

A NEW GEM IN NORTH ALABAMA'S 'STRING OF PEARLS'

OPPORTUNITY ZONES





ABOUT OPAL

Harnessing the power of Opportunity Zones to transform Alabama

Opportunity Alabama – or OPAL, as we like to call it – is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to driving capital into Alabama's distressed communities. OPAL's primary focus is on capital formation in Opportunity Zones – 158 Census tracts distributed across all 67 counties in Alabama. OPAL has a comprehensive strategy to turn Alabama into a national epicenter for Opportunity Zone-driven investment – and, in the process, lay the groundwork to ignite place-based economic development revolution across the state.

OPAL's mission is to:

- Educate stakeholders on what Opportunity Zones are and how investments can be structured to work for projects and communities
- Source project and capital pipelines
- Promote communities (and the projects that could make the biggest difference for those communities) to potential investors
- Connect projects to capital, capital to projects, and key institutional supporters to both groups to ensure that deals get done
- Track performance of projects within communities to determine whether the program is having its intended effects

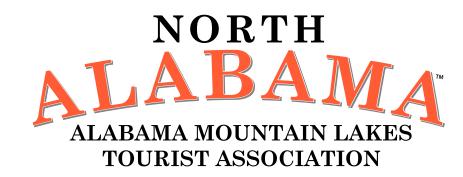


APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS REGION

The Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association (AMLA) region is made up of the 16 northern most counties of the State of Alabama. This area includes the Tennessee River Valley and the Appalalchian Mountain Range.

Counties within the AMLA region are:

BLOUNT	DEKALB	LAUDERDALE	MARION Marshall
CHEROKEE	ETOWAH	LAWRENCE	
COLBERT	FRANKLIN	LIMESTONE	MORGAN
CULLMAN	JACKSON	MADISON	WINSTON



ABOUT AMLA

AND THE CONCEPT OF NORTH ALABAMA'S "STRING OF PEARLS"

The idea of a regional organization to promote the area was conceived by individuals concerned with the economic development of North Alabama. Five years of extensive research during the early 1960s concluded that the region was far above the national average in natural wonders, attractions and panoramic terrain, yet well below the national average in tourist income.

In 1960, as director of the Decatur Chamber of Commerce, Dick Ordway began efforts to organize groups in Decatur, Huntsville, Florence, Sheffield, Athens, and Cullman to work together in promoting tourism and travel in the area.

"Even back then we saw that North Alabama had a number of quality destinations laid out across the region next to the Tennessee River like a string of pearls," Mr. Orday said.

With this in mind, the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association (AMLA) was created in 1964 with the express purpose of developing North Alabama's travel industry and marketing the region to the traveling public. Over the course of the past five decades, the North Alabama tourism and travel industry has grown into an annual \$15 billion economic workhorse for the region.

AMLA is a nonprofit organization with an ever-expanding membership base representing progressive travel-regulated businesses and associations as well as various levels of government. AMLA's 500-plus members include chambers of commerce, convention & visitors bureaus, attractions, campgrounds, festivals, communities, counties, golf courses, restaurants, tour operators, accommodations, vendors, financial institutions, parks and individuals.

We all prosper by working together in a unified effort to promote the sixteen-county region. That is why AMLA has compiled this information piece on Alabama's powerful Opportunity Zone program.

Additional information on AMLA and North Alabama destinations, accommodations and special events is available by calling 800.648.5381 or by visiting www.NorthAlabama.org.

Some materials contained within this information piece are compiled from, with permission and thanks, Alabama Tourism Department, Opportunity Alabama, Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, and the State of Alabama.

OPPORTUNITY ZONES

ALABAMA'S NEW TOOL FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Interactive map available at adeca.alabama.gov/opportunityzones

The Opportunity Zones program is a new alternative economic development program established by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 to foster private-sector investments in low-income rural and urban areas. This is a new program with many moving parts. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs presents this brochure to give you a basic overview of the program and how it is being implemented in Alabama.

WHAT ARE OPPORTUNITY ZONES?

The areas eligible for submission as Opportunity Zones are low-income census tracts with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent and a median family income of less than 80 percent of the statewide or area median income. Census tracts are statistical subdivisions of a county established by the U.S. Census Bureau. Each tract averages between 1,200 and 8,000 in population and the nominated tracts vary in size from 199 acres to 235,352 acres.

HOW CAN THEY BENEFIT MY AREA?

The program provides a federal tax incentive for investors to reinvest their unrealized capital gains into Opportunity Funds dedicated for investing in the designated Opportunity Zones.

HOW MANY OPPORTUNITY ZONES HAVE BEEN SELECTED?

Congress empowered governors to nominate Opportunity Zones in their states by using up to 25 percent of their low-income community census tracts. In Alabama, 629 of the state's 1,181 census tracts qualified as low-income community tracts. Of those 629 eligible tracts, Governor Kay Ivey was authorized to select 158 as Opportunity Zones.

WHO SELECTED THEM?

The Governor's Office, with the help of ADECA, identified and selected the 158 Opportunity Zones from the qualifying tracts. There is at least one Opportunity Zone in each of the state's 67 counties.

HOW WERE THEY SELECTED?

The Governor's Office and ADECA used an objective methodology that involved input from a variety of resources to determine areas where the program could be most effective. Methods used in the selection process included a county-by-county examination of previous designations as advantage sites or industrial sites, a review of aerial imagery for development activities by ADECA's Geographical Information Systems Unit and data and research compiled by federal, state and local organizations.

WHO APPROVED THE STATE'S NOMINATIONS FOR OPPORTUNITY ZONES?

Alabama's Opportunity Zones were approved by the U.S. Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service on April 18, 2018. According to the U.S. Treasury Department, the qualified Opportunity Zones will retain this designation for 10 years. Investors can defer tax on any prior gains until no later than Dec. 31, 2026, so long as the gain is reinvested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund, an investment vehicle organized to make investments in Qualified Opportunity Zones. In addition, if the investor holds the investment in the Opportunity Fund for at least 10 years, the investor would be eligible for an increase in its basis equal to the fair market value of the investment on the date that it is sold.

*Opportunity Zones 101, Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs



WHAT'S NEW

A SMALL SELECTION OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN NORTH ALABAMA

BLOUNT COUNTY

- Spring Valley Beach \$1M expansion.
- Blue Spring Living Water available in over 150 locations state-wide, with plans for a national marketing effort underway.

CHEROKEE COUNTY

- Pirate's Bay Water Park
- · Jake's On The Lake
- Graves Three Rivers Landing
- F.C. Weiss Pub & Eatery
- Joyland RV Park

COLBERT COUNTY

- · City of Cherokee Kayak & Canoe Trail
- Sheffield is poised for explosive growth in tourism. Inspiration Landing, a multi-use development anchored by a 150-room, full service hotel, event center, amphitheater, microbrewery, retail space and a marina is being built on the Tennessee River west of the downtown district.

DeKALB COUNTY

- Grand Reopening of Alabama Fan Club and Museum
- Hampton Inn Fort Payne added 28 new rooms this past year, bringing their total number of rooms up to 56.

ETOWAH COUNTY

- The Cove RV Resort & Campground
- Big Wills Creek and Campground
- Fairfield Inn & Suites renovations
- · Nine new dining establishments

FRANKLIN COUNTY

• Girard Systems, a custom awning manufacturer, has opened a new factory at the West Franklin Regional Industrial Park near Red Bay. The new factory is the 5th location for Girard and is located on nearly 15 acres in the West Franklin Regional Industrial Park.

MADISON COUNTY

- City Centre Development (downtown across from Big Spring Park) AC Hotel
- Mid-City Development (former Madison Mall location) featuring Topgolf, Dave & Buster's, The Camp, Aloft hotel

MORGAN COUNTY

· Cook Museum of Natural Science



Pirate's Bay Water Park, Cherokee County



The Cove RV Resort & Campground, Etowah County.



CityCentre at Big Spring, Huntsville.



Cook Museum of Natural Science, Morgan County.

CHOOSE NORTH ALABAMA

MORE THAN TWO DECADES OF DRAMATIC ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROWTH

- There are at least one opportunity zone in each of North Alabama's 16 counties
- Size varies from 199 acres to 235, 352 acres

The North Alabama tourism and travel industry achieved a record \$3.2 billion economic impact on the region in 2019 according to a study released recently by the Alabama Tourism Department. The figure of \$3,209,283,833 represents an 7.8% growth over 2018's \$2,926,299,074.

"We're seeing dramatic increases in all categories of the industry across the region," said Tami Reist, AMLA President and CEO. "Throughout the year our members are reporting increases in the number of travelers at traditional destinations, as well as travelers for new emerging markets such as flea markets and thrift shops, wedding venues, heritage sites, and parks," she said.

In another key segment, the state study showed some 37,644 residents in the region are employed directly and indirectly in the tourism industry, a 7.6% rise over 2018's 35,084 employment figure.

These jobs were created in direct response to services demanded by travelers in the state. The biggest beneficiaries of travel-related employment were eating and drinking establishments. This sector accounted for 53 percent of all the travel-related jobs created in the state in 2019. Other industries that benefited strongly were lodging facilities and entertainment.

A breakdown of percentage of employment by segement shows:

13% Lodging Facilities 27% Eating and Drinking Establishments

10% General Retail 9% Entertainment

15% Public Transportation 26% Auto Transportation

The job creation process, however, does not end with direct employment. Each job created by travel provided income for those employed in the above subsectors of the economy. This income generated expenditures, which in turn, created additional demand for goods and services and thus, more jobs in the region.

Travel related earnings in North Alabama was \$5,746,377,400, up 4.1% over 2018.

Economic impact analysis was performed using a model developed by Dr. Keivan Deravi, President of Economics Research Services, Inc., an Alabama based consulting firm, and a retired professor of economics. This model, designed for the Alabama Tourism Department and the State of Alabama, uses Alabama industry multipliers developed by the Regional Input-Output Modeling System, United States Department of Commerce, Economic and Statistical Division, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Analysis Division.

WHERE NORTH ALABAMA TRAVELERS SPEND MONEY

The largest single travel expenditure was made on eating and drinking by visitors to North Alabama. This category (food services in general) accounted for 27 percent of all the travel and tourism spending in the state. Transportation and lodging were the next largest travel expenditure categories.















ENTERTAINMENT







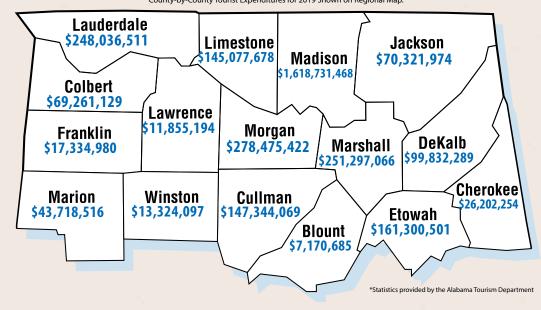






NORTH ALABAMA TOURISM IMPACT

As Indicated by the 16-County Region's Total Tourist Expenditures



NORTH ALABAMA TOURISM EMPLOYMENT

In 2018, an estimated 33,161 North Alabama jobs were directly and indirectly attributable to the travel industry. These jobs were created in response to services demanded by travelers in the state. A study conducted by the Alabama Travel Bureau indicates that the biggest beneficiaries of travel-related activities were eating and drinking establishments. This sector accounted for 53 percent of all the travel-related jobs created in 2017. Other industries that benefited strongly were lodging facilities and entertainment. This indirect job creation is known as the multiplier effect or economic impact.



FACILITIES







EATING & DRINKING





GENERAL RETAIL





ENTERTAINMENT







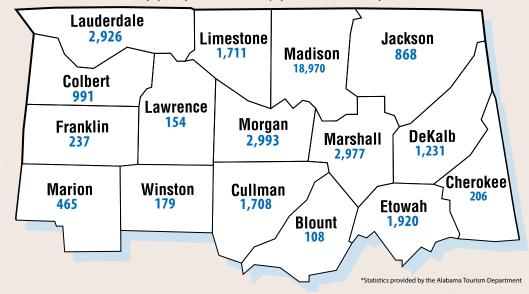






NORTH ALABAMA TOURISM EMPLOYMENT

37,644 JOBS



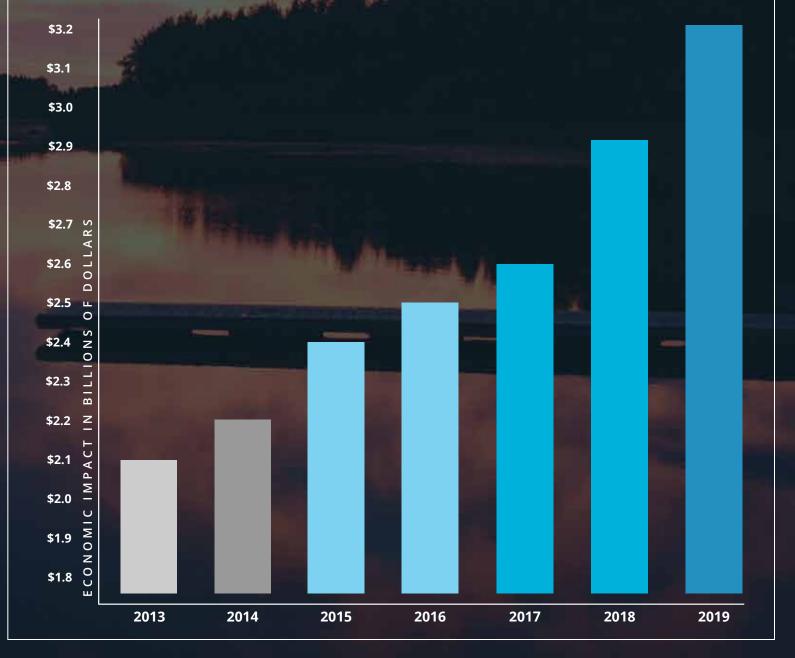
MEASURE OF SUCCESS

SIX YEARS OF STEADY GROWTH

In 2019, the Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association achieved metrics that significantly increased visitor spending and therefore taxable revenues. We continue to meet benchmarks that help achieve our overarching goal of creating a sustainable tourism industry for all of North Alabama, with a focus on increasing visitor awareness of the leisure time opportunities the region presents. When visitors take a road trip to Alabama's majestic Appalachian Mountains, our local businesses make money, employment opportunities expand, and local governments enjoy an influx of added tax revenues.

\$3.2 BILLION

ECONOMIC IMPACT IN THE 16 COUNTIES OF THE REGION IN 2019



North Alabama travel-related employment in 2019 reached a record high of

37,644

(5% growth*)

Six North Alabama counties were included in the

Top 15 for total travel-related employment

in the state in 2019: Madison with 18,970, Lauderdale with 2,962, Marshall with 2,977, Morgan with 2,993, Etowah with 1,920, and Cullman with 1,708. Three North Alabama counties were included in the

Top 25 counties with the largest total

percentage employment growth in the state in 2019:

DeKalb county with a 11.5% growth, Colbert County with a 11.5% growth, and Morgan County with a 10.4% growth.

North Alabama Travel-related earnings in 2019

5,746,377,400

Based on analytics, more than

213,870

people visited the consumer website www.NorthAlabama.org in 2019.

In 2019, more than

\$1 billion

of state and local tax revenues were generated by tourism and travel activities.

Based on primary and secondary trips, more than

28.7 million

people visited Alabama in 2019.

Every

\$119,237

of travel-related expenditures creates one direct job in Alabama.

For every

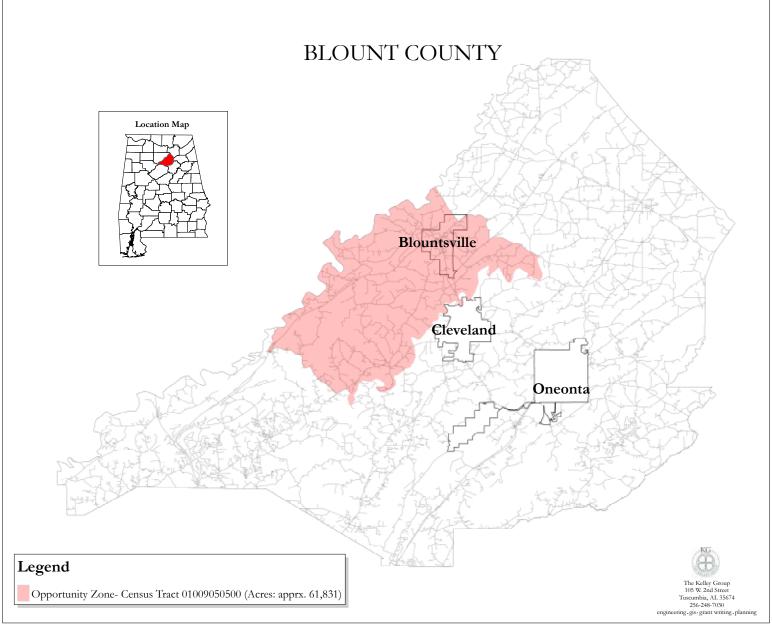
\$1

in Alabama's travel-related expenditures, the state retains a total of \$0.34.

*Economic Impact Alabama Travel Industry 2017 Alabama Travel Department



ECONOMIC ZONES BLOUNT COUNTY



Census Tract 505, Blount County, Alabama

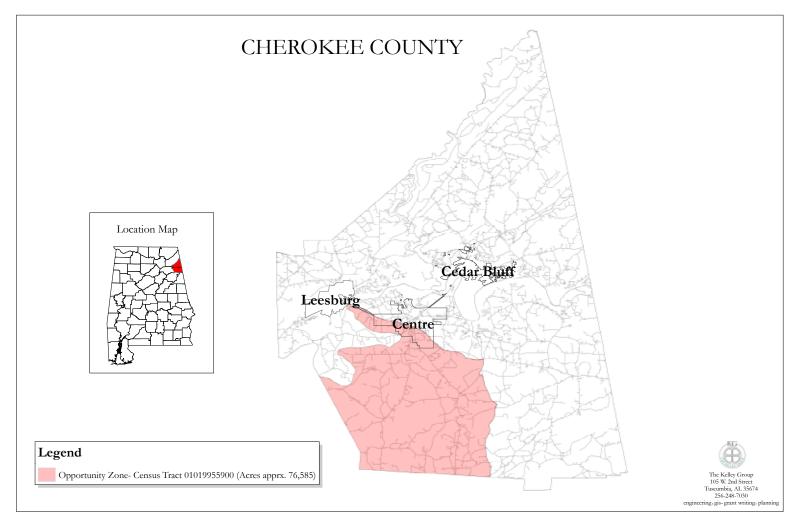
GeoID: 01009050500 Labor Force: 2,773

Work Force Employed: 2,651 Work Force Unemployed: 122 Unemployment Rate: 4%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 116

Tract Size: 61,784 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES CHEROKEE COUNTY



Census Tract 9559, Cherokee County, Alabama

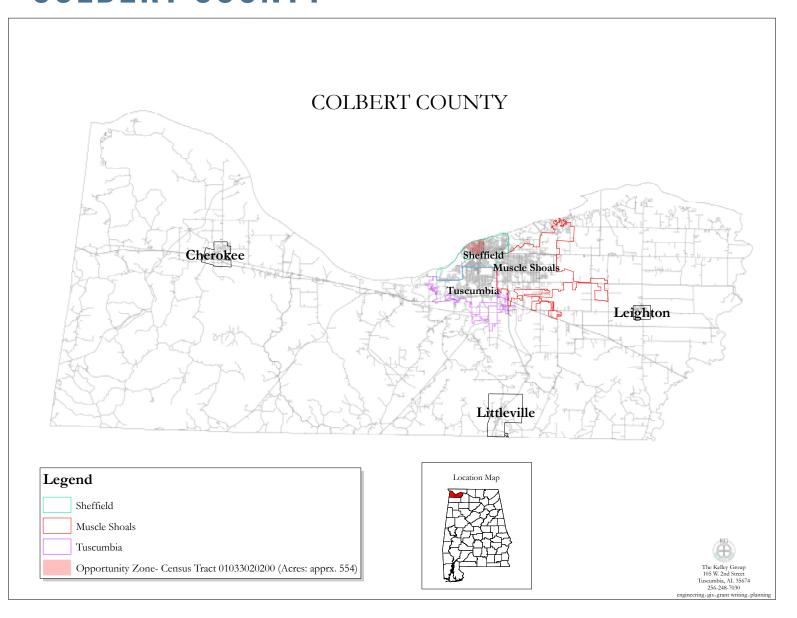
GeoID: 01019955900 Labor Force: 2,009

Work Force Employed: 1,927 Work Force Unemployed: 82 Unemployment Rate: 4%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 177

Tract Size: 76,559 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES COLBERT COUNTY



Census Tract 202, Colbert County, Alabama

GeoID: 01033020200

Labor Force: 893

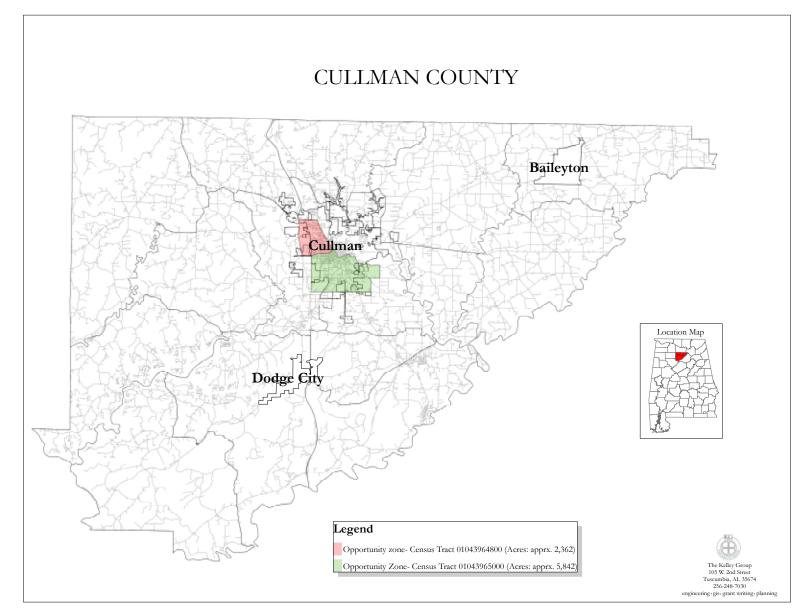
Work Force Employed: 828 Work Force Unemployed: 65

Unemployment Rate: 7%

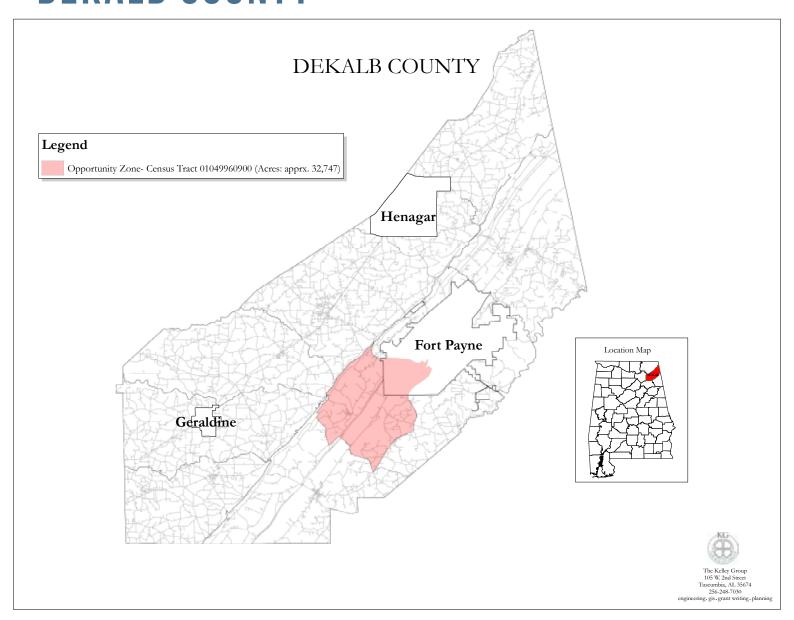
Number of Businesses in Tract: 105

Tract Size: 554 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES CULLMAN COUNTY



ECONOMIC ZONES DEKALB COUNTY



Census Tract 9648, Cullman County, Alabama

GeoID: 01043964800 Labor Force: 1,828

Work Force Employed: 1,760 Work Force Unemployed: 67 Unemployment Rate: 4%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 241

Tract Size: 2,360 Acres

Census Tract 9650, Cullman County, Alabama

GeoID: 01043965000 Labor Force: 2,703

Work Force Employed: 2,609 Work Force Unemployed: 94 Unemployment Rate: 4%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 627

Tract Size: 5,838 Acres

Census Tract 9609, DeKalb County, Alabama

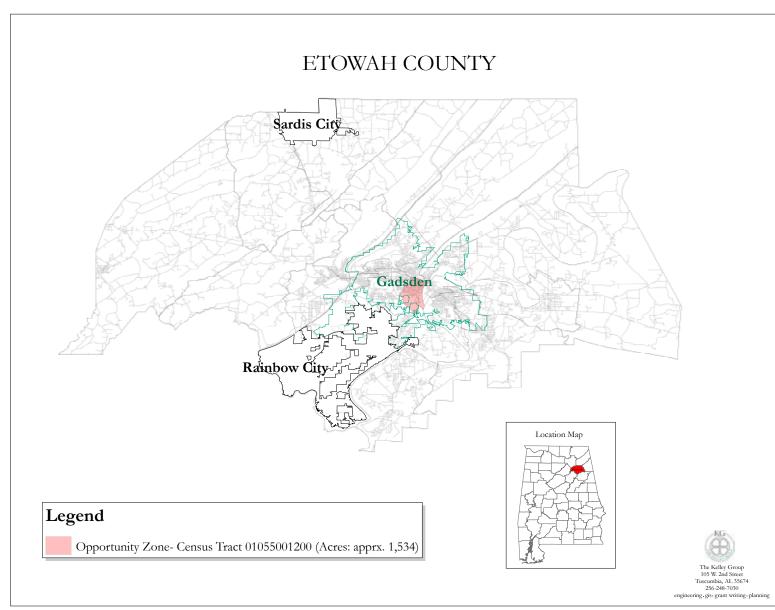
GeoID: 01049960900 Labor Force: 1,526

Work Force Employed: 1,479 Work Force Unemployed: 47 Unemployment Rate: 3%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 200

Tract Size: 32,716 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES ETOWAH COUNTY



Census Tract 12, Etowah County, Alabama

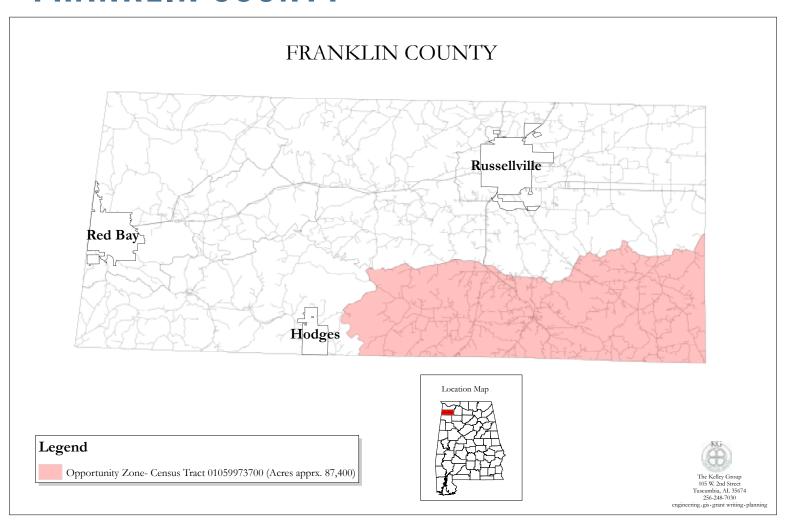
GeoID: 01055001200 Labor Force: 1,247

Work Force Employed: 1,153 Work Force Unemployed: 94 Unemployment Rate: 8%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 745

Tract Size: 1,533 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES FRANKLIN COUNTY



Census Tract 9737, Franklin County, Alabama

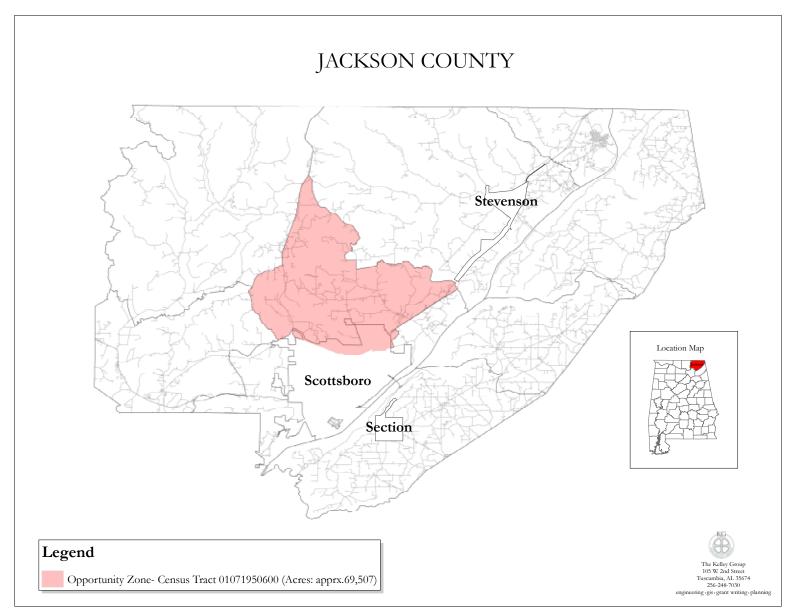
GeoID: 01059973700 Labor Force: 2,287

Work Force Employed: 2,180 Work Force Unemployed: 107 Unemployment Rate: 5%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 79

Tract Size: 87,352 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES JACKSON COUNTY



Census Tract 9506, Jackson County, Alabama

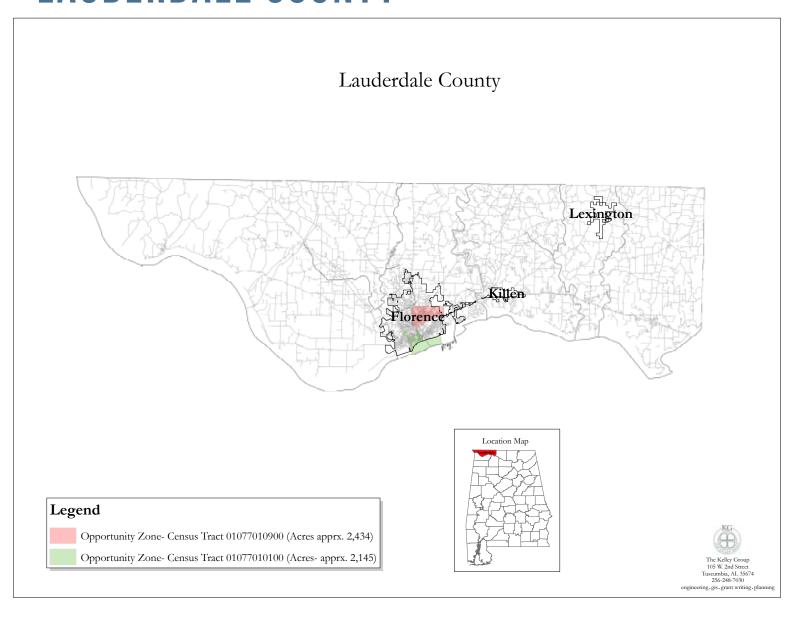
GeoID: 01071950600 Labor Force: 2,661

Work Force Employed: 2,561 Work Force Unemployed: 100 Unemployment Rate: 4%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 204

Tract Size: 69,445 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES LAUDERDALE COUNTY



Census Tract 101, Lauderdale County, Alabama

GeoID: 01077010100

Labor Force: 685

Work Force Employed: 628 Work Force Unemployed: 57

Unemployment Rate: 8%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 601

Tract Size: 2,144 Acres

Census Tract 109, Lauderdale County, Alabama

GeoID: 01077010900 Labor Force: 3,143

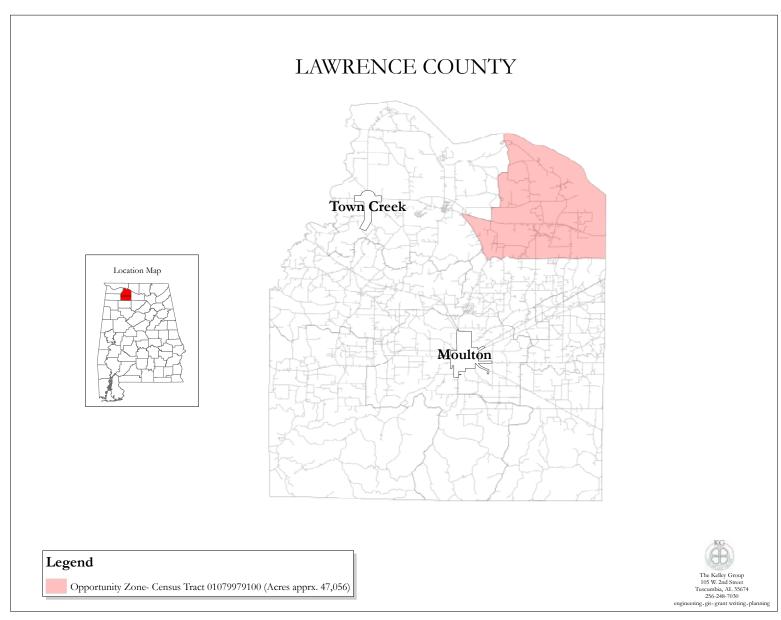
Work Force Employed: 3,033 Work Force Unemployed: 110

Unemployment Rate: 4%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 670

Tract Size: 2,433 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES LAWRENCE COUNTY



Census Tract 9791, Lawrence County, Alabama

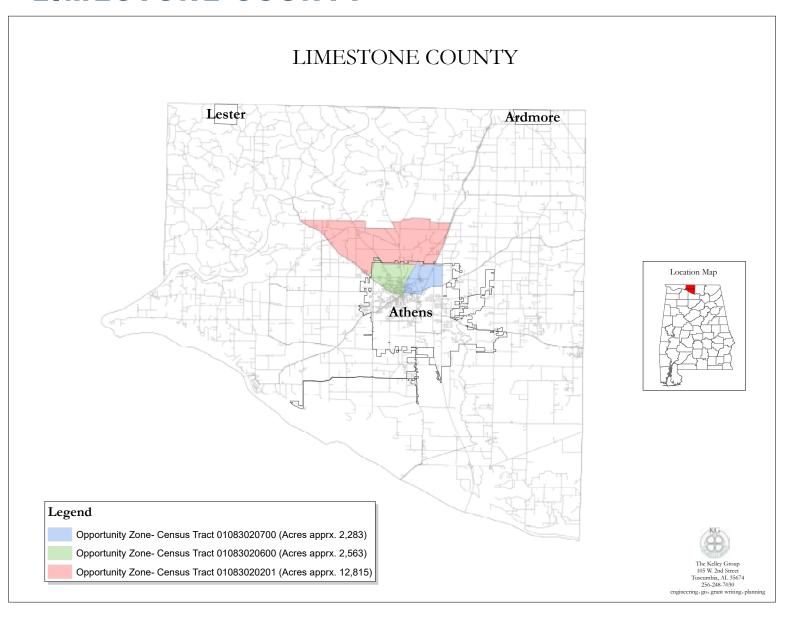
GeoID: 01079979100 Labor Force: 729

Work Force Employed: 686 Work Force Unemployed: 43 Unemployment Rate: 6%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 44

Tract Size: 47,025 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES LIMESTONE COUNTY



Census Tract 202.01, Limestone County, Alabama GeoID: 01083020201

Labor Force: 2,537 Work Force Employed: 2,412 Work Force Unemployed: 125

Unemployment Rate: 5% Number of Businesses in Tract: 63

Tract Size: 12,807 Acres

Census Tract 206, Limestone County, Alabama

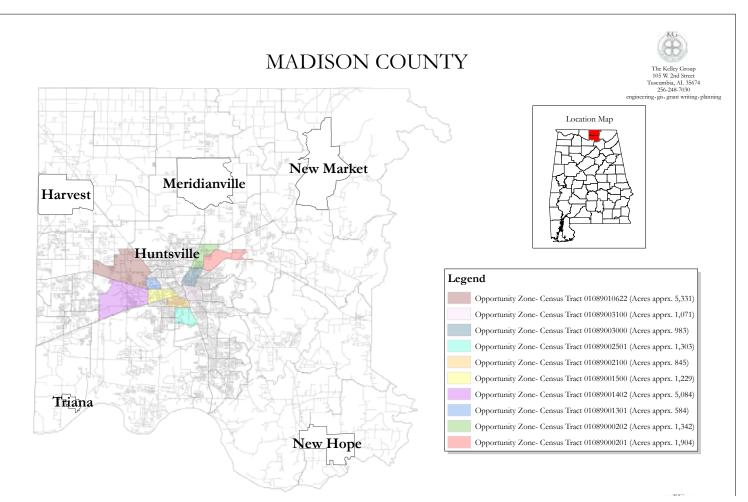
GeoID: 01083020600 Labor Force: 2,055 Work Force Employed: 1,952 Work Force Unemployed: 104 Unemployment Rate: 5% Number of Businesses in Tract: 272 Tract Size: 2,561 Acres

Census Tract 207, Limestone County, Alabama

GeoID: 01083020700 Labor Force: 1,048 Work Force Employed: 1,017 Work Force Unemployed: 31 Unemployment Rate: 3% Number of Businesses in Tract: 85

Tract Size: 2,282 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES MADISON COUNTY



Census Tract 2.01, Madison County, Alabama

GeoID: 01089000201 Labor Force: 512 Work Force Employed: 473 Work Force Unemployed: 39 Unemployment Rate: 8% Number of Businesses in Tract: 105 Tract Size: 1,903 Acres

Census Tract 2.02, Madison County, Alabama

GeoID: 01089000202 Labor Force: 1,625 Work Force Employed: 1,340 Work Force Unemployed: 285 Unemployment Rate: 18% Number of Businesses in Tract: 76 Tract Size: 1,341 Acres

Census Tract 13.01, Madison County, Alabama

GeoID: 01089001301 Labor Force: 1,871 Work Force Employed: 1,736 Work Force Unemployed: 134 Unemployment Rate: 7% Number of Businesses in Tract: 274 Tract Size: 584 Acres

Census Tract 14.02, Madison County, Alabama

GeoID: 01089001402 Labor Force: 3,096 Work Force Employed: 2,960 Work Force Unemployed: 136 Unemployment Rate: 4% Number of Businesses in Tract: 1,023 Tract Size: 5,080 Acres

Census Tract 15, Madison County, Alabama

GeoID: 01089001500 Labor Force: 2,192 Work Force Employed: 1,981 Work Force Unemployed: 211 Unemployment Rate: 10% Number of Businesses in Tract: 148 Tract Size: 1,229 Acres

Census Tract 21, Madison County, Alabama

GeoID: 01089002100 Labor Force: 1,374 Work Force Employed: 1,259 Work Force Unemployed: 115 Unemployment Rate: 8% Number of Businesses in Tract: 454 Tract Size: 845 Acres

Census Tract 25.01, Madison County, Alabama

GeoID: 01089002501 Labor Force: 1,921 Work Force Employed: 1,845 Work Force Unemployed: 76 Unemployment Rate: 4% Number of Businesses in Tract: 545 Tract Size: 1,303 Acres

Census Tract 30, Madison County, Alabama

GeoID: 01089003000 Labor Force: 1,184 Work Force Employed: 1,115 Work Force Unemployed: 70 Unemployment Rate: 6% Number of Businesses in Tract: 482 Tract Size: 982 Acres

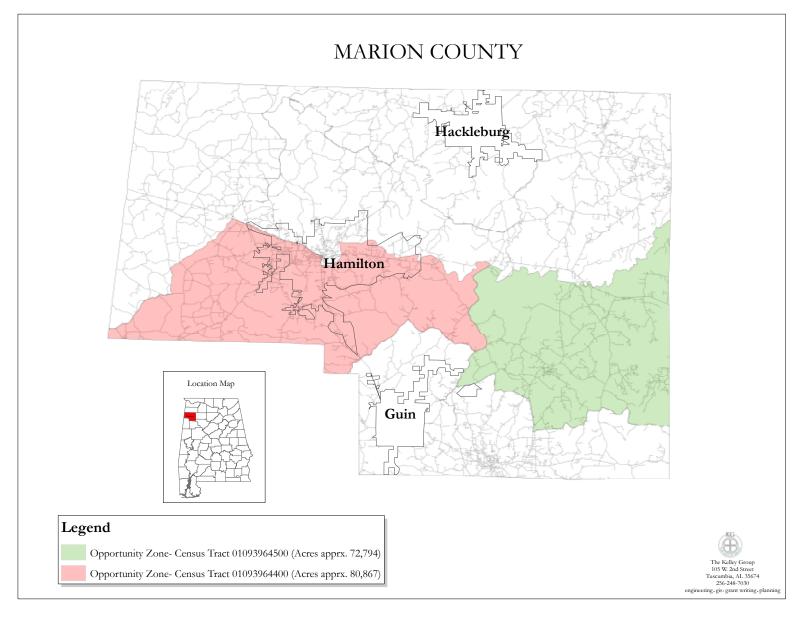
Census Tract 31, Madison County, Alabama

GeoID: 01089003100 Labor Force: 782 Work Force Employed: 763 Work Force Unemployed: 20 Unemployment Rate: 3% Number of Businesses in Tract: 1,111 Tract Size: 1,070 Acres

Census Tract 106.22, Madison County, Alabama

GeoID: 01089010622 Labor Force: 5,647 Work Force Employed: 5,363 Work Force Unemployed: 285 Unemployment Rate: 5% Number of Businesses in Tract: 664 Tract Size: 5,328 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES MARION COUNTY



Census Tract 9644, Marion County, Alabama

GeoID: 01093964400 Labor Force: 2,199

Work Force Employed: 2,106 Work Force Unemployed: 92 Unemployment Rate: 4%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 283

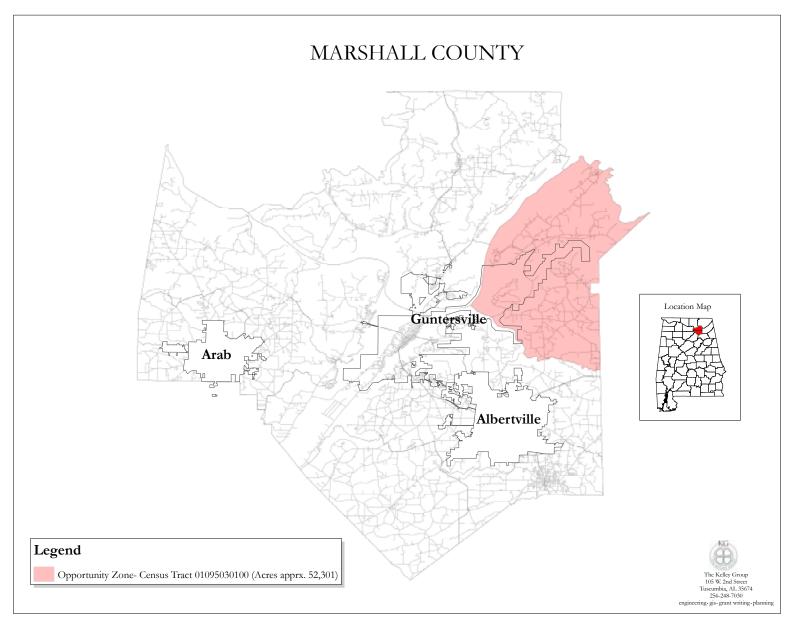
Tract Size: 80,829 Acres

Census Tract 9645, Marion County, Alabama

GeoID: 01093964500 Labor Force: 1,024 Work Force Employed: 965 Work Force Unemployed: 59 Unemployment Rate: 6% Number of Businesses in Tract: 39

Tract Size: 72,754 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES MARSHALL COUNTY



Census Tract 301, Marshall County, Alabama

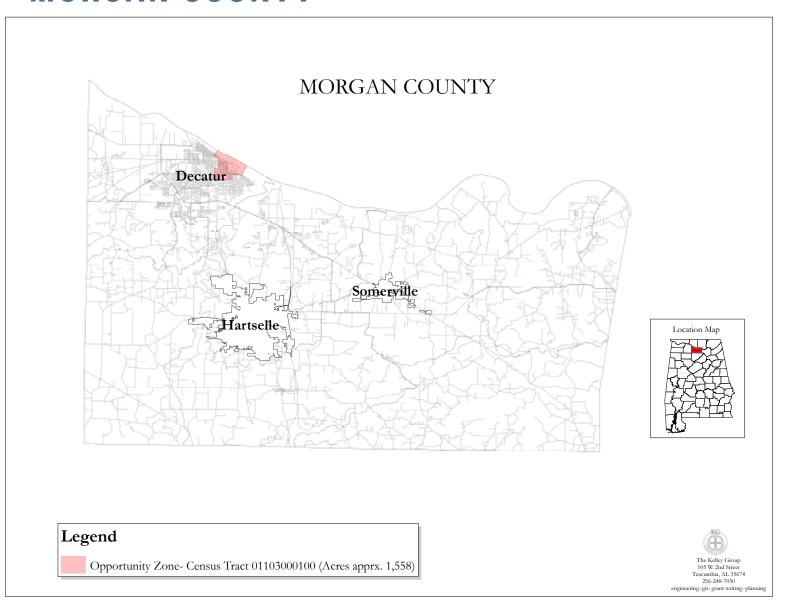
GeoID: 01095030100 Labor Force: 989

Work Force Employed: 934 Work Force Unemployed: 55 Unemployment Rate: 6%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 44

Tract Size: 52,255 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES MORGAN COUNTY



Census Tract 1, Morgan County, Alabama

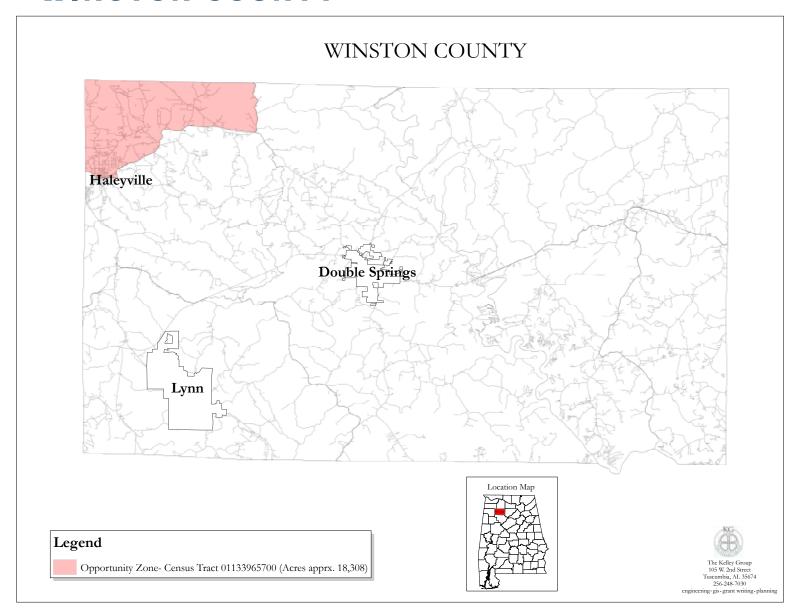
GeoID: 01103000100 Labor Force: 1,632

Work Force Employed: 1,496 Work Force Unemployed: 135 Unemployment Rate: 8%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 155

Tract Size: 1,558 Acres

ECONOMIC ZONES WINSTON COUNTY



Census Tract 9657, Winston County, Alabama

GeoID: 01133965700 Labor Force: 1,942

Work Force Employed: 1,860 Work Force Unemployed: 83 Unemployment Rate: 5%

Number of Businesses in Tract: 204

Tract Size: 18,298 Acres

A community support resource program presented by:



Alabama Mountain Lakes Tourist Association 402 Sherman Street P.O. Box 2537 Decatur, AL 35602 Phone: 1-800-648-5381

none. 1-000-040-7501

With special thanks to:



Opportunity Alabama Info@opportunityalabama.com 1500 First Avenue North, Suite D102 Birmingham, Alabama 35203



Kelley Keeton Taft, MPA 105 W. 2nd Street Tuscumbia, Alabama 35674 256.248.7030 (office) 1.866.225.7488 (fax) www.kelleynetwork.com kelley@kelleynetwork.com



Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs P.O. Box 5690 Montgomery, AL 36103-5690 Phone: (334) 242-5100 Fax: (334) 242-5099 contact@adeca.alabama.gov ww.adeca.alabama.gov