

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM



2013

THINK PROSPERITY

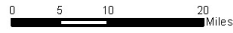
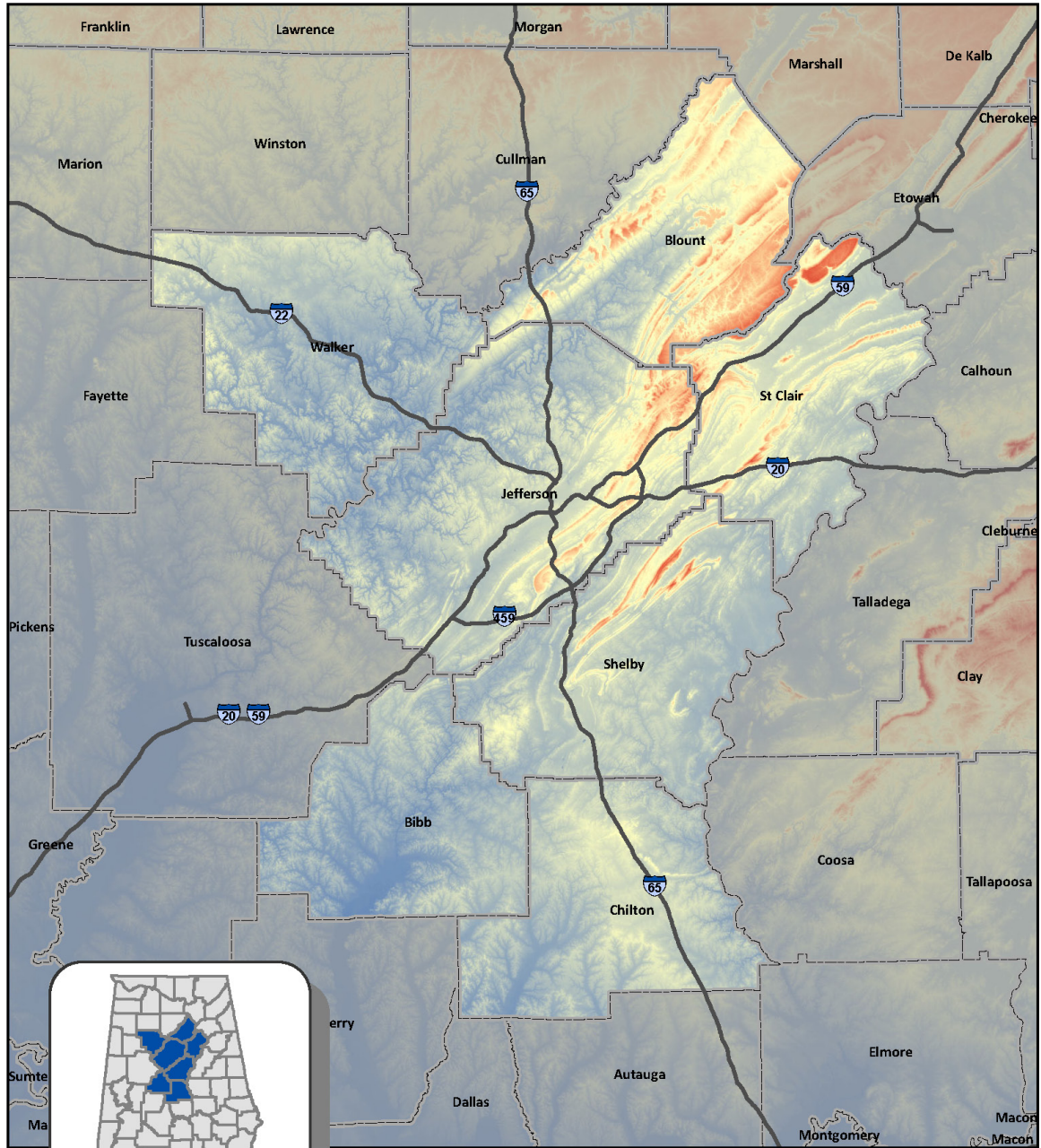
INTRODUCTION

The Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham (RPCGB) was established in the 1960's as an advisory planning agency for Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, Saint Clair, and Walker Counties, and their resident municipalities. RPCGB has since expanded its role as a regional service provider and continues to do so in order to best serve its member governments. The array of services offered by RPCGB include: transportation planning, community planning, technical assistance, grant-writing, project management, customized studies, plans and implementation tools, historic preservation and revitalization, geographic information systems, demographics, and economic development assistance. RPCGB also houses several programs such as the Alabama Partnership for Clean Air (APCA), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Medicaid Waiver program, and a revolving loan fund (RLF). Through its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document, **the RPCGB seeks to better serve its member governments by identifying and offering implementation strategies** for the projects that each community feels would best assist them in development on the municipal, county, and regional levels. RPCGB is designated as an Economic Development District (EDD) by the Economic Development Administration (EDA). EDA requires the CEDS to qualify for its assistance programs.

As the RPCGB staff worked on the implementation of the 2008 CEDS document, it recognized that there was a need for alignment with the region's long-range transportation and community planning efforts. In 2013 the strategic planning efforts of the CEDS and the Regional Transportation Plan combined to form Think Forward. Think Forward is a long-range planning effort that guides the greater Birmingham region in transportation, community, and economic planning. The economic and community development portion of Think Forward is entitled Think Prosperity. The Think Forward advisory committee provided guidance, oversight and input into the CEDS planning process and final report. The processes undertaken in these meetings included a visioning exercise and goal setting. RPCGB member governments and local interests were then asked to submit projects which the RPCGB staff aligned with the Think Prosperity vision and goals.

When asked what they would like to see come out of the Think Forward process, the advisory committee had the following responses:

- **A plan that takes into account the needs of the entire region**
- **Ways to implement the desired improvements**
- **A plan with realistic goals and strategies**



Birmingham MPO Regional Transportation Plan, 2012

July, 2013 - G:\ProjectData\CEOS\BhamMPO_03091011.mxd

This map is for informational purposes only. The RPC does not guarantee and expressly disclaims any responsibility for the content and accuracy of the data and information depicted. The RPC shall assume no liability for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information provided regardless of how caused or any decision made or action taken or not taken by any person in reliance upon any information or data contained herein.

MISSION, VISION & GOALS

Utilizing the feedback of the Think Forward advisory committee and stakeholders, the RPCGB staff was able to identify its mission, vision, and goals for moving forward.

MISSION

The mission of the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham:

To serve as a catalyst for regional leadership, cooperation, and sustainability in Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair, and Walker Counties of Central Alabama.

VISION

The vision for economic development in the region:

A well-marketed region with an atmosphere of pervasive cooperation, premier educational facilities and staff, an ample employment-ready workforce, heavily-invested leadership, and an infrastructure network that is both highly connective and accessible.

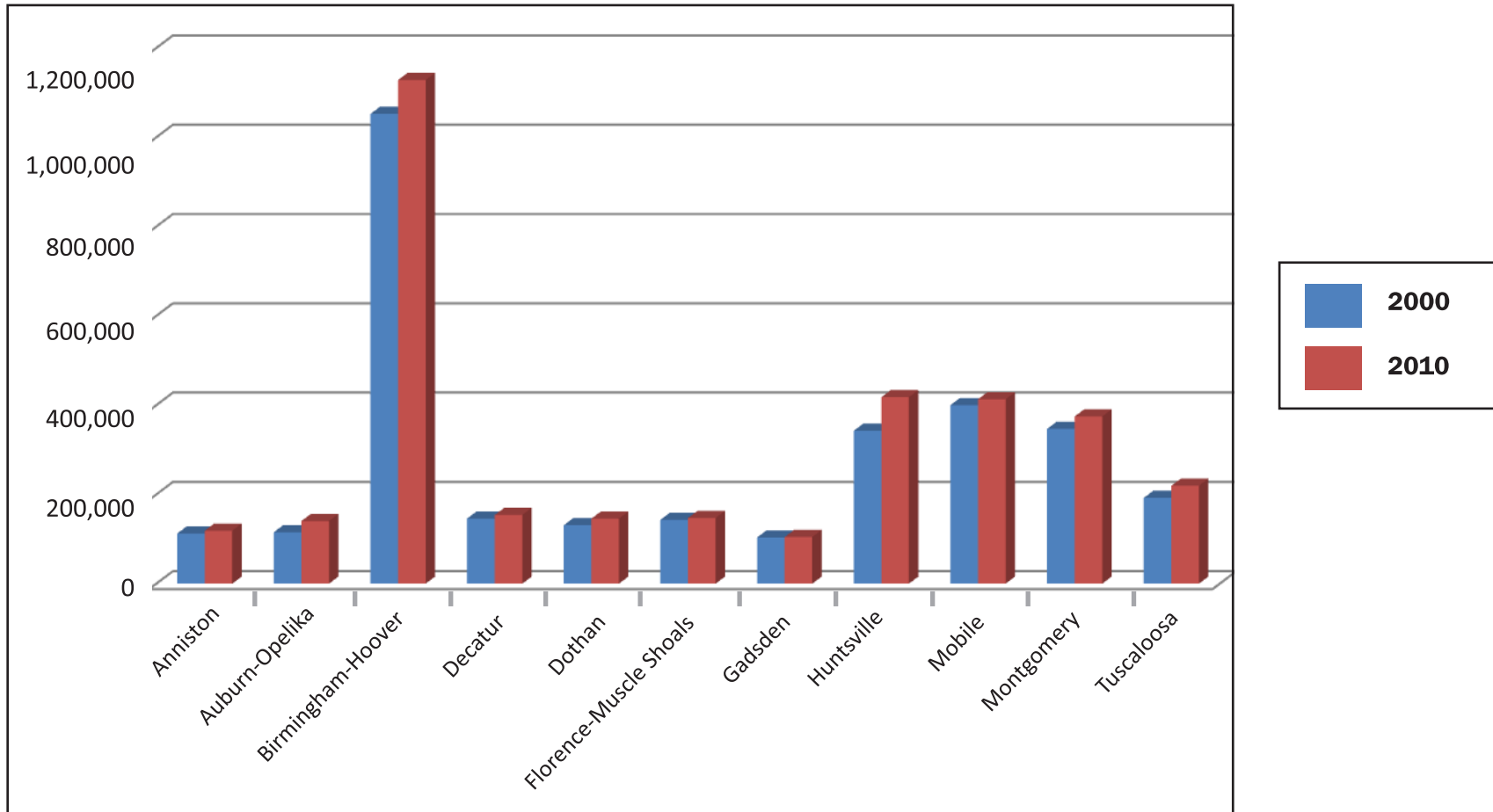
GOALS

1. Empowerment and Implementation
 - a. Community Education
 - b. Leadership Development
 - c. Funding
 - d. Coordination and Cooperation
2. Infrastructure Development and Service Improvements
 - a. Fixing What We Already Have
 - b. Making What Works, Work Better
 - c. Rethinking Service Delivery
 - d. Investing Strategically
3. Improving Access to Opportunities
 - a. Transportation Choices
 - b. Cultivating Competitive Economic Assets

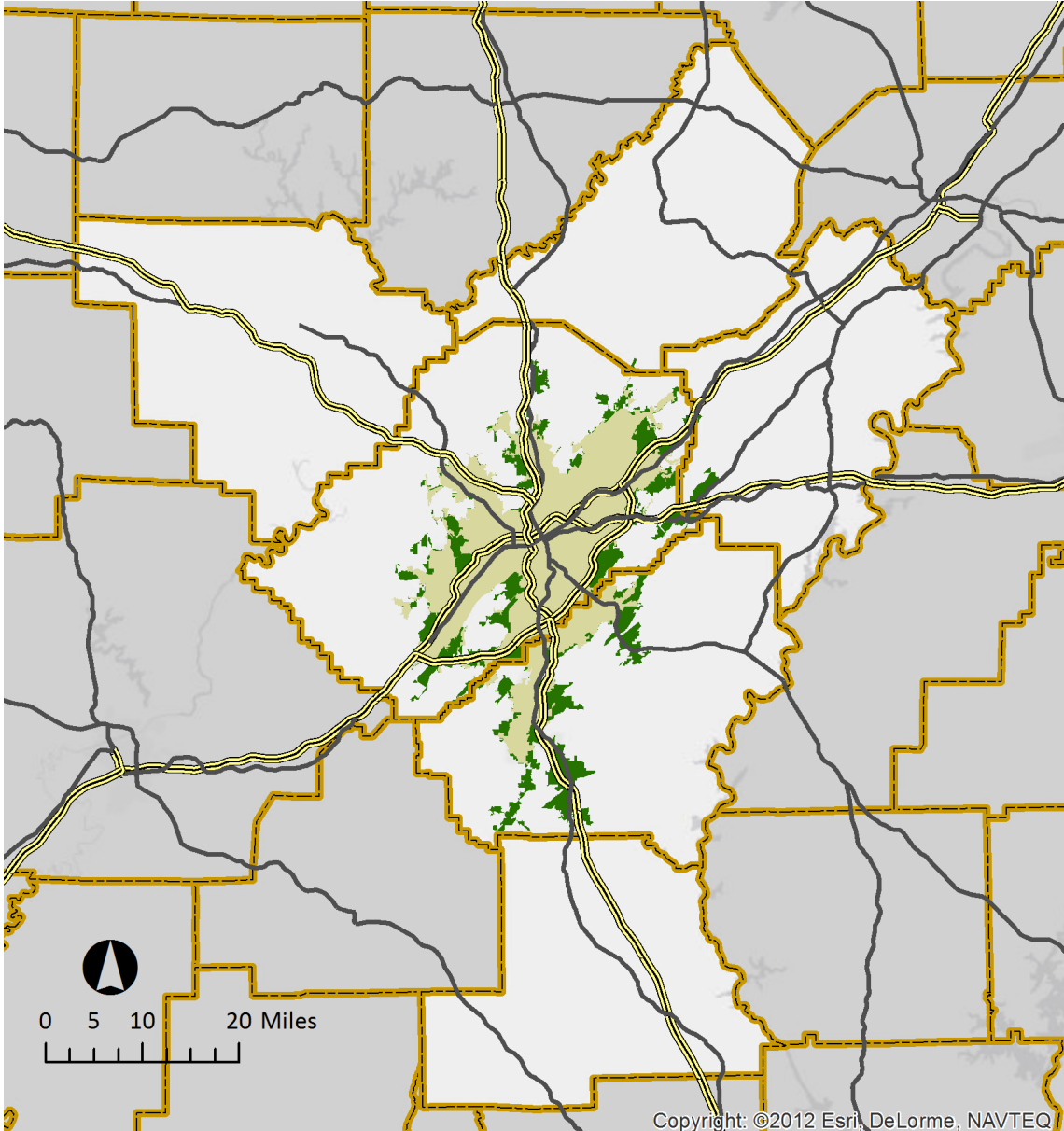
BACKGROUND [PEOPLE]



The Greater Birmingham Region’s population has continued to grow, adding nearly 74,000 residents over the last decade alone, pushing the population to 1.1 million residents. These increases in population are also representative of changes in area land uses, densities, and infrastructure, and the shifting of existing population within the region pose challenges in terms of transportation, education, wastewater, and other critical investment needs. While population increase is often synonymous with economic prosperity, stable tax bases, and an increase in the general quality of life of the residents, it also creates issues with natural resource conservation, environmental degradation, and increases competition of social investment priorities. Monitoring growth trends is essential to comprehensive land use planning since added growth can add demands on existing infrastructure and other community facilities.

Metropolitan Population Change [2000-2010]



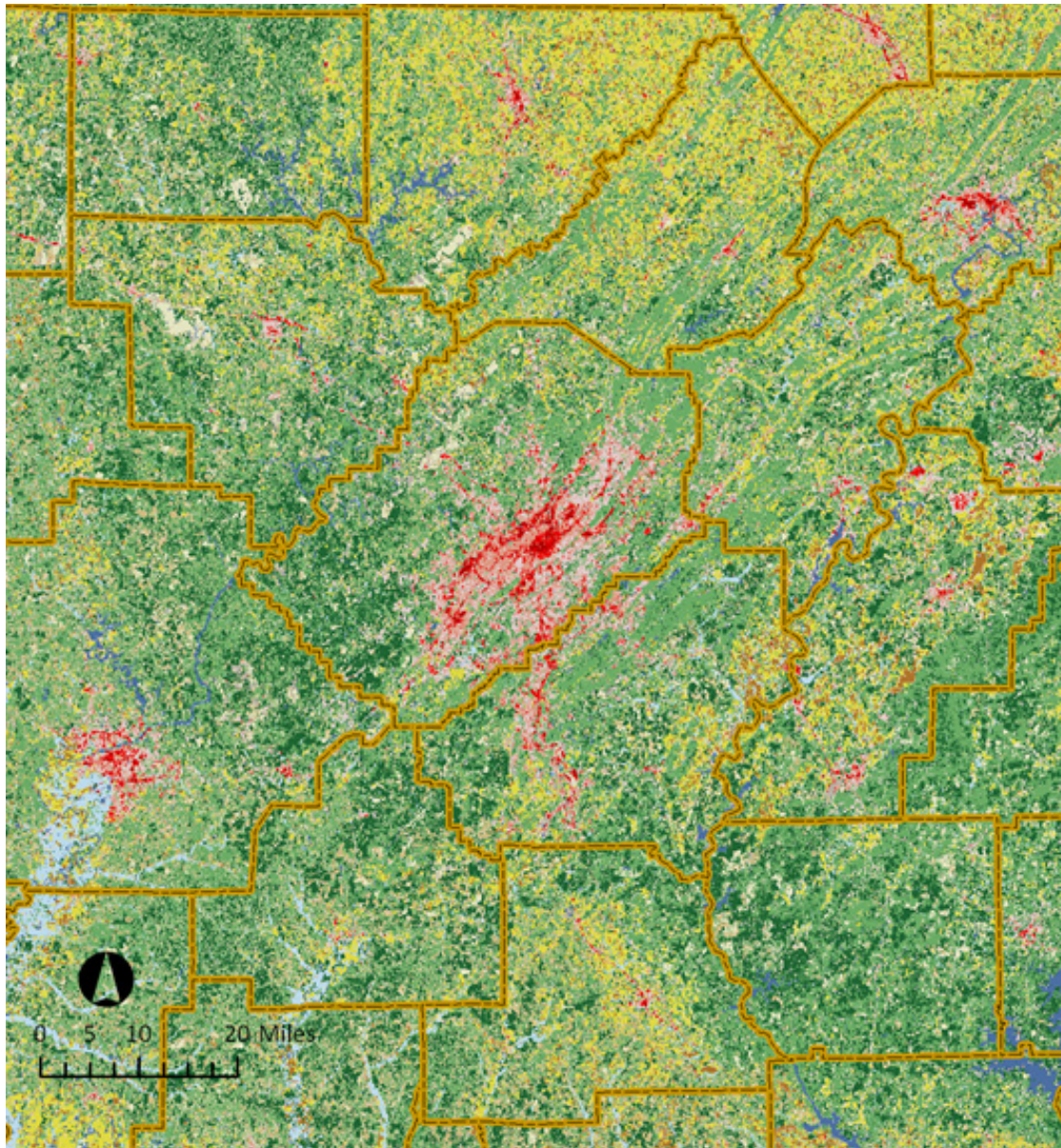
Urban Geographic Change [2000-2010]



	Urban Area 2000
	Urban Area 2010

Copyright: ©2012 Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ

Map of Regional Land Use [2006]



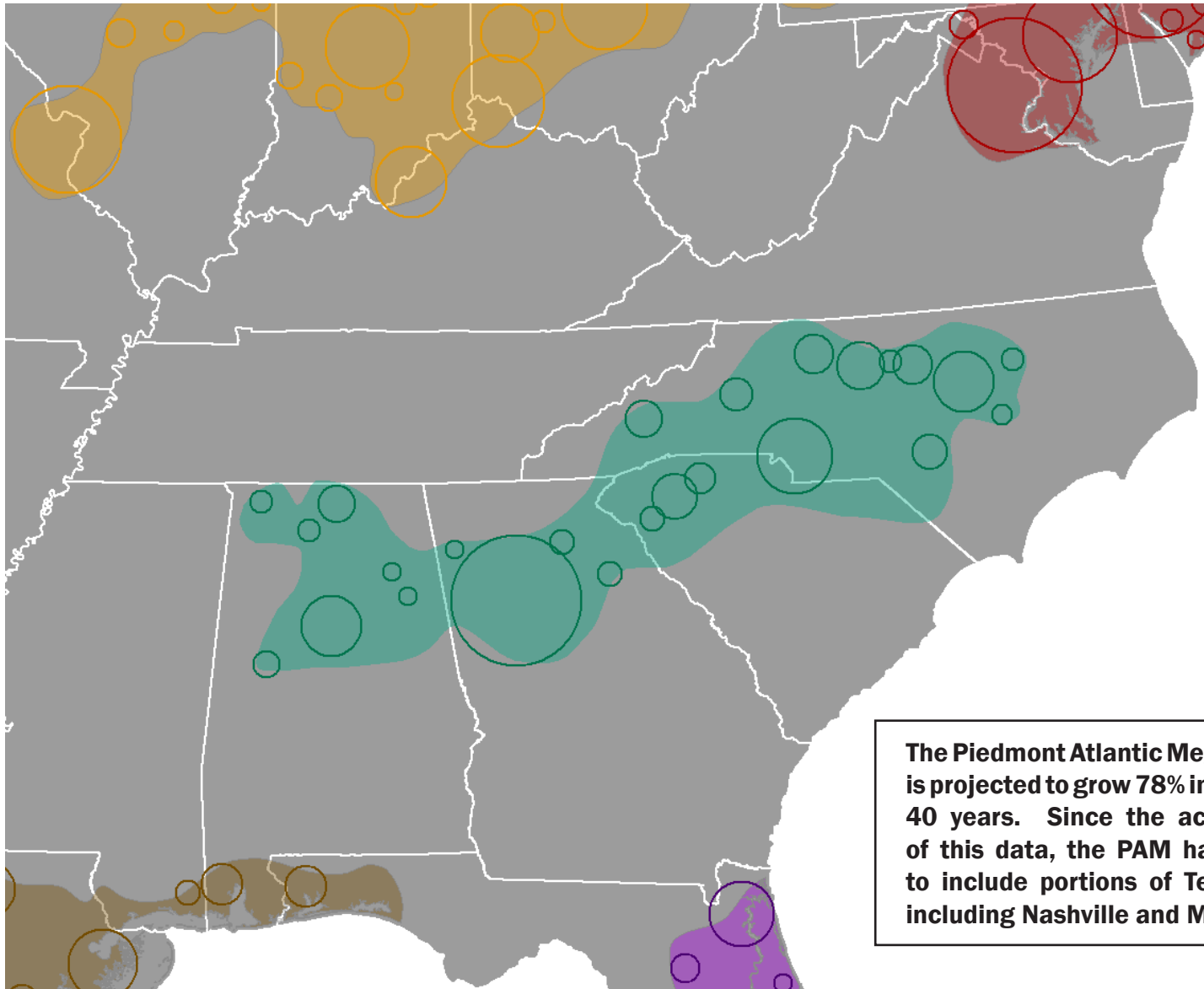
[GROWTH TRENDS]

The Birmingham-Hoover Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) consists of seven counties that currently include Bibb, Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, St. Clair, Shelby, and Walker Counties. The Birmingham-Hoover MSA is one of a dozen primary metropolitan areas located within the Piedmont Atlantic Megaregion (PAM), which generally follows the Interstate 85/20 corridor, stretching from Raleigh, North Carolina to Birmingham, Alabama. The PAM region, with a 2010 population estimate of 17.6 million, includes areas in the southeastern states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama, and is so defined by interconnecting economic systems, shared natural resources and ecosystems, parallel settlement patterns and culture, and common transportation systems that link these metropolitan areas together. The coordination of jurisdictional interests at a megaregion level provide a system by which the megaregion can better facilitate the management of limited resources, coordination in global trade and economic partnerships, and management of transportation linkages.

The region's more rural counties where a larger share of jobs exist within the agricultural, construction, retail, and other traditionally lower wage jobs, the wage rate has also increased but is still lower than that of the state. Regionally, annual average wage and salary increases have been commensurate with that of the state until the effects of the 2008 recession slowed the rate of increase in the region.

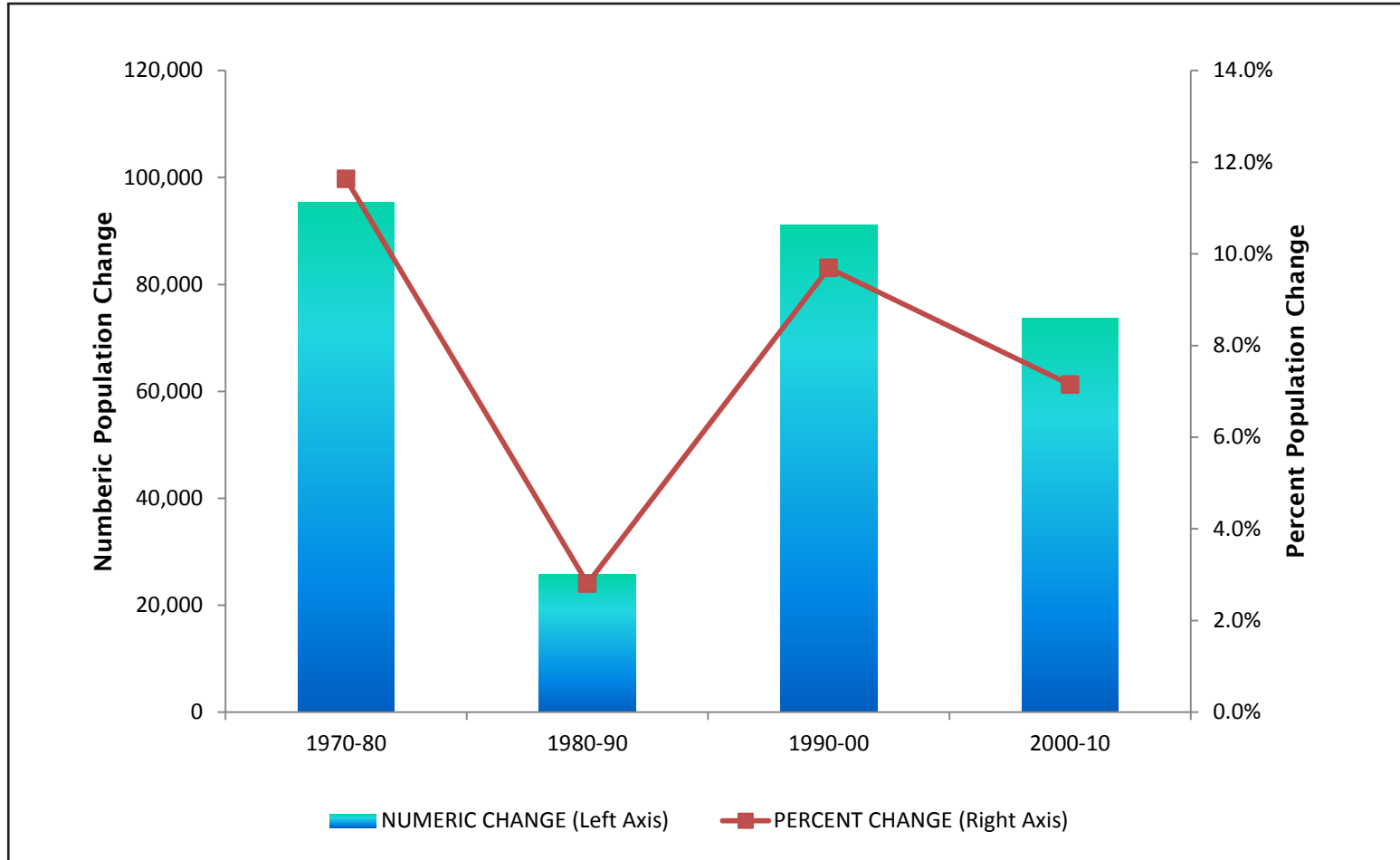
Between 1970 and 2010, the Greater Birmingham Region (Blount, Chilton, Jefferson, St. Clair, Shelby, and Walker Counties) **grew in population by nearly 286,000 residents**, increasing from 819,263 to 1,105,132 persons. This growth represents a 35% increase in population over the forty year period. On an average annual basis, the growth rate was 0.9 percent. The nation and the State of Alabama grew at a slightly higher average annual rate over the same period with 1.3% and 1.0% respectively.

Megaregion Map Piedmont Atlantic Mega Region (PAM)

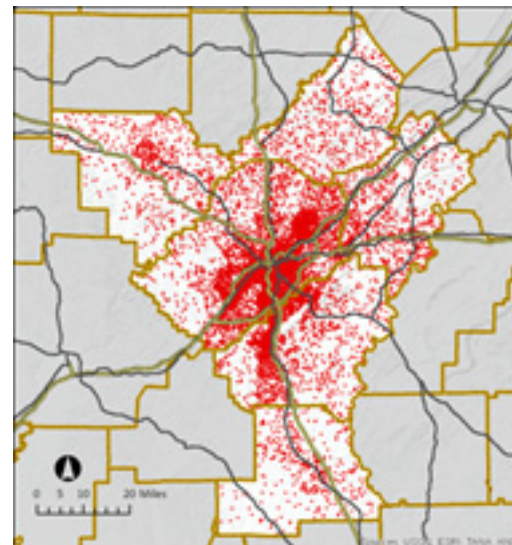
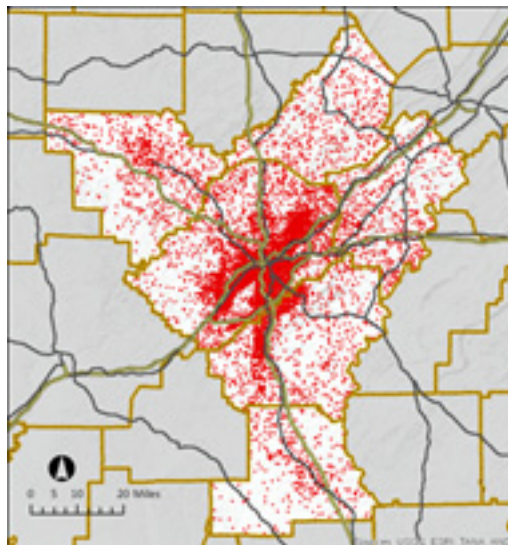
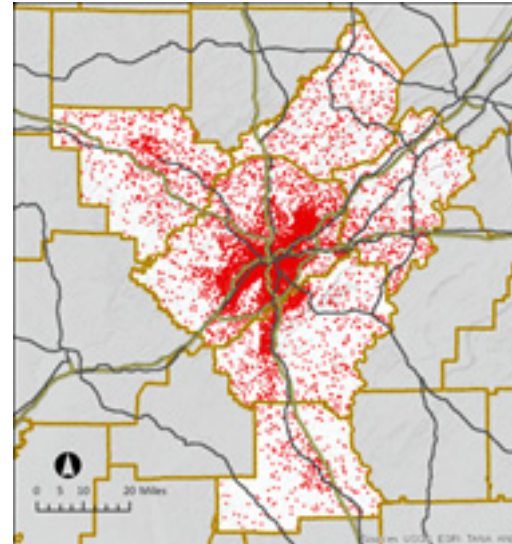
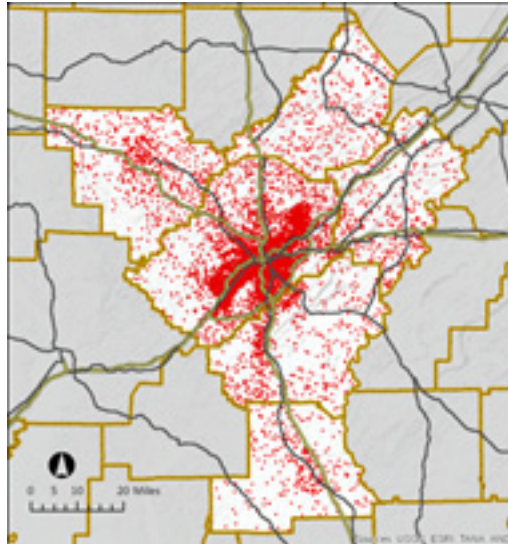


The Piedmont Atlantic Megaregion is projected to grow 78% in the next 40 years. Since the acquisition of this data, the PAM has grown to include portions of Tennessee including Nashville and Memphis.

Population Growth Levels & Rates [1970-2010]



Regional Population Density Change [1980-2010]

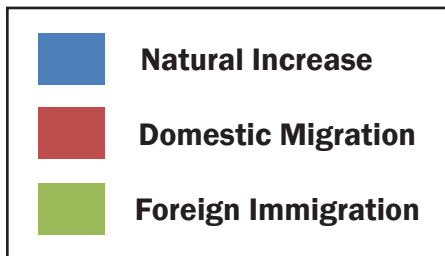
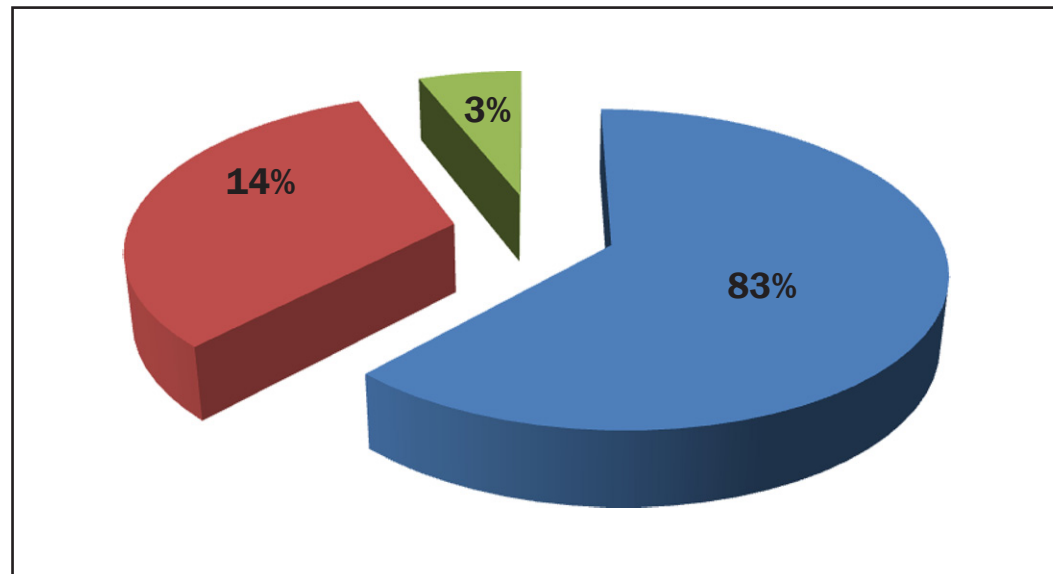


In addition to the sustained, moderate rate of job growth experienced in the past, the continued trend of suburbanization has stimulated patterns of localized population movement.

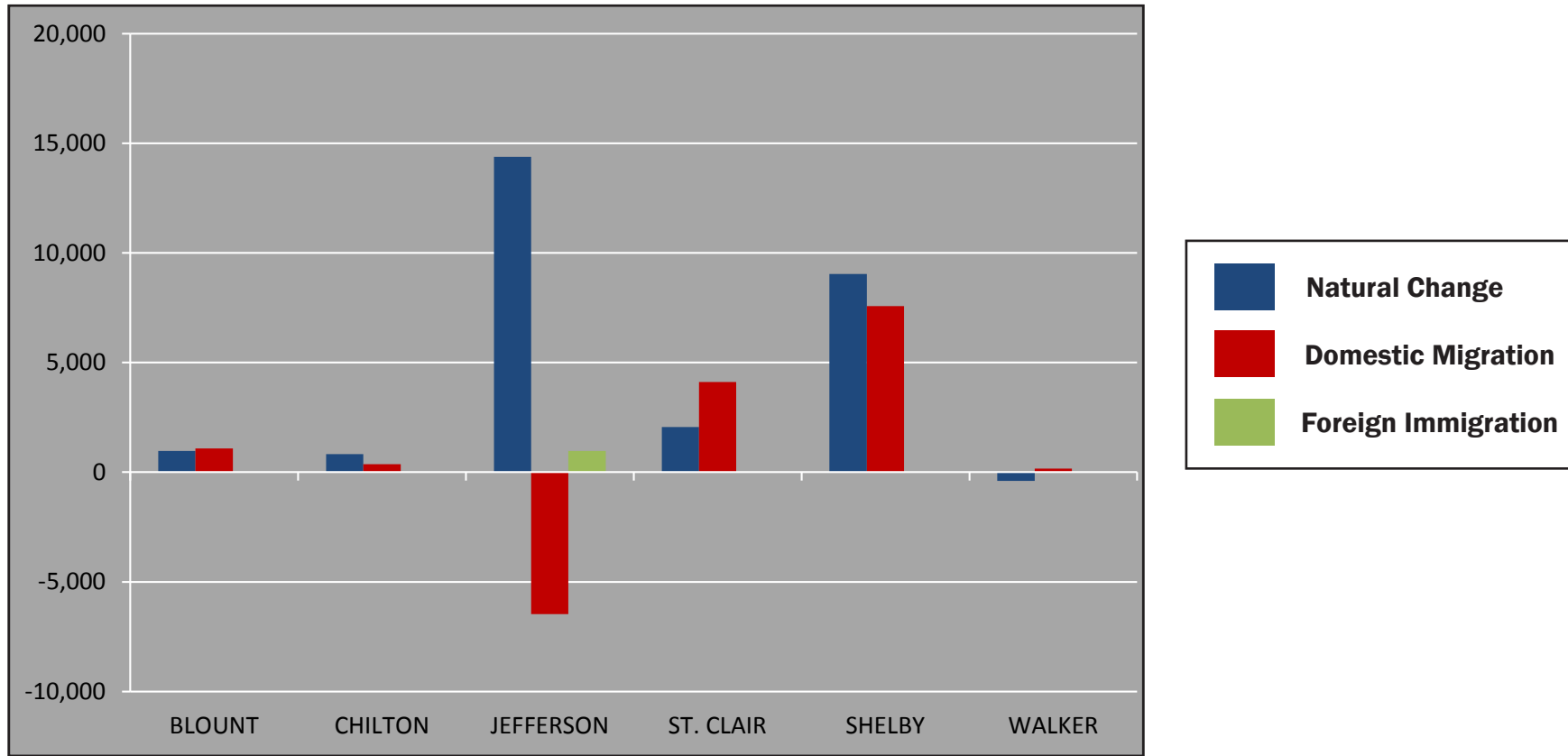
Domestic in-migration to the region, while constituting a positive net migration to the Birmingham Region, only represents about 17% of total population growth. Natural population change within the region has accounted for the majority of the population growth, consisting of about 83 percent. Domestic migration from within the State of Alabama is the largest source of positive net migration, with the relocation of residents moving into the Birmingham Region from other Alabama metropolitan areas. Geographic mobility estimates by the US Census for 2009 report that 3% of the region's

resident population moved from a different county in the State of Alabama into the region in a one-year period while 2% moved from a different state. Foreign immigration, averaging 208 annually over the last decade, does not significantly contribute as a source of population growth in the region. The Greater Birmingham Region has historically been the economic and residential center of the State of Alabama. The population of the region has averaged 23% of the entire population of the State of Alabama since 1980 and continues to remain stable despite recent market setbacks which have affected net migration into the region, in terms of both foreign and domestic migration. Since 2008 net migration has seen a sharp decline in the region.

Sources Of Population Growth [2000-2010]



Regional, Foreign and Domestic Migration [2005-2010]



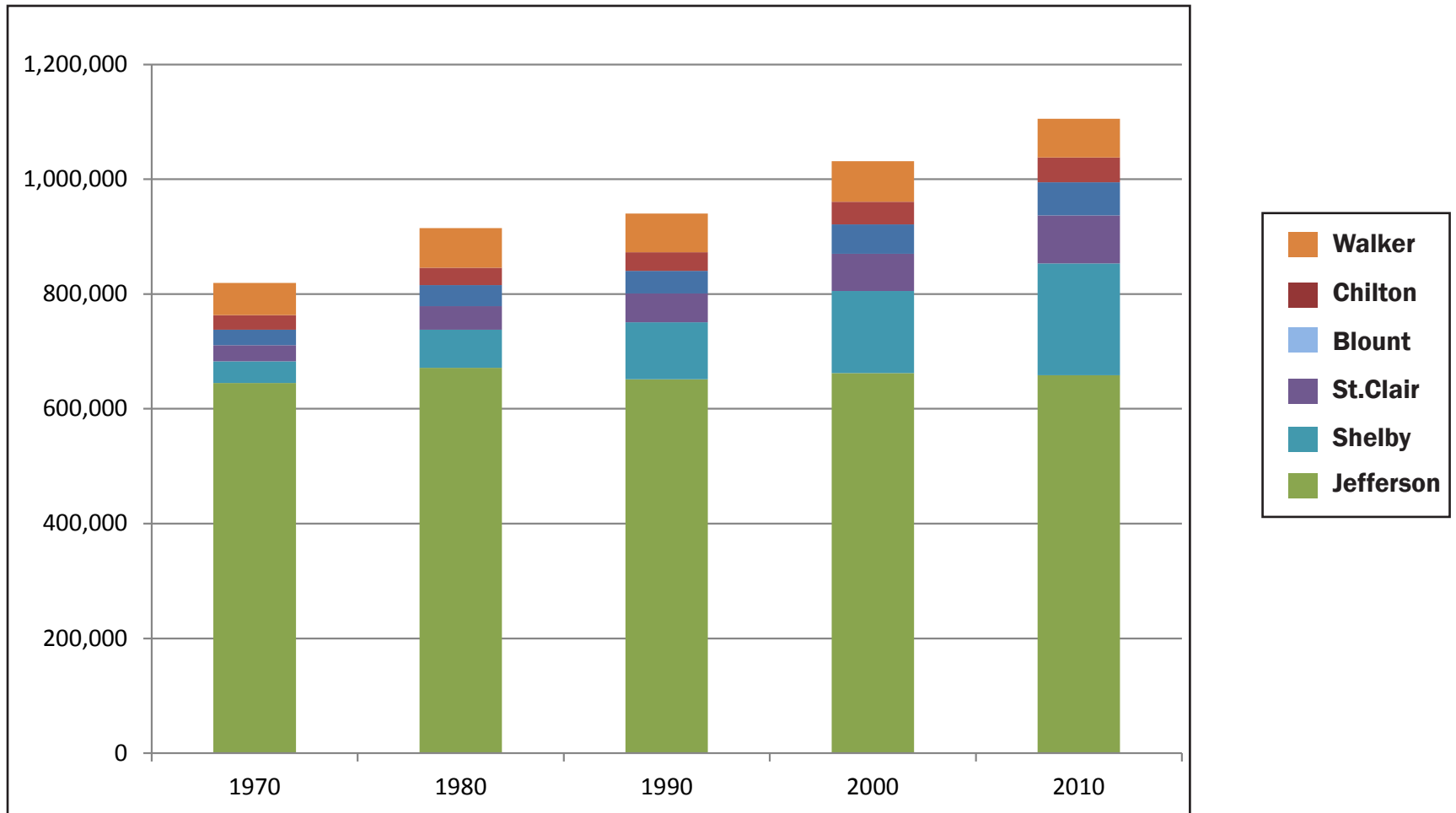
Population growth in the region accounted for 22 percent of the total increase in the state between 2000 and 2010. Four of the top twenty Alabama counties experiencing population increases over the prior decade are in the Greater Birmingham Region. These include Shelby (1st with 36.1%), St. Clair (3rd with 29.1%), Blount (13th with 12.3%), and Chilton (16th with 10.2%). In contrast, the counties of Jefferson (currently Alabama’s most populous county) and Walker both experienced modest population decreases of 0.5% and 5.2% respectively.

Within the six-county region, Jefferson County is the state’s most populous county and is the central county in the region. The City of Birmingham, currently the state’s most populous city, is located

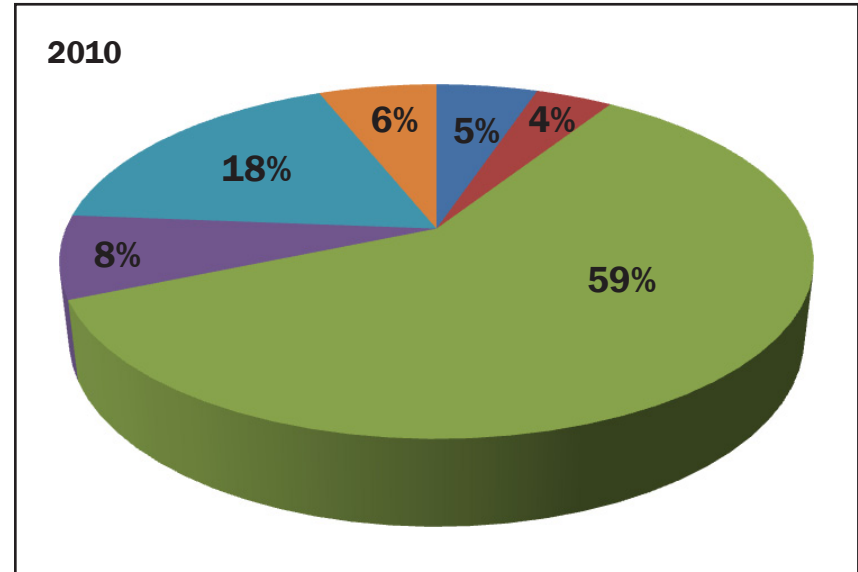
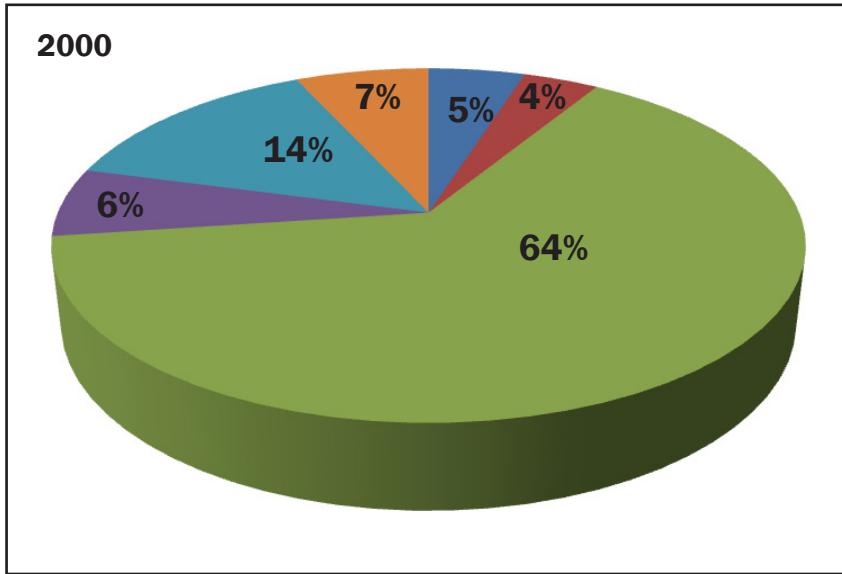
within Jefferson County. Historically, Birmingham has been the state’s economic hub, and has generated much of the economic activity benefiting both the state and the region while also influencing area development patterns. According to the 2010 Census, the City of Birmingham has a residential population of 212,237 which accounts for 32% of Jefferson County’s population and 19% of the region’s population. Population growth in Birmingham has been declining over the last several decades, indicative of suburbanization trends and recognized in domestic migration patterns and geographic mobility indicators. Between 2000 and 2010, Birmingham lost over 30,000 residents (13%), many of whom have moved into the peripheral areas of Jefferson County or surrounding counties.

The counties of Shelby and St. Clair have experienced the largest population increases in the region as well as the state. Shelby County’s population has increased from 143,293 in 2000 to 195,085 in 2010, an increase of 51,792 (36%) while St. Clair County’s population increased from 64,742 in 2000 to 83,593 (29%) in 2010. Much of these increases are attributable to local area economic development, suburbanization trends related to inexpensive developable land, and social demands associated with more affordable housing, perceptions of better performing schools, and concerns of urban crime. The added transportation costs associated with rural suburbanization have done little to slow this trend.

County Population Change [1970-2010]

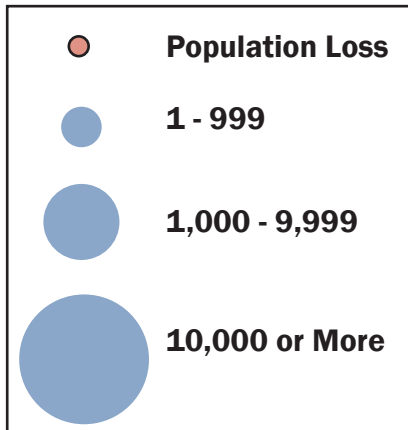


Population Regional Share by County [2000-2010]

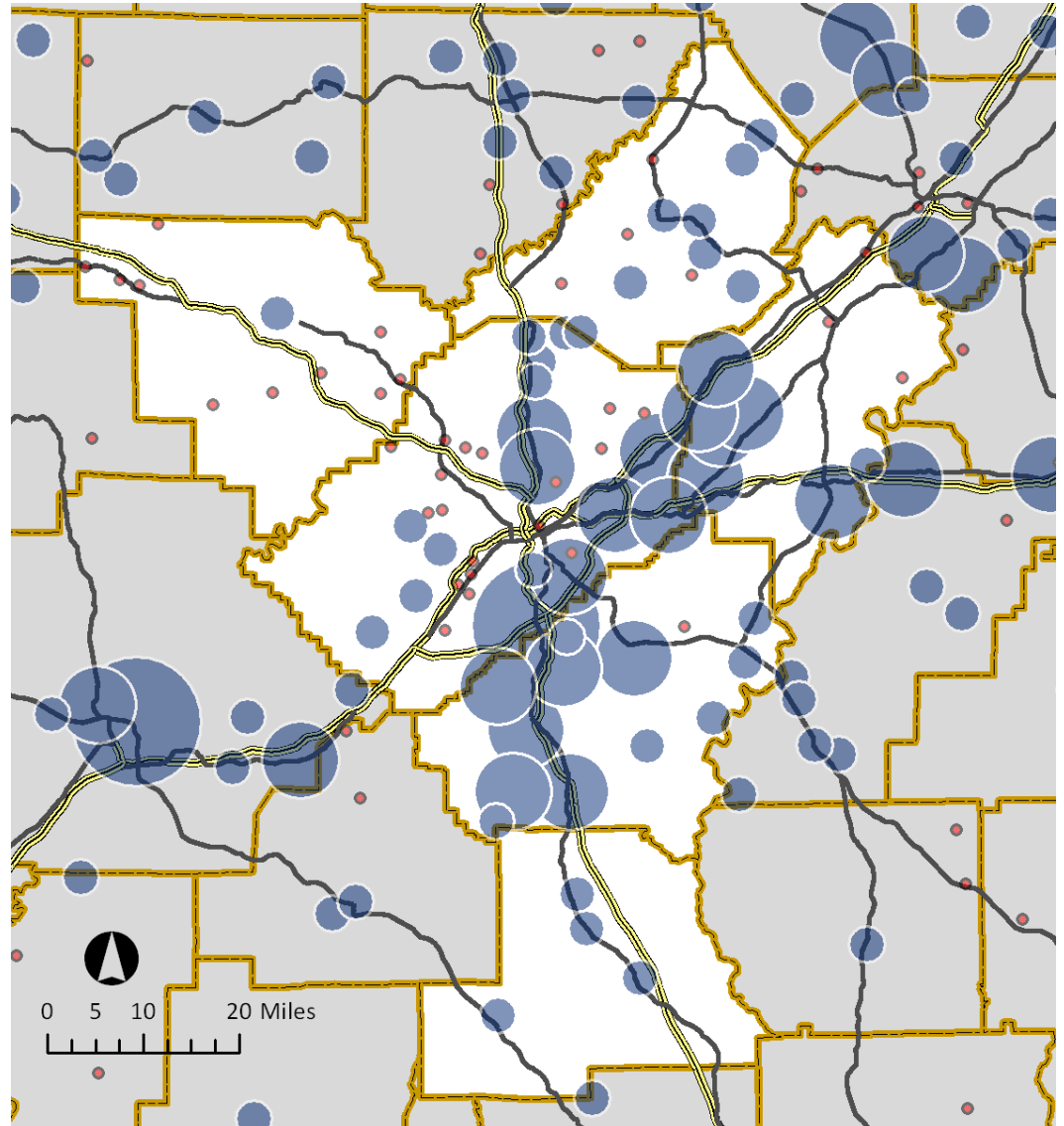


A number of cities along the periphery of the region's urban core have absorbed much of the region's growth.

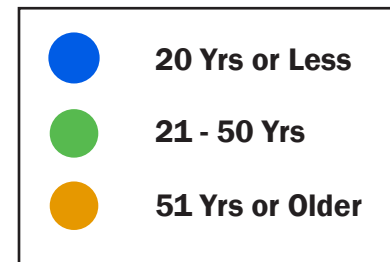
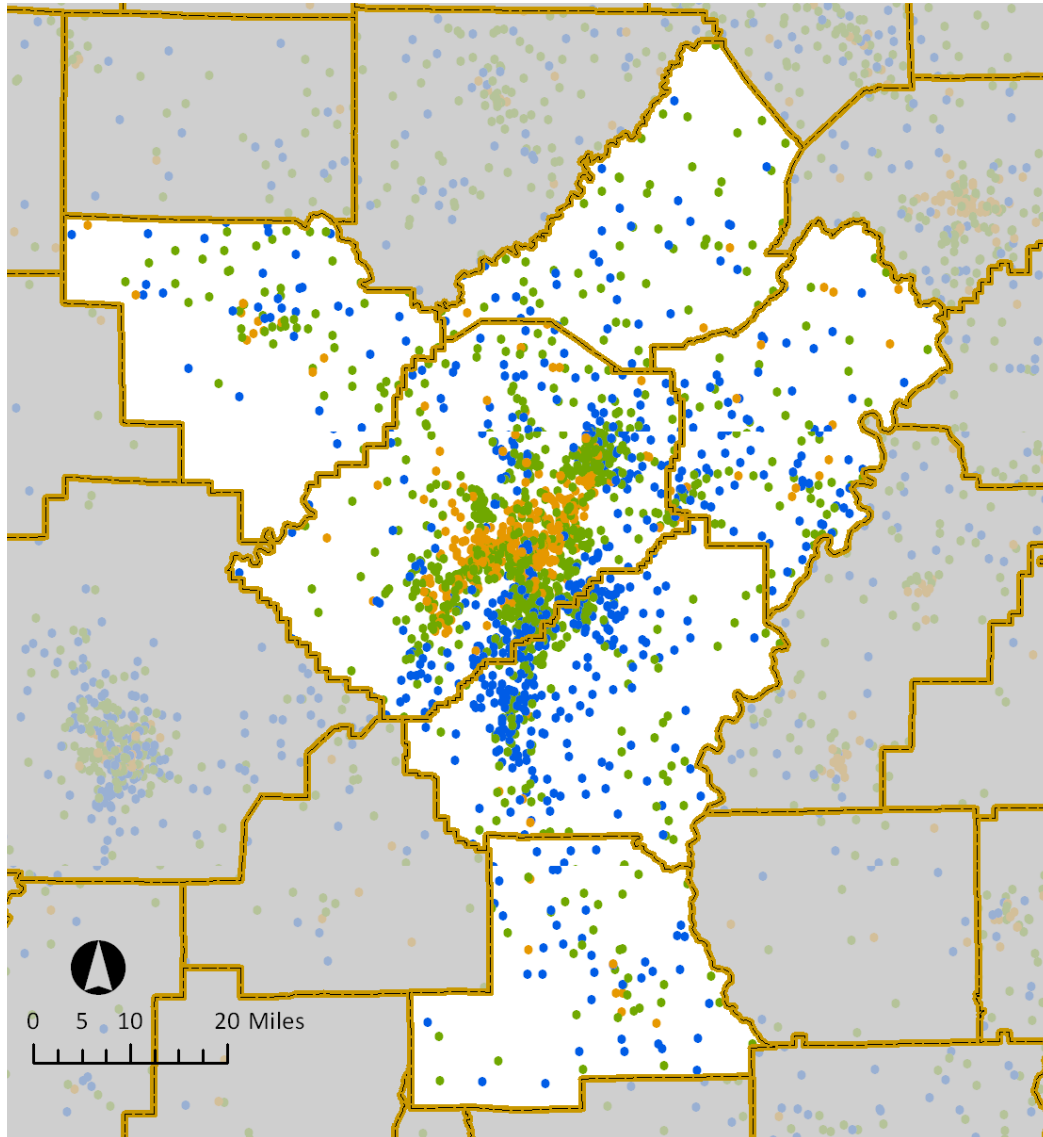
These cities include Hoover, Vestavia Hills, Trussville, and Gardendale in Jefferson County, and Helena, Pelham, and Alabaster in Shelby County. Additional significant growth has occurred in the region's unincorporated urban areas and in suburban cities outside the periphery of the urban core. These places include the cities of Pinson and Clay, as well as the unincorporated areas of Mount Olive and McCalla in Jefferson County; significant portions of unincorporated northeast Shelby County, specifically Dunnivant Valley, as well as the cities of Chelsea and Calera; the cities of Moody, Margaret, Argo, and Springville in western St. Clair County; and the Smoke Rise area of southern Blount County.



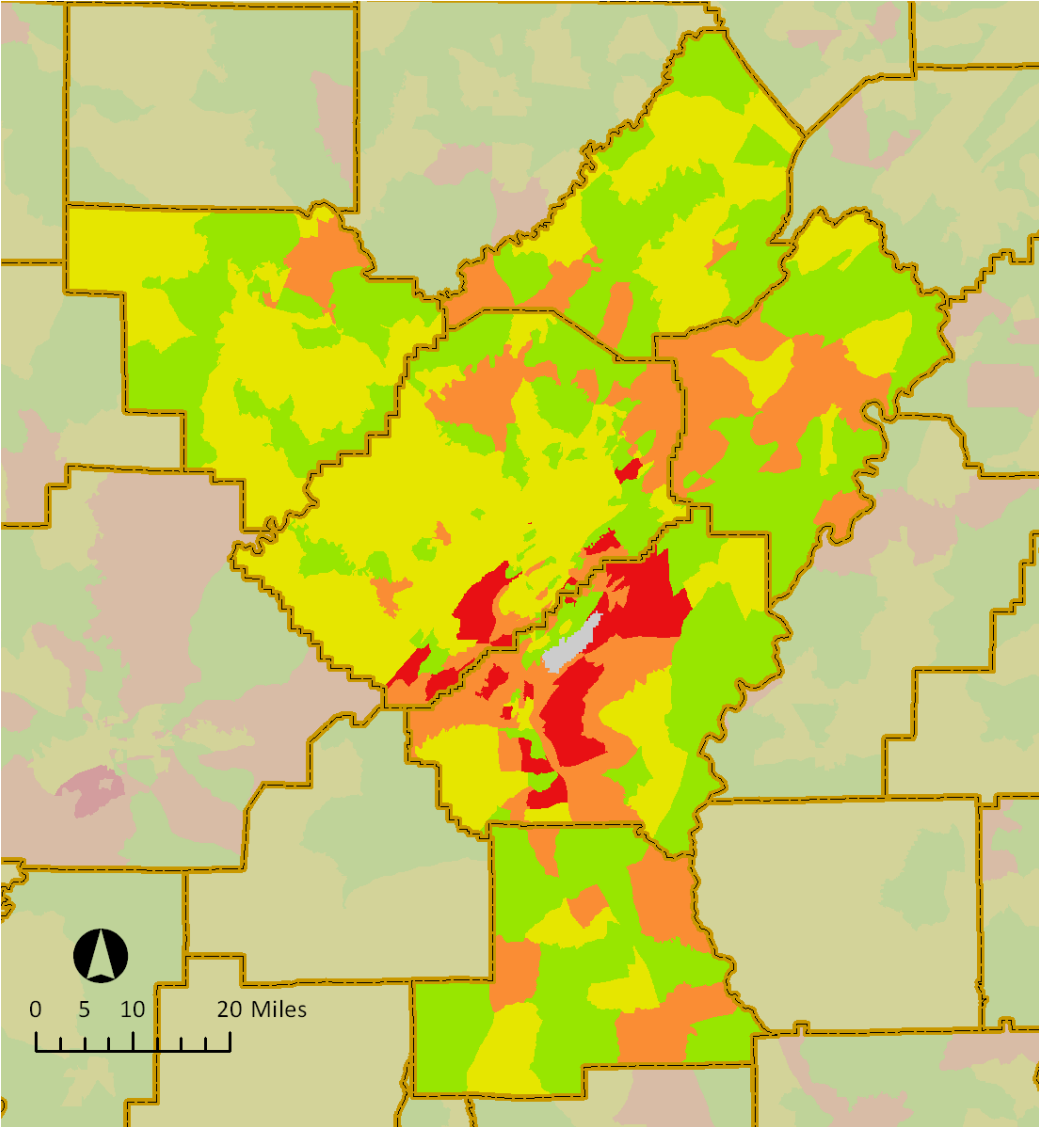
City Growth Map [2000-2010]



Housing Year Built



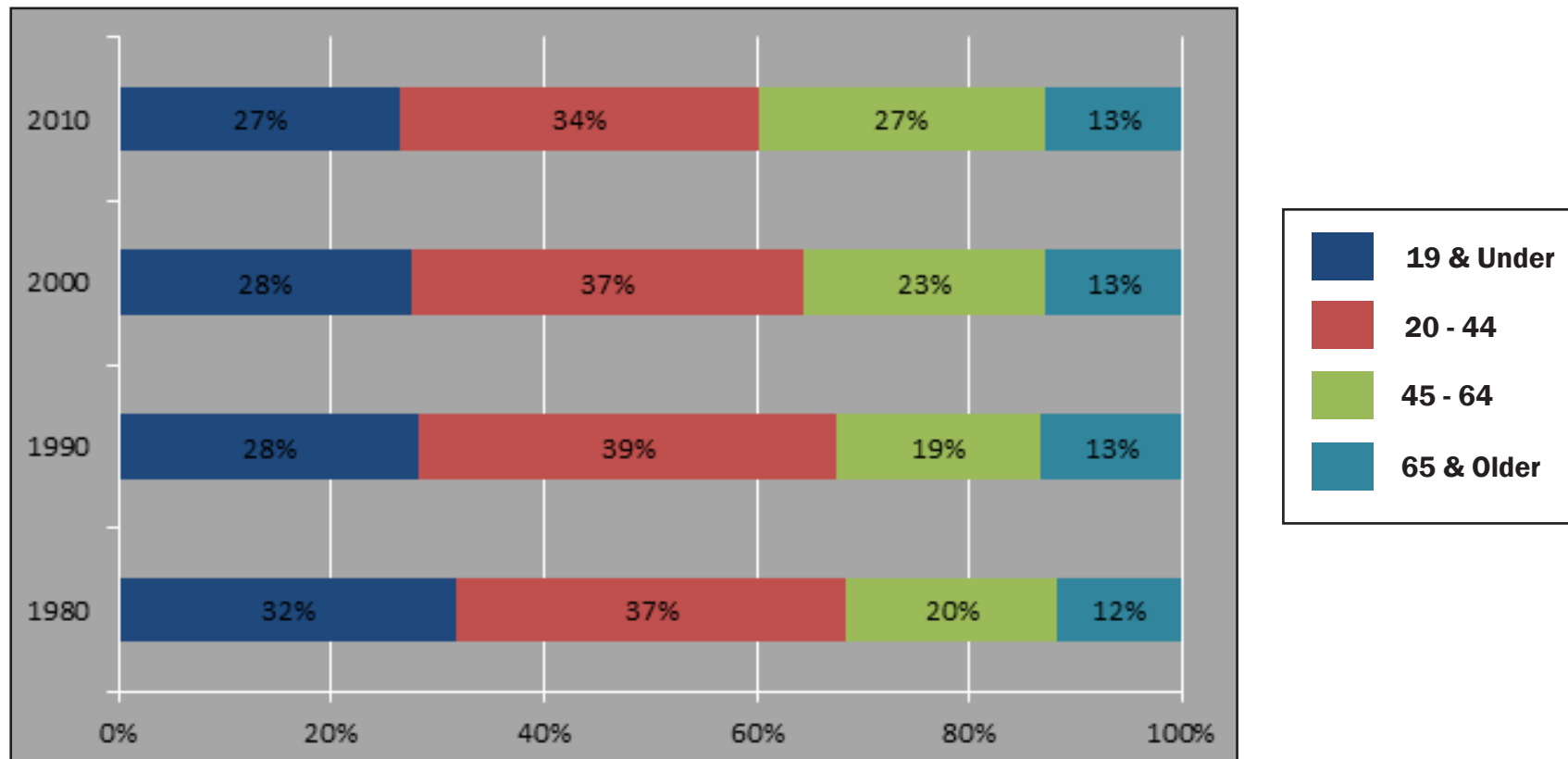
Median Year Structure Built



POPULATION BY AGE

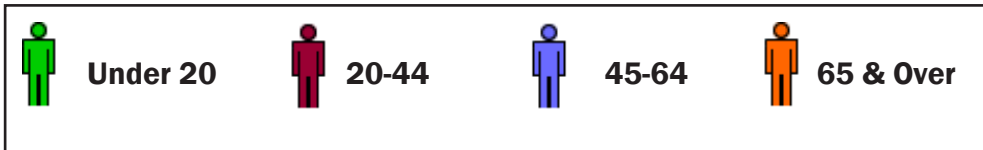
The median age in the region has continued to increase over time. Median age increased from 33.8 in 1990 to 36.0 in 2000 and to 37.4 in 2010. In 2000 there were 132,150 persons age 65 or over (12.8% of the region’s population), and in 2010 that number increased to 143,233 persons age 65 or over (13.0% of the region’s population). By comparison, the number of residents 19 years or under increased from 285,101 in 2000 to 293,498 in 2010, but the percent share of this age group has decreased by 1% over that decade, dropping from 27.6% to 26.6 percent.

Regional Population by Age [1980-2010]

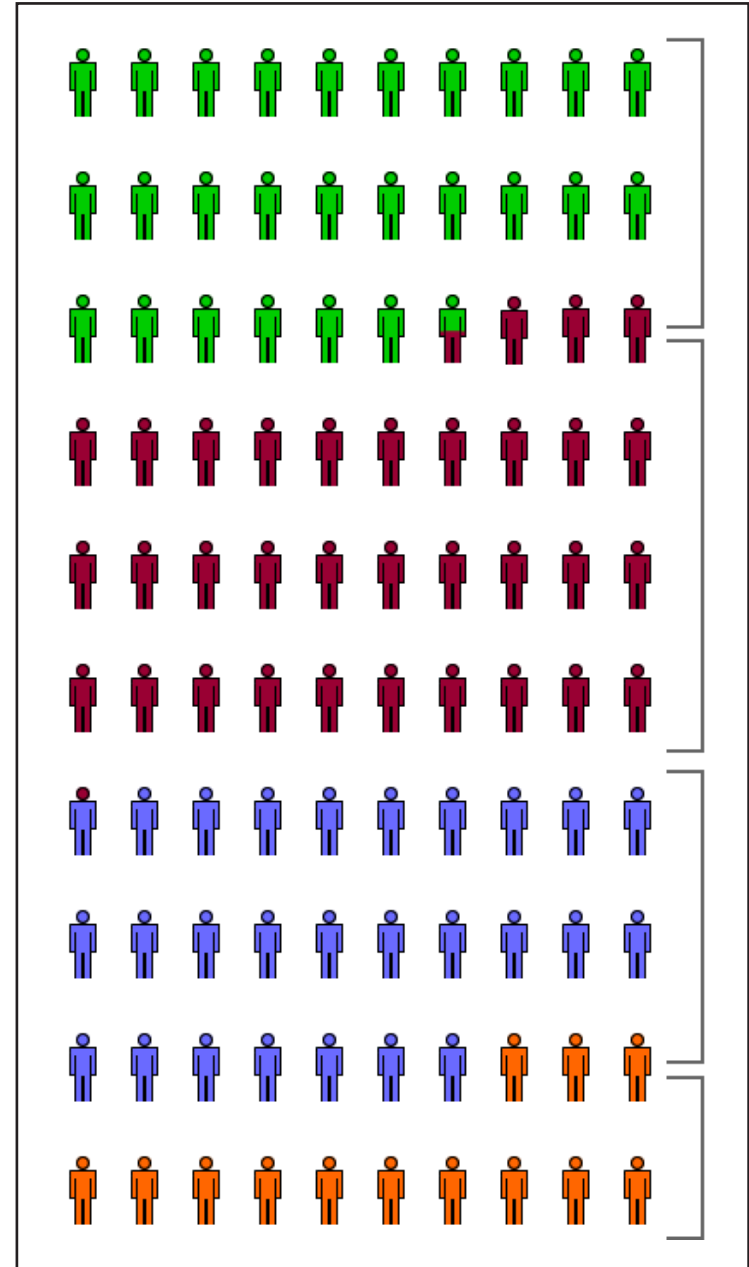


Regionally, the change in the distribution of age groups between 2000 and 2010 has been most notable among the working age population.

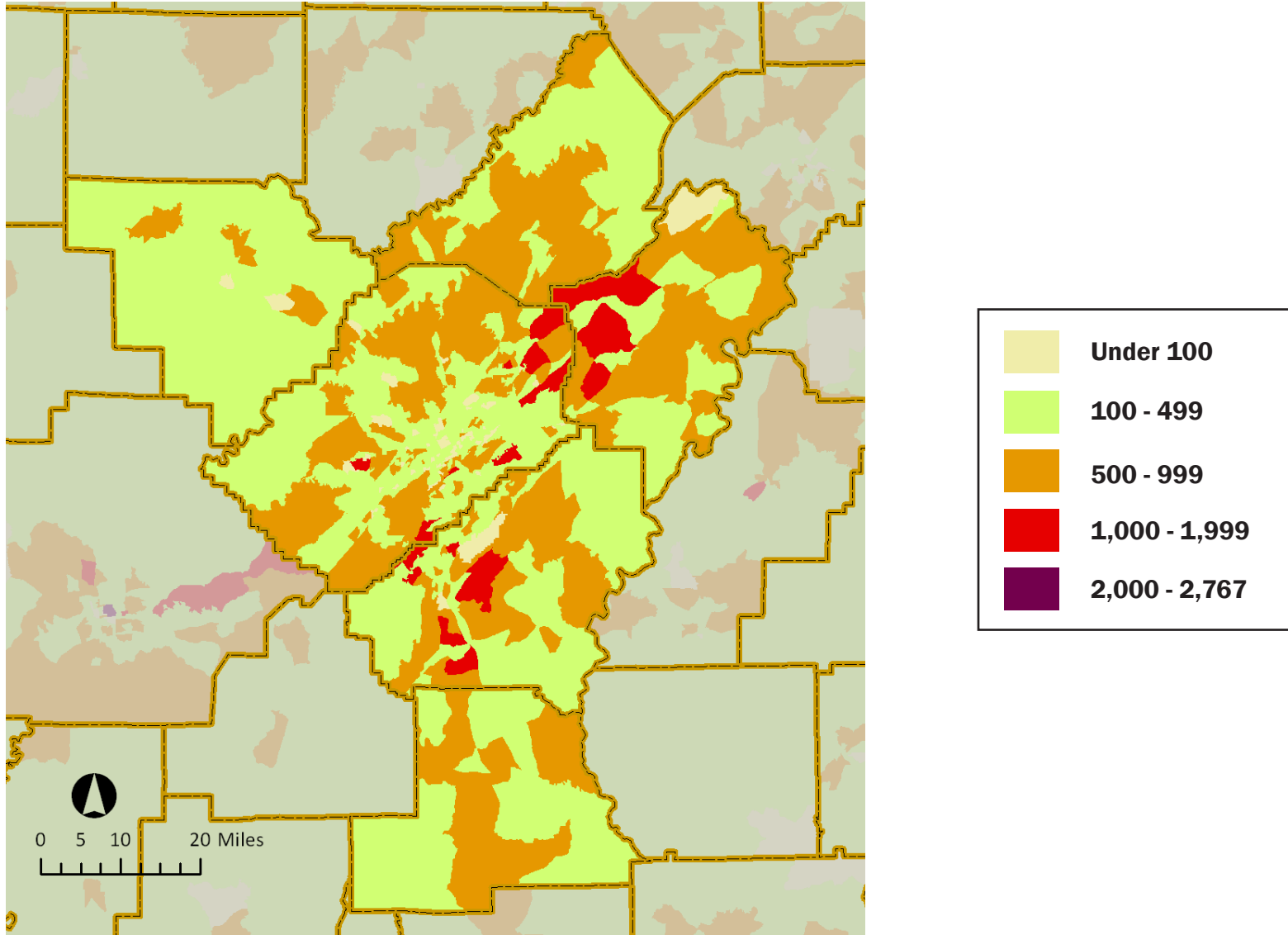
While the percent share of persons age 19 or younger has remained relatively stable over the decade, persons aged 20 to 44 years have seen a decline, dropping from a 37% share in 2000 to 34% in 2010. Persons aged 45 to 64 have seen a sharp increase in the percent share of the total population, increasing from 23% in 2000 to 27% in 2010. The changes in the percent share of these age groups indicate that the region will experience a marked increase in the senior/elderly population over the next few decades as the baby boomer generation continues to age.



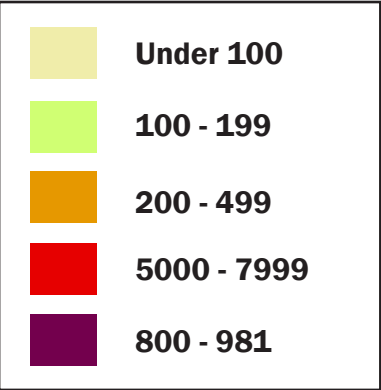
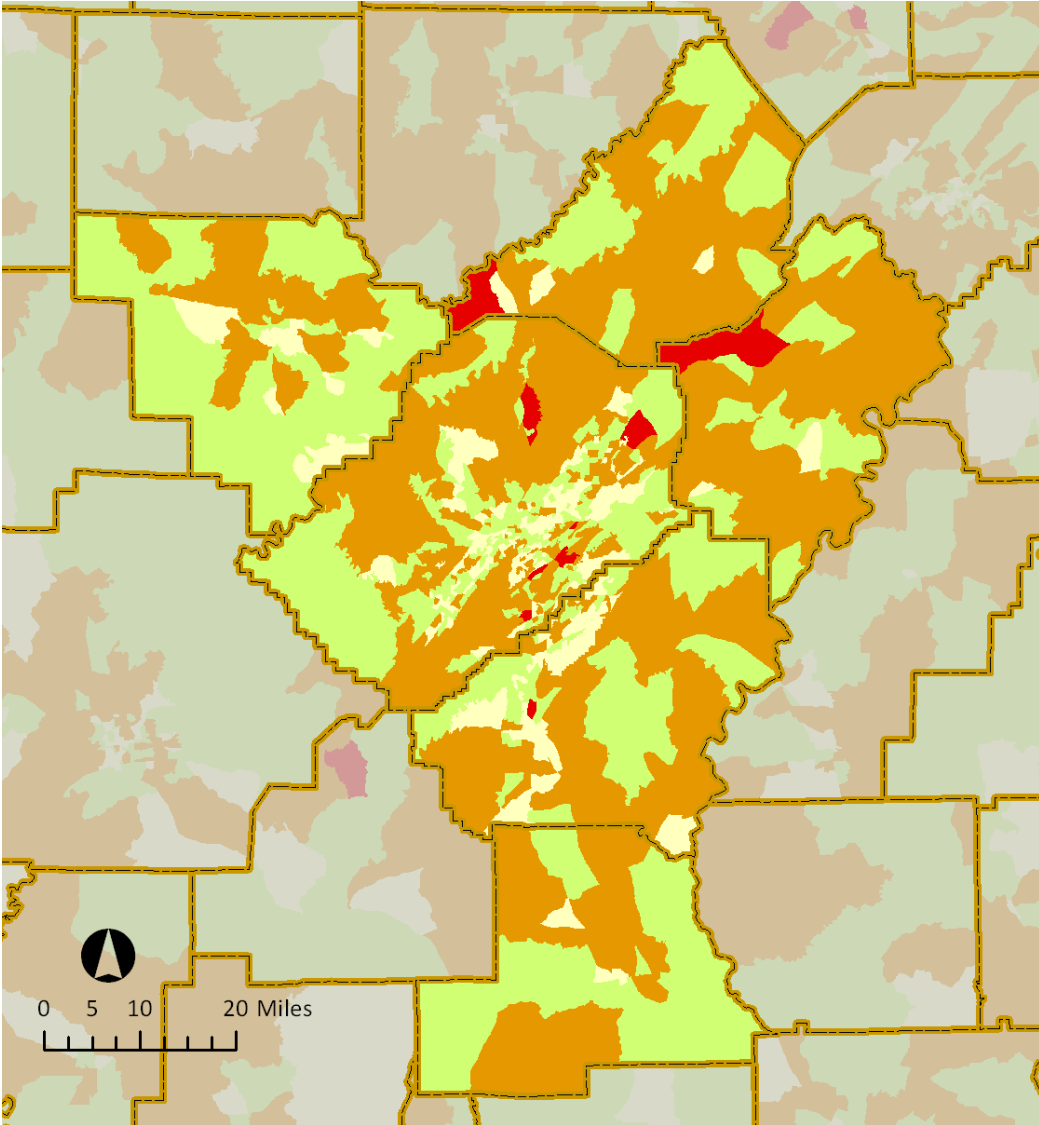
Regional Age Cohorts



Youth Population Concentrations



Senior Population Concentrations



DIVERSITY

The Greater Birmingham region has long been at the forefront of racial diversity issues, with the staunch opposition to racial integration in the middle of the twentieth century to its firm support of civil rights and racial justice today. There are several demographic dynamics at work in the region affecting diversity, including the continuing change in the ethnic composition, an increasing share of the immigrant (legal or unauthorized) population, disproportionate racial settlement patterns within the urban and suburban communities, and an increasing share of the aging population. These dynamics are interrelated and have significant implications for the future performance potential of the region.

The region is becoming increasingly more diverse. Between 2000 and 2010, the region's White population decreased from 69% to 65%. While the Black population remained at 28%, other racial categories, particularly those who identify themselves as of mixed race, increased from 2% to 3% and those of Hispanic Origin increased from 2% to 4%. These changes in the racial composition are more evidenced at the county level, where racial settlement patterns follow the suburbanization trends of residents moving from the urban core in Jefferson County to outlying, rural counties.

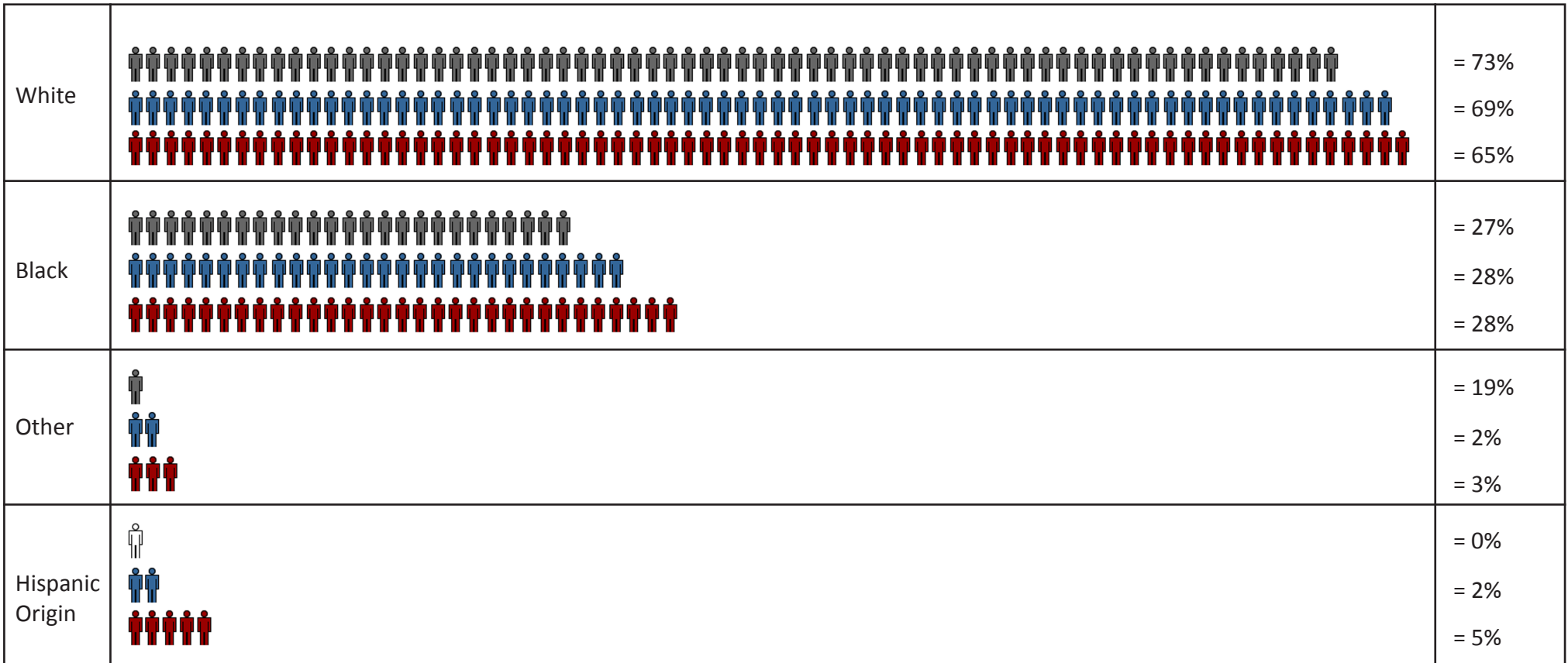
Though out-migration of residents from Jefferson County, particularly from the City of Birmingham, initially began with White residents, this trend has grown to include residents of all races as the urban housing stock continues to age and residential income increases, providing motive and means to relocate.

According to US Census figures, the number of foreign born residents in the region nearly doubled between 2000 and 2010, increasing from 22,135 to 44,008.

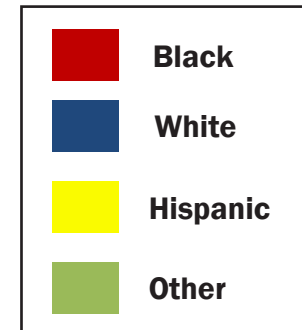
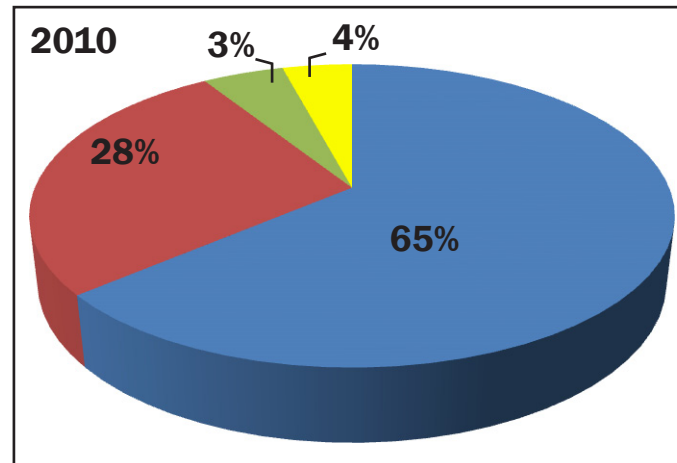
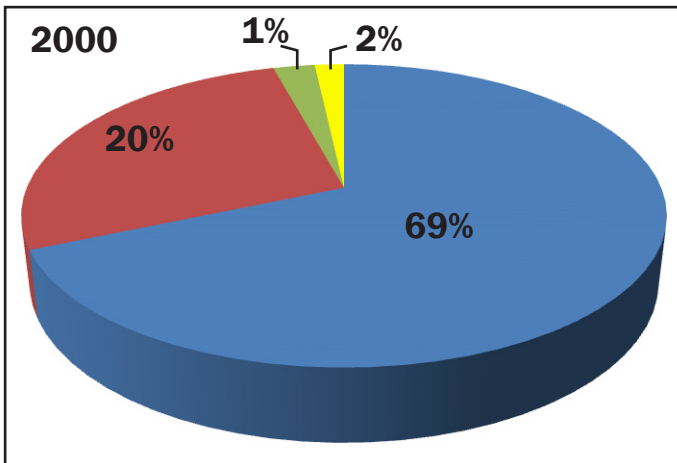
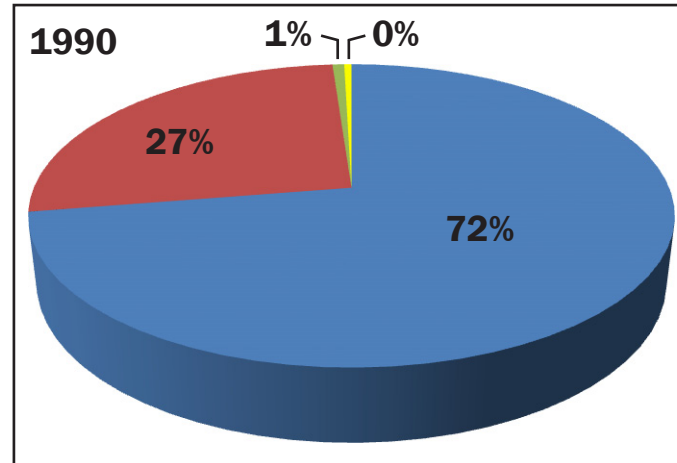
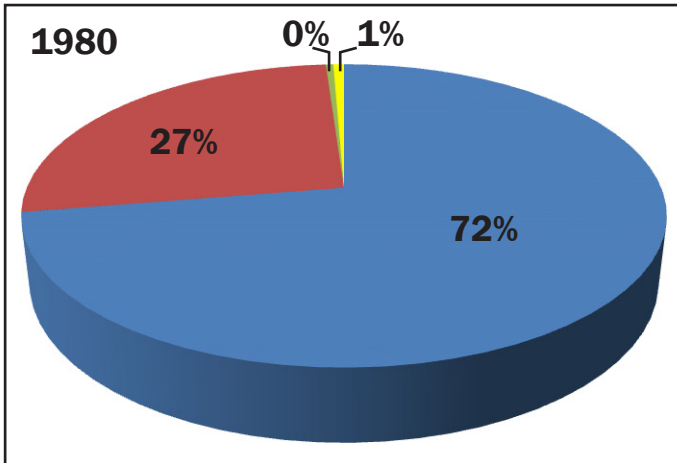
Individuals from Latin American countries made up the largest share with 58%, followed by Asia with 26%, Europe with 8%, and other countries with 8%. While the decennial census does not distinguish between legal or illegal entry, and undocumented persons residing in the country and state are not easily counted, some recent estimates* have placed the number of illegal aliens in the State of Alabama at 120,000 to 125,000. In the Birmingham Region, much of the presence of illegal residents is associated with low wage employment opportunities, particularly within the Construction, Manufacturing, and Agricultural industries.

**The Pew Hispanic Center and the Federation for American Immigration Reform, 2010*

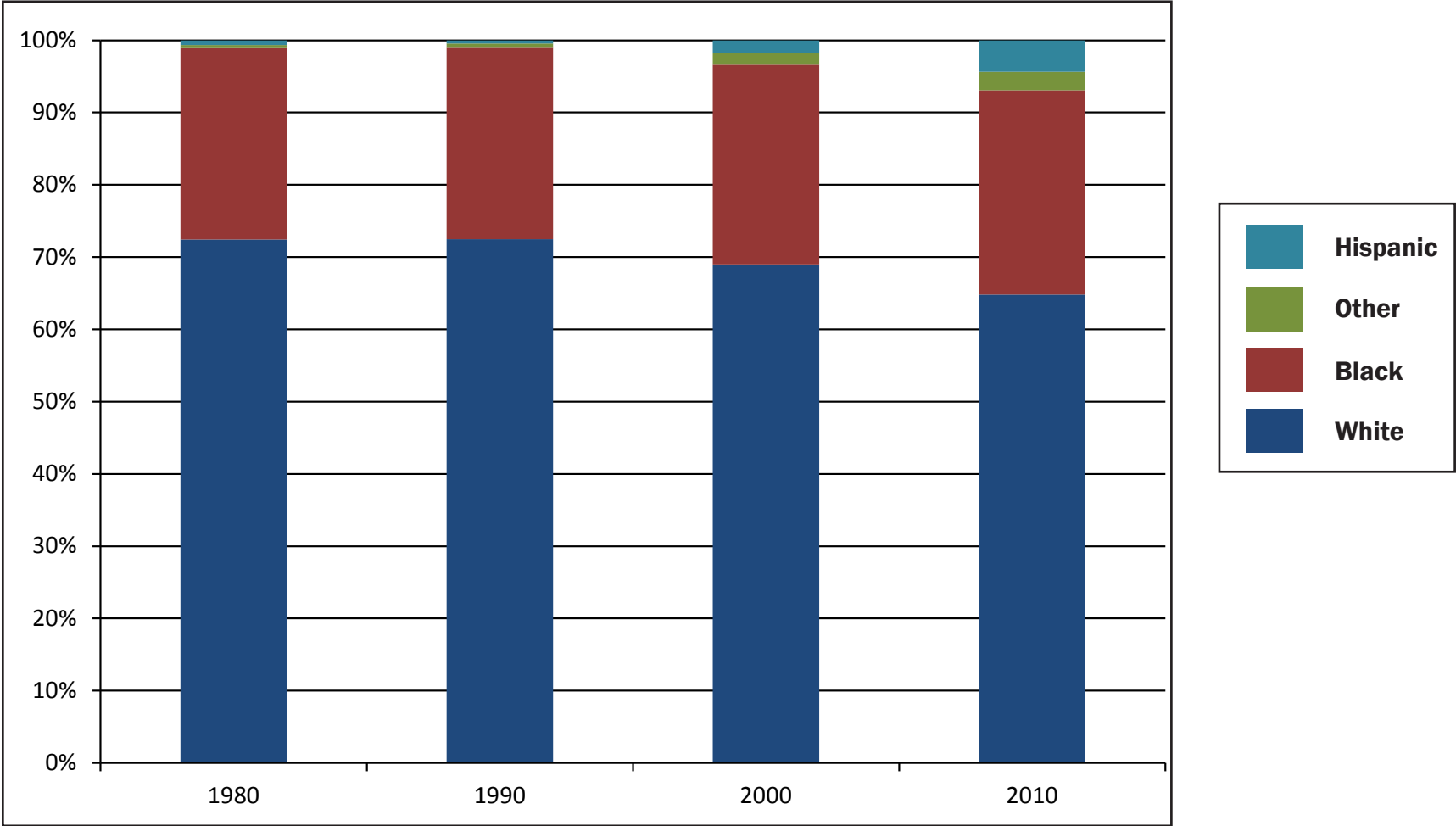
Regional Racial Composition [1990-2000]



Population Distribution By Race & Hispanic Origin [1980-2010]



Racial Distribution by County [1990-2000]



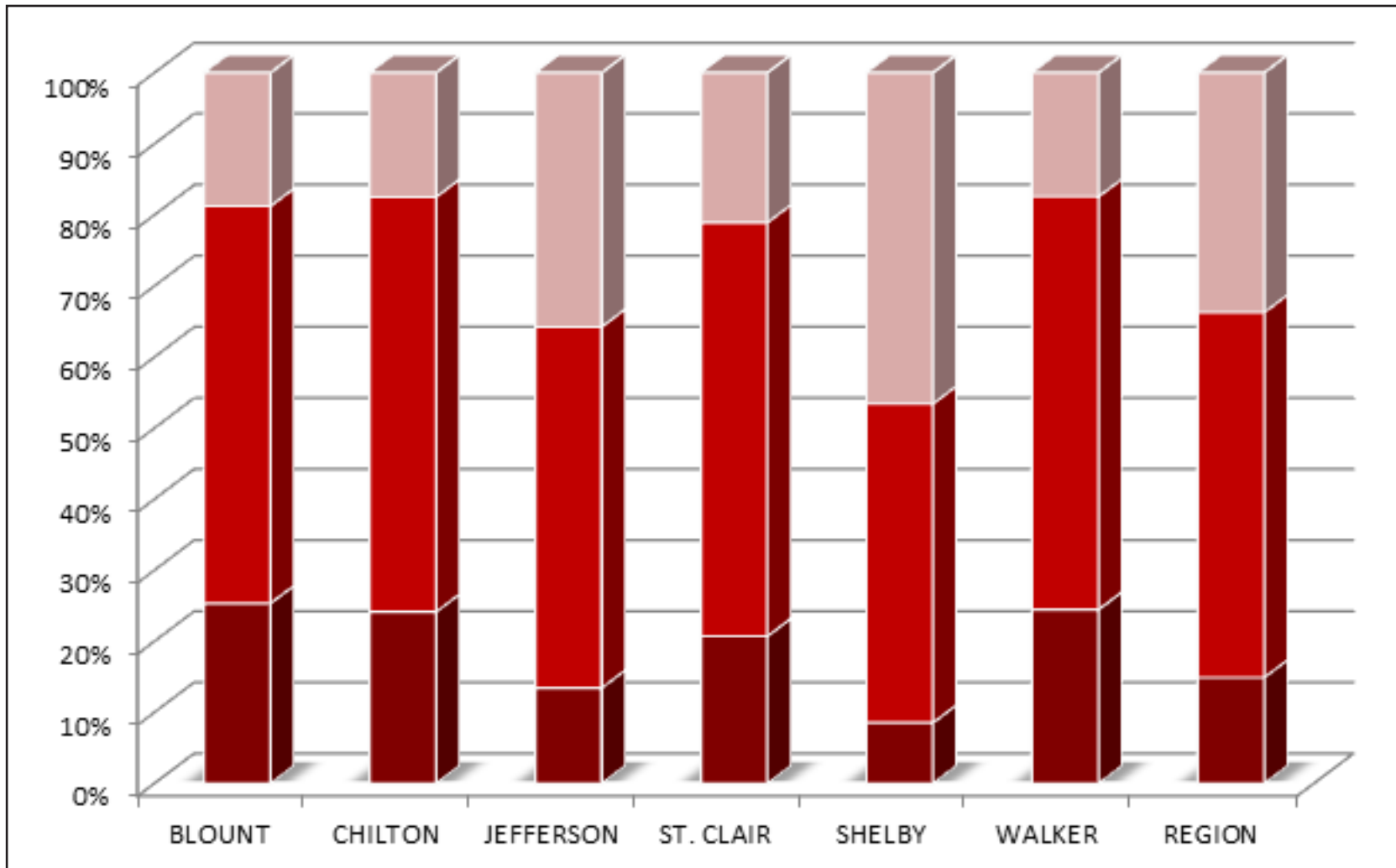
[EDUCATION]

Quality education is a major factor for the success of individuals, cities, counties, and the region – and thus an important element of a prosperous and sustainable economy. Education is a community investment in training the future workforce. Oftentimes, the location of a skilled workforce is the primary cause for the decision to locate or relocate a business.

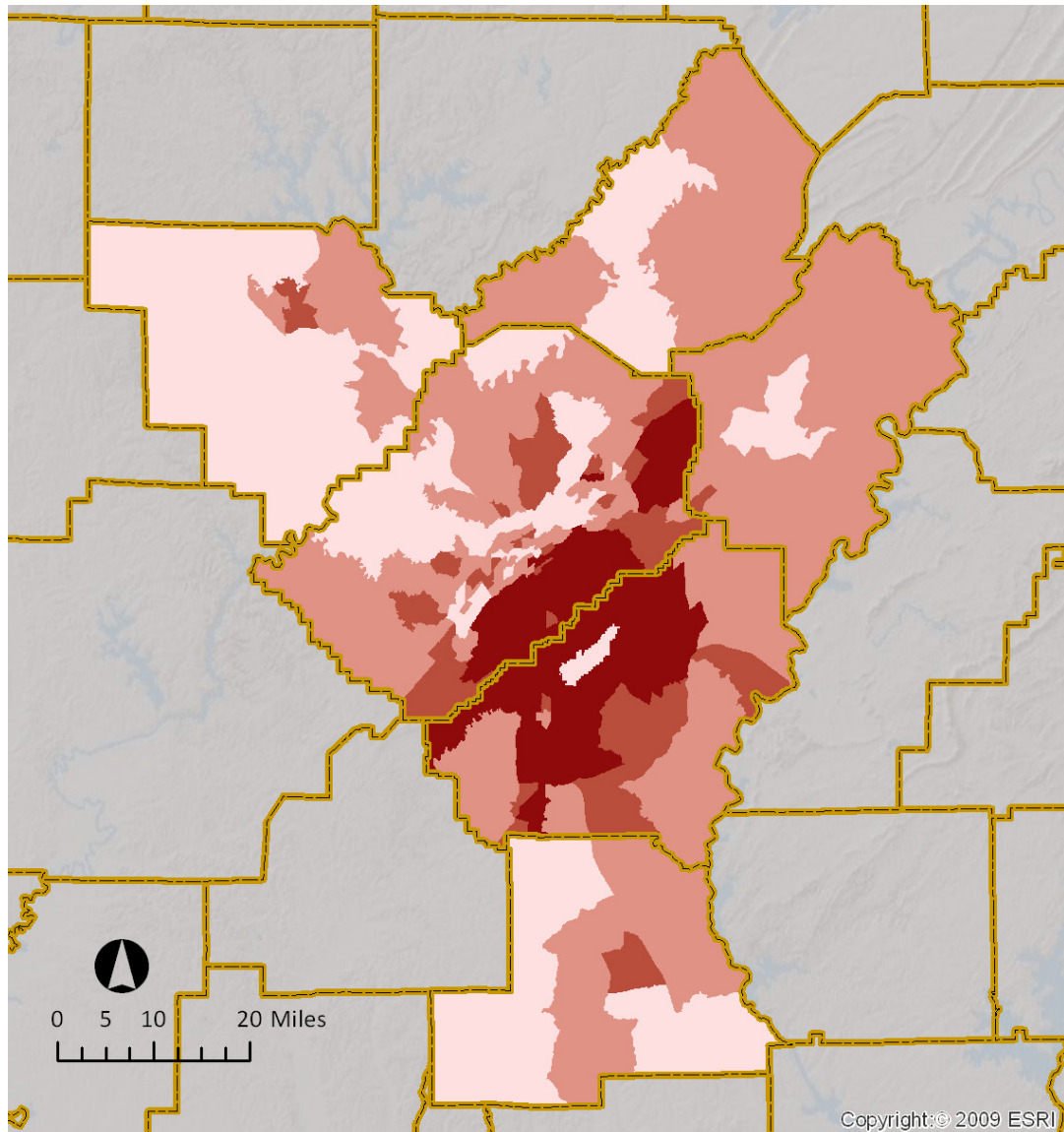
The Greater Birmingham region is home to ten institutions of higher learning, including four-year colleges such as the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Samford University, the University of Montevallo, and Birmingham-Southern College as well as two-year professional schools such as Lawson State Community College and Jefferson State Community College. Combined student enrollment in 2010 totaled over 48,000 students.

Educational attainment is the highest level of schooling each student attended and successfully completed. Approximately 44% of the region's population age 25 years and older never attended college, with nearly 15% not completing high school and 29% earning no degree beyond a high school diploma. Conversely, **17% of the region's population age 25 years and older have earned at least a 4-year college degree** (including Bachelor's degrees as well as Master's, Doctorate, or Professional degrees).

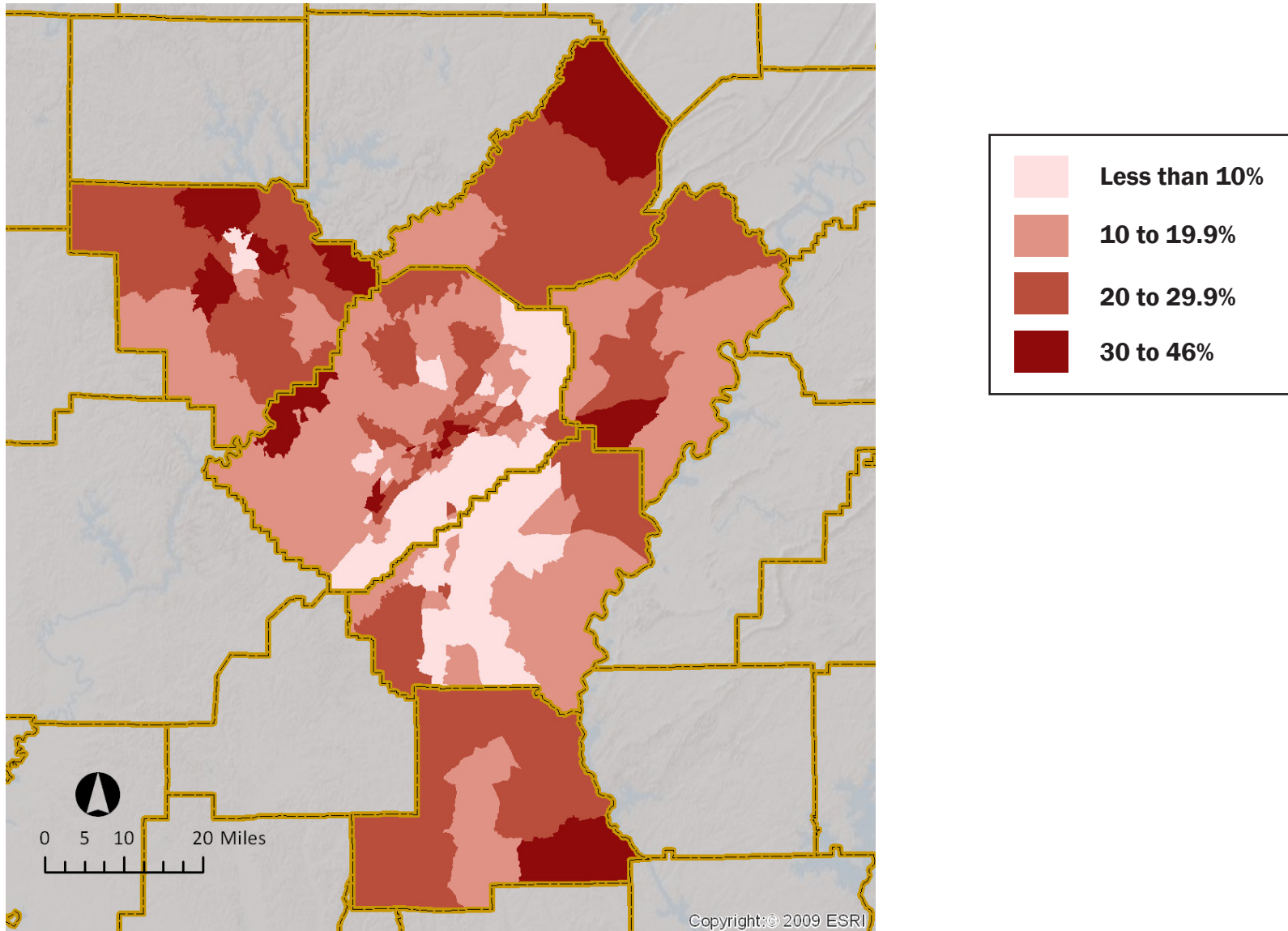
Regional Educational Attainment [2010]



Concentrations of Persons Age 25 and Older with a Bachelor's or Higher Degree by Census Tract [2010]



Concentrations of Persons Age 25 and Older with No High School Degree by Census Tract [2010]



[CONSTRUCTION & INCOME]

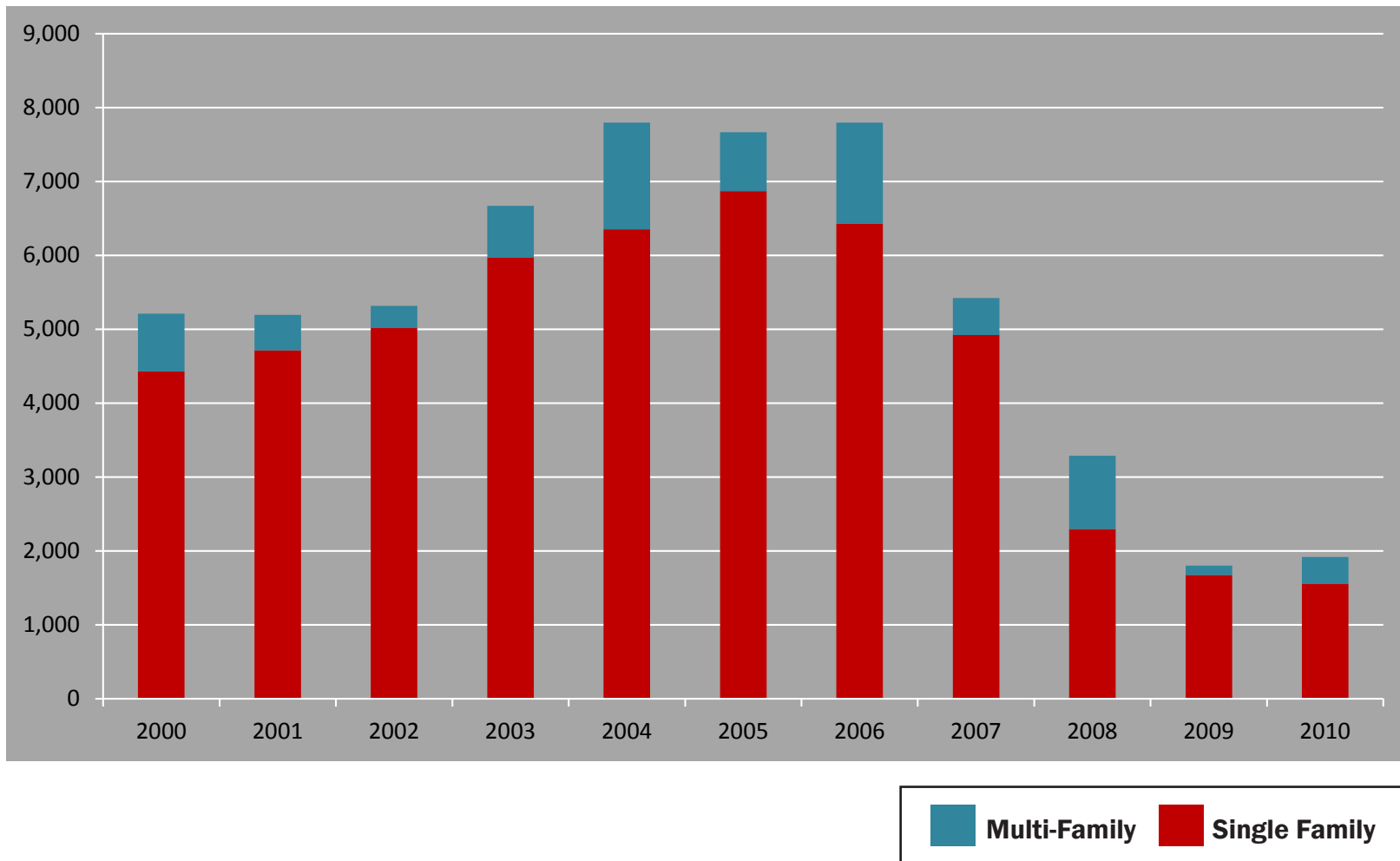
The region's balance of housing and jobs has implications for the economy, transportation, infrastructure, and overall quality of life for the residents. The construction industry is also an important component of employment and economic contributor to the region. The increasing trend of residential suburbanization in the region has increased the cost of transportation and commute times for individuals employed in the region. Without opportunities for individuals to live near work, commute times and costs will continue to grow. Many individuals in the region commute long distances to their jobs because they cannot afford to live closer to where they work. Additionally, different geographical distributions of new housing result in different needs for support infrastructure and services that add costs to new development and financial burdens to communities not prepared to accommodate them.

Between 2007 and 2009 the total number of residential building permits in the region fell by 67 percent from 5,422 units to 1,798 units, with the largest decline being within the single family home sector. **Between 2000 and 2010, the region has averaged 5,279 total units annually.** The majority of the residential construction permits, 56 percent, were issued within Jefferson County with another 34 percent having been issued within Shelby County. Multifamily units have averaged 713 units annually between 2000 and 2010, with the peak year of 2004 totaling 1,442 units. Multifamily construction also declined substantially due to the market recession but has made some recent gains.

Mode of Transportation to Work & Mean Travel Time

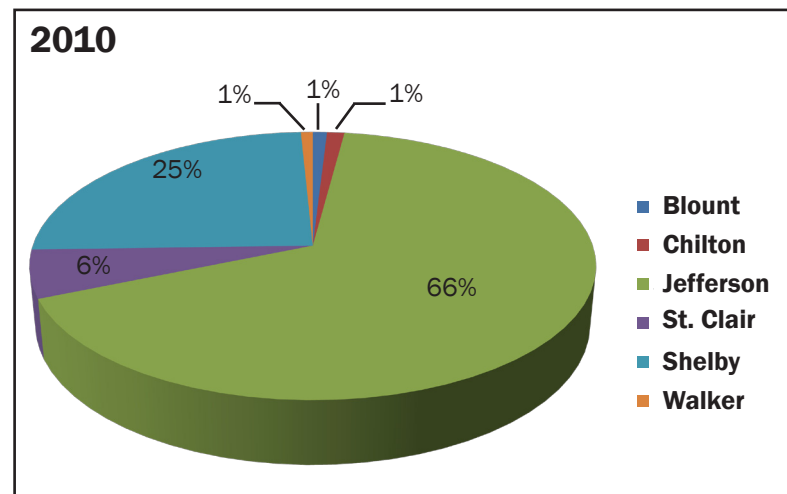
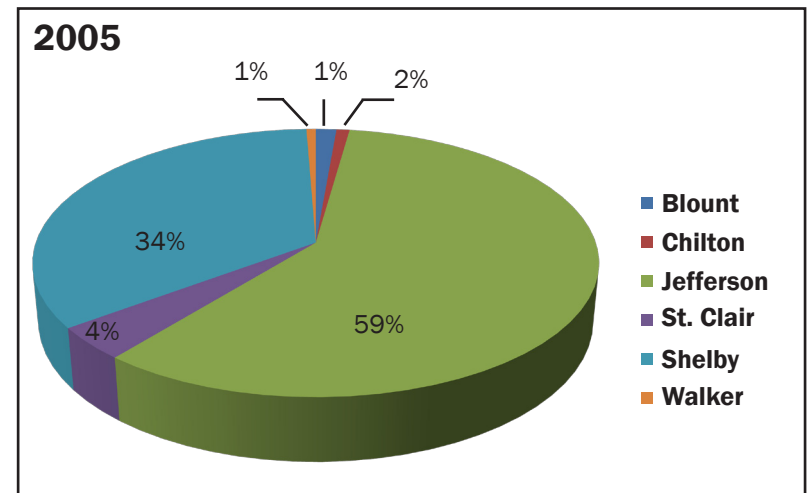
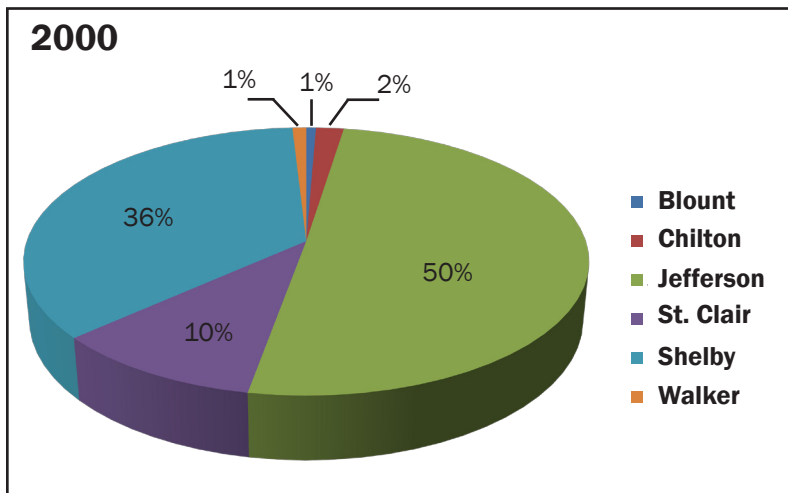
	BLOUNT COUNTY		CHILTON COUNTY		JEFFERSON COUNTY		ST. CLAIR COUNTY		SHELBY COUNTY		WALKER COUNTY		REGION	
TOTAL LABOR FORCE (Employed, Age 16+)	26,744 people		20,222 people		330,602 people		38,302 people		101,237 people		28,840 people		545,947 people	
DRIVE ALONE	19,335	80.6%	14,640	80.9%	246,282	83.5%	28,996	84.1%	78,960	84.1%	21,095	85.4%	409,312	83.6%
CARPPOOL	3,421	14.3%	2,814	15.5%	32,905	11.2%	3,806	11.0%	8,394	8.9%	2,721	11.0%	54,062	11%
TRANSIT	13	0.1%	16	0.1%	3,197	1.1%	41	0.1%	202	0.2%	44	0.2%	3,513	0.7%
WALKED	352	1.5%	188	1.0%	3,643	1.2%	185	0.5%	958	1.0%	144	0.6%	5,470	1.1%
OTHER	77	0.3%	154	0.9%	1,873	0.6%	305	0.9%	735	0.8%	257	1.0%	3,401	0.7%
WORKED AT HOME	780	3.3%	289	1.6%	6,879	2.3%	1,160	3.4%	4,594	4.9%	427	1.7%	14,129	2.9%
MEAN TRAVEL TIME TO WORK	33.2 minutes		32 minutes		23.3 minutes		30.1 minutes		29 minutes		28.8 minutes		29.4 minutes	
OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS	20,605 units		16,563 units		260,441 units		29,574 units		71,759 units		25,800 units		424,742 units	
HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT A VEHICLE	707	3.4%	65	4.0%	20,822	8.0%	1,017	3.4%	1,510	2.1%	1,614	6.3%	26,335	6.2%

Regional Housing Construction Trends (SF & MF) [2000-2010]

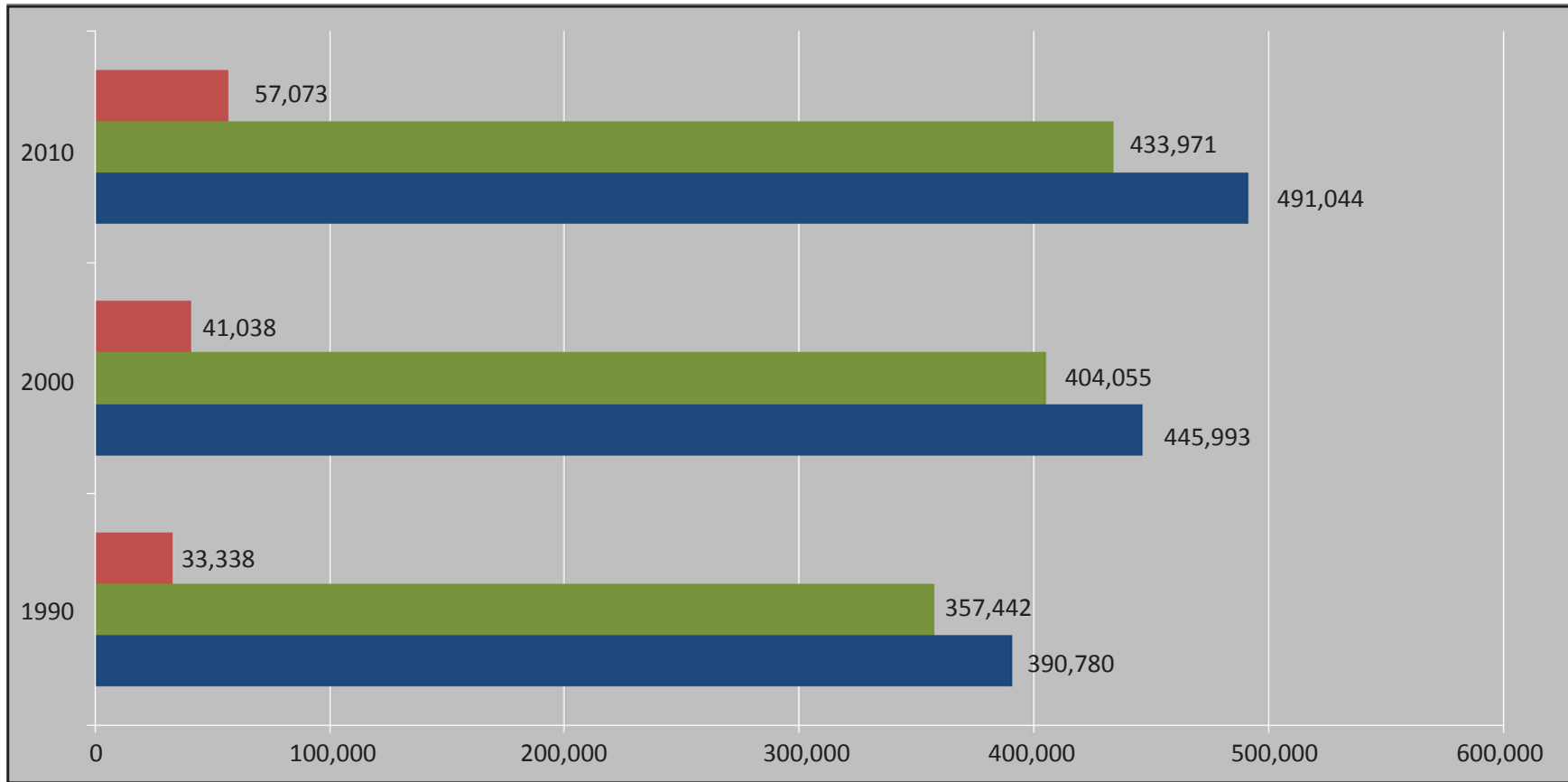


Between 2000 and 2005, the region experienced an increase in the total number of permits issued from 5,210 units to 7,665 units. By 2010 the total number of permits issued declined to 1,916 units, a 75 percent decrease. While this trend has since reversed, the annual permit levels have not yet risen to pre-recession levels. The distribution of permits within the region is heavily concentrated within Jefferson County which has consisted of over half of all issued permits. Shelby County has consistently followed accounting for about one-third of all permits. St. Clair County, having shown a substantial increase in home construction between 2000 and 2005, has been slower to recover in that sector by 2010.

Percent Share of Issued Housing Permits by County

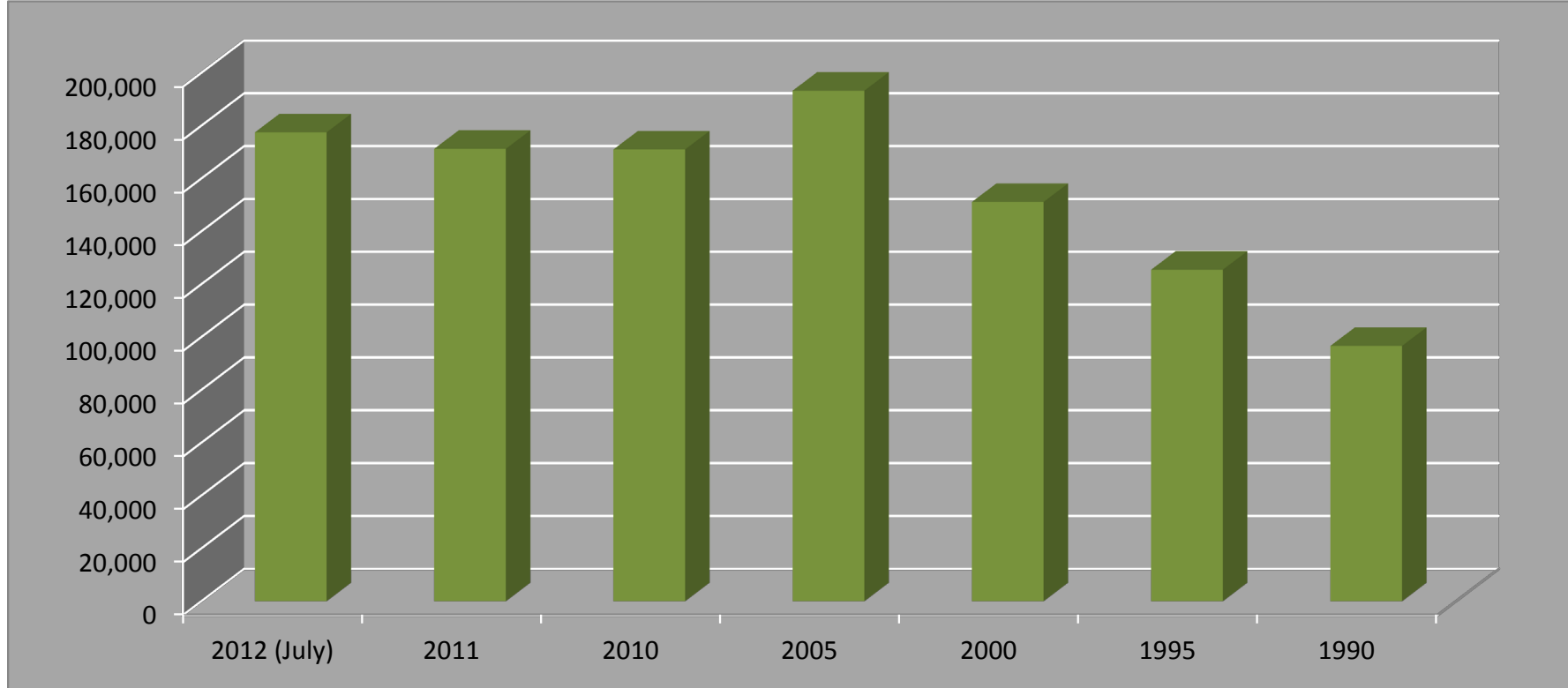


Total Units, Vacant Units, & Built Units [1990-2010]

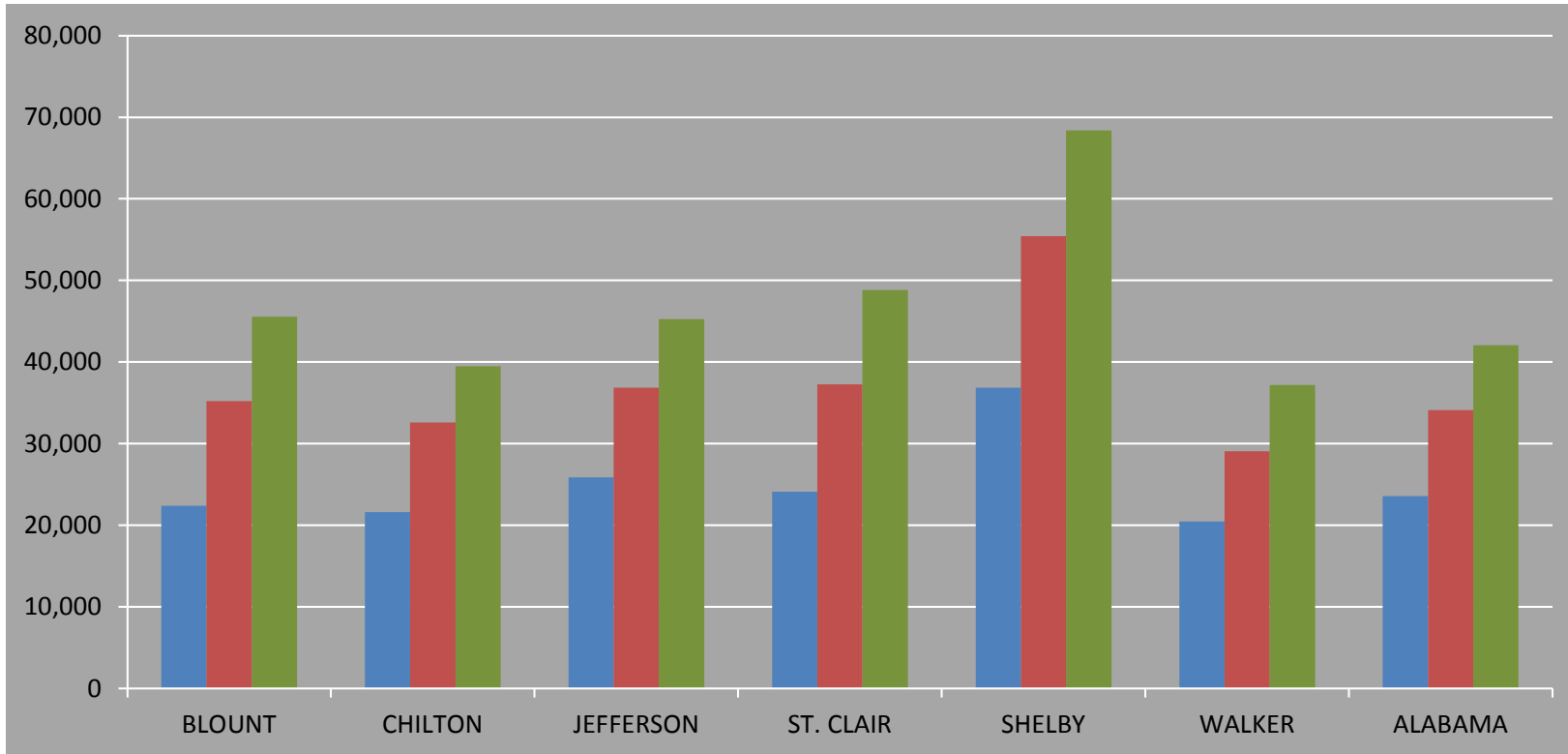


The amount of housing construction, population growth, and new households is a major determinant of housing prices. Housing affordability provides an indication as to the level of financial burden of housing expenses which constitute the largest share of household expenditures, typically followed by transportation costs. The affordability of homes is impacted by household income, home prices, and mortgage interest rates. While mortgage interest rates have fallen to historic lows and the median value of specified owner-occupied housing units have increased along with median household income, average home selling prices have decreased since 2005.

Average Home Selling Price [1990-2012]



Median Household Income [1990-2012]



INFRASTRUCTURE

WATER & SEWER

The six counties are located within four drainage basins - the Black Warrior, Coosa, Cahaba and Alabama rivers. Of the 52 to 57 inches of annual rainfall, 5 inches contribute to groundwater recharge and over half becomes surface runoff entering streams and rivers. Alabama Power Company is a major controlling force over the region's water resources. It controls the water on the Black Warrior River with a hydropower dam on the Sipsey Fork. It also owns four major reservoirs on the Coosa River.

The Cahaba River originates in western St. Clair County and extends through the region to Dallas County. The river, along with the reservoir Lake Purdy, provides raw water to the Shades Mountain filter plant.

There are over 70 water systems in the six-county region. These systems have a total water treatment capacity of approximately 300 MGD; the Water Works and Sewer Board for the City of Birmingham is the largest area provider with a treatment capacity of approximately 190 MGD.

There are numerous public and private sewer collection and treatment systems. According to the most recently available data, Jefferson County has over 2,600 miles of sewer lines and 140 pumping stations. There is increasing demand in the five remaining counties for expanded sewage collection and treatment systems to accommodate growth and system maintenance requirements.

ELECTRICITY

Electric power is provided throughout the region predominately by Alabama Power Company. Other providers include the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Central Alabama Electric Cooperative. Natural gas can be provided in firm or interruptible service in large quantities. Alabama Gas Corporation is the region's largest natural gas distribution company and supplies most of the region; however, there are also municipal and private gas distribution systems serving communities throughout the region.

BROADBAND

Broadband - continuous high-speed internet access that does not interrupt traditional dial-up access - has become a priority for the State of Alabama through its Connecting Alabama initiative. The region is served by six primary broadband providers - Bright House Networks, AT&T Mobility, Sprint, Verizon Wireless, T-Mobile, and AT&T Alabama. However, there are still major deficiencies in broadband availability throughout the region and primarily in rural areas. The Connecting Alabama initiative has mapped broadband availability and is monitoring areas of need and facilitating expansion of service areas. See <http://www.connectingalabama.gov> for additional information.

TRANSPORTATION

The greater Birmingham region is well connected to major transportation hubs in the southeast. From local commuting to freight travel, there are multiple ways to travel through the region. Transportation modes in the region include highway, air, railroad, and water. This transportation infrastructure allows for the efficient movement of raw and finished materials as well as commuter travel to Atlanta, Memphis, Nashville, New Orleans, and Mobile.

The Birmingham region's interstate and highway system is most utilized for commuter transportation and freight travel. There are approximately 292 miles of Interstate system and over 1,200 miles of U.S. and State highways within the region, including the recently completed I-22 corridor from Birmingham to Memphis. This network, including I-65 that runs north to south between Nashville, TN and Mobile, AL as well as I-20/59 that runs east to west from Atlanta, GA to Dallas-Fort Worth, TX, is crisscrossed by an extensive rail network.

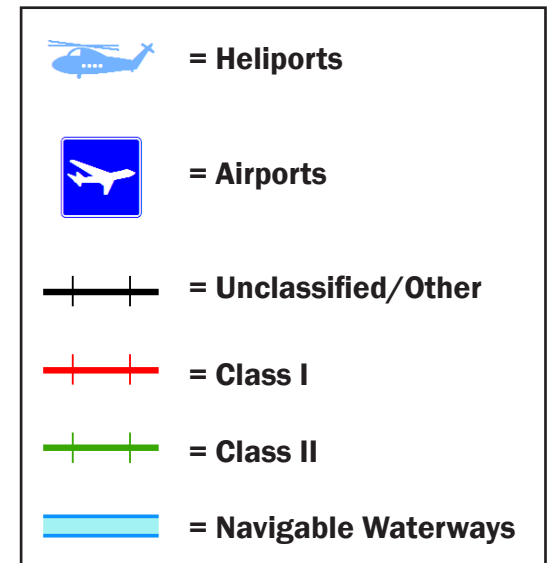
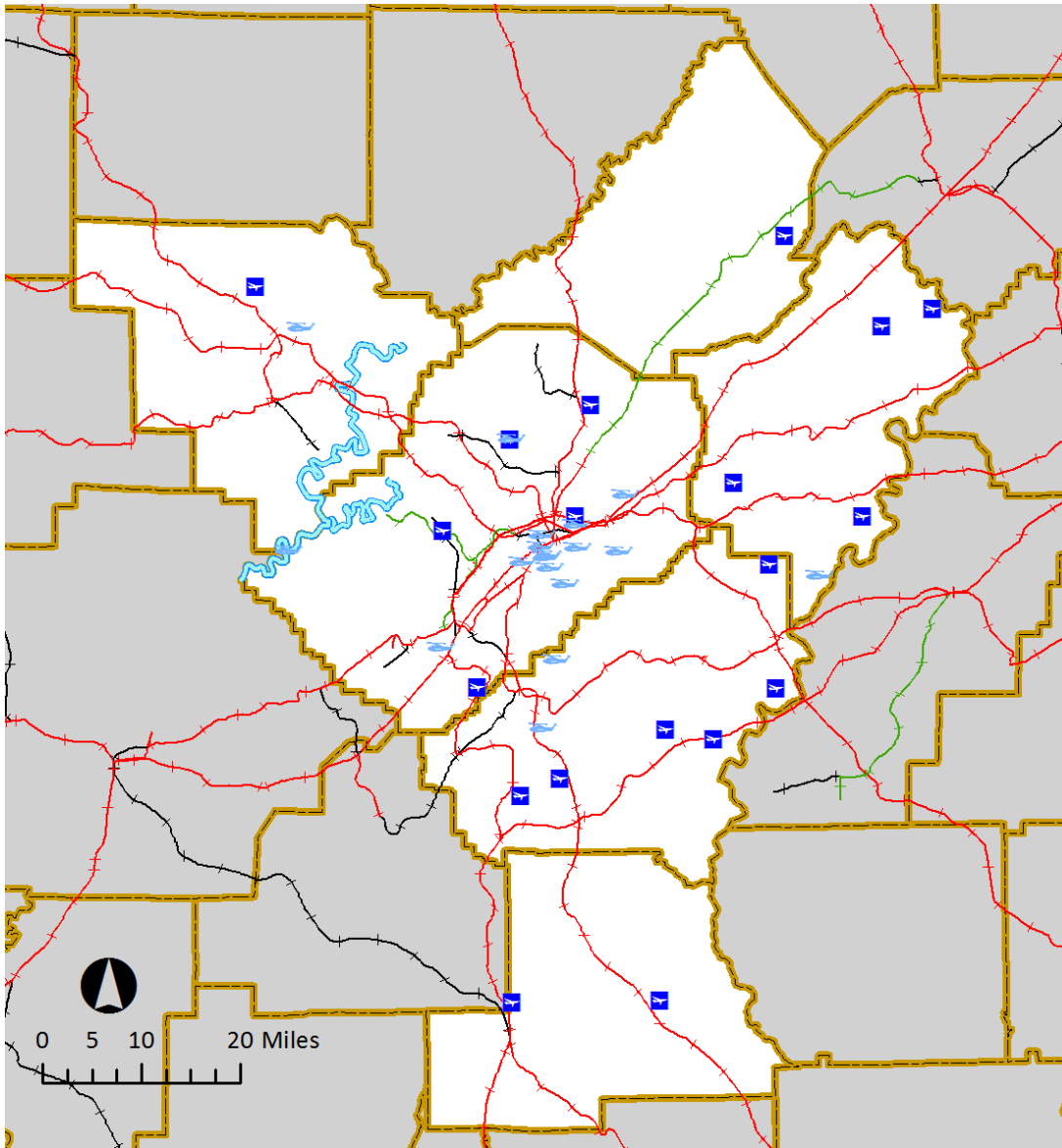
The Birmingham region is served by three Class I railroads (BNSF, CSXT and NS). The industry has recently made substantial investment on new or upgraded rail infrastructure and facilities in preparation for the growing importance of the region as a major rail hub. As part of the Crescent Corridor project, the recent addition of the Birmingham Regional Intermodal Facility in southwest Jefferson County will offer the only intermodal service for domestic containers and trailers at Birmingham, with service to and from the northeast, plus Dallas and Mexico with Kansas City Southern.

The region's air passengers and cargo are primarily served by the Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport which accommodates nearly 3 million travelers per year and generates nearly \$ 1 billion per year in economic activity. The Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport serves as a significant distribution point for air cargo, shipping nearly 34,000 tons of cargo in 2005. The recent expansion of the air cargo complex is expected to substantially increase the amount of cargo movement throughout the region. In addition to the Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport, the region holds six additional public general aviation airports, twelve private air fields, and eighteen heliports that serve the region.

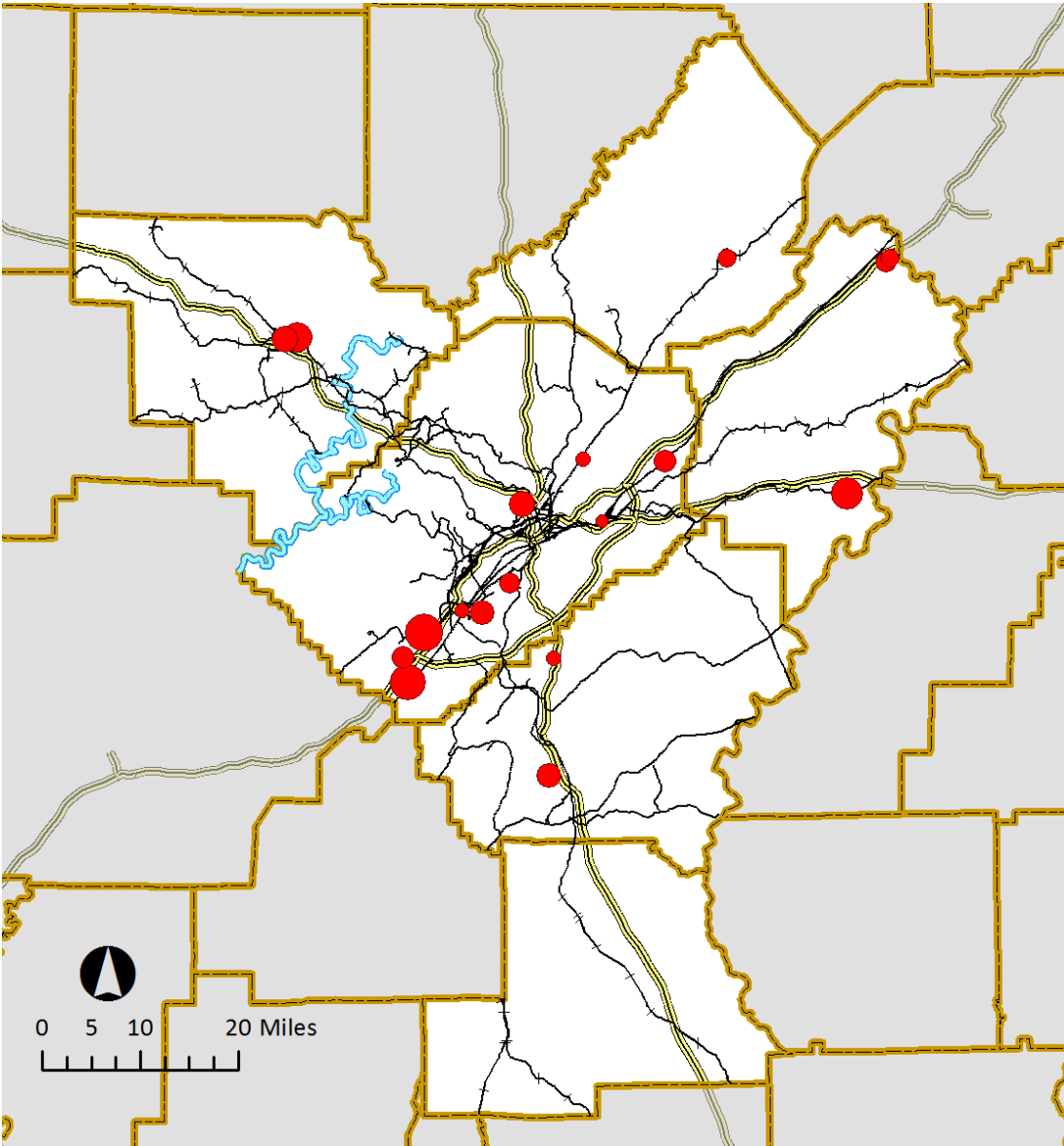
Port Birmingham is the region's access to inland waterway freight commerce. Located approximately eighteen miles northwest of the City of Birmingham along the Locust Fork of the Black Warrior River in Jefferson County, the port has served the region since 1920. It was designed in conjunction with the development of the Warrior River Barge Line, which permitted barge traffic from Birmingham to reach Mobile and New Orleans. The activity along the two-mile stretch of river primarily serves the steel and transportation industries with materials from Mobile. The port is linked to the Birmingham market and the ground transportation network by rail and highway infrastructure.

The Birmingham region is home to nearly forty industrial parks ranging in size from under 100 acres to over 800 acres. These parks, predominantly concentrated in Jefferson County, are located along primary transportation routes that include interstate highway and rail access. With the emergence of the region as a major freight hub, increased rail activity, and major investments to the automobile industry, additional demand for transportation and warehousing facilities have benefitted the region's industrial parks. Business activities range from automobile suppliers, pharmaceutical distribution, and retail distribution to engineering, general consumer services, and healthcare services.

Air, Rail, and Navigable Waterways



Regional Industrial Parks



NATURAL RESOURCES

Alabama is known for its large forests, with over 22 million acres (approximately 68% of the state's acreage) scattered throughout the state. These forests are valuable resources that provide wildlife habitats, recreation and outdoor opportunities and raw materials for industry. Ownership of the region's forest is primarily non-industrial private landholders (85 percent). Alabama forests generate over \$21 billion in revenue each year and provide over 122,000 jobs. The region's forest base includes yellow pine (41.2 percent) and over 200 native species of hardwoods (58.7 percent).

The region contains an abundance of minerals including coal, limestone, sand, shale, and clay. Most of the coal reserves are concentrated in Jefferson and Walker but coal deposits are also found in Blount, St. Clair and Shelby Counties. In Jefferson County, commercially extracted coal is mined from the Warrior and Cahaba Coalfields which produce high-grade bituminous coal for coke, gas, steam and domestic uses. Coal along the eastern side of the Warrior Field is superb coking coal. In Walker County, coal is found in the Warrior and Plateau Coal Basins.

Clay and shale, suitable for the manufacture of brick and tile, are present and mined throughout the region. Fire clay, which is mined in Blount and Walker Counties, lies beneath coal seams and can be mined in conjunction with coal.

The region's air passengers and cargo are primarily served by the Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport which accommodates nearly 3 million travelers per year and generates nearly \$ 1 billion per year in economic activity. The Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport serves as a significant distribution point for air cargo, shipping nearly 34,000 tons of cargo in 2005. The recent expansion of the air cargo complex is expected to substantially increase the amount of cargo movement throughout the region. In addition to the Birmingham-Shuttlesworth International Airport, the region holds six additional public general aviation airports, twelve private air fields, and eighteen heliports that serve the region.

Sand and gravel deposits which are ideal for construction and industrial use occur in Blount, Chilton and Jefferson Counties. Limestone is used in construction aggregates, in the manufacture of Portland cement, and for the production of agricultural limestone. There are also many stone quarries located near the fringe of urban areas to minimize the distance required for hauling quarried materials to construction and other sites.

WATER RESOURCES

The region has abundant surface water and ground water resources. Water in area streams and groundwater reservoirs is derived primarily from precipitation, which averages from 52 to 57 inches per year. Much of the water either evaporates, enters the soil zone where it is retained as soil moisture, is taken up and transpired by plants, or enters the groundwater system.

The greatest supply of surface water for the region comes from the Coosa, Warrior and Cahaba Rivers. The Cahaba River watershed, which drains an area of approximately 1,825 square miles in central Alabama, is the primary water source for Birmingham. Wastewater discharges, siltation (dirt), pesticides, and herbicide residues have degraded water quality in this river. Many of the region's highly developed areas are located in areas containing low yielding aquifers. The Pottsville Aquifer, which forms a part of the Cumberland Plateau and the Alabama Valley and Ridge ground water provinces, is a low-yielding aquifer that underlies all of Walker and part of Blount, Jefferson, St. Clair and Shelby counties. A higher yielding aquifer, the Valley and Ridge Aquifer, is found in parts of the same counties, excluding Walker. Gordo and Coker Aquifers, located in Chilton County, are in the Coastal Plain groundwater province and are moderate to high yielding.

CLIMATE

The region's climate is humid and subtropical with mild winters and long, hot summers. The annual average mean temperature for the region is around 62 degrees Fahrenheit. Rainfall is usually abundant and distributed throughout the year. The annual rainfall in Birmingham is 54 inches. Mild winters rarely produce temperatures low enough to cause freeze penetrations to depths greater than six inches. This makes subsurface construction for foundations, roadways, and underground utilities more practical and affordable than in harsher climates. Primary tornado season is in March and April, and there is a secondary tornado season in November and December.

POLLUTANT STANDARDS INDEX

Per the requirements of the Clean Air Act, the region must comply with air quality standards established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Regions found to be in noncompliance are classified as nonattainment areas; Jefferson County, Shelby County, and a portion of Walker County are classified as nonattainment for 24-hour Particulate Matter 2.5 standards as well as the annual Particulate Matter 2.5 standards. The region is thereby required to perform integrated transportation and air quality planning and implement pollution reduction strategies.

THINK PROSPERITY

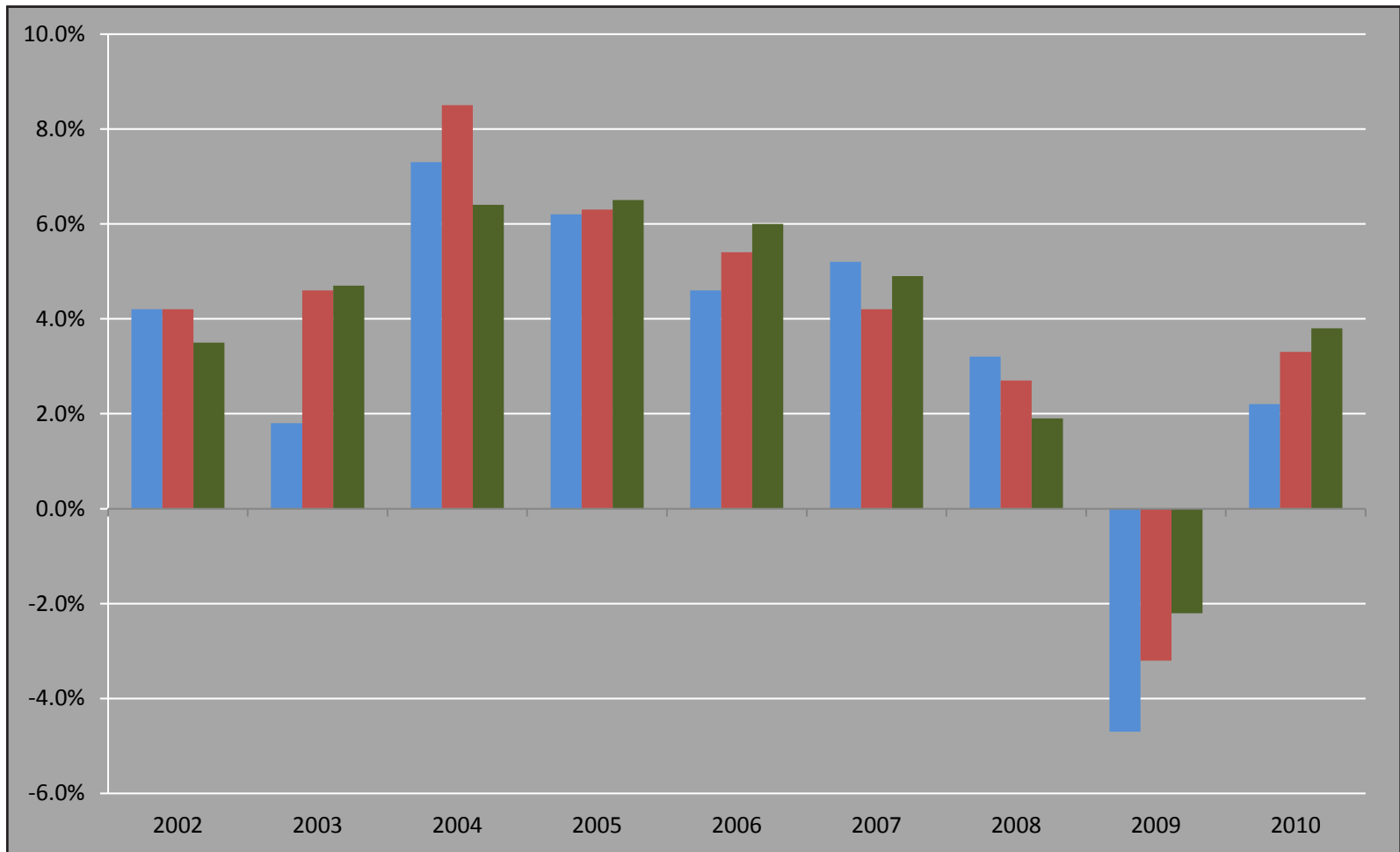
The economy of the Birmingham Region has historically been rooted in the iron and steel industry. Around 1871, the Elyton Land Company founded and incorporated the City of Birmingham after discovering the natural resource potential that existed with the tremendous deposits of iron ore, coal, and limestone – the essential ingredients in steel production. With the expansion of the railroads and the growing millworks and factories, the economic success of Birmingham grew. As the economic prosperity increased, so did the number of housing units, apartments, hotels, and private businesses.

Birmingham's economy was devastated when the Great Depression of the 1930's reduced the demand for iron and steel but recovered when World War II necessitated the increased production for the war effort. Following World War II, the economy of the region grew and began to diversify with the establishment of health care and medical research facilities. By the 1970's, along with

the residential suburbanization most prominently south and east of the City of Birmingham, the economic strength of the region began to evolve more with increases in the transportation, warehousing, retail, education, and financial industries. While these increases have helped diversify the region's economy, the advent of economic globalization and international trade has reduced the region's ability to compete within the industrial and manufacturing sectors.

The Birmingham region is the largest economy in the State of Alabama, making up over 30 percent of the state's total gross domestic product (GDP). In 2010 the region's GDP totaled \$53.8 billion. While the region's annual change in GDP typically mirrors the trends of the state and nation, it often underperforms by comparison. As a result of market recession in 2008, the impact on the Birmingham region's economy was evidenced with a decrease of nearly 5 percent in 2009, over double that of the national impact.

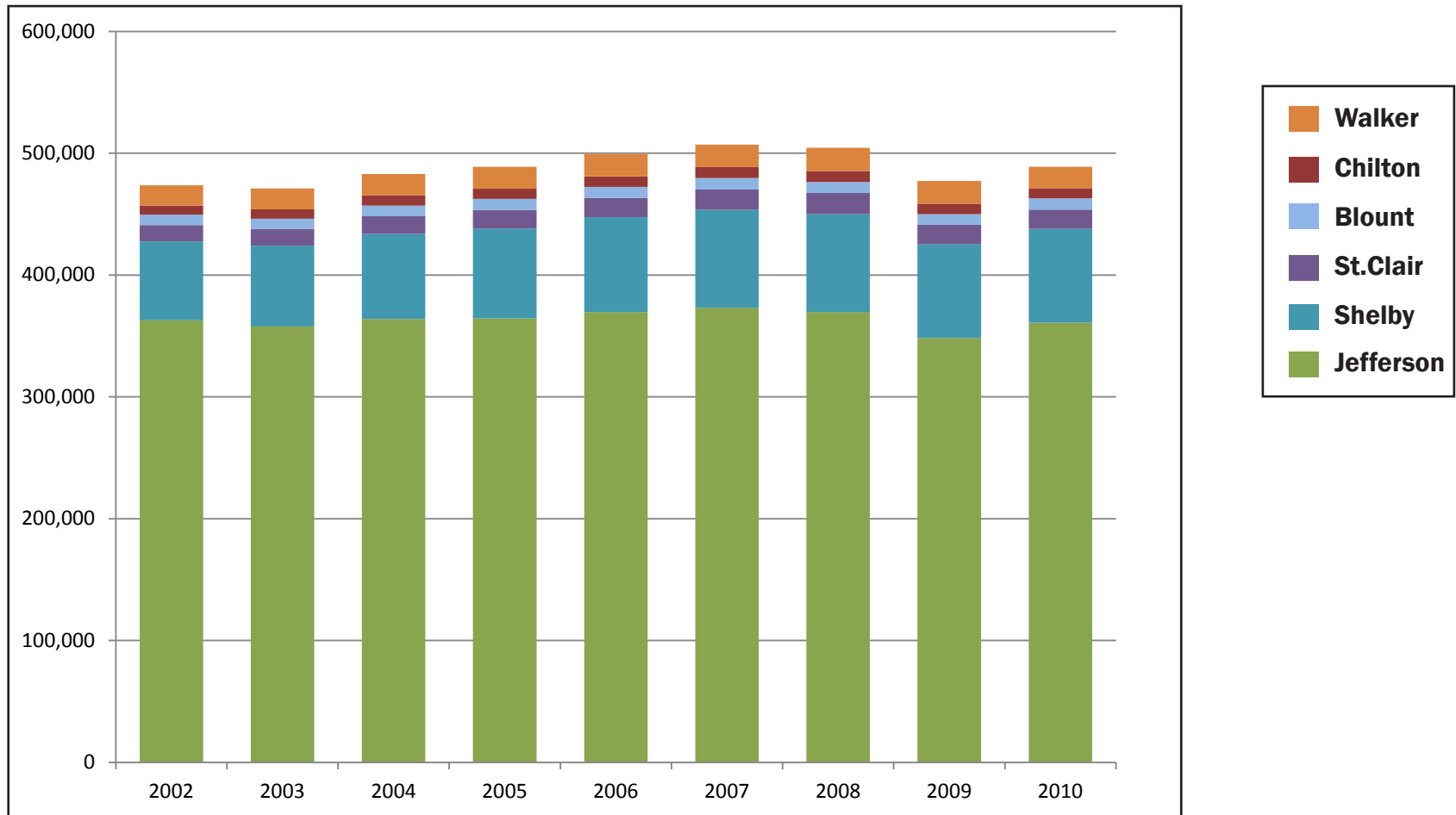
Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Percentage Change from Previous Year



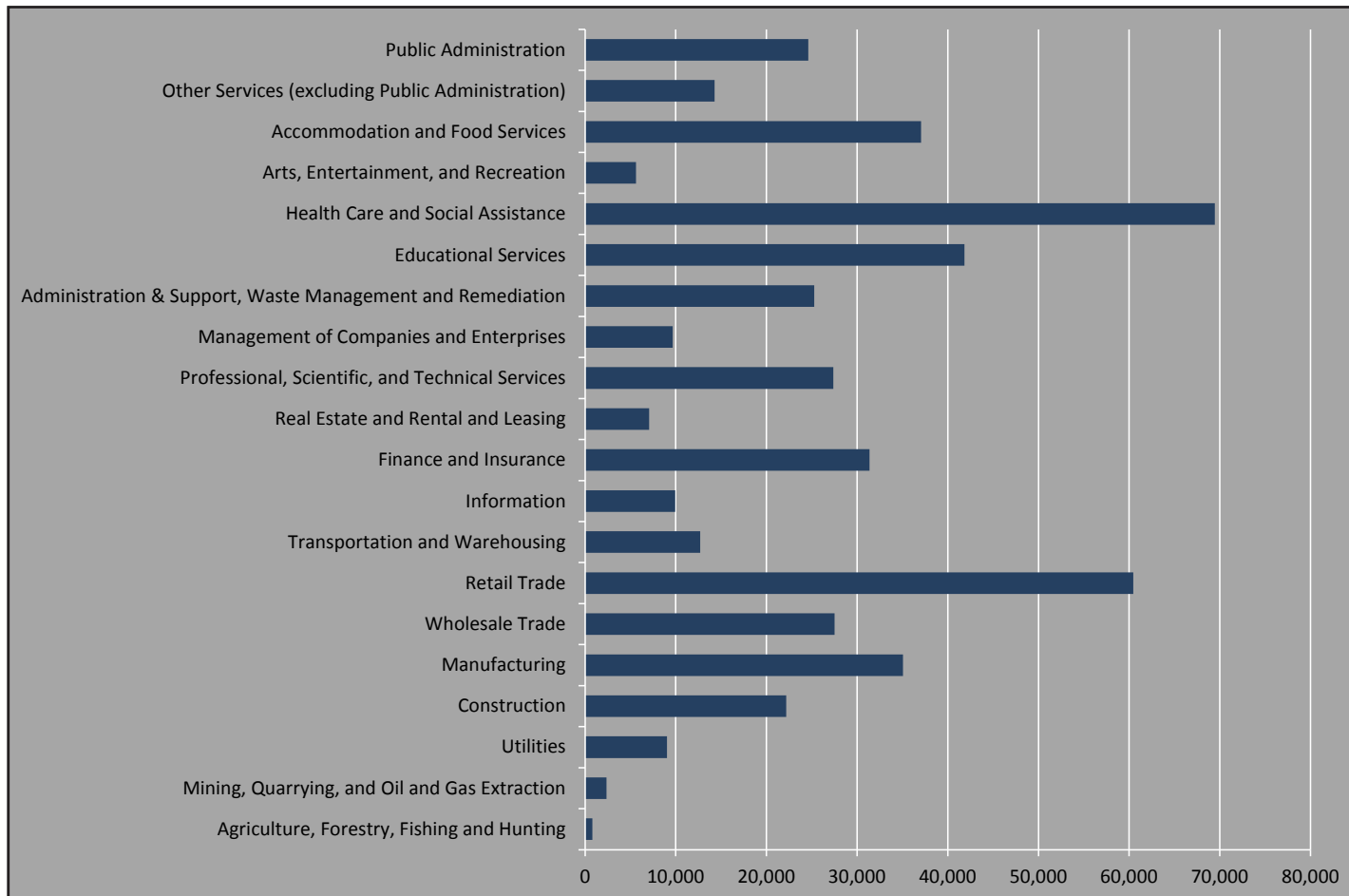
EMPLOYMENT

While employment in the region has historically been tied to the successes of the iron and steel industries, **the diversification of the economy and the labor force has shifted that economic reliance into other industry sectors.** This shift has given the region the ability to better cope with changing economic conditions, and it has helped to diminish the effects of recent economic downturns. A more diversified regional economy will be less vulnerable to turbulent economic environments. Overall, the region’s economy has stayed fairly steady over the last decade. Between 2002 and 2010 the region’s employment increased from nearly 474,000 to nearly 489,000, an increase of 3%. The effects of the 2008 recession are evidenced with the loss of over 27,000 jobs in 2009. By 2010, however, employment had improved by adding nearly 12,000 jobs back into the economy. And while unemployment rates are still elevated, rates did decline over 2009 and 2010 though it has still not recovered to pre-recession levels.

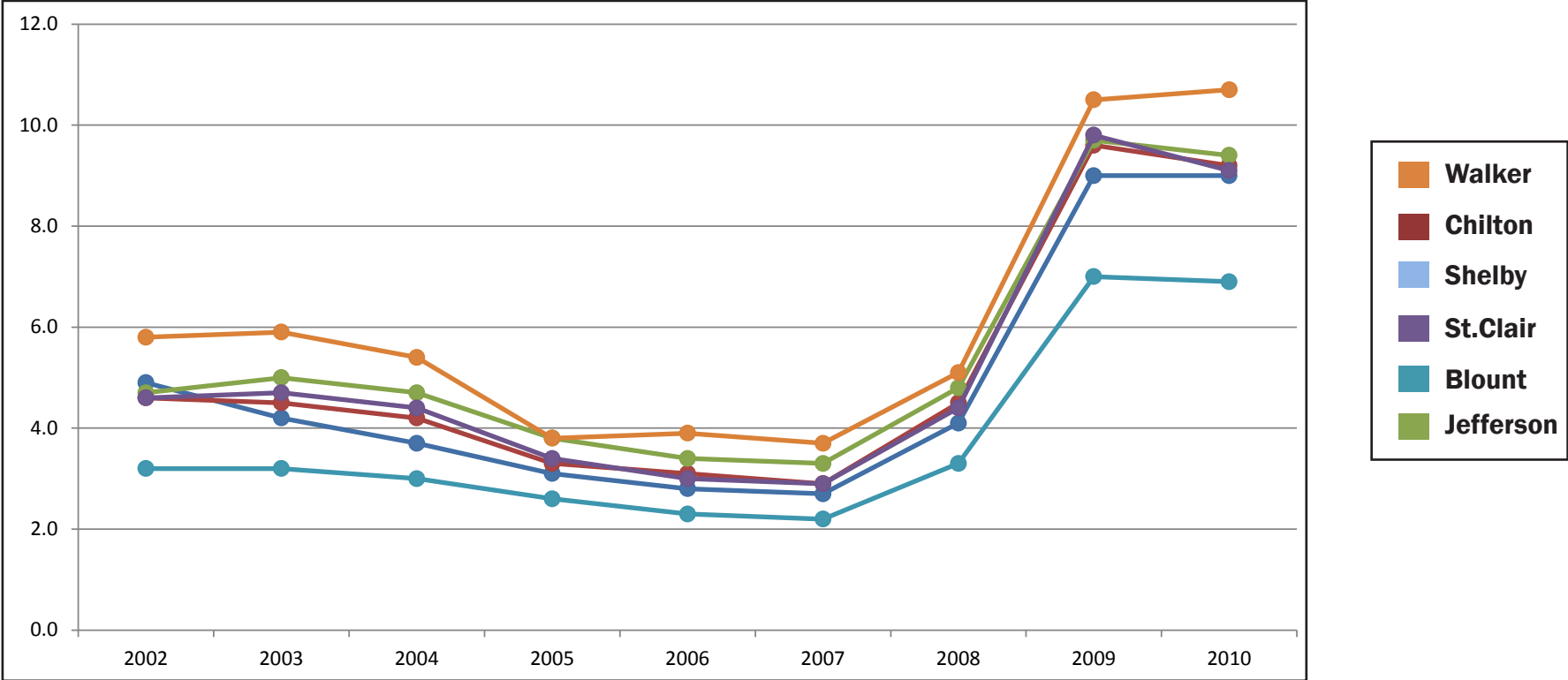
Total Employment by Place of Work, 2002-2010



Total Employment by Industry [2010]



Unemployment Rates [2002-2010]



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

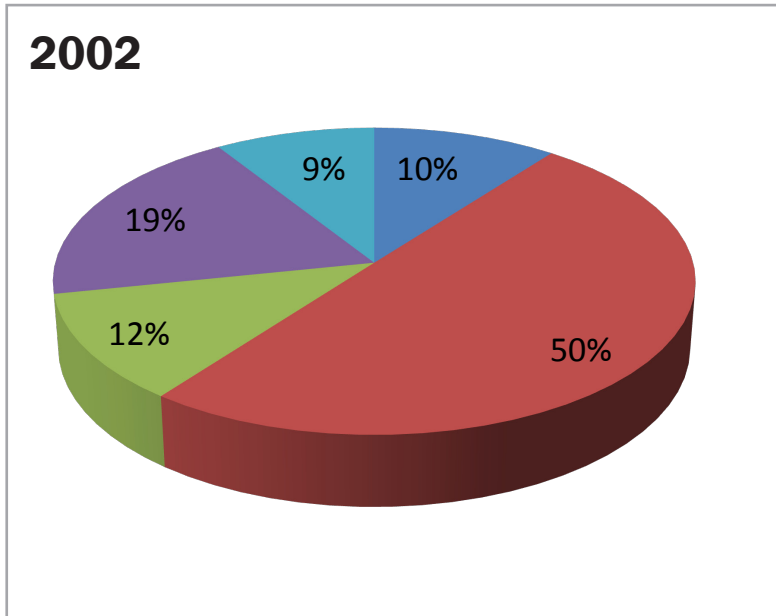
The number, types, and wage levels of employment in large part determine the region's economic activities and well-being. Between 2002 and 2010 the region saw substantial increases in employment within the Health Care and Social Assistance industry (+10,352), Public Administration (+5,403), and Education (+4,896). These industries, along with Retail, Accommodation and Food Services, and Finance account for over half the jobs in the region as well as over 40 percent of the region's average total wages and salaries. In contrast, employment loss occurred within the Manufacturing (-12,234), Construction (-7,618), and Information Technology (-4,571) sectors.

The RPCGB region falls under the jurisdiction of the Governor's Office of Workforce Development's Region 4 Council. According to the 2013 council report the positions in highest demand are registered nurses, sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing, home health aides, personal home care aides, and lawyers. The fastest growing occupations are personal home care aides, occupational therapy assistants, helpers (pipe layers, plumbers, etc.), and physical therapy assistants.

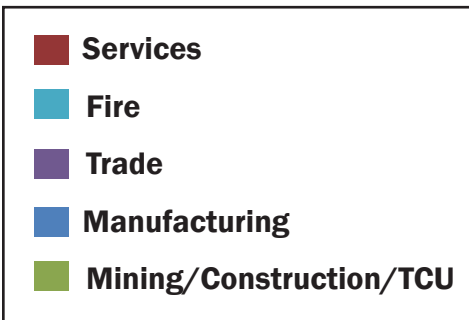
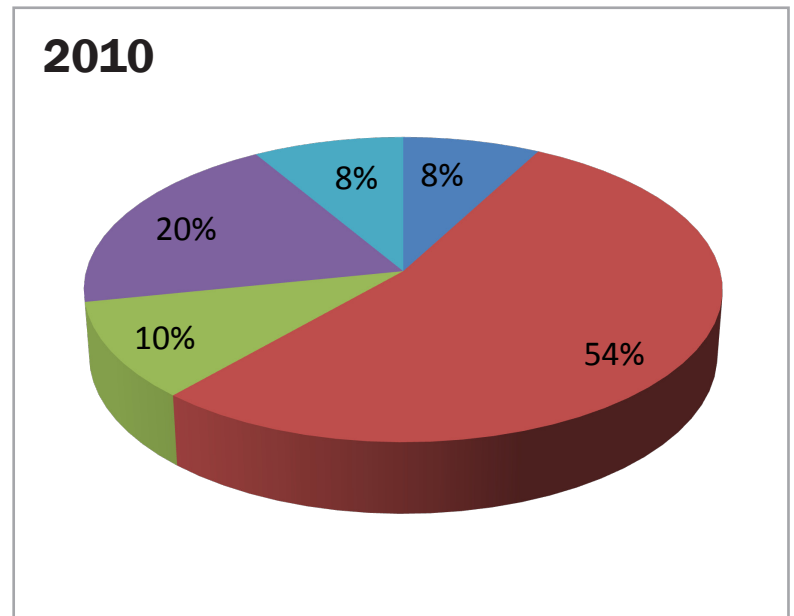
There is an anticipated worker shortfall of approximately forty-one thousand for the year 2020 and fifty-one thousand for 2030. Viable employment opportunities will continue to require increasing technical skill and training. While the state has created a strong workforce development initiative to address needs, the investment will need to continue to increase as skilled worker demand increases.

For additional information, please reference the Education section under Background: People.

Percent Employment Change by Selected Sector



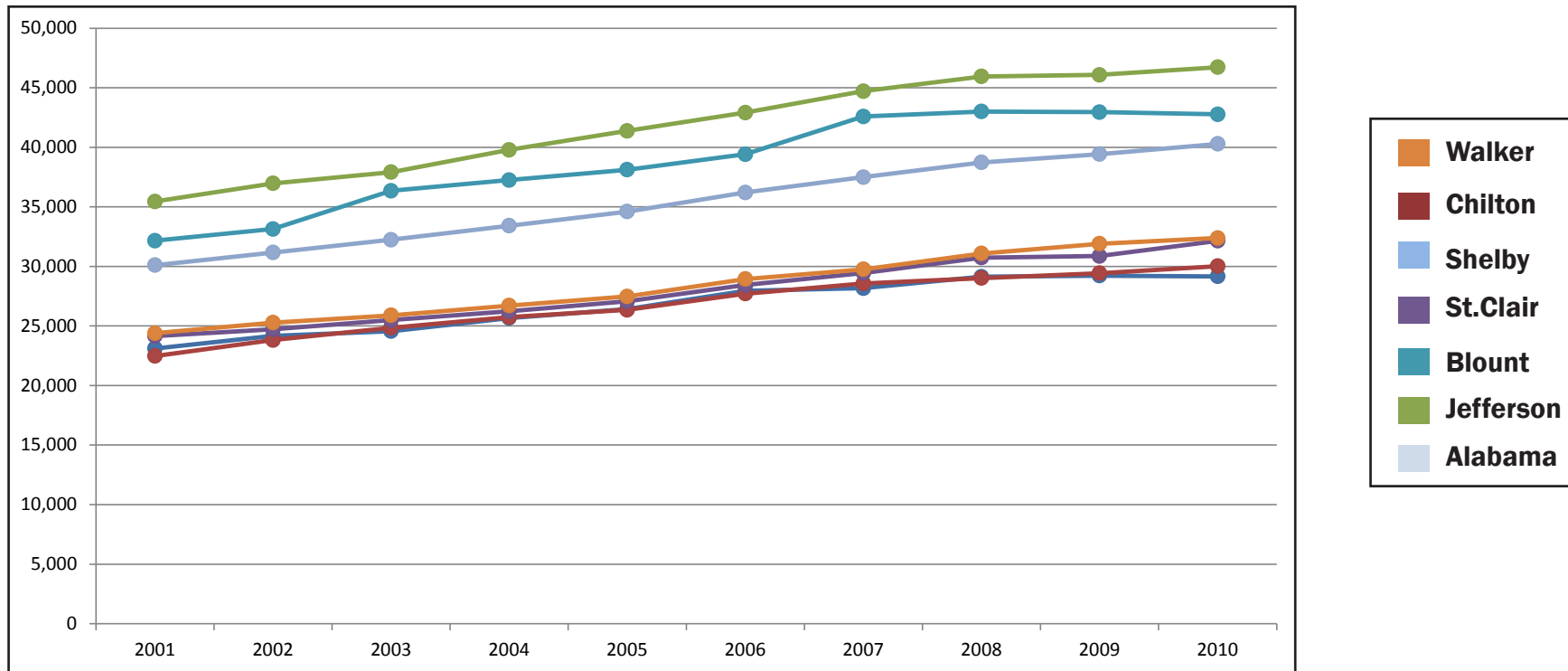
Percent Employment Change by Selected Sector



While the total number and percentage share of manufacturing jobs in the region has been declining over the last several decades, this industry sector has seen positive signs in recent years with the resurgence of the automotive industry. Employment opportunities created from the nearby Mercedes-Benz and Honda manufacturing plants adjacent to the region have created ancillary business opportunities within the Birmingham region. As vendors have begun locating in the region to supply these facilities, the Transportation and Warehousing industry sector as well as some Manufacturing subsectors have begun to gain some positive momentum.

The average wage and salary of an area provides an indication of the overall quality of jobs available in the region and the financial wellbeing of the residents. Higher average wage per job contributes to higher per capita income of the residents. Average wage and salary has steadily increased within the Birmingham region’s counties, with both Jefferson and Shelby counties well above the state.

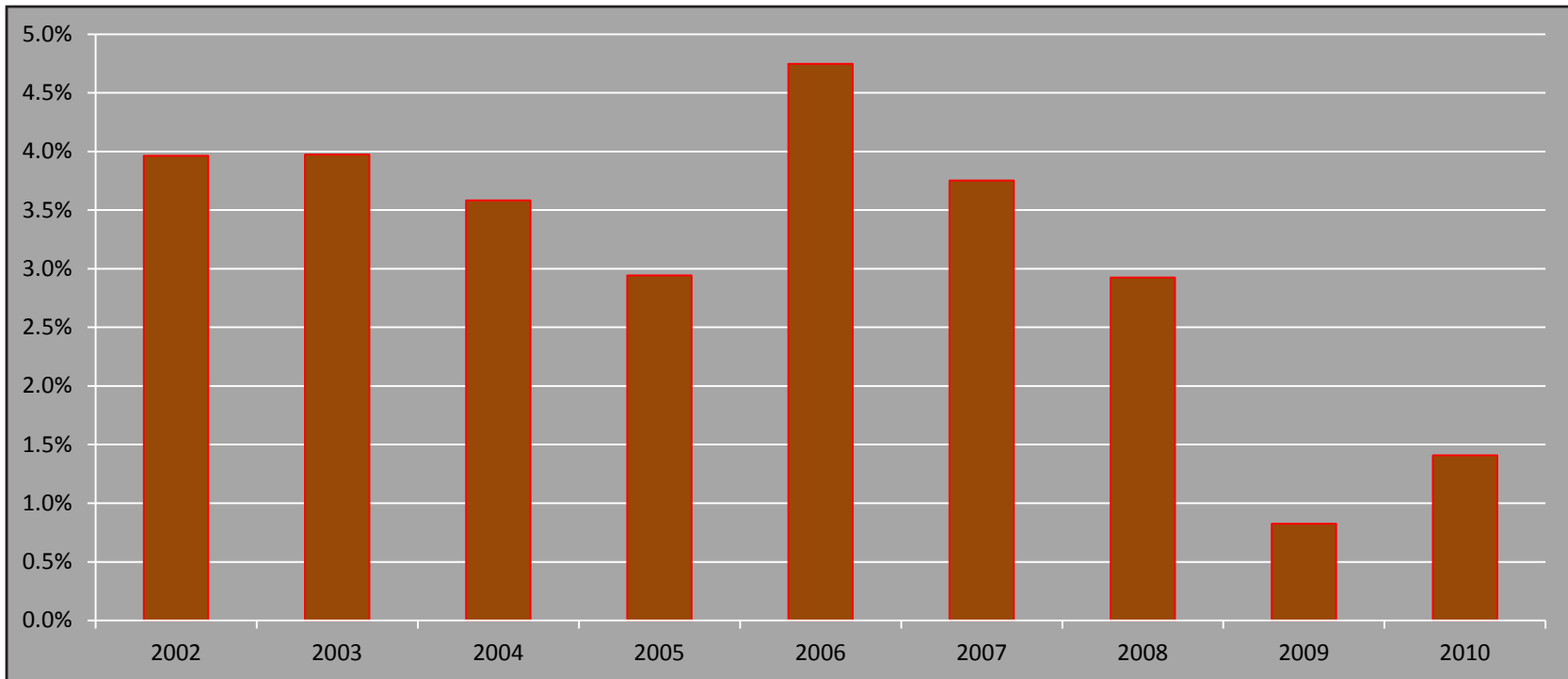
County Wage And Salary Changes [2001-2010]



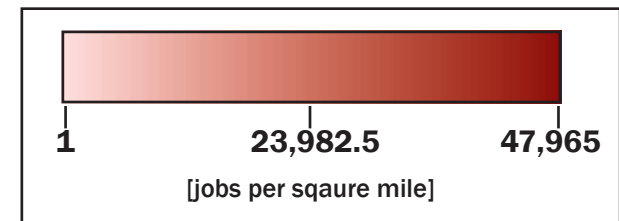
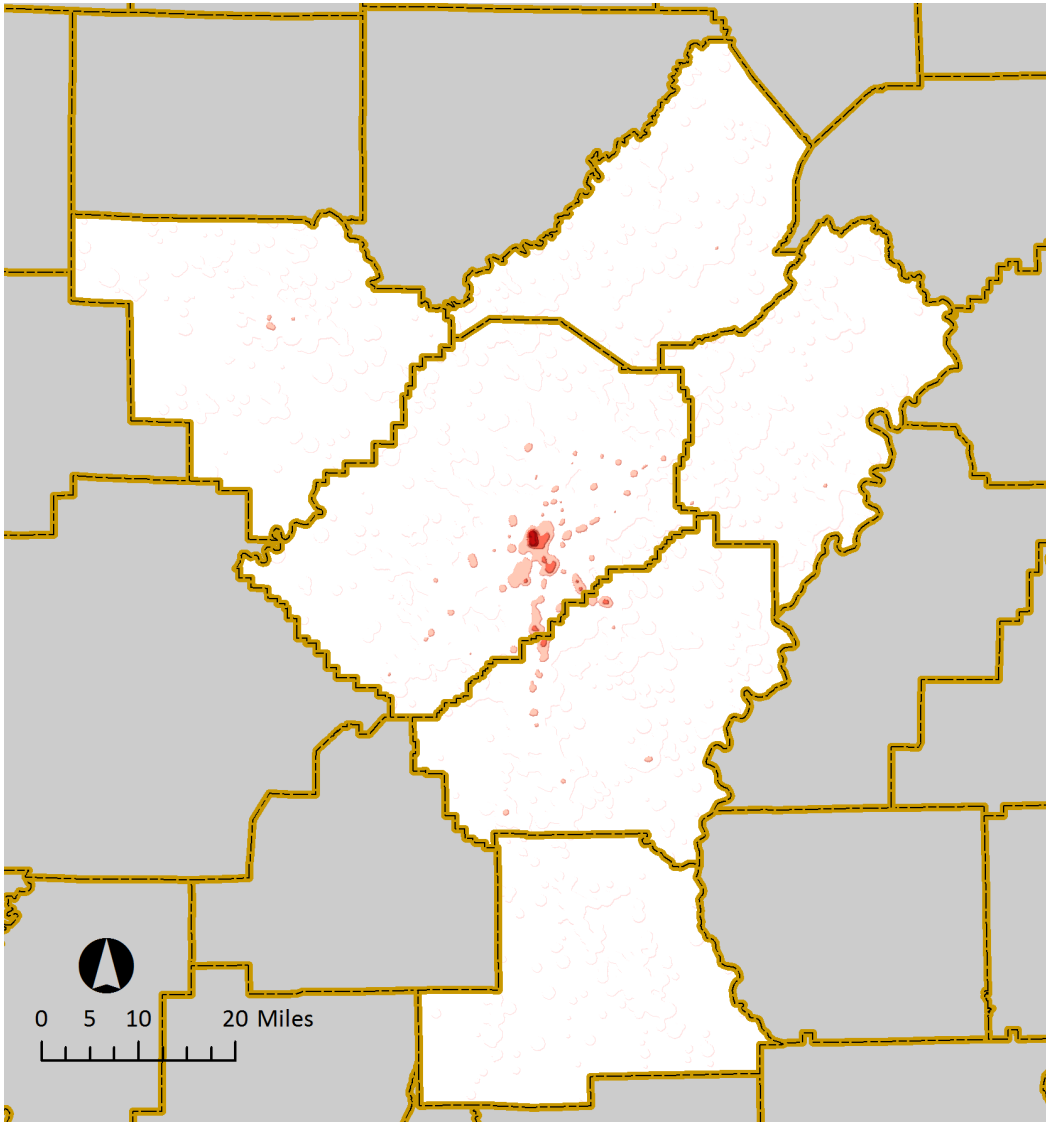
The region’s more rural counties where a larger share of jobs exist within the agricultural, construction, retail, and other traditionally lower wage jobs, the wage rate has also increased but is still lower than that of the state. Regionally, annual average wage and salary increases have been commensurate with that of the state until the effects of the 2008 recession slowed the rate of increase in the region.

The Birmingham region has an internationally competitive economy supported by diverse businesses and a work force that possesses the range of skills necessary to compete in a global economy. While the region has transitioned from a manufacturing-based economy to a service-based economy, the location and distribution of jobs and the labor force has become increasingly divided. The Birmingham region, like most urban areas across the country, has experienced significant suburbanization over the last several decades. While the largest concentrations of jobs are located within the urban core, the majority of the labor force is located around the periphery and fringes of the urban core, especially south along the I-65 corridor into Shelby County and east along the I-59 corridor into St. Clair County.

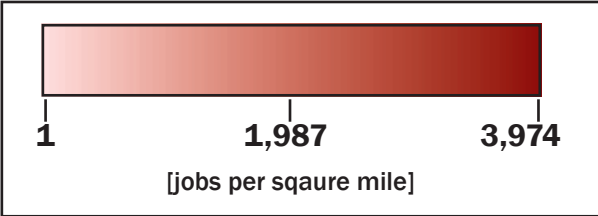
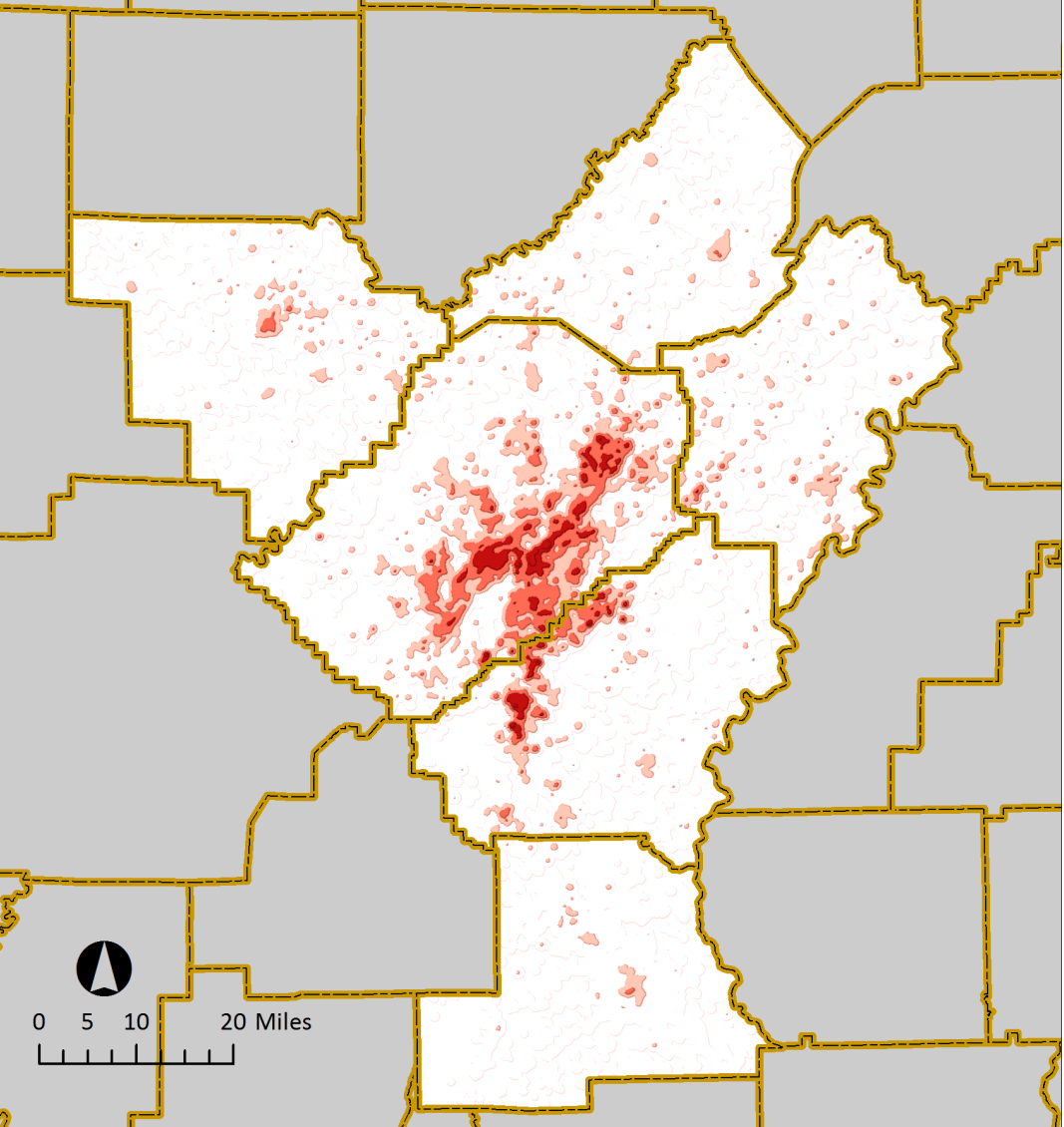
Average Regional Wage And Salary Percent Changes From Previous Year [2002-2010]



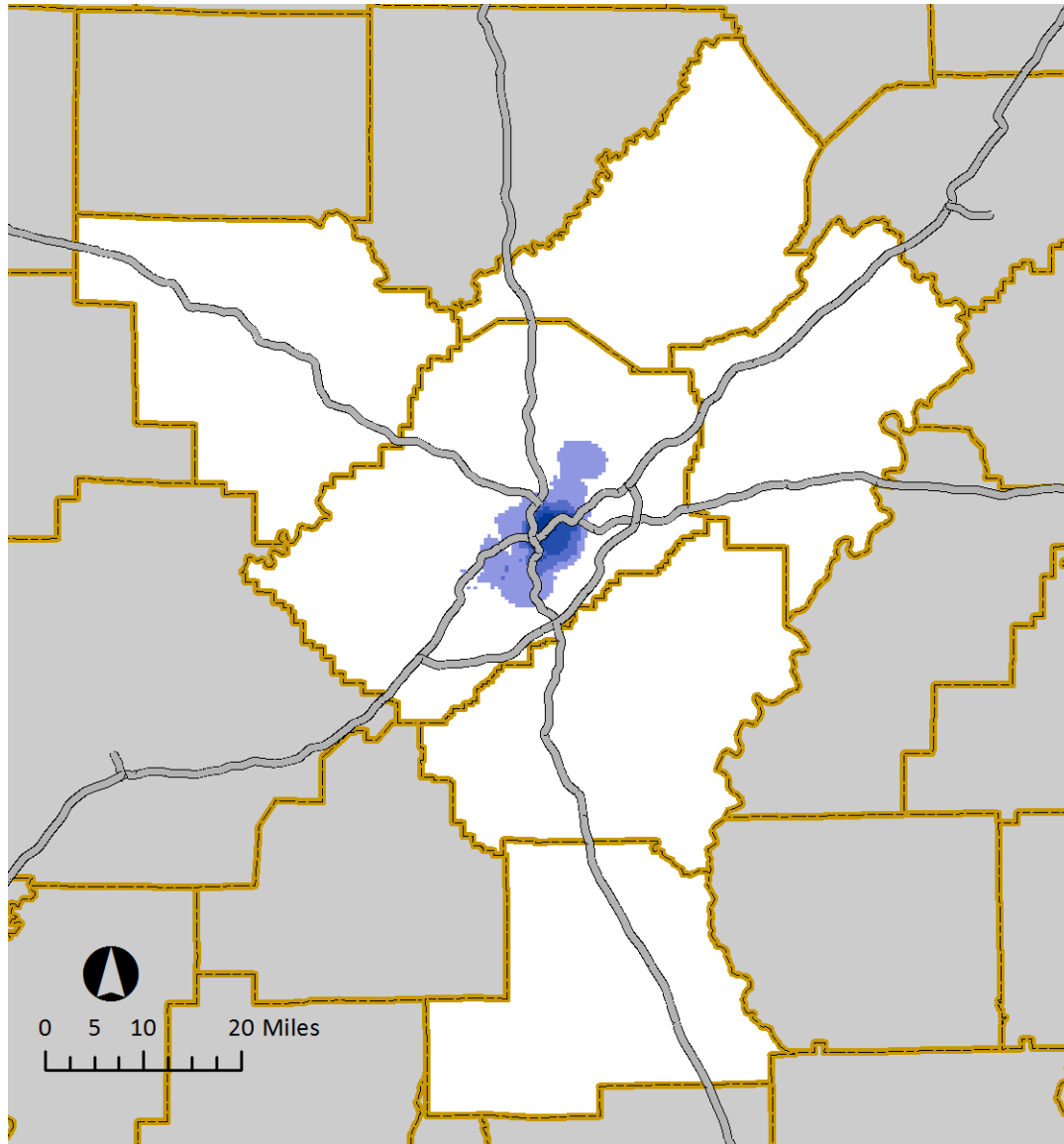
Regional Job Shed



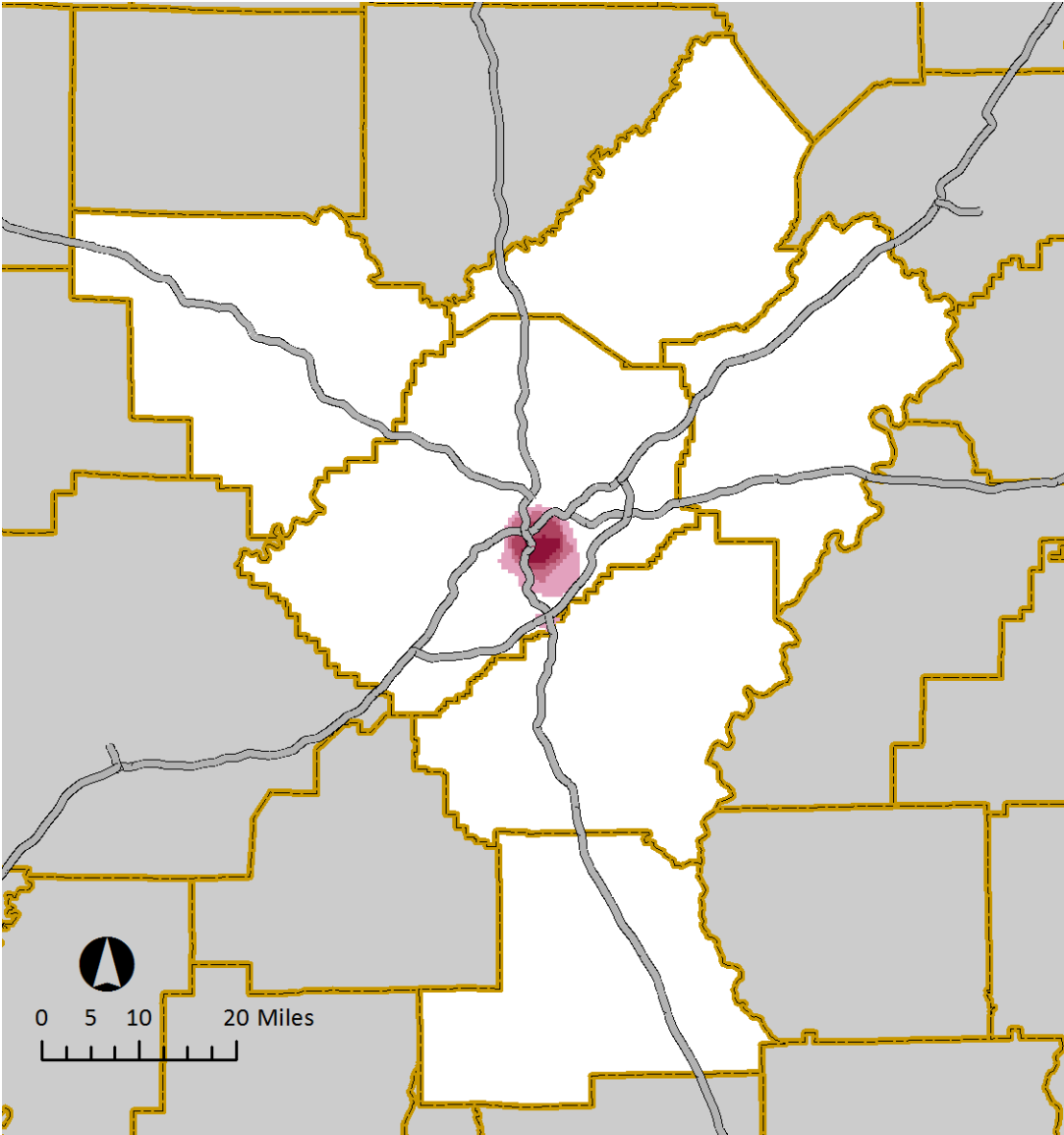
Employed Residential Density



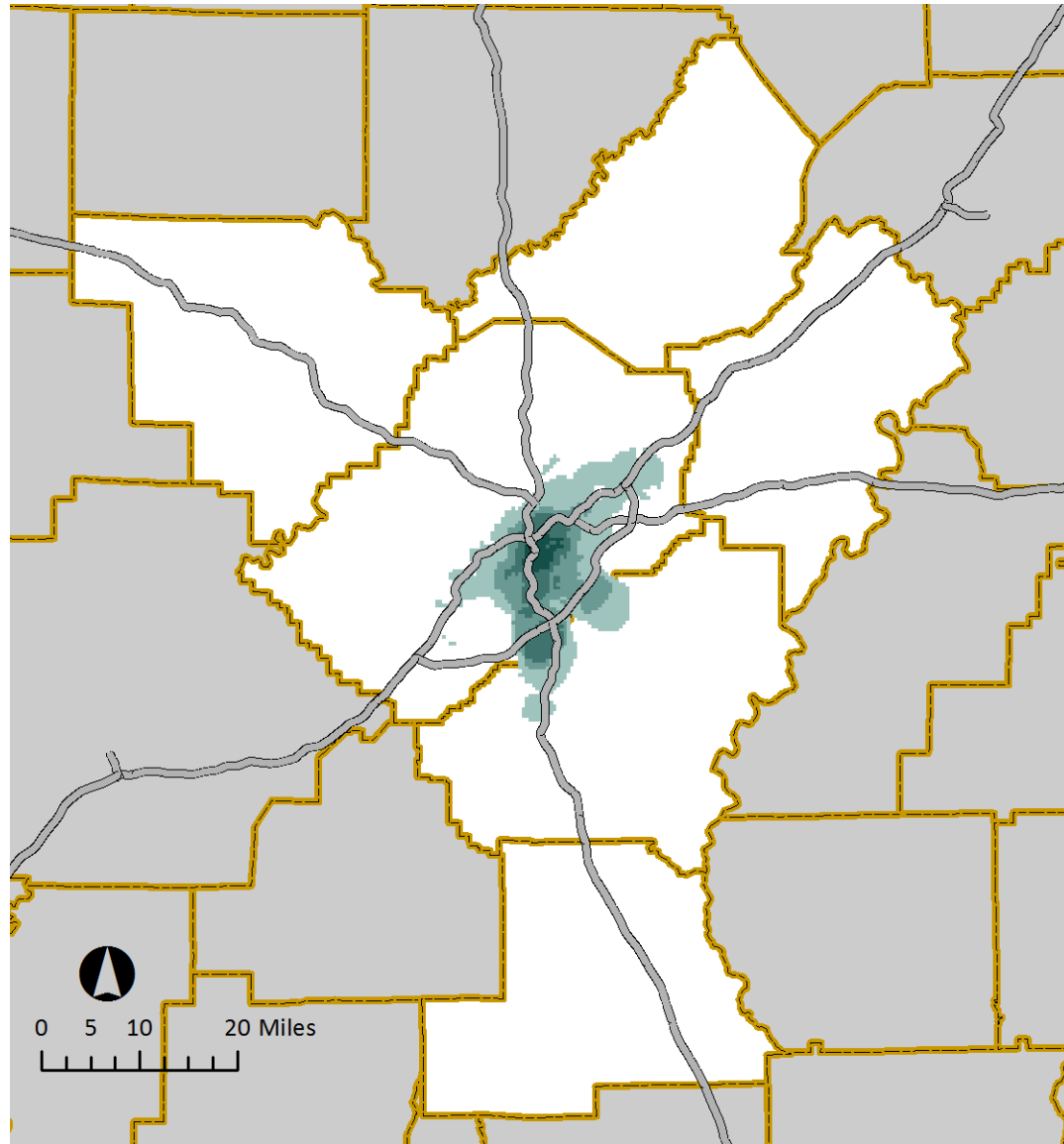
Manufacturing Concentrations



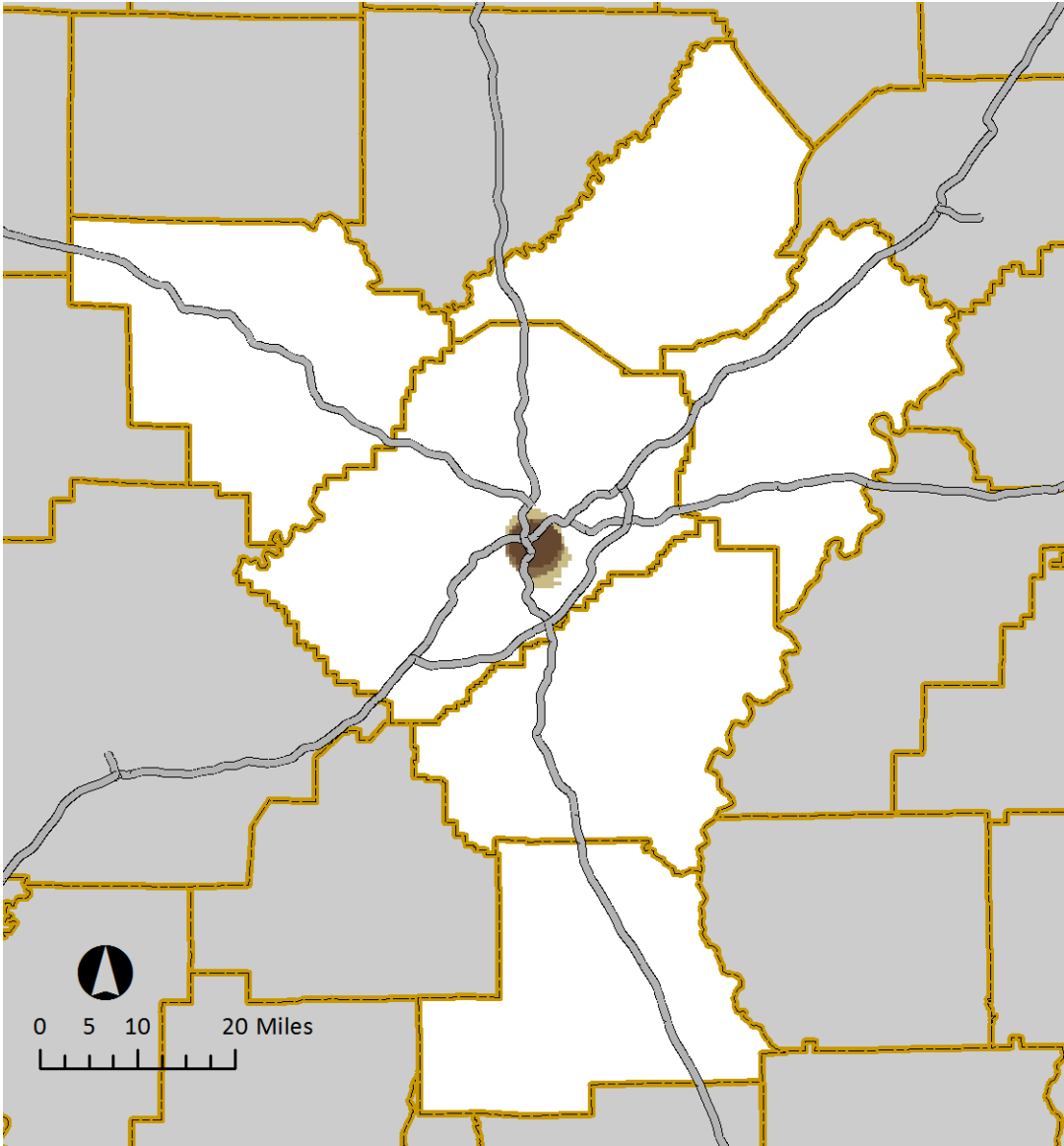
Healthcare Concentrations



Retail Concentrations



Education Concentrations



REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Working through the Think Forward advisory committee, EDD staff identified the primary challenges and opportunities for the region:

CHALLENGES

1. Access to Jobs and Facilities
2. Employment
3. Congestion and Transportation Costs
4. Infrastructure for Economic Development
5. Funding

OPPORTUNITIES

The Think Forward advisory committee identified the following opportunities for the region:

1. Educate and Cooperate
 - a. Create an educational program that covers transportation, community planning, and economic development resources targeted
 - b. Promote interconnectivity of roads, trails, and transit
 - c. Promote the benefits of livable, walkable, and mixed-use development
2. Get Creative with Funding
 - a. Work local governments to identify and/or create new funding opportunities
 - b. Identify and/or create dedicated funding for transit and alternative transportation
 - c. Find ways to share regional transportation costs and services

ECONOMIC CLUSTERS

Beyond those opportunities revealed in the consultation process with the Think Forward advisory committee, the following clusters have been identified in the region:

MANUFACTURING

The manufacturing sector has been declining in the region for decades which is reflective of the national trend. The region continues to experience a countering shift to a service and retail-based economy. However, the burgeoning automotive industry in central Alabama continues to spin off Tier 1 and Tier 2 automotive suppliers, warehousing and other support industries. Within a 200 mile radius of the City of Birmingham, the geographical center of the region, there are nine (9) automotive plants: Hyundai (AL), Honda (AL), Mercedes (AL), Saturn (TN), Nissan (TN), Nissan (MS), Toyota (MS), GM (KY), and Kia (GA). Transportation equipment has remained the state's top export totaling \$7.65 billion in 2012.

Overall exports in the state increased almost 60% from 2009 to 2012. The state now ships products to 188 countries with Canada receiving the highest volume and Germany, China, Mexico, and Japan following.

The region's historical presence in the steel industry has solidified a metals-related manufacturing base with companies like American Cast Iron Pipe Company (ACIPCO), O'Neal Steel, McWane, U.S. Steel, and U.S. Pipe. These companies remain critical large employers for the region's workforce.

HEALTHCARE

The region is well-known for its premier healthcare facilities. The most prominent of these is University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Health System; this system includes The Kirklin Clinic, Callahan Eye Foundation Hospital, Spain Rehabilitation Center, UAB Highlands, Medical West Hospital in Bessemer, various satellite health centers, and UAB Hospital in downtown Birmingham. US News has continually ranked UAB Hospital as one of "America's Best Hospitals" with high specialty rankings in Nephrology, Rheumatology, and Urology. UAB is also home to one of one of the nation's top 20 schools of public health (US News & World Report); Princeton Review College rankings listed UAB as one of the best Southeastern colleges and in the top 15% of colleges and universities in the US.

There are many other well-known, quality providers in the region. Children's Hospital of Alabama is the primary pediatric teaching hospital for UAB School of Medicine. It is home to one of the nation's leading pediatric hematology/oncology centers, a cystic fibrosis center, and the State of Alabama's only pediatric burn center. Also, the hospital offers a variety of support services such as the International Adoption Clinic, Ronald McDonald House, and the Sunshine School.

St. Vincent's Health System is a part of the Ascension Health group, the nation's largest Catholic, non-profit health system. St. Vincent's has locations in Birmingham, Blount County, East Birmingham, St. Clair County, and the One Nineteen Health and Wellness Center just off the Highway 280 corridor.

Brookwood Medical Center is a part of Tenet Health System and is known for its Women's Medical Center and MedPlex Surgery Center.

Additionally, **there are a variety of other quality hospitals throughout the region** such as Walker Regional Medical Center, Shelby Baptist Medical Center, and Trinity Medical Center (formerly known as Montclair).

CONSTRUCTION

The region is seat to a large concentration of construction employment for both commercial and residential purposes. Major construction companies in the region and beyond include BE&K, B.L. Harbert International, Brasfield & Gorrie, and Hoar Construction.

Recent notable construction projects have included the \$97.5 million Norfolk Southern Birmingham Regional Intermodal Facility in McCalla, the \$100 million Dollar General distribution facility in the JeffMet Park Lakeshore location, an \$8.2 million expansion of the United Johnson Brothers of Alabama's wine distribution facility, and the completion of the Regions Field baseball park.

Vulcan Materials, which is headquartered in the region, is the nation's largest producer of construction aggregate materials including gravel, crushed stone, and sand.

TECHNOLOGY

Biotechnology and medical research industries are primarily linked to UAB as it is the largest employer in the region. Biomedical and health care research focuses on AIDS, cancer and heart research. UAB is a world-renowned academic health center with 80 interdisciplinary research centers. Its research dollars stimulate econometric local spending of about \$12 to \$13 dollars per every \$1 brought in. The region's increase in the number of adults with bachelors and graduate degrees and can be attributable to UAB graduates, faculty and research staff. In 2010, UAB's research funding from outside sources totaled approximately \$490 million. The Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA) and UAB have recently partnered to create the Invention2Innovation (i2i) program to commercialize inventions that come from the premier research university.

Southern Research Institute, a center for scientific discovery and technology development, is a leading research facility for pharmaceutical, engineering, environmental and energy industries. Technology is a rapidly growing industry sector. There are over 400 technology companies in the Birmingham area alone and Birmingham ranks among the top ten largest Southeastern technology centers. In 2012, SRI invested \$14 million in the construction of a new facility that included space for incubation of businesses that spin-off from research.

The Innovation Depot recently completed the final phase of its facility in downtown Birmingham with the assistance of EDA funds. The local technology incubator has increased its capabilities from housing 75 businesses to housing 90 businesses and from 450 jobs to 650 jobs. In 2011, the incubator won the Dinah Adkins Incubator of the Year Award making it the nation's top technology incubator. From 2009 to 2012, Innovation Depot showed an economic impact of over \$1 billion. It receives over 100 applications for tenancy each year. The incubator also partners with the premier technology transfer resources in the region like UAB, BBA, Birmingham Venture Club, TechBirmingham, BioAlabama, and the Alabama Launchpad program.

As a current and prospective location for technology-based business and investment, the Birmingham area provides resources for the industry including proximity to leading-edge technology and generators of leading-edge technology, well-managed and successful incubators, a well-trained technology workforce, low operating costs, geography, and community culture.

COMMUNITY & PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP

There are a variety of federal, state, regional, and local government, nonprofit, and private organizations that provide resources and partner with the EDD to promote the growth of the region. These partners include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Economic Development Administration (EDA)**
- **Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)**
- **Small Business Administration (SBA)**
- **Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA)**
- **Alabama Department of Commerce**
- **Governor's Office of Workforce Development (OWD)**
- **Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA)**
- **Birmingham Business Alliance (BBA)**
- **Central Alabama Women's Business Center (CAWBC)**
- **Birmingham Business Resource Center (BBRC)**
- **Local and regional chambers of commerce**
- **Local and regional economic and industrial development authorities**
- **Rev Birmingham**
- **United Way of Central Alabama (UWCA)**
- **Cultural Alliance of Greater Birmingham**
- **Alabama Power Company**
- **Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama**
- **Alagasco**
- **AT&T**
- **First Commercial Bank**
- **PNC Bank**
- **Graham & Company**
- **Innovation Depot**
- **Bessemer Business Incubation System**

STRATEGIC PROJECTS, PROGRAMS, & ACTIVITIES

Strategies for the EDD based on the Think Prosperity goals:

COMMUNITY EDUCATION

- Link member governments with the knowledge and resources necessary to plan and implement growth
- Promote community and economic development opportunities and projects through technology media

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Educate elected officials and local leaders on planning principles, processes, and tools
- Engage the young professional population in order to develop and educate the region's next generation of leaders
- Educate elected officials and local leaders on financial mechanisms and opportunities that can be used for the implementation of plans

FUNDING

- Increase outreach and education of local governments on available funding sources through face-to-face networking
- Create an online resource guide to grant funding for local government investment projects

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

- Promote the partnering of member governments on like-interested projects in order to maximize the use of resources
- Increase outreach in each county to promote partnering and connect membership
- Work to create opportunities for connection of local government to private and nonprofit partners through organizations like the Birmingham Business Alliance and the United Way of Central Alabama

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT & SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

FIXING WHAT WE ALREADY HAVE

- Fill resource gaps for jobseekers through improved marketing and communication
- Promote infill development prioritizing the development of grayfields and brownfields through education of the advantages of such development
- Identify and assess those potential grayfield and brownfield properties that could be better utilized
- Assist local governments in the planning and implementation of infrastructure improvement projects

MAKING WHAT WORKS, WORK BETTER

- Use the existing Brownfields Task Force as an outreach mechanism to educate on and incentivize the use of potential grayfield and brownfield properties
- Assist local governments in the planning and implementation of infrastructure improvement projects

RETHINKING SERVICE DELIVERY

- Strengthen small business and the entrepreneurial community through the revolving loan fund
- Connect small business and entrepreneurs to local government through chambers of commerce and business associations; work with the Birmingham Business Alliance to further the establishment of the Birmingham Regional Enterprise Council
- Work with local business retention programs and utilize the revolving loan fund to fill financial needs

INVESTING STRATEGICALLY

- Promote growth and investment based on existing corridors and infill strategies for congestion mitigation and air quality improvement
- Maximize resources by combining projects and creating partnerships

IMPROVING ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES

TRANSPORTATION CHOICES

- *[See Think Travel]*

CULTIVATING COMPETITIVE ECONOMIC ASSETS

- Increase quality of life through the attraction and investment in a diverse array of businesses
- Increase livability through the planning and implementation of walkable, sustainable, and convenient communities
- Develop a qualified workforce for business and industry needs through partnerships

PROJECTS, PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

LOCATION	PROJECT	TYPE	COST	LOCATION
Regional	Think Forward 2040	Planning/Other	\$2,500,000	A regional expansion of the long-range transportation plan combined with the CEDS, land use planning, and natural resource planning. Will be executed through the scenario planning process.
Regional	GET Implementation	Other	unknown	Funding the implementation of "Growth, Employment, Transit" (GET) plans, which serve as comprehensive plans for freight facilities and their workforce, housing, and mobility needs.
Regional	Brownfields Redev. Initiative	Brownfields		
Regional	Main Street Program	Planning	\$400,000	The Main Street program offers direct, hands-on, customized assistance for small town downtowns and urban neighborhood commercial centers through participating statewide programs.
Regional	Revolving Loan Fund	Incubator/Small Business	\$1,000,000	Recapitalization of existing revolving loan fund to serve the EDD region
Regional	Birmingham Airport Improvements	Transportation		
Regional	Small Business Lending Program	Incubator	\$500,000	
Birmingham	Innovation Depot	Incubator	\$1,500,000	Facility improvements, working capital, loan program
Bessemer	Bessemer Business Incubation System	Incubator		Lending program and incubator improvements
Tarrant	JSCC Incubator	Incubator	\$3,000,000	
Shelby	Small Business Incubator	Incubator	\$1,000,000	
Jasper	Tom Bevill Industrial Park Improvements	Industrial Park	\$2,000,000	
Jefferson	Jefferson County Industrial Park	Industrial Park		

LOCATION	PROJECT	TYPE	COST	LOCATION
Warrior	The Regional Library at Warrior	Planning/Other	\$2,000,000	Renovation of abandoned National Guard Armory for reuse as a regional library, resource center, and learning center for children, youth, and adults
Jefferson	Birmingham Jefferson Civic Center	Other		
Regional	Economic Dev. Recruitment Initiative	Other	\$1,000,000	Inventory of available buildings and developable properties, redevelopment of brownfield sites, quality of life report card
Regional	Regional GIS Initiative	Other	\$2,500,000	GIS infrastructure mapping
Graysville	Five Mile Creek River Walk	Incubator/Small Business	\$1,620,000	
Homewood	Soccer Fields & Facilities	Parks/Rec.	\$30,00,000	
Hoover	Multi-purpose Indoor Sports Facility	Parks/Rec.		
Hoover	Land Acquisition	Parks/Rec.		Acquisition in wetlands, floodplains, floodways to protect Cahaba River and Shades Creek
Hoover	Trails	Parks/Rec.		Develop trails including canoe trails along streams and in parks as connections to destinations
Oneonta	JSCC Incubator	Parks/Rec.		
Shelby	Park Improvements	Parks/Rec.	\$5,000,000	
Chilton	Chilton County Land Resource Inventory	Planning	\$50,000	Completion of inventory and infrastructure plan
Fairfield	Main Street Program	Planning	\$500,000	
Regional	Regional Water and Sewer Plan	Water/Sewer	\$300,000	Update regional water resource assessment; long-range regional growth plan for water

PLAN OF ACTION

The EDD will invest in the region using the following primer:

- Promote economic development and opportunity
- Foster effective transportation access
- Enhance and protect the environment
- Maximize effective development and use of the workforce consistent with any applicable State or local workforce investment strategies
- Promote the use of technology in economic development, including access to high-speed telecommunications
- Balance resources through sound management of physical development
- Obtain and utilize adequate funds and other resources

All EDD investments will seek to be aligned with state and regional initiatives in order to ensure best the most successful implementation and maximize resources. Think Forward: Prosperity is aligned with the following state and regional planning priorities through a consultation process:

- *Accelerate Alabama* – Alabama Economic Development Alliance, Alabama Department of Commerce
- *Region 4 Workforce Development Strategic Plan* – Region 4 Workforce Development Council, Governor’s Office of Workforce Development
- *Blueprint Birmingham* – Birmingham Business Alliance

The goals, priorities, and strategies of Think Forward: Prosperity will be implemented through the works of the EDD staff and its partners.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Number of jobs created after implementation of CEDS
- Number and types of investments undertaken in the region
- Number of jobs retained in the region
- Amount of private sector investment in the region after implementation of the CEDS
- Changes in the economic environment of the region

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

RPCGB BOARD

- Honorable Valerie Abbott, *Chairman*
- Honorable Waymon Pitts, *Vice -Chairman*
- Honorable Theoangelo Perkins, *Secretary*
- Mr. Tom Barnett, *Treasurer*
- Honorable Stanley Batemon
- Honorable Delor Baumann
- Honorable William Bell
- Honorable Sandra Little-Brown
- Honorable David Carrington
- Honorable Ken Gulley
- Honorable Chris Green
- Mr. Ray Hamilton
- Honorable Bruce Hamrick
- Honorable Robbie Hayes
- Honorable Thomas Henderson
- Ms. Vanessa Hendricks
- Honorable William Hereford
- Mr. Reginald Holloway
- Mr. Chester Jolly
- Honorable Joe Knight
- Mr. Devon Laney
- Honorable Tim Mims
- Ms. Eunice Rogers
- Honorable Loxcil Tuck
- Mr. Tim Westoven

RPCGB STAFF INVOLVEMENT

- Charles Ball, *Executive Director*
- Ray Morris, *Deputy Executive Director*
- Yvonne Murray, *Director of Economic Development*
- Darrell Howard, *Deputy Director of Planning*
- Marthalena Alsbrooks, *Economic Development Specialist*
- Brett Isom, *GIS Manager*
- Marshall Farmer, *Senior GIS Analyst*
- Harry He, *Transportation Engineer*
- Laurel Land, *Senior Planner*
- Renato Ghizoni, *Planner*
- Mikhail Alert, *Planner*
- Cissy Crowe, *Public Information Officer*
- Jessica Fadlevich, *Media Specialist*

THINK FORWARD

[ADVISORY COMMITTEE]

- Allen Armstrong, *Blount County Public Transportation*
- Nan Baldwin, *Birmingham Business Alliance*
- Mark Bartlett, *Federal Highway Administration*
- Delor Baumann, *City of Hueytown*
- William Bell, *City of Birmingham*
- Andre Bittas, *City of Birmingham*
- Chris Brady, *City of Vestavia Hills*
- Joyce Brooks, *Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority*
- Sandra Little Brown, *Jefferson County*
- Matthew Cobb, *City of Homewood*
- Randy Cole, *Shelby County*
- Jan Hagerty, *Central Alabama Women's Business Center*
- Tom Henderson, *City of Center Point*
- Maxine Parker, *City of Birmingham*
- Scott Holliday, *Shelby County*
- David Hunke, *Shelby County*
- Walter Jackson, *Jefferson County*
- Ken Boozer, *Jefferson County*
- Devon Laney, *Innovation Depot*
- Joe Lee, *St. Clair County*
- Chris Leffert, *Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority*
- Rod Long, *City of Hoover*
- Tom Magee, *City of Birmingham*
- Andre Natta, *The Terminal*
- Kimberly Rafferty, *City of Birmingham*
- Alicia Rudolph, *Volkert & Associates*
- Don Smith, *St. Clair County Economic Development Council*
- Jennifer Smith, *City of Jasper*
- Ronelle Stewart, *Region 4 Workforce Development Council, Brookwood Medical Center*
- Gary Stricklin, *Blount County*
- Joe Thomas, *St. Clair County Public Transportation*
- Jeff Traywick, *Birmingham Business Alliance*
- Tim Westhoven, *City of Hoover*
- Alberto Zaragoza, *City of Vestavia Hills*