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Appendix

Appendix 2A: Population, Housing and Employment Projections 2005-2035

Chapter 2: State of the Region

2.1 Regional Socio-Economic Profile

2.1.1 Geographic Profile

The Birmingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), consisting of Jefferson and Shelby Counties, approves an annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and develops the Range Transportation Plan (RTP) which includes a task for socioeconomic data and the development of demographic projections.

This report contains key demographic and socioeconomic variables for the planning area of the Birmingham MPO through the year 2035. Population, Housing, and Employment by Place of Work, both total and retail, are included. The current year estimates and projections are developed for various levels of geography and are used as inputs to the regional traffic assignment model used for the development of the RTP and other transportation products.

The Birmingham MPO area consists of 52 municipal jurisdictions. The largest city in the MPO is the City of Birmingham with a 2005 population estimate of 231,877. Since the year 2000, there have been five municipal incorporations within the MPO planning area: Center Point, Chelsea, Clay, Pinson, and Westover.

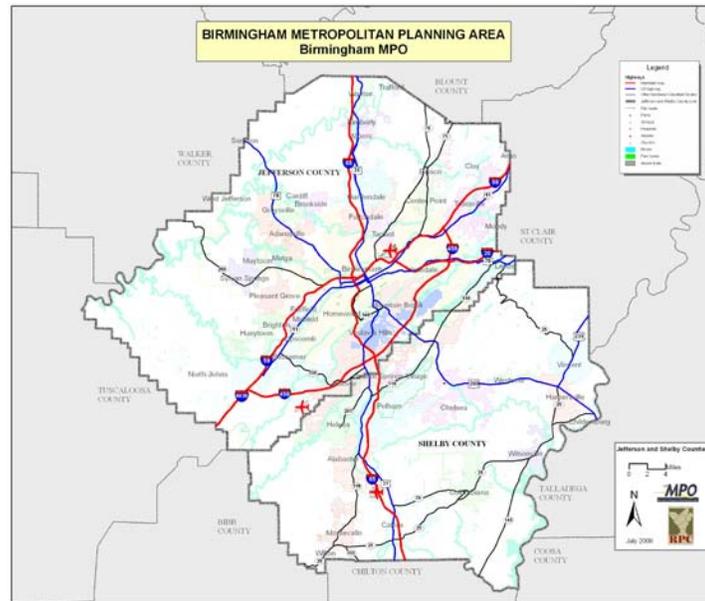


Figure 2.1 Birmingham MPO Area

The Birmingham MPO counties are subdivided into areas called planning districts. Planning districts are defined as aggregated census tracts, grouped according to similar geographic and demographic characteristics. While census tract boundaries are subject to change from Census to Census, the planning districts have little, if any, change, thus making it possible to measure change over time using consistent geographic boundaries. Jefferson County has twenty-two

planning districts. Shelby County has eight (8). The demographic and socioeconomic data and maps provided in this report are at the planning district level.

The projections were developed using a combination of secondary sources, historic trend analyses, and evaluations of existing and planned developments. A variety of state- and nationally-based demographic and economic sources were used to compute the county-wide projections, while sub-county projections for planning districts, census tracts, and traffic analysis zones were developed by RPCGB staff and based predominately upon historic trends and known and probable residential and commercial developments identified by the public and private sectors. The projections do in part reflect desired regional land development and land use policies.

2.1.2 Environmental Profile

Central Alabama is located within two geologic provinces. The southeast portion of both Jefferson and Shelby Counties fall within the Valley and Ridge Province, characterized by limestone and dolomite deposits. The northwest portion of Jefferson is located in the Appalachian Plateau Province, characterized by rich coal deposits. These deposits of limestone and coal were easily acquired and brought industrial development to the area.

This unique confluence of geographies, where the Appalachian Mountains meet the Cumberland Plateau, has produced one of the most bio-diverse areas in the country. As a result of these diverse habitats, Central Alabama has 117 threatened or endangered species, the third highest number in the country. Most of the plants and animal habitats of these species are dependent on water resources.

The northwest to southeast orientation of the Valley and Ridge Province has influenced the travel patterns in central Alabama. Modern highways and railways follow the original land travel routes dictated by the topography of the area. Rivers within the Cahaba, Lower Coosa and Middle Coosa watersheds are located in the Valley and Ridge Province and follow the northwest/southeast orientation. Recent industrial, commercial and residential development in the Valley and Ridge Province has caused changes to the hydrologic conditions. For example, increases in impervious surfaces have increased the potential for waterways to produce flood peaks of greater magnitudes and shorter durations than in previous years. Figure 2.2 illustrates the geologic provinces.

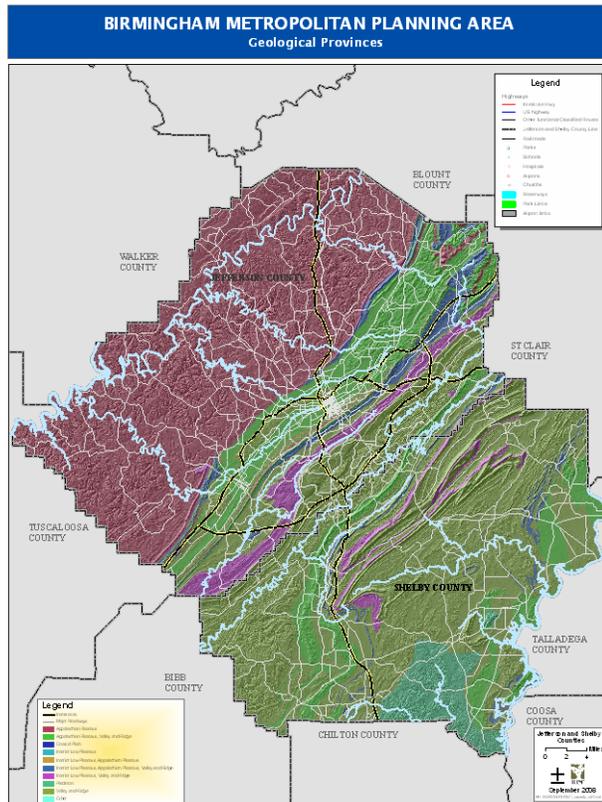


Figure 2.2: Geological Provinces

2.1.3 Population Profile

A. Historic Population Growth

Jefferson and Shelby Counties are home to 18.2% of the State's population. Jefferson County is the most populous county in the state. Between 1970 and 2007, the Birmingham MPO counties grew from a population of 683,028 to 830,204, an increase of 22%. By 2035 the population is forecast to increase to 988,646. Population forecasts are discussed in more detail later within this chapter. Figure 2.3 presents this information more clearly.

The implications of population change, whether increasing or decreasing, has various effects upon the region, including social, political, economic, and environmental. As the population as a whole continues to increase within the Birmingham metropolitan planning area, there can be expected strains on the economic resources of communities to meet the demands of the population.

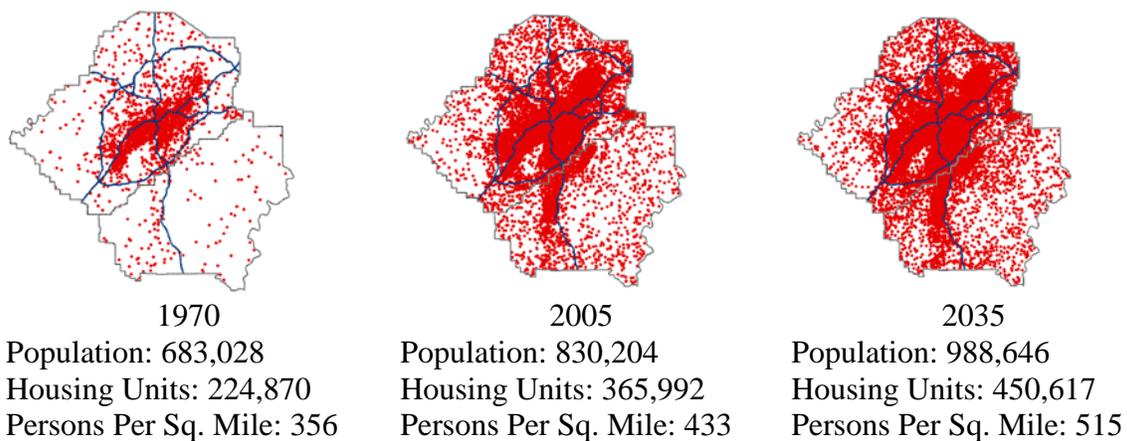


Figure 2.3: Birmingham MPO Population Growth

Growth in population and employment is a major factor in a region's ability to attract and retain business and residents.

While growth within the Birmingham metropolitan area is positive, a major issue facing the region is the persistence of suburban sprawl coupled with declines in population within existing developed areas. Between 1990 and 2000, the City of Birmingham lost approximately 15% of its population, down from 265,968 residents in 1990 to 231,483 in 2005. During the same time period, the metropolitan planning area's share of the regional population also declined by 1.8% from 78.1% in 1990 to 77.6% in 2000. Since 2000, the metropolitan planning area's share of the region's total population has declined an additional 0.5%. Additionally, the U.S. Bureau of the Census reports that Jefferson County has also lost population.

A closer review of the region's historic population data provides a rough indication that the urbanized area is spreading outward, with most of the growth occurring in northern and central Shelby County. New growth is also occurring along the rural edges of northeastern and eastern

Jefferson County, just across the county's borders with Blount and St. Clair Counties. Southwestern Jefferson County near the I-459 and I-20/59 areas in Bessemer, are also beginning to develop. Figure 2.3 illustrates the historic population growth.

It is the goal of the RTP to analyze the demographic trends of the Birmingham metropolitan planning area in order to assess the future transportation needs and policies regarding infrastructure, congestion management and mitigation, and land use development scenarios. This would include better assessments of the impacts that the opening of new transportation facilities such as the future I-22 and the proposed Northern Beltline might have on the region's population growth and economic development. Documentation of the population, housing and employment projections, 2005-2035, December 2008 is included in Appendix A.

B. Existing Population Characteristics

Year 2000 Census data indicates that the poverty rate in the Birmingham metropolitan planning area is thirteen percent (13 %), comparable to both the national and state poverty rates of twelve percent (12%) and sixteen percent (16%) respectively. Persons aged 65 and older comprise thirteen percent (13%) of the Birmingham MPO region's total population, and is equal to that for the State of Alabama. The federal poverty guidelines for poverty issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services are shown in Table 2.1. These guidelines were used to assess the level of poverty within the metropolitan planning area. National poverty guidelines vary based on family size and increases each year due to changes to the Consumer Price Index. Poverty rates in the Birmingham metropolitan planning area, however, have remained fairly constant.

Other household characteristics show that average household incomes in Shelby County are higher than those of in Jefferson County by close to \$20,000. This is constant.

Table 2.1: Annual Federal Poverty Guidelines by Family Size

Family Size	2005 Poverty Guidelines	2006 Poverty Guidelines	2007 Poverty Guidelines
Family of 1	\$9,570	\$9,800	\$10,210
Family of 2	\$12,830	\$13,200	\$13,690
Family of 3	\$16,090	\$16,600	\$17,170
Family of 4	\$19,350	\$20,000	\$20,650*

Source: US Department of Health and Human Services.

Note: To figure larger families add \$3,260 for 2005, \$3,400 for 2006, and \$3,480 for 2007 for each additional person

Table 2.2: Household Characteristics

	Jefferson County				Shelby County			
	2000	2006	Numeric Change 2000 - 2006	Percent Change 2000 - 2006	2000	2006	Numeric Change 2000 - 2006	Percent Change 2000 - 2006
Median Household Income	\$36,868	\$44,246	7,378	20.01%	\$55,440	\$64,243	8,803	15.88%
Per Capita Income	\$20,892	\$25,166	4,274	20.46%	\$27,176	\$32,236	5,060	18.62%
Median Family Income	\$45,951	\$55,178	9,227	20.08%	\$64,105	\$74,541	10,436	16.28%
Median Housing Value	\$90,700	\$115,238	24,538	27.05%	\$146,700	\$171,925	25,225	17.19%
Vehicles Per Household	1.70	1.74	0.04	2.35%	1.99	2.00	0.01	0.50%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

C. Aging Characteristics

Between 2000 and 2005, the Birmingham metropolitan planning area's total population experienced a net increase of 22,047 people. Jefferson County lost just over 6,000 residents during this period while Shelby County gained approximately 28,000. However, Jefferson County experienced a total change in the number of children age 0 to 5 years, a change of 4.6%. By contrast, Shelby County experienced growth in each of the cohorts analyzed, and experienced a net population growth of 84.8%.

Jefferson County							
Cohort	2000	2005	2035	Net Change	% Change	Net Change	% Change
				2000 - 2005	2000 - 2005	2005 - 2035	2005 - 2035
Age under 5 Yrs	43,281	45,498	46,656	2,217	5.12	1,158	2.5
5 to 19 Yrs	138,950	132,539	141,142	-6,411	-4.6	8,603	6.5
20 to 59 Yrs	364,194	366,031	325,147	1,837	.50	-40,884	-11.2
Age 60 and Over	115,622	115,329	158,361	-293	-.25	43,032	37.3
Total	662,047	659,397	671,306	-2,650	-0.4	11,909	1.8
Shelby County							
Cohort	2000	2005	2035	Net Change	% Change	Net Change	% Change
				2000 - 2005	2000 - 2005	2005 - 2035	2005 - 2035
Age under 5 Yrs	10,718	12,504	23,150	1,786	16.6	10,646	85.1
5 to 19 Yrs	30,346	35,220	63,849	4,874	16.1	28,629	81.3
20 to 59 Yrs	85,067	100,349	156,647	15,282	18.0	56,298	56.1
Age 60 and Over	17,162	22,735	73,695	5,573	32.5	50,960	224.1
Total	143,293	170,807	317,341	27,514	19.2	146,534	85.8

Source: US Bureau of the Census 2000 Decennial Census and Annual Estimates 2006

D. Population Trends

As out-migration from Jefferson County began, so did the suburbanization of Shelby County. Population and housing growth increased dramatically in Shelby County beginning in the 1980s. From 1980 to 2005, Shelby County's population rose by 104,509, an increase of 158%. Much of this growth is located along the major transportation corridors, providing access to employment in Jefferson County. Shelby County, historically a sparsely populated rural county with thousands of acres of greenspace, has been transformed into one of Alabama's largest counties. By 2035 it is projected that Shelby County will add another 146,500 residents and 61,600 households.

The county level trends associated with population change are ones that mirror those within other urbanized areas in the country. Suburban development continues to grow outside of existing developed areas, primarily along major transportation corridors. Populations within existing urban areas of Jefferson County migrate to suburban areas along the fringes of the county, as well as south out of Jefferson County into Shelby County. The majority of the suburban population is located along major transportation routes to the City of Birmingham, the employment center of the region. As the numbers of persons and housing units continue to increase within the

historically rural areas of the region, so the numbers will continue to decline within the existing urban areas. Jefferson County, therefore, is not expected to have significant population increases, though Shelby County is projected to maintain a pattern of high growth, particularly within the rural areas. Over time, increases in costs associated with infrastructure and transportation could begin to reverse this trend.

E. Housing Trends

The housing trends within the Birmingham metropolitan planning area mirror that of population. Residential developments are most evident within the suburban areas of Jefferson and Shelby Counties. Housing construction permits within the area average about 5,800 annually. While Jefferson County exceeds Shelby County in terms of annual housing construction, Jefferson County has a far older housing stock and therefore a higher number of vacant housing units, particularly within existing urban areas. In addition, Jefferson County has a higher rate of unit removal than Shelby County. The housing demand within the Birmingham MPO planning area is strong, as revealed by rising prices and ownership rates. However, the performance of specific housing markets varies widely, with strong growth in the suburban areas, moderate growth within the rural areas, and persistent weakness within existing, developed urban areas. It is projected, however, that loft and condominium development within the Birmingham Central Area will follow similar urban trends of becoming an attractive alternative to suburban living.

On average, Birmingham MPO jurisdictions issue about 5,800 housing construction permits annually. Of these, Jefferson County averages about 3,500 permits annually while Shelby County averages about 2,300.

F. Population and Housing Forecasts

Between 2005 and 2035, Jefferson County's population is projected to remain relatively level, increasing from 659,397 to 671,306, a 2% increase over the next thirty years. This is primarily due to decreases in the urban population being offset by increases in population in the suburban areas of the county.

Shelby County is projected to add about 146,500 residents, growing from 170,807 in 2005 to 317,341 by 2035, an increase of 86%. The majority of the growth will occur along the major transportation routes. In order to plan for future transportation needs, it is necessary to project the development trends within the region. Regionally, the Birmingham metropolitan planning area population increased by 13% between 1980 and 2005. By 2035 it is projected to increase another 158,442 persons, or 19%.

The population in Jefferson County is projected to increase by 11,909 or 1.8% between 2005 and 2035. As previously discussed, most of this growth will be in the suburban areas, in close proximity to interstate access. In terms of total numbers, the Trussville Area (district 20) and the South Bessemer / Oxmoor Area (district 18) are projected to have the largest increases, adding 12,476 and 14,523 respectively. These areas have had significant increases in the past, and are expected to remain areas of high growth in the future. Other areas with significant increases include the Hoover / Vestavia Hills Area (district 19) and the Gardendale / Fultondale Areas (district 13). These districts, located around interstate interchanges, have significant residential

developments planned or in progress. The Central Area (district 1), located in downtown Birmingham, is projected to begin a reversal from its historic declines. With redevelopment efforts in the urban core, including the Railroad Reservation Park and renewed demand for loft and mixed-use developments, the Central Area is projected to increase in population from 3,500 in 2005 to over 6,700 in 2035. In addition, the new interstate corridors, the future I-22 located in northwest Jefferson County and the currently proposed Northern Beltline will spur continued suburban growth in those areas. Table 2.4 summarizes these population and housing trends.

Table 2.4 Housing and Population Trends

Jefferson County									
	1980	1990	2000	2005	2035	Net Change 1980 - 2005	% Change 1980 - 2005	Net Change 2005 - 2035	% Change 2005 - 2035
Total Population	671,324	651,525	662,047	659,397	671,306	-11,927	-1.78%	11,909	1.81%
Total Housing Units	259,843	273,097	288,162	294,843	318,823	35,000	13.47%	23,980	8.13%
Shelby County									
Total Population	66,298	99,358	143,293	170,807	317,341	104,509	157.64%	146,534	85.79%
Total Housing Units	24,644	39,201	59,302	71,149	132,795	46,505	188.71%	61,646	86.64%
Birmingham MPO									
Total Population	737,622	750,883	805,340	830,204	988,647	92,582	12.55%	158,443	19.08%
Total Housing Units	284,487	312,298	347,464	365,992	451,618	81,505	28.65%	85,626	23.40%

The areas of greatest population decline are projected to occur within the existing developed urban areas, including the East Lake / Woodlawn Area (district 4), Tarrant Airport Area (district 5), North Birmingham Area (district 6), Pratt City / Ensley Area (district 7), and West End / Midfield Area (district 8). These areas, the traditional large neighborhoods of the City of Birmingham, consist of some of the oldest housing within Jefferson County. These areas have seen constant decreases in residential population as families continue to move into suburban areas. Without significant redevelopment efforts, this trend is expected to continue.

Shelby County has had a steady increase in population over the decades, increasing by 158% between 1980 to 2005. This trend is expected to continue over the next 30 years. Much of Shelby County's growth will be in the Helena Area (district S1) and the Middle Shelby Area (district S7). The Helena area is projected to increase by 176%, adding nearly 30,000 residents, by 2035, while the Middle Shelby Area is projected to add over 25,000, primarily in the Chelsea area. Every planning district within Shelby County is projected to have increases over 50%, with the exception of the Hoover Area (district S2), which is projected to increase by 24%, due primarily to the fact that district is quickly approaching maximum build out. Shelby County has transformed from a sparsely populated, rural county into the fastest growing county in Alabama, and it is projected to continue to have substantial increases through 2035.

Between 2005 and 2035, the number of housing units within Jefferson County is projected to increase from 294,843 to 318,822, an 8% increase. The majority of the units will be within the suburban areas of the county, primarily along major transportation routes. Shelby County is projected to increase from 71,149 in 2005 to 132,795 by 2035, an increase of 87%. Housing demand is expected to remain strong in Shelby County for the next several decades. The Birmingham MPO counties are projected to add a combined 85,625 housing units by 2035. Over time, the increase in suburban units in Shelby County will make up a larger percentage of the total.

2.1.4 Employment Profile

Employment by Place of Work totals within the Birmingham metropolitan planning area have remained strong, steadily increasing in the region. In 1980, employment totaled over 314,000 and by 2005 had increased to about 403,500, an increase of nearly 89,500 or 29%. By 2035 the area is projected to add another 142,270 jobs for a 35% increase. The Birmingham area, traditionally known as a banking, industrial, and manufacturing center of the Southeast, is seeing gains within the retail and service sectors while jobs within the industrial and manufacturing sectors continue to decline. The automotive and medical industries are spurring new and renewed opportunities for area residents.

A. Historic Employment Growth and Employment Characteristics

Since 1980, total employment for both full and part-time workers increased from 385,415 to 562,369 in 2005, an increase of 46%. Between 1990 and 2000, the interim decade of the analysis period, the Birmingham metropolitan planning area added close to 33,888 full-time jobs. Since 2000, the region has added an additional 16,694 jobs, bringing the regional total to 403,655 total jobs. 86% of the Greater Birmingham region’s job creation since 2000 has been in Jefferson and Shelby Counties.

Since 2000, all but one of the region’s six counties has realized a gain in total jobs. Shelby County leads the way with a total of 10,314 jobs added. Jefferson County follows closely, adding just over 6,000 jobs within the same time period. Jefferson County still leads the region in the number of total jobs, having almost five times as many jobs as Shelby County. Table 2.5 illustrates these observations and more.

Table 2.5: Annual Average Full-Time Employment

County	1980	1990	2000	2005	1990 - 2000		2000-2005	
					Net Change	% Change	Net Change	% Change
Jefferson	297,955	316,800	329,561	335,941	12,761	4.0%	6,380	1.9%
Shelby	16,146	36,773	57,400	67,714	20,627	56.1%	10,314	18.0%
Metropolitan Planning Area	314,101	353,573	386,961	403,655	33,388	9.4%	16,694	4.3%

Source: Alabama Department of Industrial Relations

As is true throughout the U.S., the manufacturing industry has continued a downward trend over the last several decades, dropping by 40% between 1980 and 2005. The recent emergence of the automobile industry around the region is fueling speculation that ancillary businesses will possibly slow that negative trend. However, the Birmingham metropolitan planning area has

managed to weather the global recession much better than other urban areas within the U.S., and particularly within the Southeast.

The greatest industry gains have been within the service industry, where nearly 90,000 full and part-time jobs have been created since 1980. These jobs have been created primarily within the medical, educational, and professional services sectors. Plans to relocate and expand the existing Trinity Medical Center to the U.S. 280 Digital Hospital, plans to locate a new Baptist Health Systems hospital to complement the existing outpatient center in the City of Hoover, as well as the planned expansion of the Baptist Shelby Hospital campus will undoubtedly offset the job losses experienced from the closing of Carraway Hospital and layoffs at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Hospital, as well as threatened losses at the Jefferson County run Cooper Green Mercy Hospital. In short, the Birmingham metropolitan planning area has cemented itself as a leader, both regionally and nationally, in healthcare and medical, bio-medical, and pharmacological research.

In addition to service industry job growth, the retail industry has also made significant gains. Between 1980 and 2000, over 28,000 jobs were added to this sector of the Birmingham region's employment. However, the industry has lost a lot of momentum recently, in large part because of declines in consumer spending. This is largely reflective of the downturn currently being experienced in the national economic environment. None-the-less, the construction, finance, and real estate industries have made notable economic contributions, having added nearly 40,000 jobs to the region between 1980 and 2005.

In looking individually at the counties that make up the Birmingham metropolitan planning area, Jefferson County lost approximately 2,100 retail jobs between 2000 and 2005. During the same time period, Shelby County gained 8,288 retail jobs. This is more than double the Shelby County year 2000 total number of retail jobs, and represents 80% of Shelby County's total employment growth. The Heart of Alabama Rural Planning Organization (HARPO) area, consisting of communities located in the counties outside of the Birmingham metropolitan planning area, lost retail jobs. In fact, most of these counties' 2005 retail job totals mirror their mid-1990's retail jobs totals. Table 2.6 presents this information in more detail.

Table 2.6: Retail Employment

County	1980	1990	2000	2005	1990 - 2000		2000-2005	
					Net Change	% Change	Net Change	% Change
Jefferson	48,190	56,835	69,019	66,930	12,184	21%	-2,089	-3%
Shelby	2,345	4,260	7,644	15,932	3,384	79%	8,288	108%
Metropolitan Planning Area	50,535	61,095	76,663	82,862	15,568	25.5%	6,199	8.1%

Source: Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham

B. Wages from Employment

Jefferson and Shelby Counties, on average, have the highest average wages of all of the counties that make up the Greater Birmingham region. Increases in wages have kept pace with the employment gains experienced within the metropolitan planning area. In 2005, the average wage in Jefferson and Shelby Counties was estimated to be approximately \$8,665 more than the average of the entire 6-county region, and the average wage per job has increased by nearly

200%, from about \$13,500 in 1980 to nearly \$40,000 in 2005. Between 2000 and 2005, the average wage for jobs in the core counties increased 21.2% in comparison to 19.7% for the region as a whole. Average wages in Jefferson and Shelby Counties were comparable, with the average wage for jobs in Jefferson County exceeding Shelby County's average by \$2,866. This is between \$14,000 and \$15,000 more than the average wages paid for jobs in the adjacent developing and rural counties.

Increases in total wages paid closely correspond to the overall increase in full-time employment which rose from 348,000 in 1980 to 478,500 in 2005, a 38% increase. The changes within the composition of the workforce have contributed to the increases in wages. As the region's workforce has shifted from Goods Producing to Service Providing, wage and salary disbursements have shifted to accommodate a greater diversified and more specialized workforce. Table 2.7 presents these findings more clearly.

Table 2.7: Average Wage per Job

County	1980	1990	2000	2005	1990 - 2000		2000-2005	
					Net Avg. Change	% Avg. Change	Net Avg. Change	% Avg. Change
Jefferson	14,053	\$ 22,931	\$ 33,738	\$ 40,963	\$ 10,807	47.1%	\$ 7,225	21.4%
Shelby	12,827	\$ 20,767	\$ 31,498	\$ 38,097	\$ 10,731	51.7%	\$ 6,599	21.0%
Average Metropolitan Planning Area Wage		\$ 21,849	\$ 32,618	\$ 39,530	\$ 10,769	49.4%	\$ 6,912	21.2%
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis: Table CA35 and CA34								

C. Employment Trends

Table 2.8 shows the top jobs in Jefferson and Shelby Counties in terms of employment. As can be seen, the medical industry within Jefferson County is the top employer. Fast food restaurants, which are classified as limited-service eating places, also make up a larger number of the jobs in both Jefferson and Shelby County.

Jefferson County		Shelby County	
Industry	Number of Jobs	Industry	Number of Jobs
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	21,778	Insurance carriers	3,799
Depository credit intermediation	13,596	Limited-service eating places	2,962
Employment services	12,275	Full-service restaurants	2,329
Limited-service eating places	10,751	Services to Buildings and Dwellings	1,951
Full-service restaurants	9,936	Building Equipment Contractors	1,679
Religious organizations	9,930	Computer Systems Design and Related Services	1,503
Management of Companies and Enterprises	8,928	Grocery Stores	1,483
Grocery Stores	7,560	Religious organizations	1,274
Offices of physicians	6,801	Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services	1,174
Building Equipment Contractors	6,340	Advertising and Related Services	1,158
Insurance carriers	6,291	Nonresidential Building Construction	1,157
Nonresidential Building Construction	6,114	Building Material and Supplies Dealers	1,127
Legal services	5,631	Foundation, Structure, and Building Exterior Contractors	1,090
Nursing care facilities	4,986	Offices of physicians	925
Clothing stores	4,971	Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services	898
Outpatient care centers	4,507	Employment services	764
Services to Buildings and Dwellings	4,198	Offices of other health practitioners	721
Utility System Construction	4,197	Residential Building Construction	716

Table 2.8: Selected Top Industries by Employment

Source: US Bureau of the Census County Business Partners, County Level 2004

D. Employment Forecasts

Jefferson County, particularly the Central Area and the Five Points South Area (district 2) within downtown Birmingham, has been the economic center of the region. The downtown area consists of nearly 20% of the jobs in the metropolitan area, primarily within the professional, financial, and medical fields. These areas are projected to continue to increase, especially with positive redevelopment efforts and additional dwelling units being constructed in the urban core.

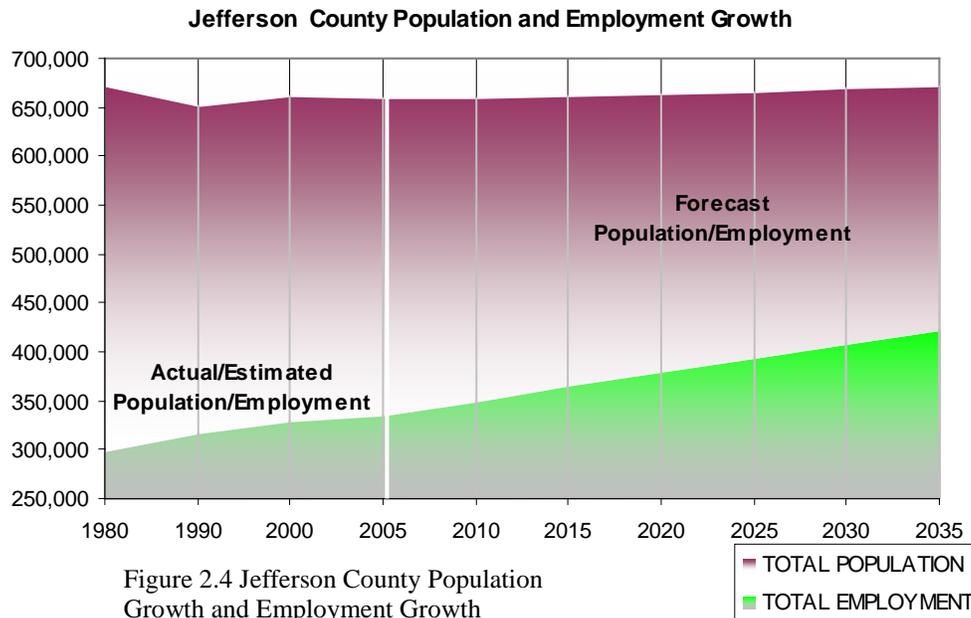
Other areas of notable increase include the Adamsville / Graysville Area (district 14) and the Mulberry Forks / North Johns Area (district 22), both projected to increase over 100% with the completion of the future I-22. The Warrior / Sayre Area (district 21) is projected to increase by 117% with the initial development of the proposed Northern Beltline. The Mountain Brook / Liberty Park Area (district 10) is projected to have the largest numeric increase of over 13,000 jobs.

Decreases in employment within Jefferson County are consistent with decreases in population and housing. As residents move out of the urban neighborhoods, employment opportunities

decrease as well. Of these areas, the West End / Midfield Area are projected to have the largest numeric decrease, losing nearly 1,000 jobs, or -7.3% by 2035.

Shelby County employment is projected to increase from about 67,500 jobs in 2005 to nearly 124,000 in 2035. Much of the growth in Shelby County is projected to occur within the professional, retail, and service sectors, with commercial developments following a steady increase in population and housing and taking the form of retail strip developments and suburban office parks. The Harpersville / Wilsonville Area (district S5), which include the cities of Chelsea and Westover along U.S. Highway 280, is projected to add about 6,900 jobs for an increase of 230%. The Montevallo Area (district S7), which includes the City of Calera, is projected to increase by 254% over the next 30 years.

Figures 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6 summarize the expected population and employment growth for Jefferson and Shelby Counties, and the metropolitan planning area as a whole.



Shelby County Population and Employment Growth

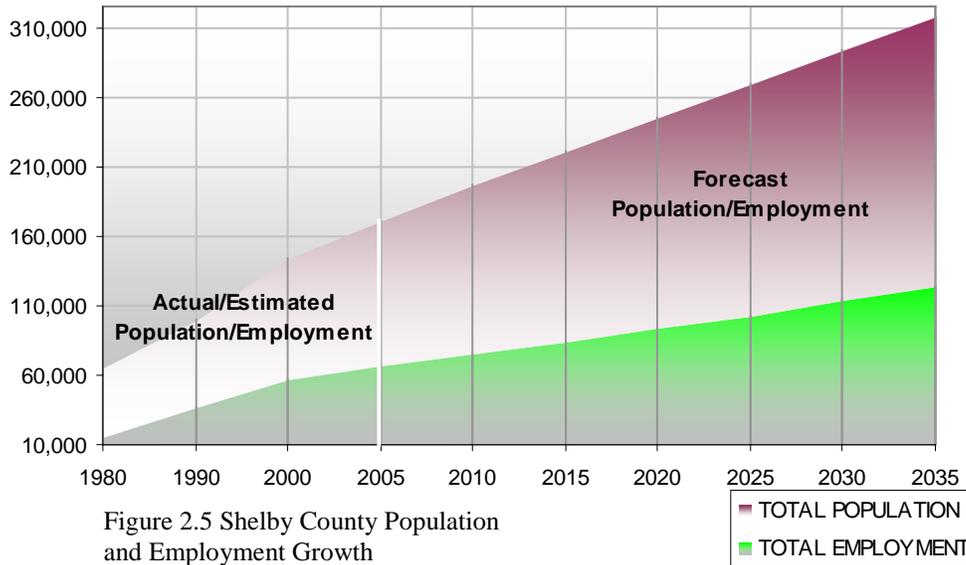


Figure 2.5 Shelby County Population and Employment Growth

Metropolitan Planning Area Population and Employment Growth

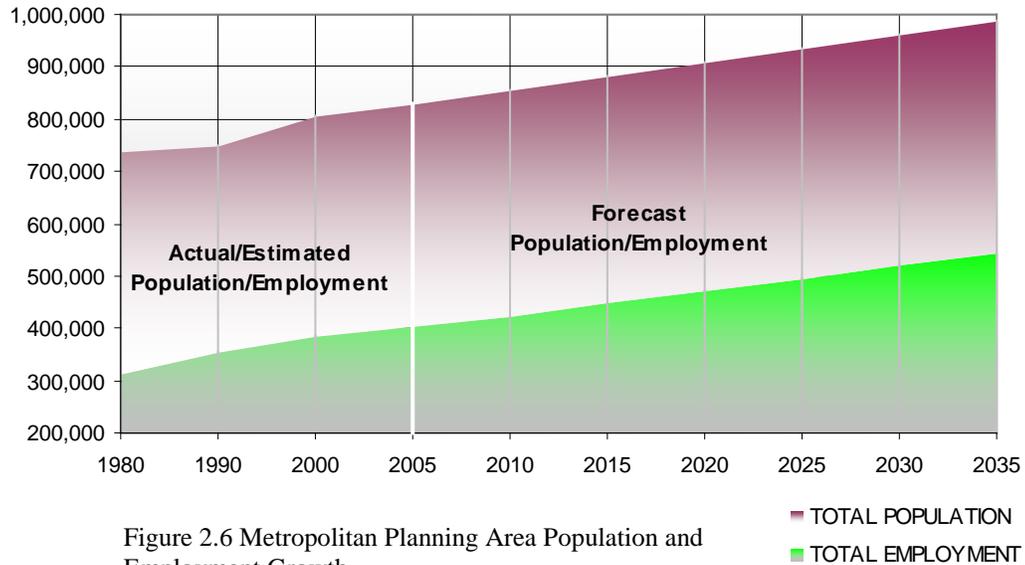


Figure 2.6 Metropolitan Planning Area Population and Employment Growth

2.1.5 Land Development Profile

A. Historic Land Development Patterns

The Birmingham region, like most other urban areas in post-war America, experienced an economic boom which helped to increase household incomes and make personal transportation more affordable. Robust government investment in the post-war transportation system led to the development of several thousand lane miles of new roads and interstates within the Birmingham region. This greatly decreased the travel times for long distance trips and increased access to inaccessible lands. This expansion of infrastructure influenced the real estate markets,

incentivizing the development of new, affordable housing in low-density suburban areas located away from the aging housing stock and perceived deficiencies of inner-city Birmingham. With the successes of the Civil Rights movement and desegregation of key institutions such as schools and inner-city housing markets, the suburbanization of the region provided added momentum with “white flight.” These influences on the land development pattern within the Birmingham metropolitan planning area are not uncommon, and in fact, most American urban areas’ post-war development pattern is similar to the Birmingham experience. As a result, the Birmingham region has “sprawled” outward.

As the population sprawled outward, so too did retail development and personal service industries. These businesses tended to locate along major transportation routes and at the intersection of major roadways. As development moved further away from the Birmingham City Center, less attention was given to the provision of pedestrian transportation facilities, and instead the focus of the transportation system’s development was almost exclusively centered on the efficient movement of automobiles. The attention given to the development of the transportation system exclusively for the automobile gave rise to the “over the mountain” communities of Vestavia Hills and Hoover, located just south of the City of Birmingham. It also has spearheaded the phenomenal growth of Northern Shelby County, following the U.S. 31, U.S. 280, and I-65 corridors. More recent development has occurred east of Birmingham along I-59 and north along I-65. Presently, I-20 east of Birmingham into St. Clair County is expected to draw much of the region’s growth over the next decade, while the future I-22 corridor west of Birmingham will add development potential to that area.

The impacts of the Birmingham region’s transportation investment decisions can be seen in both the urban and suburban areas of the region. Within the Birmingham City Center, multi-lane one-way streets provide for the swift movement of cars entering and exiting the area by the interstate system and the region’s freeways. In suburban areas, the transportation system does not accommodate non-motorized travel and caters exclusively to the movement of cars. This makes walking and biking to retail and service oriented establishments located along major travel corridors from adjacent residential communities nearly impossible without a car.

B. Existing Land Development Characteristics

While the most recent development spurt is occurring south of the City of Birmingham and in the Northern and Central portions of Shelby County, development is also occurring east of Birmingham and extending well into St. Clair County. Additionally, moderate development is occurring north of the City of Birmingham along I-65 as it heads into Blount County. The development of these exurbs is occurring on land historically used for farming and other agricultural purposes.

Both Shelby and St. Clair Counties have been recognized as two of the fastest growing counties in Alabama in terms of population. However, they are both bedroom communities to Jefferson County, and a large percentage of their populations are employed in Jefferson County. Being the region’s core county, Jefferson has the most jobs.

The development of land on the urban fringe follows typical development patterns, initially being developed with residential construction. Commercial and retail development normally follows the residential development, and meets the daily convenience needs of the new residents. As the area continues to develop, it becomes more suburban in nature, and is typified by concentrations of

low-density single-family households with a localized retail center (i.e. strip mall) in close proximity. Each of these is located along a primary transportation corridor and there is little redundancy of the transportation system. Employment in these suburban areas takes place largely in centralized office parks. However, most suburban residents commute to work at jobs located within the region's economic core.

C. Land Development Trends

The housing trends within the Birmingham metropolitan planning area mirror that of population. Residential developments are most evident within the suburban areas of Jefferson and Shelby Counties. Housing construction permits within the area average about 5,800 annually. While Jefferson County exceeds Shelby in terms of annual housing construction, Jefferson has a far older housing stock and therefore a higher number of vacant housing units, particularly within existing urban areas. In addition, Jefferson County has a higher rate of unit removal than Shelby County. The housing demand within the metropolitan planning area is strong, as revealed by rising prices and ownership rates. However, the performance of specific housing markets varies widely, with strong growth in the suburban areas, moderate growth within the rural areas, and persistent weakness within existing, developed urban areas. It is projected, however, that loft and condominium development within the Birmingham Central Area will follow similar urban trends of becoming an attractive alternative to suburban living, especially among the aging/retiring population and young urban professionals.

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2.2 Issues and Challenges

2.2.1 Auto Dependency

For good or for bad, the Birmingham metropolitan planning area, like most American cities, can be characterized mostly as a widely-scattered set of *dispersed origins*—essentially, where people live—and *multiple destinations*—those clusters of employment and retail centers where people travel to in a given day. Fully, 99% of all trips in the Birmingham metropolitan planning area are accomplished by private automobile, of which 86% of all trips are in single-occupant vehicles. In looking at the region, it is very evident that much of the development patterns over the past 50 years, as well as current development have been centered on the automobile. The continued pursuit of this historic development pattern is perpetuating urban sprawl and fueling an over-dependence on the automobile for travel. Between 2000 and 2007, the total per person vehicle miles traveled increased from 26,283,000 miles/day to 28,800,000 miles/day. This is an increase of 8%, equivalent annual rate of 1.3%. This development pattern also has negative consequences for the socio-economic environment as well as contributing to a decline in public health conditions.

2.2.2 Congestion

At the same time, the Birmingham metropolitan area’s roadway congestion has increased. The Texas Transportation Institute notes that congestion in the Birmingham area increased from 8 to 32 hours per traveler each year between 1982 and 2007. The total hours of delay in 2007 was 12,605,000. The Texas Transportation Institute defines the Birmingham area as a “faster congestion growth.”

The Birmingham Regional Congestion Management Process (CMP) reports that 54 center-lane miles of interstate roadways and 41 miles of arterial roadways, representing 36% interstate and 6% arterials, were congested during peak travel hours. Forecasts of future traffic conditions show that under a “business as usual” transportation system development scenario, peak hour congestion on the area’s interstate and arterial roadways can be expected to increase by 16% and 171% in 2035, where congested travel periods will last longer and be more intense.

2.2.3 Urban Form

As previously alluded to, urban form is in large part responsible for the regions over reliance on automobiles for person travel. Lower density, dispersed development which is representative of much of the region’s communities has resulted in travel patterns that focus less on the City Center, particularly for non-work trips. The exception to this has been trips to the Medical Center hospitals and doctors’ offices, as well as trips to UAB continues to serve as a commuter campus despite the increase in on-campus residents. The urban development pattern has also focused less on the development of traditional town centers in favor of strip commercial development along urban arterials. This development pattern makes the ability to provide public transportation services more difficult, increasing transit trip distances and travel times, and reducing reliability and on-time performance. Along with the purposeful underinvestment in non-motorized transportation facilities, it also contributes to public health concerns related to sedentary life-styles.

2.2.4 Public Transportation

Public transportation in the Birmingham metropolitan planning area is provided by the Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority (BJCTA). Human service transportation is provided by a patchwork of non-profit agencies, with the primary provider being the Central Alabama Specialized Transportation (ClasTran), a consortium of non-profit agencies. Rural public transportation is also provided by ClasTran under contract to both Jefferson and Shelby Counties. Ideally, public transportation services would be coordinated and seamless, allowing travelers to travel freely across the region and to move between providers. However, the public transit system is poorly integrated, and traveling across boundaries (rural to urban, system service boundaries, etc.) is inconvenient, frustrating, unattractive, and costly. If transit is to be a viable transportation system strategy for the Birmingham region, changes will need to be made in order to allow to improve its integration and to enable it to both attract and accommodate a larger share of trips.

2.2.5 Under Investment

Investment in the physical development of transportation infrastructure has not kept pace with the region's growth.

Between 1995 and 2005, 250 lane miles of roadway were constructed, a change of 5.2%, an annual rate of 0.5%, as contrasted with a population change of 5.2% , an annual rate of 0.5% between the same period. Additionally, the Birmingham region has not invested in any major/substantive modifications to its public transportation system. While many other urban areas within the United States and abroad are investing heavily in rapid transit systems such as commuter rail, heavy rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit (BRT), the Birmingham region has barely broached the subject. The good news on this front is that planning has either been completed or is currently underway for rapid transit systems to serve the Birmingham metropolitan planning area. This would include the regional transit system plan, the In-town Transit Partnership (ITP), the I-65 south corridor, U.S. 280, and U.S. 11 west corridors.

Finally, there has been a purposeful underinvestment in non-motorized transportation facilities such as sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes. With the exception of a handful of cities, most communities within the region do not consider non-motorized transportation facilities to be viable modes of transportation and therefore do not address their development within their development regulations. Outside of the Birmingham MPO and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), there is little encouragement to build these facilities. The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT), within the 3rd Division, actively discourages the construction of sidewalks and bike lanes on arterial roadways, in stark contrast to the FHWA's guidance that such facilities be developed unless there is good reason not to. As a result of the lack of investment in non-motorized transportation facilities, automobile travel is encouraged for short trips as travelers have no other travel options. This has implications for roadway congestion, air quality, and public health.

It also has implications social equity. The transportation system's development (or lack thereof) could exacerbate existing social inequities, isolating communities identified as Environmental Justice populations as well as vulnerable populations such as the elderly and disabled. Many of these populations' households historically do not own and/or cannot afford to own automobiles –

insurance, maintenance, ad valorem taxes, and fuel costs can stretch household financial resources well beyond these populations' ability to pay. Social isolation problems and the inability to participate in activities such as education, social services, health care, and jobs have the potential to be magnified as energy costs rise and more of the community is unable to afford transportation.

2.2.6 Funding

As discussed previously, there has been a purposeful underinvestment in the region's transportation system. This purposeful underinvestment is largely the result of a lack of adequate funding to address all of the disparate needs of a modern American city. At the federal level, funding for the Birmingham metropolitan planning area's transportation system has remained constant. At the same time, the costs of transportation infrastructure improvements have increased. Although these costs have dropped dramatically in recent months, in large part because of lowered demand resulting from a weakened global and national economy, the costs of materials and labor should be expected to continue to increase as demand will undoubtedly return to and even surpass pre-recession numbers. Inadequate funding at the statewide and local levels is also prevalent. Historically, few cities in the Birmingham metropolitan planning area have been able raise enough money to either pay for projects outright, or to match federal funds. Too often, cities' projects sit for years within the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) while the city attempts to raise capital in order to pay for match. It should be noted, that this is but one of many contributing factors to the excessive delay the metropolitan planning area has with implementing projects.

None-the-less, the lack of adequate funding at both the state and local levels underscores the need for existing funding sources to increase the amount of revenues they generate, or the addition of new funding sources.

2.2.7 Implementation

Even if there were adequate funding to provide for all of the Birmingham metropolitan planning area's transportation system needs, a need exists for a strong implementing agency. Few entities coordinate local land development decisions, transit service and highway construction.

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2.3 Summary

The Birmingham region is at a crossroads in its development. For the past several years the region has been able to get away with minor transportation system adjustments – widening a roadway here, installing a traffic signal there – as the region has, for the most part, been bypassed the rapid development that has characterized other major urban areas in the Southeastern United States. However, relying on minor changes is no longer a valid option for the Birmingham metropolitan planning area given the many issues and challenges that have been identified. The need to rebuild the existing transportation infrastructure, the need to develop new infrastructure, as well as the need to expand and/or improve transportation services has been well documented. Finally, it does no good to call for changes in the quantity and quality of the infrastructure without fundamental changes in how the region will operate, maintain, support, and most importantly, use it.