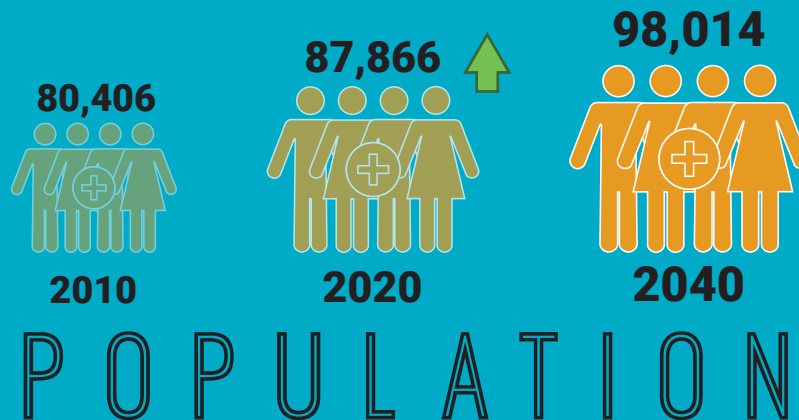


ECONOMY

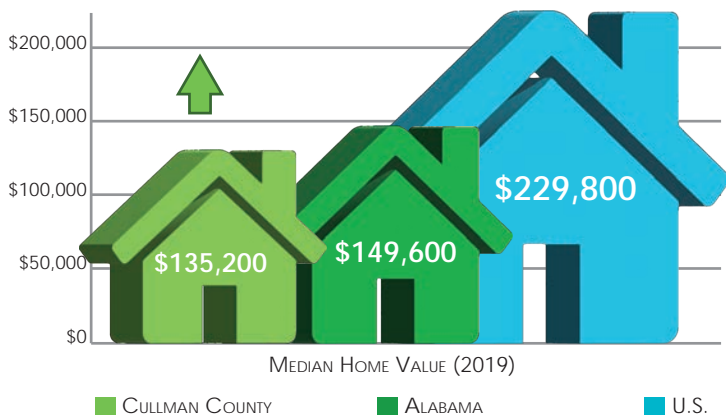




CULLMAN COUNTY



HOUSING



EDUCATION

82.3% Age 25+ with ≥ high school diploma ↑

15.4% Age 25+ with ≥ bachelor degree ↑

Wallace State Community College
5,502 enrolled students

HEALTH

11.6% Population with no health insurance

14.7% Food insecurity rate ↓

13.5% Child food insecurity rate ↓

TOP 10 EMPLOYERS

- Wal-Mart Distribution
- Cullman Regional Medical Center
- Cullman County Schools
- Topre America Corporation
- Wal-Mart Super Center North/South
- REHAU
- City of Cullman
- Reliance Worldwide
- Cullman County Commission
- Yutaka Technologies

EMPLOYMENT

39,566 Total labor force ↑

938 Unemployed

2.4% Unemployment rate

ECONOMY

\$3,605,285,000 Total personal income ↑

\$1,369,018,200 State Assessed Value ↑

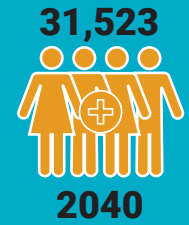
\$48,388 Median household income ↑

\$42,659 Per capita income ↑

\$45,102 Annual wages per employee ↑

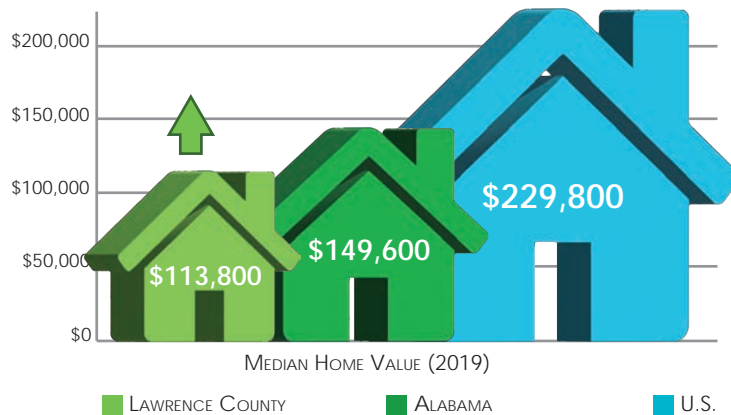


LAWRENCE COUNTY

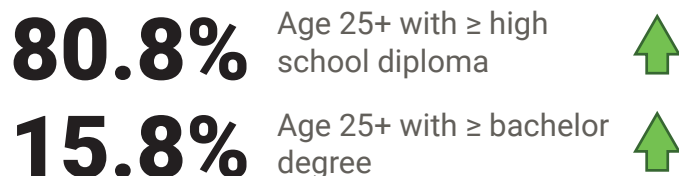


POPULATION

HOUSING



EDUCATION



HEALTH



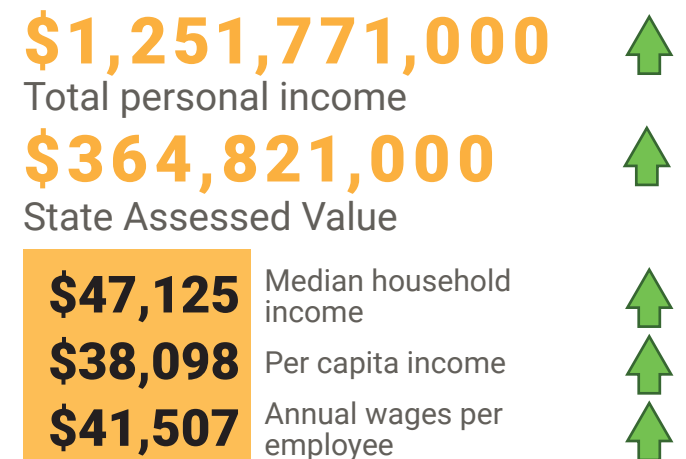
TOP 10 EMPLOYERS

- Lawrence County School System
- Wal-Mart
- Lawrence County Medical Center
- Lawrence County Commission
- Jack Daniel Cooperage
- Lockheed Martin Space Systems
- Joe Wheeler EMC
- Nucor Tubular Products
- Country Brook Design
- City of Moulton

EMPLOYMENT

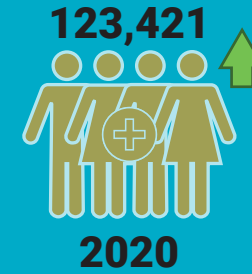


ECONOMY



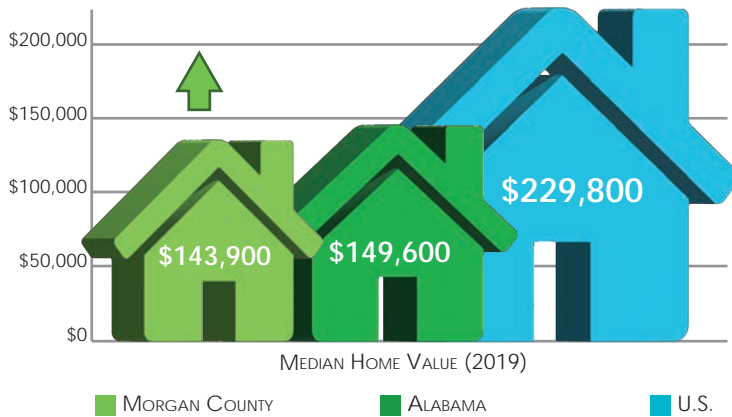


MORGAN COUNTY



POPULATION

HOUSING



EDUCATION

84% Age 25+ with ≥ high school diploma

21.3% Age 25+ with ≥ bachelor degree



*Calhoun Community College
9,736 enrolled students

*Physical location is in Decatur city limits, but in Limestone County

HEALTH

10.2% Population with no health insurance

14.2% Food insecurity rate

16.8% Child food insecurity rate

TOP 10 EMPLOYERS

- Decatur Morgan Hospital
- GE Appliances, a Haier company
- Decatur City Schools
- Wayne Farms Prepared Foods
- Morgan County Schools
- 3M Company
- Nucor Steel
- Wayne Farms Fresh Facility
- United Launch Alliance
- City of Decatur

EMPLOYMENT

60,890 Total labor force

1,568 Unemployed

2.6% Unemployment rate

ECONOMY

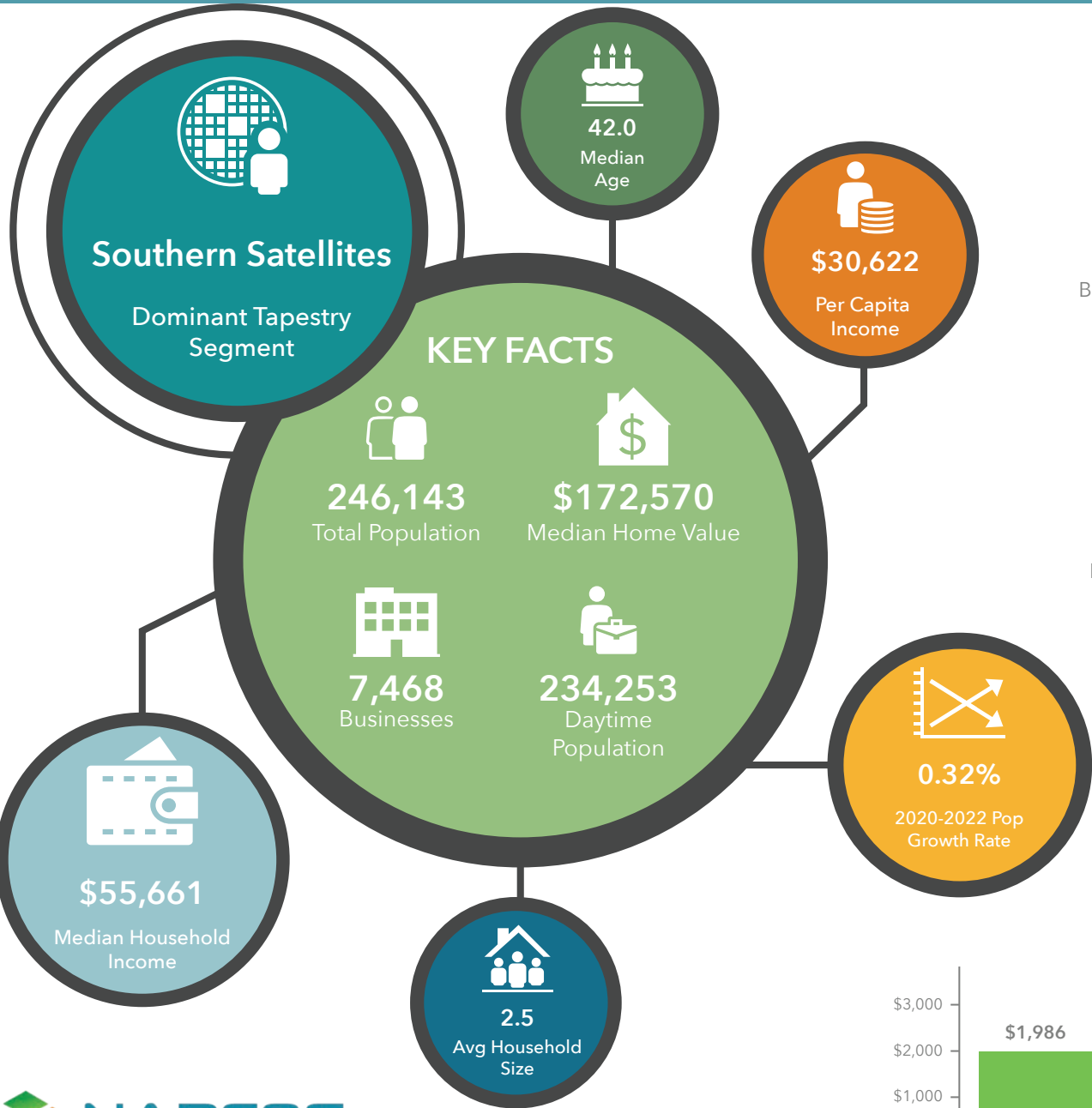
\$5,356,307,000 Total personal income

\$2,280,840,420 State Assessed Value

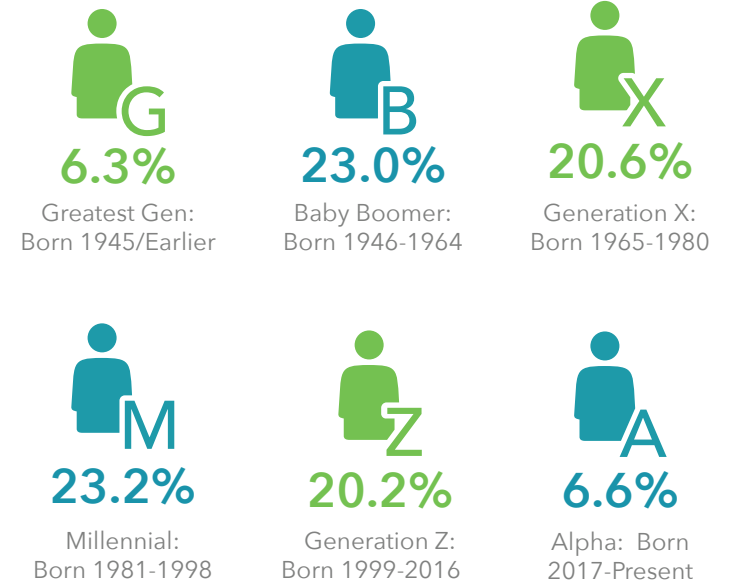
\$52,923 Median household income

\$44,679 Per capita income

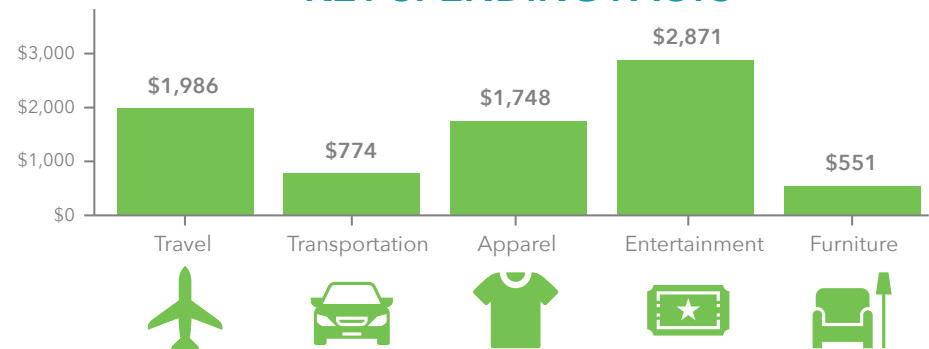
\$53,241 Annual wages per employee



POPULATION BY GENERATION



KEY SPENDING FACTS



This infographic contains data provided by Esri, Esri-Data Axle, Esri-U.S. BLS. The vintage of the data is 2022, 2027

© 2022 Esri

Spending facts are average annual dollars per household

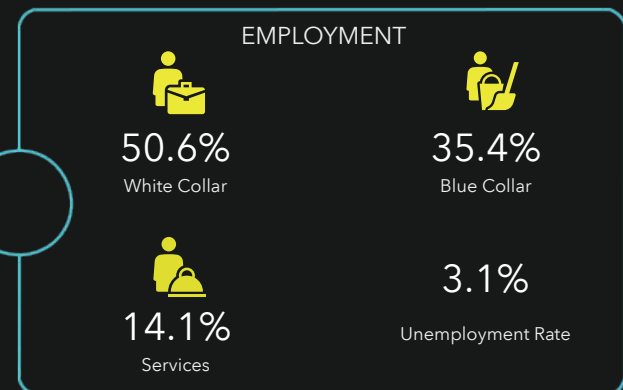
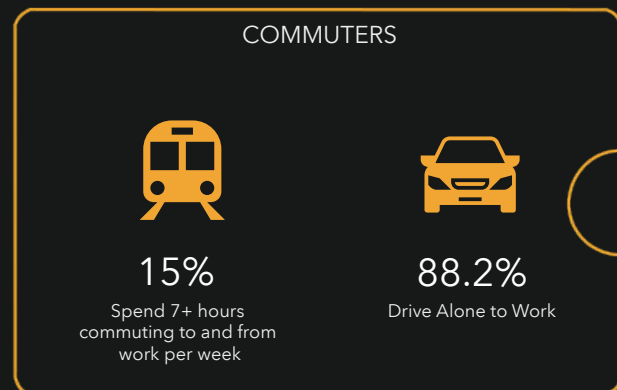
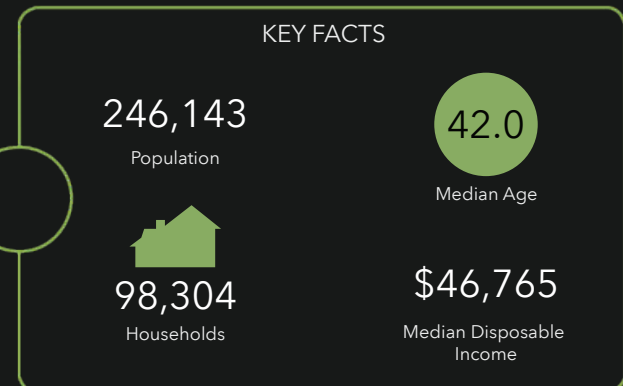
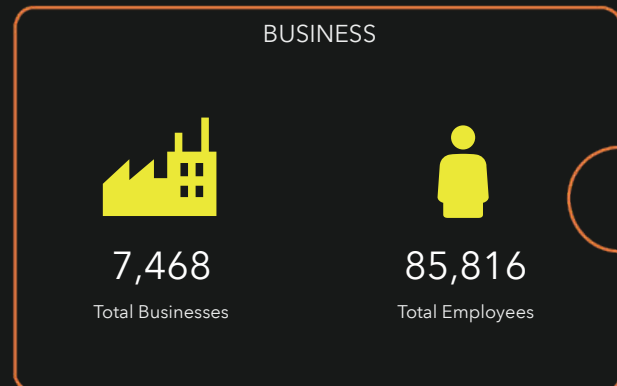
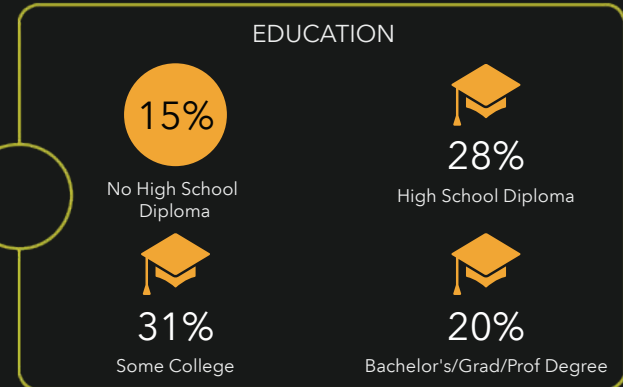
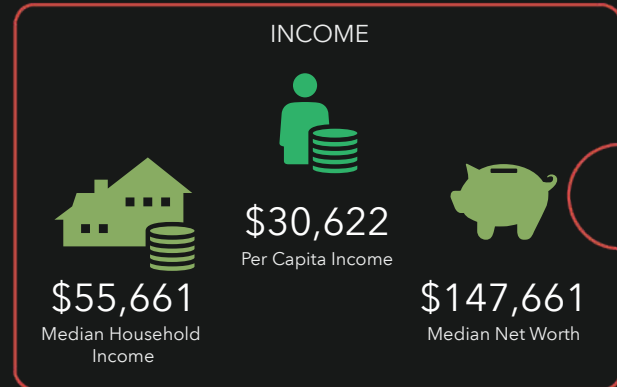
Employment Overview

NARCOG Region
Cullman County, AL (01043) et al.
Geography: County

Prepared by Esri

Employment Overview

NARCOG Region
Geography: County



This infographic contains data provided by Esri, Esri-Data Axle, Esri-MRI-Simmons, ACS. The vintage of the data is 2022, 2027, 2016-2020.

© 2022 Esri

Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri, Esri-Data Axle, Esri-MRI-Simmons, ACS. The vintage of the data is 2022, 2027, 2016-2020.

2 SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis is a traditional approach to strategic planning and, per new EDA guidelines, should consider economic resilience factors. A survey was sent to the CEDS Strategy Committee utilizing an online survey tool to gather input on the identified Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) for our Region and vision.

The following page shows the survey results.

STRENGTHS

A region's assets that provide relative competitive advantages that can be promoted, often internal in nature.

WEAKNESSES

A region's challenges that provide relative competitive disadvantages, usually internal in nature.

OPPORTUNITIES

Potential future chances or occasions for regional improvement or progress to pursue, often external in nature.

THREATS

Potential future occasions for negative impacts on the region, usually external in nature.

NARCOG also reviewed other national, state, and local strategic plans to inform our CEDS. Several plans reviewed include:

- NARCOG 2017 CEDS
- NARCOG Area Plan on Aging 2022–2025
- NARCOG EDA T-4 Plan
- Converging for Success – Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce
- Accelerate Alabama 3.0
- ARC and Alabama's Appalachian Development Plans
- NARCOG's Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan (HSCTP) FY2020
- Alabama Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)
- Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce Police Plan



STRENGTHS - What do you think the economic strengths are of our Region?

- Diversity of jobs, diversity of housing accommodations, central location in the SE region of the US
- Existing tourism attractions, new attractions, strong manufacturing, growth retail center.
- Workforce, unique public/private sector employers, cost of living
- Location, workforce
- Morgan County has a solid, strong and diversified industrial base. We support and encourage entrepreneurship. Our workforce and synergies among agencies and government organizations is definitely a strength.
- Location. Workforce. Training assistance from community colleges and AIDT. TVA support. Highway network.
- Partnership with community colleges for work based learning and training

WEAKNESSES - What do you think the economic weaknesses are of our Region?

- Lack of public transportation
- Low unemployment; lack of affordable housing especially rental units. Neighborhood unwilling to embrace rental space.
- We need to continue to collaborate more regionally
- Workforce availability, seen as having too much growth in the region
- Infrastructure - we need a third TN River bridge.
- Lack of workers is restricting growth in all sectors of the economy. Retail, Commercial, Industrial, professional. Lack of STEM in public schools. Next to expand throughout the region.
- Cannot pinpoint any weakness that separates our region from others

OPPORTUNITIES - What do you think the economic opportunities are for our Region?

- Develop additional tourism attractions/points of interest to attract tourism \$\$
- Quality of life, excellent schools including Community College; great location; easy access to air travel; large manufacturing base in place; community committed to organized growth
- We need to increase ties between Huntsville and the surrounding region to support workforce needs and bring higher paying jobs to North Alabama residents.
- Aerospace, high technology, advanced manufacturing
- Expanded broadband/fiber capabilities and options.
- Capitalize on Huntsville growth. Target aviation and aerospace, defense contracting, engineering and professional workers.
- Soft skills training; Expanding Modern Manufacturing programs to all schools in our Region

THREATS - What do you think the economic threats are to our Region?

- Lack of real estate in key areas needing additional development
 - Lack of available workers; need more workers moving to area but lack of affordable housing limits options; housing values are high; need more jobs/more workers; limited industrial sites.
 - Just need to keep thinking big!
 - Availability of workforce, incentives, transportation, available sites
 - Our ability to recruit additional workforce to our area when so many are trying to do the same.
 - Housing shortage in Cullman, Morgan and Lawrence. Hard to attract new workers when suitable housing (in their price range) is not available.
- Not working together as a region. NARCOG can help expand grant growth opportunities in the three counties. There is power in numbers. Ties
- Workforce

Is there anything else that you would like to contribute for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for our Region?

- Encourage all communities in our Region to have a true comprehensive plan for their community.
- Entrepreneurship and collaboration between entrepreneurs is taking off here. We need to keep fostering and investing in it.
- Supporting transportation upgrades --- highways, rail, airports improve the chance of success in each community.

VISION

Where and/or what do we want to be in 5 years?

The Strategic Direction and Action Plan was developed through an internal and external analysis of the SWOT approach. Additionally, the CEDS Strategy Committee was presented the above question via an online survey to help determine the vision for our Region.

Survey Results for the Vision:

- Exponential residential growth, new industry, additional tourism attractions, EXCITING TIMES
- Continue aggressive plan to move forward with retail, tourism and manufacturing. Be diversified in recruiting manufacturing, new age industry. Create strong jobs program.
- Increase tech component and regional collaboration
- Growth, high tech, aerospace, heavy manufacturing, automotive
- Focus on attracting better paying jobs. Low unemployment rate in North Alabama proves we need to look at smaller numbers of jobs and better compensation
- Diversifying our economy in Morgan County through education and job creation that provides the basis to raise median income levels for all.
- Prosperity, thriving workforce



GOALS

Goals are broad outcomes or general intentions that build upon the desired vision for the Region (and are often intangible). Objectives are quantitative, directional statements that support the vision. Strategies define the means to achieve the goals and objectives.

GOAL 1

BUILD RESILIENT REGIONAL BUSINESSES

Build Resilient Regional Businesses through Innovation & Entrepreneurship (industry, financing, incentives, etc.)

1.1 Invest in next generation entrepreneurial and business development strategies

1.1.1 Support the expansion of the E-Center, the development of a "tech accelerator" to house tech startups, and Business Incubator Centers

1.1.2 Utilize the NARCOG Accelerate Business Growth Fund, venture capitalists, and angel investors for capital

1.1.3 Create a Downtown Innovation District in Decatur

1.1.4 Recruit entrepreneurs to the region

1.1.5 Support efforts to recruit high-tech, high image companies to the Region

1.1.6 Support efforts to expand Entrepreneurial education

1.2 Support the Entrepreneurial Center

1.2.1 Support of small start-up businesses; supply technical assistance with business plans, financial management assistance, and other resources

1.2.2 Support the Best & Brightest Initiative

1.3 Continue expansion of technology and innovation programs in public and private schools

1.3.1 Support robotics programs in the public schools, such as EARLY and FIRST Robotics

1.3.2 Support AMSTI and STEAM programs in public schools

1.3.3 Support Robotics Technology Park training programs

1.3.4 Help facilitate partnerships between the Region's public schools, 2-year colleges, and the US Space and Rocket Center

1.3.5 Implement Entrepreneurial Education curriculum in high schools

1.4 Support the continued growth of the Alabama Center for the Arts and other higher education projects, such as the Cook Museum of Natural Science, to further the initiative of establishing a STEAM-based economy in Downtown Decatur

GOAL 2

BUILD A RESILIENT & SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL ECONOMY

Build Regional Economy that is Resilient and Sustainable (economic shocks, pandemics, natural, man-made, etc.)

2.1 Ensure economic resiliency by preparing and protecting the Region from natural, man-made, and technological economic shocks

2.1.1 Develop and maintain Pre-Disaster and Post-Disaster Recovery Plans

2.1.2 Actively participate in regional hazard mitigation planning and incorporate into local plans

2.1.3 Seek inspiration by researching local and national best practices in recovery and resiliency

2.2 Create a diversified economic base to compete in the global marketplace

2.2.1 Continue to attract new businesses and industries to the Region

2.2.2 Promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and industries in the Region

2.2.3 Maintain and develop local, regional, national and international partnerships

2.2.4 Support and market research and development parks in the Region

2.2.5 Actively seek foreign direct investment in the Region

2.2.6 Connect startup and existing businesses with external and global markets utilizing export strategies

2.2.7 Seek AdvantageSite designation for industrial parks through the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama

2.3 Promote environmental responsibility and stewardship in the Region to protect the Region's economy

2.3.1 Encourage responsible and environmentally friendly economic development best practices

2.3.2 Explore opportunities in business growth in tech-based clean energy innovations such as solar and EV charging stations

2.3.3 Seek federal and state funds to support our Regional Brownfield Initiative to identify, assess, clean-up, and reuse contaminated brownfield sites

2.3.4 Support development of advanced electric power generation and transmission grid improvements that allow for sustainable growth while delivering low cost, reliable power for industrial, commercial, and residential customers

2.4 Enhance the competitiveness of the Region's manufacturers for potential growth

2.4.1 Develop networks and support innovative manufacturing processes

2.5 Support redevelopment activities in identified Opportunity Zones in the Region

2.6 Support and promote opportunities to capitalize on Toyota-Mazda

GOAL 3

BUILD A RESILIENT REGIONAL WORKFORCE ECOSYSTEM

Build a Resilient Regional Workforce Ecosystem through education, healthcare, housing, childcare, etc.

3.1 Continue expansion of technology and innovation programs in public schools

3.1.1 Support AMSTI and the STEAM programs (See 1.2.1)

3.1.2 Support federal funding to increase the number of career coaches based on enrollment numbers

3.1.3 Support federal funding for high-quality early education opportunities including head start, Pre-K, early education, professional development for personnel, etc.

3.2 Align existing education and training programs to establish a ready workforce for employers

3.2.1 Expand Dual Enrollment, Fast Track, Fast Track for Industry, and Virtual School to all high schools in the Region

3.2.2 Utilize Calhoun Community College and Wallace State Community College workforce development solutions/training programs

GOAL 4

BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE REGION

Build Resilient Infrastructure for the Region including broadband, planes, trains, automobiles, bike/ped, transit, ports, water, sewer, drainage, electric, etc.

4.1 Explore the deployment of high speed broadband internet service through strategic use of wireless systems and smart grids that are partially funded by regional and state initiatives

4.1.1 Support the State Broadband Initiative

4.2 Foster the sharing of resources to improve multimodal transportation, including public transit, and shipping infrastructure in the Region to leverage community development efforts

4.2.1 Maintain and expand federal and state highways including the Appalachian Development Highway System and local roads

4.2.2 Develop working relationships and partnerships with the CSX and Norfolk Southern Railways

4.2.3 Capitalize on the Tennessee River, the Tennessee–Tombigbee Waterway and the Port of Decatur

4.2.4 Promote, maintain, and improve small local airports

3.2.3 Utilize the Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT) programs and North Alabama Works workforce regional councils

3.2.4 Support programs that offer basic knowledge and soft–skills training to prepare workers for employment

3.2.5 Continue to support our AAA’s Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), a program providing job training opportunities

3.2.6 Support the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and funding for the Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT) initiative as well as the Alabama Technology Network (ATN)

3.2.7 Support funding for marketing and economic recruitment efforts at the Alabama Robotics Technology Park

3.2.8 Support continued grant funding for workforce development and education improvement programs

3.3 Improve access to healthcare and address chronic health conditions for workers and their families

3.3.1 Invest in access to quality and affordable healthcare, including professionals and facilities, for a healthy workforce

3.3.2 Utilize the many programs available through NARCOG’s Area Agency on Aging

3.3.3 Partner with the Alabama Department of Public Health to implement telemedicine opportunities to rural residents

3.3.4 Support legislation and funding/incentives for community mental health centers to ensure the centers cover a broad range of mental health services, including: 24-hour crisis care, increased integration of physical, mental and substance abuse treatment, and expanded support for families of people living with mental health issues

3.4 Attract new and affordable housing with a variety of housing types

3.4.1 Update and modernize zoning ordinances to reflect the changing land use patterns (mixed uses)

3.4.2 Market region to progressive real estate developers who adhere to good planning practices

4.2.5 Enhance all modes of freight movement in the region to allow for maximum safety and efficiency

4.2.6 Actively participate in the Decatur Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Plan

4.3 Support viable and reliable transit in the region for the elderly and disabled

4.3.1 Support the Regional Transit Agency that serves Lawrence and Morgan County

4.3.2 Support the City of Decatur Transit System and HSCTP –FY2020 plan

4.3.3 Champion and support a Fixed Route Transit System for Downtown Decatur

4.4 Continue to administer transportation planning programs, including the North Central Alabama Rural Planning Organization (RPO), which provide a forum for coordinating transportation improvements in the region

4.4.1 Provide professional assistance to prepare grants and other applications

4.4.2 Continue to prepare Street Assessments, Corridor Studies, Trail Plans, and County Transportation Plans

4.5 Promote the implementation of the Inland Port Initiative to create Transportation-Based Economic Development

4.5.1 Support local leaders, CSX, Port of Mobile, Port of Decatur, and the State

4.6 Improve, maintain, and expand existing water and sewer systems

4.6.1 Provide professional assistance to prepare grants and other applications

4.6.2. Support wastewater treatment improvements for West Morgan East Lawrence Water and Sewer Authority

4.7 Improve, maintain, and provide adequate stormwater drainage facilities

4.7.1 Provide professional assistance to prepare grants and other applications

4.8 Promote the use of electric or hybrid fleet vehicles and invest in more EV charging stations and electric vehicle production for the Region

4.9 Promote the funding and construction of all road and bridge improvement projects in the region

4.9.1 Support the construction of a new southbound U.S. 31 Bridge over the Tennessee River

4.9.2 Support the construction of a third Bridge over the Tennessee River

4.9.3 Support the construction of a new U.S. 278/St. Bernard Bridge in Cullman

4.9.4 Continue seeking funding for a completed Corridor Study and

improvements along US Alt 72/SR 20 and US 31 to create a limited access roadway from the I-65/I-565 interchange to US 31 and SR 20/Wilson Street intersection

4.9.5 Study and recommend improvements along US Alt 72/SR 20 from Wilson Street intersection to the Morgan-Lawrence County line.

4.9.6 Seek funding to widen US 67 from two to four lanes from Priceville to the US 36 intersection

4.9.7 Improve the I-65/US 67 interchange by increasing the number of turn lanes to access the interstate from US 67

4.9.8 Support the construction of a Hartselle Bypass to avoid excessive downtown traffic

4.11 Invest in safe alternative transportation facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, such as sidewalks, walking trails, and bike lanes

4.11.1 Provide professional assistance to prepare grants and other applications

4.11.2 Support the development of the Tennessee RiverLine Trail

4.11.3 Support the development and implementation of the Singing River Trail

4.11.4 Support the development and implementation of the Lawrence County Master Trail Plan

GOAL 5

BUILD A RESILIENT REGIONAL TOURISM- BASED ECONOMY

Build a Resilient Regional Tourism Based Economy to leverage our assets (cultural, natural, & historical assets, downtowns, trails, etc.)

5.1 Continue to partner with and support the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association to promote the cultural and natural assets in the Region

5.1.1 Support the continued success and development of the tourism industry in the Region

5.1.2 Promote existing special events and festivals and establish new ones

5.2 Preserve and capitalize on existing natural assets in support of local and regional economic opportunities

5.2.1 Promote the Tennessee River, Smith Lake, Wheeler Lake, Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge, Bankhead National Forest, Sipsey Wilderness, and others as eco-tourist destinations

5.2.2 Discourage development of prime agricultural land; explore incentives for conservation programs

5.2.3 Promote the North Alabama Birding Trail

5.3 Preserve and capitalize on existing cultural assets in support of local and regional economic opportunities

5.3.1 Promote the historic downtowns, Jesse Owens Park and Museum, Oakville Indian Mounds and Museum, Joe Wheeler Home, Cook Museum of Natural History, the Shrine, Ave Maria Grotto, Princess Theater, and others as tourist destinations

5.3.2 Promote the Hallelujah Trail

5.4 Support investments in natural and cultural heritage resources for preservation and stewardship of community character

5.4.1 Continue to partner with and support the efforts of the Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area

5.4.2 Support development of heritage tourism by investing in downtown redevelopment, gateway communities, historic districts and other unique local community features

5.4.3 Support seeking the additional funding needed to complete the 32-acre Ingalls Harbor project

5.5 Support the development of the Singing River Trail, Lawrence County Master Trail Plan (LCMTP), and the Tennessee RiverLine, etc.

5.5.1 Provide professional assistance to prepare grants and other applications

5.6 Support the AMRV RC&D's North Alabama Trail & Recreation (NATR) initiative

5.7 Support, promote, and invest in Cultural Arts in the Region

5.7.1 Promote all of the Mural Trails in the Region

GOAL 6 BUILD RESILIENT REGIONAL COMMUNITY LEADERS & CAPACITY

Build Resilient Regional Community Leaders and Capacity (partnerships, training, planning, etc.)

6.1 Advocate for community and regional planning

6.1.1 Continue to provide planning and technical assistance for local comprehensive planning, area development plans including downtown plans, and neighborhood revitalization plans that build support for partnering investments from state, federal, and private sources

6.1.2 Champion a Centers and Corridors planning approach to guide regional economic development and spacial patterns (e.g. downtown and corridor plans)

6.1.3 Adopt, improve and/or enforce existing development regulations and design guidelines

6.1.4 Continue the Regional Downtown Network Initiative

6.1.5 Develop a community design and aging in place program at NARCOG

6.1.6 Support the mission of the Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority to implement the Envision Decatur plan updated in the One Decatur plan

6.2 Invest in, and take advantage of, available opportunities for networking and training current and future leaders

6.2.1 Encourage participation in the Alabama Community Leadership Network

6.2.2 Encourage participation in the adult and youth leadership development programs provided by local chambers of commerce

6.2.3 Encourage participation in the Alabama League of Municipalities training conferences

6.2.4 Encourage participation in the Association of County Commissions of Alabama training conferences

6.2.5 Encourage communities to participate in Main Street Alabama's training conferences and webinars

6.2.6 Encourage eligible communities (Hartselle, Hanceville, Cullman, Good Hope, Moulton, and Priceville) to seek and maintain designation as Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE)

6.2.7 Encourage participation in the Economic Development Association of Alabama's (EDAA) Leadership Training and other programs

6.2.8 Encourage council members, planning commissioners, and building inspectors to participate in and pursue certification in the University of North Alabama's Certified Alabama Planning and Zoning Official (CAPZO) Program

6.2.9 Encourage participation in Your Town Alabama

6.2.10 Encourage attendance at other professional development training related to community and economic development

6.2.11 Encourage communities to participate in the programs offered by DesignAlabama

6.2.12 Encourage communities to participate in the new ARC Capacity Building Program

6.3 Expand upon existing regional cooperation and collaboration and look beyond regional borders


6.3.1 Support counties, municipalities, economic development organizations, and chambers of commerce

4 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

An evaluation framework is comprised of performance measures used to gauge progress on the CEDS and its impact on the regional economy, as well as providing information for the CEDS Annual Performance Reports. Therefore, performance measures should be selected based upon what is important to our Region and used to evaluate the progress in achieving the vision, goals, objectives, and strategies in our CEDS. The EDA recommends that an EDD consider both traditional and non-traditional performance measures for evaluation. Below are some of our selected performance measures.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Number of jobs created (anticipated)
- Number of jobs retained
- Number of new businesses and/or industries
- Number of expanding businesses and/or industries
- Amount of private sector investment
- Amount of public sector investment
- Number of labor force
- Number of unemployed
- Unemployment rate
- Changes in the economic environment in the Region
- Number of grants submitted and amount
- Number of grants funded and amount
- Number of NARCOG Small Business Fund loans
- Amount of NARCOG Small Business Fund loans
- Local revenue generated
- Net taxable assessed valuation
- Wealth creation such as GDP per capita
- Median household income
- Per capita income
- Total personal income
- Annual wages per employee
- Median home value
- Population with no health insurance coverage

- 
- Educational attainment – high school diploma and bachelor's degree
 - Number of new partnerships
 - New development regulations
 - New plans (downtown plans, comprehensive plans, hazardous mitigation)
 - Number of hybrid or electric fleet cars added to local businesses and agencies

5 ECONOMIC RESILIENCY



WHY IS ECONOMIC RESILIENCY IMPORTANT?

According to the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), “History has shown that a region’s success is inherently linked to its economic resilience – in other words, its ability to anticipate, withstand, and bounce back from any shocks to its businesses and overall economy, whether those stem from natural hazards, climate change, or shifting economic or market conditions.”¹⁴ The NARCOG Region has recently suffered significant economic shocks. Some communities have met these shocks with fortitude and solid action plans, while others teeter on the verge of collapse. For our regional economy to achieve resiliency in the face of adversity, we must fully understand the risks that we face, then develop strategies to mitigate those risks. A focus on economic resilience will enable our Region to better withstand shocks, or quite possibly prevent them altogether.

ECONOMIC VS. PHYSICAL SHOCKS

Strategies for strengthening regions and communities in the wake of disaster not only mean reducing future risk, but can mean enhancing quality of place by guiding smart development, protecting natural resources, diversifying the economy, creating alternate transportation options, and fostering economic growth.

When examining the types of shocks that a community needs to plan for, most can be categorized in one of two ways, economic shocks and physical shocks. Economic shocks are those which are caused primarily by economic forces such as the closing of a major factory that results in great loss in employment, a national recession, or a change in regulations that affect importing and exporting. Physical shocks are those which cause harm to either built or natural environment, or both, such as a hurricane, or a man-made disaster such as an oil spill. Our Region is vulnerable to both. Obviously physical shocks are economic in nature as well, so the issue is not just repairing the physical damage, but repairing the economic damage caused by destroyed property and loss of income and businesses. Whether the shock comes as an economic shock or a physical shock, it's important that all aspects of the community be resilient: people, the built environment, and industries.

MEASURING RESILIENCE

Resilience is a process, not an end-state. Our Region must employ tools to measure the effectiveness of resilience initiatives across physical, economic, and social dimensions. Rigorous procedures for data collection and analysis must be implemented to understand and mitigate our vulnerability to economic shocks. The Community Resilience Indicator by the Missouri Transect group looks at a set of indices and variables designed to measure county resilience and vulnerability along social, infrastructure, economic, and environmental dimensions.

ECONOMIC SHOCKS

PANDEMICS

NATURAL DISASTERS

MAN-MADE

Plant Closures

Civil Unrest

Terrorism

TECHNOLOGICAL

Cyber Attacks

Fraud

Power Outages

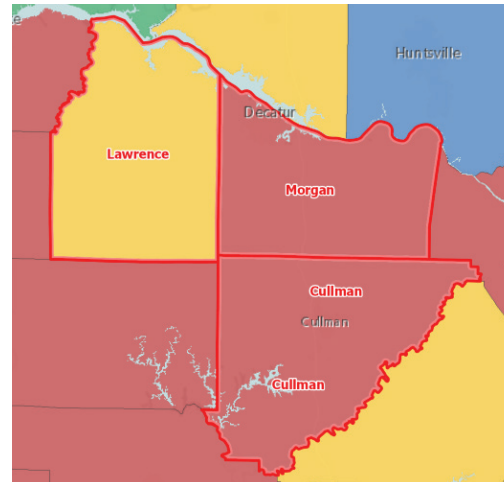
Disruptive Innovation

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE INDICATORS NARCOG REGION¹⁸

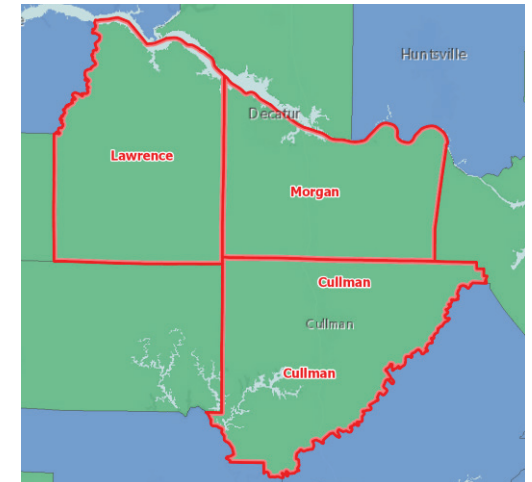
RESILIENCE/VULNERABILITY QUADRANT BY COUNTY

- High Resilience / Low Vulnerability
- High Resilience / High Vulnerability
- Low Resilience / Low Vulnerability
- Low Resilience / High Vulnerability

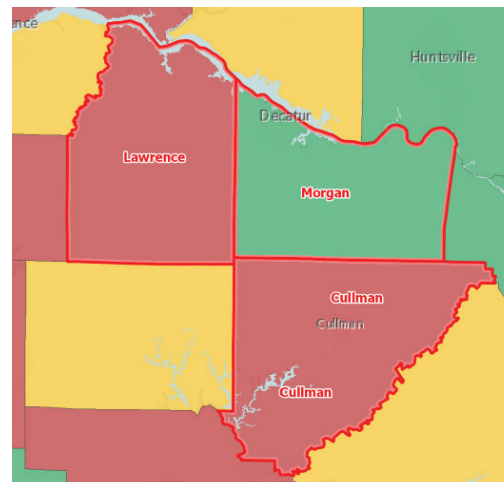
SOCIAL FACTORS



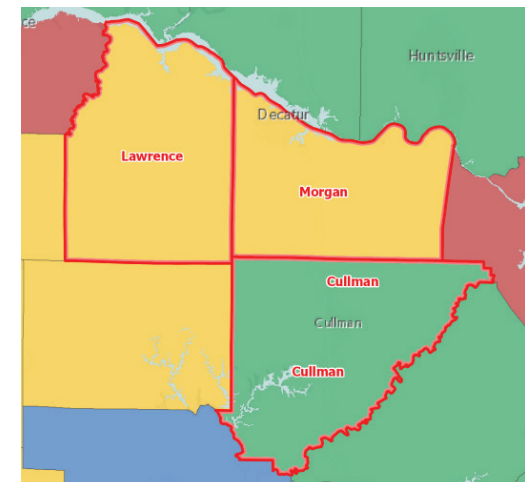
ENVIRONMENTAL



INFRASTRUCTURE



ECONOMICS



PLANNING FOR & IMPLEMENTING RESILIENCE

A resilient economy can anticipate hazards and threats to people and what they value; understand vulnerabilities and hazards to mitigate and reduce their impact; organize itself through the stages of an emergency, reconstruction, and community betterment; and respond to events as they happen by mobilizing resources and coordinating events.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING

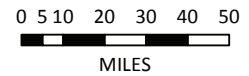
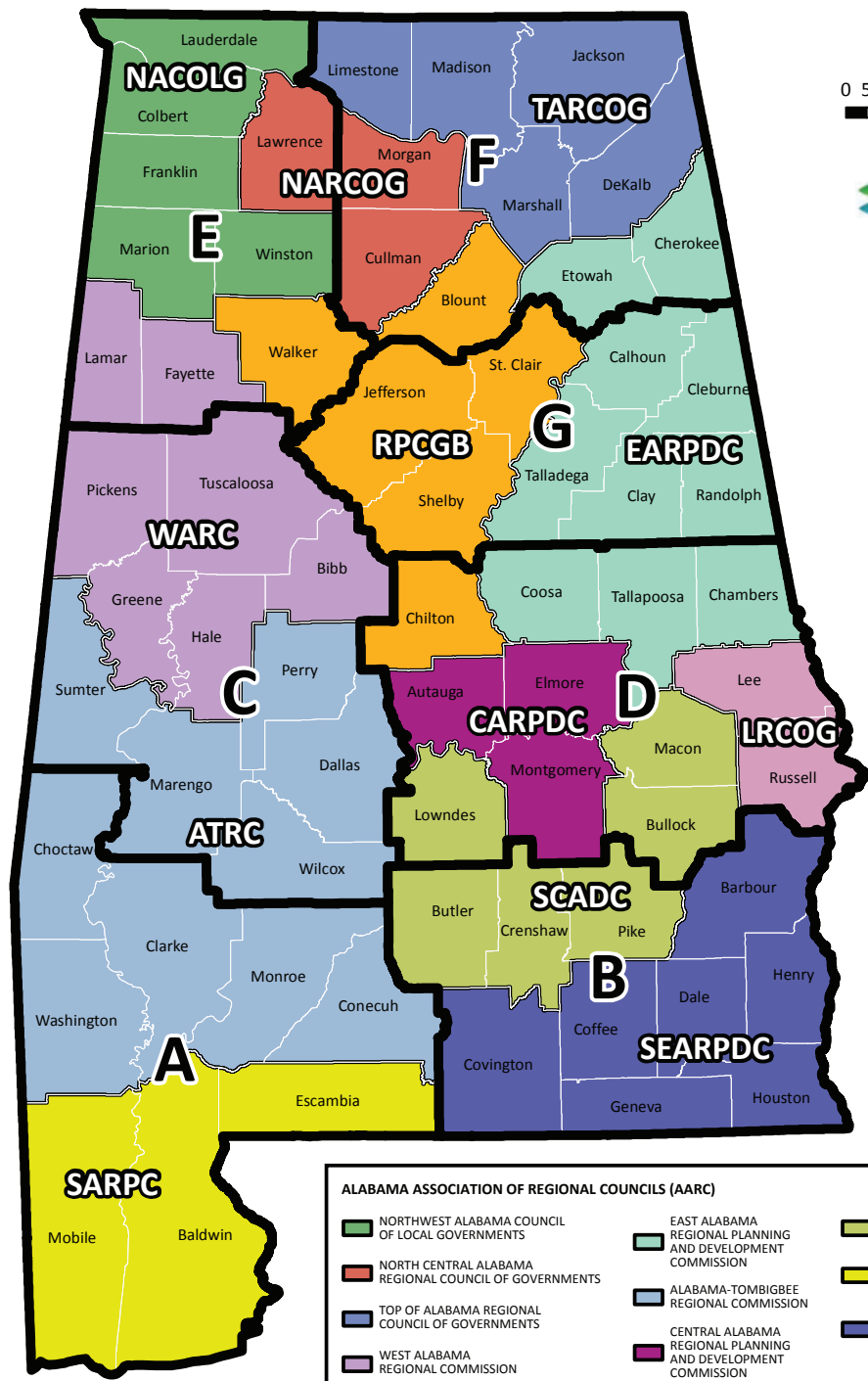
Preparing communities and regions for long-term recovery and resiliency is a complex process requiring vision, setting of priorities, cooperation, and action sustained over a long period. It requires close collaboration among the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Economic resiliency is important for both economic shocks and physical shocks, but hazard mitigation is a tool that is mainly focused on physical shocks. Hazard mitigation planning is often focused primarily on natural disasters in which we usually have some advance warning, but hazard mitigation should also focus on physical shocks that come without warning. Each community in NARCOG's Region has created a community action plan that is part of their respective Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan (for both Region F and Region E), which outlines how to prepare for and react to hazards and the resources that are available in the event of a disaster. Our Region's counties are split between 2 EMA Regions. As shown in the map on the following page, Lawrence County is part of Region E, and Morgan and Cullman Counties are part of Region F.

Located in *Appendix C* is a list of recommendations and strategies from the Urban Land Institute, Tornado Recovery Action Council, as well as best practices in the area of resilience planning.

ESTABLISHING INFORMATION SYSTEMS

A critical component of economic resilience and recovery planning is the establishment of communication mechanisms—both in day-to-day operations and post-shock. NARCOG takes pride in providing an arena for collaboration and conversation amongst regional leadership. We employ many mechanisms for reaching out to our community to facilitate planning efforts, as well as serving as an information hub in times of recovery post-shock. In *Appendix C*, we have listed some of the ways that NARCOG enables information networks in our Region.



ALABAMA ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS (AARC)

NORTHWEST ALABAMA COUNCIL OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS	EAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION	SOUTH CENTRAL ALABAMA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
NORTH CENTRAL ALABAMA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS	ALABAMA-TOMBIGBEE REGIONAL COMMISSION	SOUTH ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
TOP OF ALABAMA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS	CENTRAL ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION	SOUTHEAST ALABAMA REGIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
WEST ALABAMA REGIONAL COMMISSION	LEE-RUSSELL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS	ALABAMA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (EMA) DIVISIONS
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM		

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Recovering from a disaster is no small task. Important decisions are made to restore livelihoods and ensure safety with little time to think of the long-term repercussions. Depending on the severity, the aftermath might require providing temporary shelter, clearing debris, pumping flood waters, or rapidly repairing damage to vital infrastructure such as roads, electricity and drinking water. Once damage is assessed and crucial infrastructure is restored, it is time to start rebuilding – a process that can take years.

In the midst of destruction, it is hard to see a disaster as an opportunity. But it can be exactly that – an opportunity to build back better. Too often in the rebuilding process, communities look backwards to try to replicate what they lost instead of looking forward to how they can rebuild more sustainably. Strategies for strengthening regions and communities in the wake of disaster not only mean reducing future risk, but can mean enhancing quality of place by guiding smart development, protecting natural resources, diversifying transportation options, and fostering economic growth.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In 2020, the NARCOG Economic Development District (EDD) received additional funding through the Economic Development Administration (EDA) CARES Act Supplemental Award funding for prevention and recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. NARCOG developed a ***North Central Alabama Economic Development Disaster Recovery and Resiliency Plan*** for our three-county region informed by the four (4) Subsector Reports on ***Transportation, Tourism, Tables, and Teachers (T4)***.

- **TRANSPORTATION** – Transit, logistics, and supply chain.
- **TOURISM** – Restaurants, lodging, air and other transportation, recreation and amusement, and retail.
- **TABLES** (food) – Agriculture (farmers), packing plants, school food and meal assistance programs, and restaurants.
- **TEACHERS** (education) – School closures, employment, funding, families, and quality educational attainment for all.

The Subsector Reports were developed concurrently with the 2021 CEDS Annual Performance Report, and the plan was developed concurrently with the 2022 CEDS 5-year update. NARCOG has utilized the Supplemental Funding award from EDA to support our organization's economic development response to the coronavirus pandemic. This supplemental funding has assisted with the costs of the staff members who are directly working on and/or supporting NARCOG's coronavirus response efforts through working on our regional plan, as well as the provision of technical assistance to our local governments applying for COVID related grants.

Additionally, NARCOG utilized our existing Accelerate Business Growth Fund Revolving Loan Fund Program (RLF) to leverage the \$700,000 supplemental EDA CARES Act RLF grant funds to aid in disaster recovery efforts for local businesses between 2020 and 2022.

NORTH CENTRAL ALABAMA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISASTER RECOVERY & RESILIENCY PLAN



T-4

TRANSPORTATION, TOURISM, TABLES, & TEACHERS

MAY 2022



OPPORTUNITY ZONES

Opportunity Zones are a new community investment tool established by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 to encourage long-term investments in low-income urban and rural communities nationwide. Opportunity Zones provide a tax incentive for investors to re-invest their unrealized capital gains into dedicated Opportunity Funds. There are 158 Census tracts that are designated Opportunity Zones distributed across all 67 counties in Alabama. There are 4 designated opportunity zones in the NARCOG region. Two of them are in Cullman County, which are Tract 9648 (01043964800) and Tract 9650 (01043965000). There is also one tract in Lawrence County, which is Tract 9791 (01079979100), and one tract in Morgan County, which is Tract 1 (01103000100).

*See map on following page

Opportunity Alabama (OPAL) is a nonprofit initiative dedicated to connecting investors with investable assets in Alabama's designated Opportunity Zones. <https://opportunityalabama.com/>
<https://eig.org/opportunityzones>
<https://adeca.alabama.gov/Divisions/OpportunityZones/Pages/Opportunity-Zones.aspx>

New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program incentivizes business and real estate investment in low-income communities of the United States via a federal tax credit. The program is administered by the US Treasury Department's Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund and allocated by local Community Development Entities (CDEs) across the United States. The New Markets Tax Credit Program was established as part of the Community Renewal Tax Relief Act of 2000.

The New Market Tax Credit Program (NMTC Program) attracts private capital into low-income communities by permitting individual and corporate investors to receive a tax credit against their federal income tax in exchange for making equity investments in specialized financial intermediaries called Community Development Entities (CDEs). The credit totals 39% of the original investment amount and is claimed over a period of seven years. Historically, low-income communities experience a lack of investment, as evidenced by vacant commercial properties, outdated manufacturing facilities, and inadequate access to education and healthcare service providers. The NMTC Program aims to break this cycle of disinvestment by attracting the private investment necessary to reinvigorate struggling local economies. More detailed information is available at the links below.

<https://www.cdfifund.gov/programs-training/programs/new-markets-tax-credit>

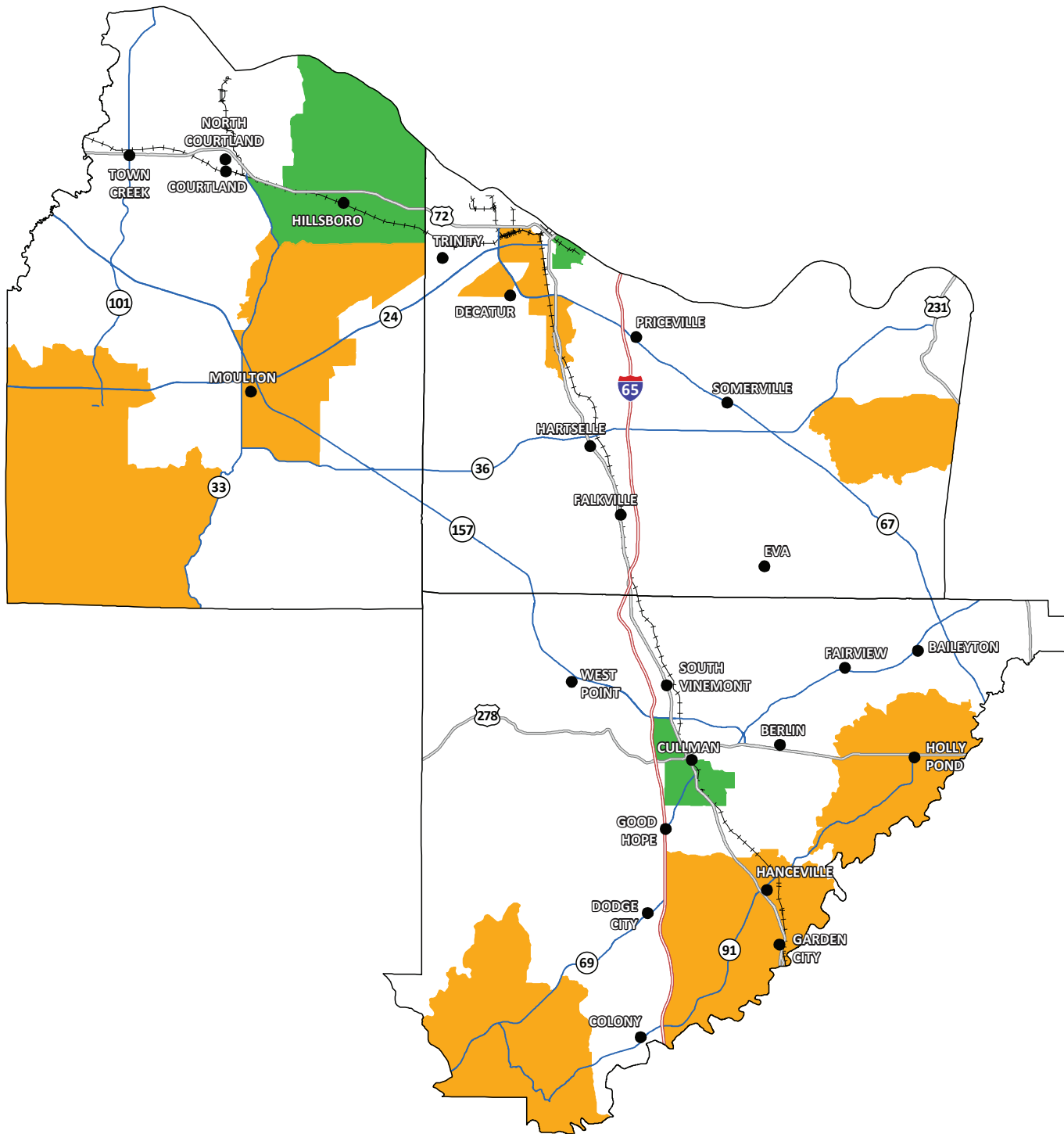
<https://www.cdfifund.gov/sites/cdfi/files/documents/nmtc-fact-sheet-english-16sept2020-final.pdf>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Markets_Tax_Credit_Program

*See map on following page

**OPPORTUNITY ZONE AND
NEW MARKET TAX CREDIT (NMTC)
QUALIFIED TRACTS**

- NMTC QUALIFIED
- OPPORTUNITY ZONE *AND* NMTC QUALIFIED



BROWNFIELD INITIATIVE

A brownfield is defined as land that has been previously developed for industrial or commercial use that has possibly been compromised by contamination. Brownfields are typically compromised by a hazardous substance, contaminant, or pollutant. Although compromised, brownfields can be redeveloped and reused if properly assessed and remediated. The redevelopment of remediated brownfields can help the local economy, create jobs, and expand the tax base while preserving undeveloped land (or "greenfields") and restoring land that has already been developed in the past. The [EPA's Brownfields Program](#) provides grants and technical assistance to communities, states, tribes and others to assess, safely clean up and sustainably reuse contaminated properties. NARCOG has and will continue to strive to establish a Regional Brownfield Initiative through obtaining funding for assessments from the EPA. In the meantime, NARCOG will continue to partner with [ADEM and their Brownfields Program](#). Previously, NARCOG facilitated the use of the program in Hartselle at the abandoned hospital site, which has since been demolished and left as a green space. The map on the following page shows brownfield sites and Opportunity Zones.

[Link to ADEM'S map of Alabama Brownfields.](#)

ADEM COMMUNITY VISIONING OF FORMER HARTSELLE HOSPITAL SITE



Top Left Community Vision Meeting

Above Rendering of proposed redevelopment of hospital site as a new City Hall Complex

Right Proposed Site Plan



VISION TO ACTION REPORT

Former Hartselle Hospital
201 Pine Street Northwest, Hartselle, Alabama

Prepared by:

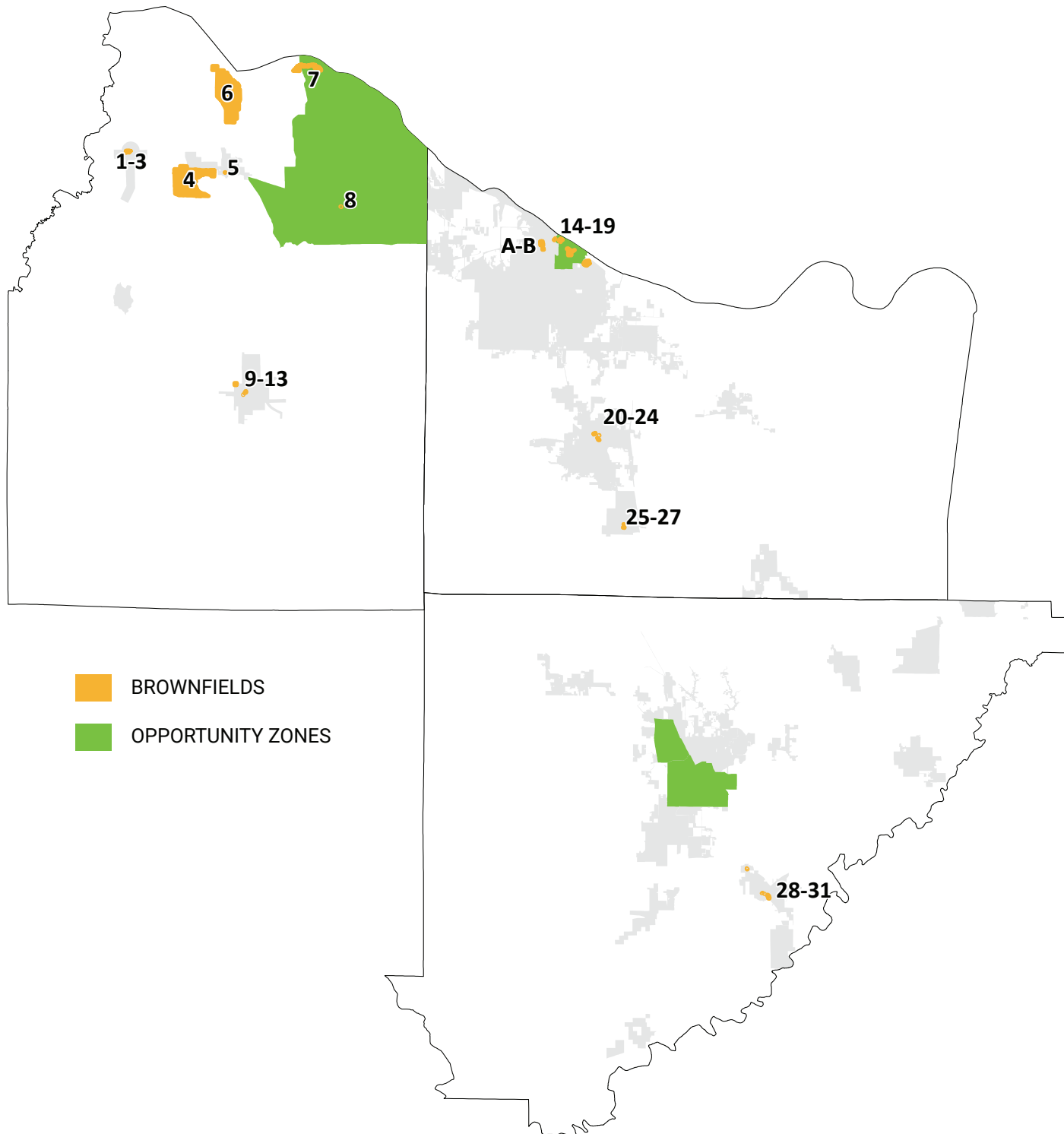


Funded by:



Contributors:





Lawrence County

- 1.) Hazelwood School (925 Wallace St, Town Creek)
- 2.) Warehouse (499 Factory St, Town Creek)
- 3.) Warehouse (452 Factory St, Town Creek)
- 4.) Lawrence Co Industrial Airpark/Courtland Airport (Lindburgh St, Courtland)
- 5.) Abandoned warehouses (240 College St, Courtland)
- 6.) Demolished International Paper mill (CR-150, Courtland)
- 7.) West Morgan-East Lawrence Water Treatment Facility (6505 CR-400, Hillsboro)
- 8.) Abandoned pawn shop/gas station (Approximately 11569 Main St, Hillsboro)
- 9.) Sewage plant (120 Beacon St, Moulton)
- 10.) Abandoned lot (14438 Market St, Moulton)
- 11.) Old Courthouse Annex (750 Main St, Moulton)
- 12.) Old automotive and miscellaneous buildings (14459 and 14485 Court St, Moulton)
- 13.) Old auto shop and other building (715 and 753 Spring St, Moulton)

Morgan County

- 14.) Gateway Opportunity Zone - warehouses (616 Church St NE)
- 15.) Gateway Opportunity Zone - abandoned building (620 Wilson St NE, Decatur)
- 16.) Waterfront Opportunity Zone - Stone Lumber Company property (1100 Somerville Rd NE, Decatur)
- 17.) Hyosung Warehouse/Factory (500 19th Ave SE, Decatur)
- 18.) Parcel for waterfront access on Wolverine property (2100 Market St SE, Decatur)
- 19.) Undeveloped GE waterfront property (between 2519 and 2400 Point Mallard Dr SE, Decatur)
- 20.) Demolished hospital (201 Pine St NW, Hartselle)
- 21.) Vacant gas station (121 Main St E, Hartselle)
- 22.) Gas station (201 Sparkman St SW, Hartselle)
- 23.) Gas station (200 Sparkman St SW, Hartselle)
- 24.) Old auto shop (532 Sparkman St SW, Hartselle)
- 25.) Vacant gas station and car wash (property north of 4662 US-31, Falkville)
- 26.) Vacant building (8 W 2nd St, Falkville)
- 27.) Vacant Drinkard Chevrolet auto building (120 Grissom Way or Corner of E 2nd St and N 1st Ave, Falkville)
- A.) Warehouses (2 Moulton St, Decatur)
- B.) Warehouse (402 1st Ave SW, Decatur)

Cullman County

- 28.) Vacant buildings (Corner of Magnolia Ave NE and Arkadelphia Rd, Hanceville)
- 29.) Abandoned gas station (110 Main St NE, Hanceville)
- 30.) Abandoned warehouse (Approximately 504 Bangor Ave, Hanceville)
- 31.) Public Works buildings (Corner of Park St and Main St/US-31, Hanceville)

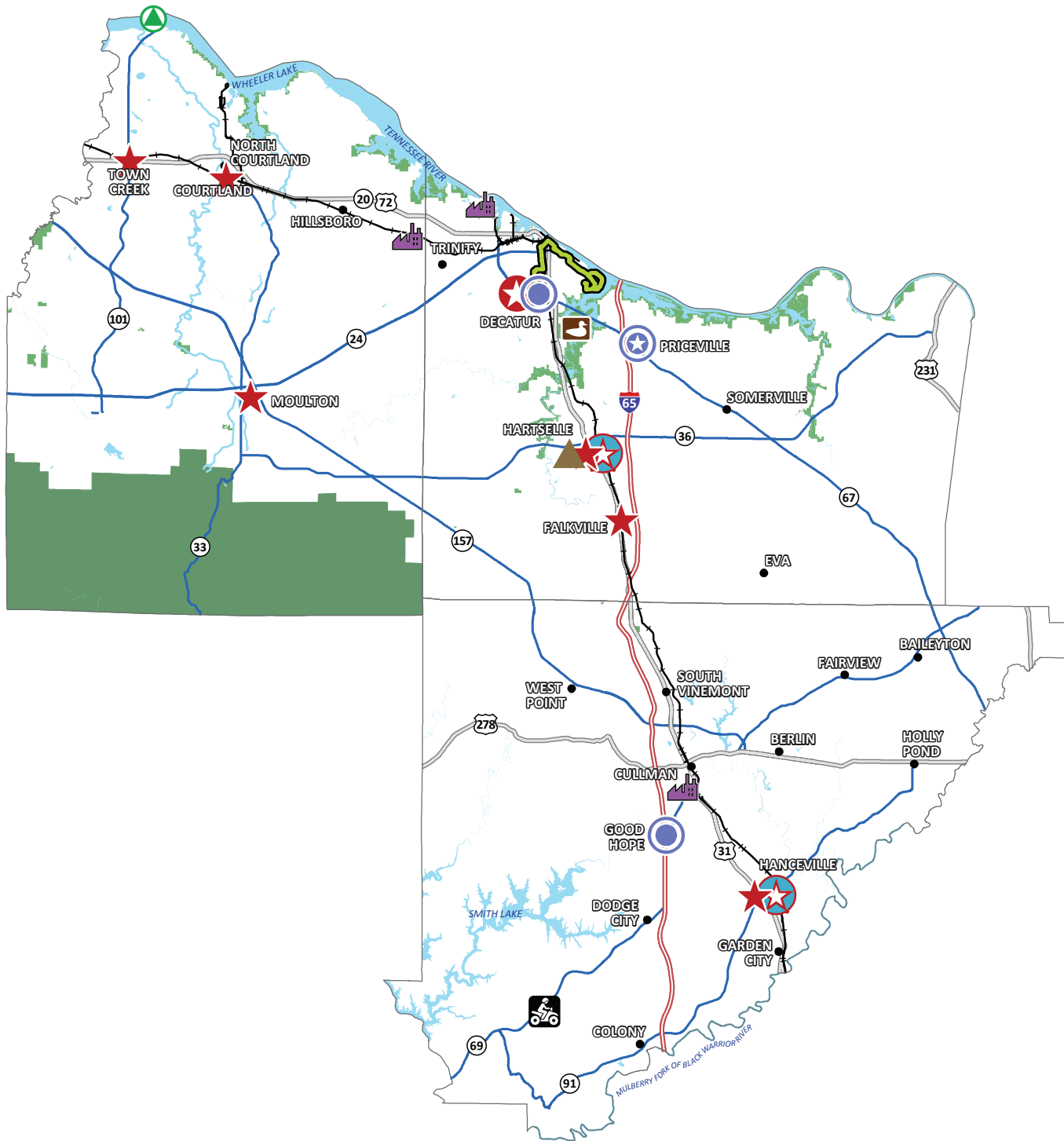
REGIONAL STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT MAP

EXISTING ASSETS

- PLACES
- COUNTIES
- WATER
- BANKHEAD NATIONAL FOREST
- PROTECTED AREAS
- RAILROAD
- ROAD TYPE**
- INTERSTATE
- STATE
- U.S.

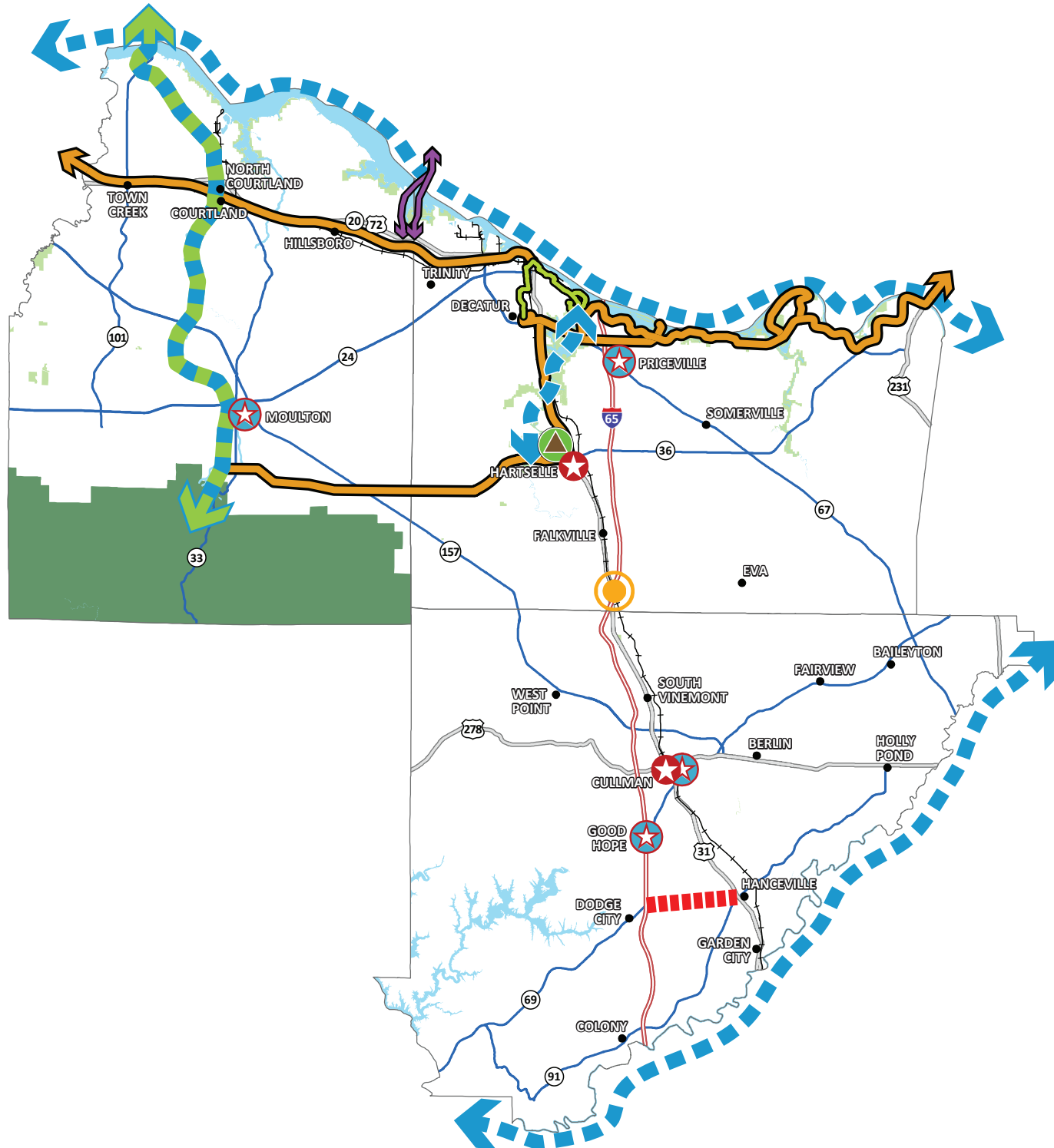
REGIONAL INITIATIVES & ASSETS

- EXISTING TRAILS
- 🏍️ STONY LONESOME OHV PARK
- 🌐 DESIGNALABAMA MAYORS DESIGN SUMMIT
- 🌐 DESIGNALABAMA MAYORS DESIGN SUMMIT & DESIGNPLACE
- ★ DESIGNATED ACE COMMUNITY
- ★ MSAL DESIGNATED COMMUNITY
- ★ MSAL NETWORK COMMUNITY
- ▲ ADEM BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM
- 🌲 JOE WHEELER STATE PARK CABINS
- 🦉 WHEELER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
- 🏭 INDUSTRIAL CLUSTERS



REGIONAL STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT MAP

PROPOSED



- PLACES
 - COUNTIES
 - WATER
 - BANKHEAD NATIONAL FOREST
 - PROTECTED AREAS
 - RAILROAD
- ROAD TYPE**
- INTERSTATE
 - STATE
 - U.S.
- PROPOSED**
- ★ DESIGNATED ACE COMMUNITY
 - ★ MSAL DESIGNATED COMMUNITY
 - PROPOSED GREENWAY TRAILS
 - EXISTING TRAILS
 - BIG NANCE CREEK BLUE/GREENWAY TRAIL
 - BLUEWAY TRAILS
 - BRIDGE/ROAD FROM US-72 OVER TENNESSEE RIVER
 - ROAD FROM DODGE CITY TO HANCEVILLE
 - INLAND PORT AT LACON/US-31/I-65
 - ▲ BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

A RESOLUTION

NORTH CENTRAL ALABAMA REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Resolution Number 2022-0008

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: 2022-2027

WHEREAS, the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) Board of Director's recognizes the importance of creating employment opportunities and promoting a stable and diversified economy throughout our Economic Development District (EDD) as designated by the Economic Development Administration (EDA), and


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

WHEREAS, the NARCOG staff and CEDS Strategy Committee have undertaken and completed the summary background, SWOT analysis, strategic direction and action plan, evaluation framework, and economic resilience, as required by the EDA guidance released in February 2015, which has resulted in the CEDS update, and

WHEREAS, the CEDS is recommended to the NARCOG Board of Directors to cover the next five-year period from 2022 to 2027 along with the Annual Reports required for the intervening four-year period.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the NARCOG Board of Director's approves and adopts the NARCOG EDD's 2022-2027 CEDS Update contingent upon no comments being provided within the 30-day public comment period.

RESOLVED this 21st day of September 2022



Chairman



Executive Director



B REFERENCES

MAP SOURCES:

1 “Our Region” (page 7)

- US Geological Survey (USGS) Gap Analysis Program (GAP), Protected Areas Database of the United States (PAD-US), Version 1.4
- U.S. Census Bureau 2016 TIGER/Line Shapefiles

2 “Natural Assets” (page 10)

- US Geological Survey (USGS) Gap Analysis Program (GAP), Protected Areas Database of the United States (PAD-US), Version 1.4
- U.S. Census Bureau 2016 TIGER/Line Shapefiles
- U.S. Forest Service, Administrative Boundaries

3 “Forest Land Cover” (page 11)

- USDA/NRCS – National Geospatial Center of Excellence, 2011 National Land Cover Database (NLCD)

4 “Transportation Systems” (page 13)

- U.S. Census Bureau 2016 TIGER/Line Shapefiles
- USDOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), Ports

5 “Industrial Parks & Working Age Population” (page 14)

- North Alabama Industrial Development Association (NAIDA) and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), TVA Sites
- Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA), Advantage Alabama
- ACS 2011-2015 5YR Estimates, Table S010, Age and Sex
- U.S. Census Bureau 2016 TIGER/Line Shapefiles

6 “Traditional Downtowns” (page 16)

- Main Street Alabama Website, Our Communities

7 “Agriculture Land Cover” (page 21)

- USDA/NRCS – National Geospatial Center of Excellence, 2011 National Land Cover Database (NLCD)

FACT SHEET SOURCES: PAGES 26-29

- 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census
- Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER), The University of Alabama, March 2017
- Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) 2015, SA1 Personal Income Summary: Personal Income, Population, Per Capita Personal Income
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) 2015 Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)
- Alabama Department of Revenue (ADOR), 2016 Annual Report, 2014 data
- Alabama Department of Labor (ADOL), Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), December 2016 Labor Force Data,
- Feeding America, Map the Meal Gap, 2015 data for Alabama by county

OTHER REFERENCES

- **8** https://www.clustermapping.us/region/economic/huntsville_decatour_al/subregions
- **9** <http://www.aces.edu/impact/ag/>
- **10** https://www.bestplaces.net/cost_of_living/county/alabama/lawrence
- **11** <https://www.nam.org/state-manufacturing-data/2021-alabama-manufacturing-facts/>
- **12** <https://www.alabamartp.org/>
- **13** <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/visionering>
- **14** <https://www.nado.org/webinar-recording-and-slides-building-economic-resilience-in-your-community-linking-economic-development-and-hazard-mitigation-planning>
- **15** Photo by Michael Wetzel. Courtesy of The Decatur Daily.
- **16** www.bankrate.com
- **17** Prepared by Karen Abt and Consuelo Brandeis, Southern Research Station, US Forest Service
- **18** Missouri Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR); <http://missouriepscor.org/>; <https://resilience.engagementnetwork.org/map-room/>

DISCLAIMER

Neither the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments (NARCOG) nor any employees thereof, make any warranty, expressed or implied, or assume any legal liability or responsibility, for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information contained on these maps. Linear and Spatial Data obtained from U.S. Census Bureau 2022 TIGER/Line Shapefiles. Maps produced by North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments, 2022.



C PARTNERS & RESOURCES

There are a host of federal, state, regional and local government, non-profit and private organizations that supply resources, support and partnerships for economic development in Alabama. The NARCOG EDD and CEDS Strategy Committee recognize the importance of defining its role and relationships with these organizations and institutions for the enhancement of economic development planning efforts and implementation. Many of these organizations have guided NARCOG's efforts as we look forward in our CEDS for the next five years. In addition, other organizations supplied information and data used in the development of the CEDS.

LOCAL PARTNERS & RESOURCES:

Calhoun Community College
<http://www.calhoun.edu/>

Cullman Area Chamber of Commerce
<http://www.cullmanchamber.org/>

Cullman County Economic Development
<http://www.co.cullman.al.us/cced/cced.html>

Cullman Economic Development Agency
<http://www.cullmaneda.org/>

Cullman County Industrial Development Authority
<http://www.co.cullman.al.us/ccida/ccida.html>

Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce
<http://www.dcc.org>

Decatur Morgan County Tourism
<https://www.decaturcvb.org/>

Decatur-Morgan Entrepreneurial Center
<http://www.alabamaincubator.com/>

Decatur Utilities
<http://www.decaturutilities.com/>

Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority
<https://decaturdowntown.org/>

Hartselle Area Chamber of Commerce
<http://www.hartsellechamber.com/>

Hartselle Development Board
<http://www.hartselle.org/hart/government/department-of-development/development/>

Hartselle Utilities
<http://www.hartselleutilities.org/>

Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce
<http://www.lawrencealabama.com/>

Lawrence County Industrial Development Board
<http://www.lawrenceidb.com/defaultadbc.html>

Morgan County Economic Development Association
<http://www.mceda.org>

North Alabama Workforce Development Alliance
<http://www.nawda.org/contact-us.html>

Rural Morgan County Industrial Development Board

Wallace State Community College
<http://www.wallacestate.edu/>

REGIONAL PARTNERS & RESOURCES:

Alabama Association of Regional Councils
<http://alarc.org/>

Alabama Automotive Manufacturers Association
<https://aama.memberclicks.net/>

Alabama Communities of Excellence
<http://www.alabamacommunitiesofexcellence.org/>

Alabama Information Technology Association
<http://www.netcentric-tech.com/aita.htm>
Alabama Power Company
<http://www.alabamapower.com/>

Alabama's Mountains, Rivers & Valleys Resource Conservation & Development Council
<http://amrvrcd.org/>

Biotechnology Association of Alabama
<http://bioalabama.com/>

Design Alabama
<http://www.designalabama.org/>

Main Street Alabama
<http://www.mainstreetalabama.org/>

Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area
<http://msnha.una.edu/>

North Alabama Industrial Development Association
<http://www.naida.com/>

North Alabama Tourism Association
<http://www.northalabama.org/>
Tennessee Valley Authority
<https://www.tva.gov/>

The University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research
<https://cber.cba.ua.edu/>

Your Town Alabama
<http://www.yourtownalabama.com/>

STATE & FEDERAL PARTNERS & RESOURCES:

The Office of the Governor
<http://governor.alabama.gov/>

Alabama Communities of Excellence
<http://www.alabamacommunitiesofexcellence.org/>

Association of County Comissions of Alabama (ACCA)
<https://www.alabamacounties.org/>

Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs
<http://adeca.alabama.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

Alabama Department of Environmental Management
<http://www.adem.state.al.us/default.cnt>

Alabama Department of Public Health
<http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/>

Alabama Development of Commerce
<http://www.madeinalabama.com/>

Alabama Department of Tourism
<http://tourism.alabama.gov/>

Alabama Department of Transportation
<http://www.dot.state.al.us/>

Alabama Industrial Development Training
<https://www.aidt.edu/>

Alabama League of Municipalities
<https://almonline.org/>

Appalachian Regional Commission
<https://www.arc.gov/>

Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama
<https://alabamachambers.org/>

Economic Development Administration
www.eda.gov

Economic Development Association of Alabama
<http://www.edaa.org/>

Economic Development Partnership of Alabama
<http://www.edpa.org/>

Environmental Protection Agency
<https://www.epa.gov/>

Federal Aviation Administration
<https://www.faa.gov/>

Federal Highway Administration
<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/>

Housing and Urban Development
<https://www.hud.gov/>

Opportunity Alabama (OPAL)
<https://opportunityalabama.com>

National Association of Development Organizations
<https://www.nado.org/>

North Alabama Works
<https://alabamaworks.com/north/>

Retirement Systems of Alabama
<http://www.rsa-al.gov/>

State Council on the Arts
<https://arts.alabama.gov/>

US Department of Agriculture
<https://www.usda.gov/>



OTHER RESOURCES:

Alabama Agri-business Council
<http://www.alagribusiness.org/>

AL Cooperative Extension System
<http://www.aces.edu/main/>

Alabama Department of Labor
<https://www.labor.alabama.gov/>

Berkeley Resilience Capacity Index
<http://brr.berkeley.edu/rci/>

Choose Alabama
<http://choosealabama.net/index.php/taxes-incentives-and-financial-assistance>

City of Decatur, AL
<http://www.decaturalabamausa.com/>

City of Hartselle, AL
<http://www.hartselle.org>

City of Moulton, AL
<http://cityofmoultonal.com/>

Community Action Partnership of North Alabama
www.capna.org

Cullman County
<http://www.co.cullman.al.us>

Cullman County Parks
<http://www.cullmancountyparks.com/>

Cullman Regional Medical Center
<https://cullmanregional.com/>

Decatur Convention and Visitors Bureau
<http://decaturcvb.org>

Good Samaritan Health Clinic
<http://www.goodsamaritancullman.com/>

International Economic Development Council
<https://www.iedconline.org/>

Morgan County School District
<https://www.morgank12.org/domain/1345>

National Park Service
<https://www.nps.gov/index.htm>

National Register of Historic Places
<http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/>

Oakville Indian Mounds
<http://www.oakvilleindianmounds.com/>

Port of Decatur
<http://www.portofdecatur.net/>

Smith Lake
<http://visitcullman.org/project/smith-lake/>

Sperling's Best Places
<http://www.bestplaces.net/>

StatsAmerica Portal to US Data
<http://www.statsamerica.org/>

US Cluster Mapping Project—Harvard Business School
<http://www.clustermapping.us/>

US Forest Service
<https://www.fs.fed.us/>

Visit Cullman
<http://visitcullman.org/>

Volunteer Center of Morgan County
<http://www.vcomc.org/about/>

Wheeler Wildlife Refuge
<https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Wheeler/about.html>



D ■ ECONOMIC ■ RESILIENCE

ESTABLISHING INFORMATION NETWORKS AT NARCOG

- On an ongoing basis, proactively build relationships with local, regional, and state emergency personnel in order to help manage flows of information, supplies, resources, and people in the event of a disaster
- Use online surveys to gauge perceptions of local economy and business environment
- Collaborating with the International Economic Development Council to host workshops for local leaders regarding Economic Recovery and Resiliency
- Maintain lists of all potential federal, state, and local sources of funding and assistance to maximize federal disaster assistance
- Maintain data for industrial and commercial sites through geographic information systems (GIS)
- Support local governments in community coordination, information dissemination, and assistance with disaster relief grants and loans
- Enable business-to-business collaboration to connect business owners

with each other, as well as emergency response centers

- Use social networks and media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) to inform businesses and the public about recovery resources
- Employ measures to reach all segments of the population regardless of language or disability
- Create and implement a media strategy to combat negative impressions and misinformation
- Collaborate as a region to send a consistent message of need to decision makers (Congress and Federal Agencies)

PRE-DISASTER RECOVERY PLANNING STRATEGIES

1. RECOMMENDATION

Local governments should prepare pre-event contracts for debris removal and disposal that require compliance with all environmental guidelines.

STRATEGY

1.1 Communities, with the assistance of NARCOG, should identify debris removal firms and evaluate the cost and requirements of contracts to reduce fraud and waste in the event of a sudden economic shock.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Increase the number of storm shelters available to the public, and publicize their locations so people know when severe weather approaches.

3. RECOMMENDATION

Engaging business leaders and other community stakeholders in a discussion on land-use issues and redevelopment priorities prior to an economic shock scenario enables the community to devote the proper time and resources to a potentially sensitive topic.

STRATEGY

3.1 To select a rational sequence and strategy for implementing resilience measures, criteria for prioritization need to be established that include a cost/benefit assessment of criticality of need, protection of market value, and potential market value to be created, among other factors.

4. RECOMMENDATION

Establish statewide fortification standards for construction of new, rebuilt, and extensively remodeled homes to save lives and property when tornados or other forms of severe weather move through Alabama; provide in the code inspection procedures and enforcement rules apply

statewide.

STRATEGY

4.1 To limit costs, a pilot program of three or four counties should be considered, an opportunity for the NARCOG region to pilot this effort statewide.

4.2 Encourage all communities to adopt the stricter Alabama Building Code for commercial and residential construction.

4.3 Identify grants and low-cost loans to finance retrofitting for resilience improvements and offer technical assistance on securing the financing.

5. RECOMMENDATION

While considering alternative locations for business and community operations following an economic shock, attention should be paid to where the workforce of small and medium-sized businesses will live if a significant portion of the regional workforce is severely damaged. Each community should consider identifying resources and partners, such as private-sector developers and contractors, to consider temporary housing solutions in the event of a major economic shock resulting in the relocation of a massive number of people.

STRATEGY

5.1 Regularly monitor and report on the availability of office space, industry space, and residential developers, building a network of contractors, engineers, real estate professionals, and other contacts who can quickly react to an economic

shock situation by providing the resources to quickly bring critical regional assets back online.

6. RECOMMENDATION

Create an ongoing resilience task force. A resilience task force should be able to drive and ensure government and region-wide coordination to assist communities as they make decisions about long-term rebuilding. The task force is envisioned as an entity that proactively drives appropriate policy and planning decisions well in advance of an event.

STRATEGY

6.1 Identify key members of the private and public sector to serve on a resilience task force. The importance of the establishment of the taskforce must be stressed and key responsibilities must be outlined.

7. Recommendation

Promote regional coordination. Interconnected infrastructure networks are regional in scope, but they also have neighborhood-by-neighborhood impacts. A change in the way local governments organize themselves might be needed to build an infrastructure framework that is flexible, that is sensitive to community context, and that supports the development of capacity for local disaster planning and response decision making. Regional protection demands cooperation among people and governments that share geomorphology. Without well-

informed collective decision making about priorities and methods, any major new protective works a region wishes to undertake will be realized slowly, if at all, and their effectiveness will be reduced.

STRATEGY

7.1 Integrate resilience as a component into the technical assistance offered to communities and entities within the NARCOG region.

7.2 Engage communities and critical regional employers in the importance of resilience planning and identify funding opportunities to enhance preparation efforts.

7.3 Communities should consider an informal agreement or partnership with nearby communities, pledging support and assets in a time of need.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Identify those parts of your region to protect and invest in that are critical to your regional economy, culture, and health, safety, and welfare. Every region has areas that are of special importance to its economic vitality and well-being. In addition, there are areas that are essential to its health and welfare, and to its unique cultural and historic heritage. An essential task of regional coordination is to identify these priority areas for protection and investment long term, given that resources are finite and all desirable projects cannot be undertaken.

STRATEGY

8.1 Identify natural infrastructure to preserve and utilize the presence of these assets to control growth and development patterns.

8.2 Devise a system for identifying critical assets in the region that must be addressed first in terms of resiliency and recovery following an economic shock.

9. RECOMMENDATION

Allow partial compliance and mitigation measures in order to create flexibility in insurance premiums. Appropriate reductions in premiums should be considered in flood mitigation programs even if properties fail to fully meet local, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), or flood insurance requirements. These measures may be appropriate in circumstances in which it is impossible or prohibitively expensive to raise the elevation of the building or to implement other zoning requirements. Integrating careful assessment of the value of flood mitigation efforts should also encourage investment in retrofits, which can reduce the impact (cost, duration, displacement) of future extreme events and thereby protect major private market investments.

STRATEGY

9.1 In certain areas, relax strict building codes to cut costs for owners and others if the efforts to bring builds and other assets to code becomes cost-prohibitive

10. RECOMMENDATION

Build capacity for decision making at the local level. Many localities lack capacity and need greater access to information and resources, as well as the support of coordinating entities at higher levels of government. Resources and expertise from other levels of government must have greater duration and continuity than they do currently. Information systems and sharing agreements among communities are needed, and they can be facilitated or encouraged by a federal or regional coordinating body. The federal government needs to institute, and make permanent, a series of training sessions for local governments to teach them how to prepare for and respond to disasters. These sessions should include both elected officials and key staff.

STRATEGY

10.1 Hold a series of workshops and community town halls to address opportunities to build resilience in both small businesses, industry, and communities.

10.2 Work with the Chambers of Commerce and local economic development organizations to develop a resilience-based continuity planning service.

11. RECOMMENDATION

Target businesses and industries within the regional cluster for business retention and expansion opportunities.

STRATEGY:

11.1 Identify existing businesses and industries that compose the regional cluster for BRE programs and financing. Businesses and industries located within or affiliated with the supply chain of large local employers should also be targeted. The existence of a large workforce geared toward this industry will easily accommodate workforce development programs and services and will ensure the regular supply of labor for critical employers.

11.2 Identify gap areas through Claritas/Nielsen for additional opportunities for BRE.


 **AREA PLAN ON AGING / 2022-2025****GOALS:****Access to reliable information**

Older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their caregivers shall have access to reliable information, helping them to make informed decisions regarding long-term supports and services.

Empower to live in their own homes

Empower older persons and individuals with disabilities to remain in their own homes with high quality of life through the provision of options counseling, home and community-based services, and support for family caregivers.

Empower to stay alive and healthy

Empower older Americans to stay active and healthy through Older Americans Act services, Medicare prevention benefits, recreation, job, and volunteer activities.

Enable to live with dignity

Enable more Alabamians to live with dignity by promoting elder rights and reducing the incidents of abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Promote progressive management

Promote proactive, progressive management and accountability Area Agency on Aging and its contracting agencies.


 **HUMAN SERVICES COORDINATED TRANSPORTATION PLAN – FY2020****GOALS:****GOAL 1: Enhance Transportation Access**

It is the goal of the Regional Stakeholders Group and the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments to enhance and sustain transit services in the North Central Alabama Region through the coordination of existing and future transit services.

GOAL 2: Minimize Duplication

It is the goal of the Regional Stakeholders Group and the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments to minimize the duplication of transit services in the North Central Alabama Region through the coordination of existing and future transit services.

GOAL 3: Provide Cost-Efficient Transit Services

It is the goal of the Regional Stakeholders Group and the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments to develop the most cost-efficient transit

system possible in the North Central Alabama Region through the coordination of existing and future transit services and to identify and maximize the necessary resources to accomplish this.

GOAL 4: Sustain and Maintain Existing Services

It is the goal of the Regional Stakeholders Group and the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments that this plan supports maintaining the status quo where possible.

GOAL 5: Enhance Existing Traditional Transit Providers

It is the goal of the Regional Stakeholders Group and the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments to exploit available opportunities to enhance and expand existing traditional transportation services within the region. This includes (but is not limited to) Sections 5307 and 5311, Sections 5316 and 5317, Section

5310 as well as intercity bus transportation as defined in Section 5311.

GOAL 6: Explore and Implement Emerging Transportation Opportunities

It is the goal of the Regional Stakeholders Group and the North Central Alabama Regional Council of Governments to identify various service opportunities and associated funding streams to provide enhanced transportation opportunities to expanded populations in less traditional venues.

The complete plan can be found here:

https://www.narcog.org/images/HSCTP_2020_Final.pdf