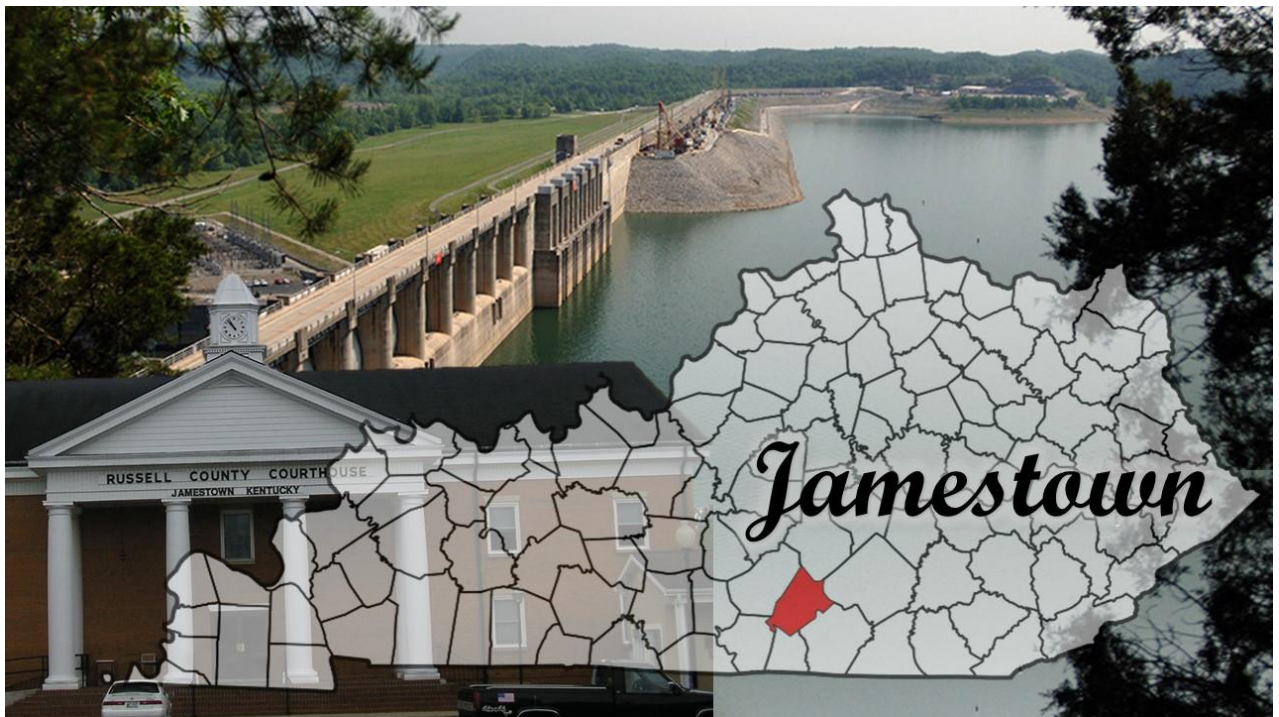


Development Opportunity Profile

Russell County, Kentucky



April 4, 2016

Introduction

The Center for Rural Entrepreneurship believes in **empowering research** – making data-driven decisions about economic development to be more strategic and, ultimately, create the kinds of economic development outcomes and long-term community prosperity you desire. We work hard to build tools and resources that communities can use to access and understand data and turn that raw information into knowledge you can apply in your community. This **Development Opportunity Profile** is one of our **Getting Started Tools**. This profile was prepared for Russell County, KY, by the Center, for our partner, the [Lake Cumberland Area Development District](#). Other **Getting Started Tools** include our **Philanthropic Opportunity Profile** and our forthcoming **Generational Diversity Profile**.

Taking Stock – The Power of Assessment

Whether a community or a region is successful over time – or not – depends upon the commitment and choices of its leaders and people, and the investments they make in their development. As Deepak Chopra says, “When you make a choice, you change the future.” Making the *right* development choices is a prerequisite for achieving community and regional prosperity. The best way to make the *right* development decisions is to commit to a thoughtful and robust assessment of your region’s opportunities. By taking the time to discover and better understand your region’s genuine development opportunities, you will make smarter investments and enhance your region’s potential for greater prosperity.

This **Development Opportunity Profile** is a start on a pathway to prosperity. But, it is only a start. It reflects one view of your region, based on secondary data. We challenge you to build on this work, draw on your own knowledge of the region and its assets, and create a deeper understanding of your unique development opportunities. Then use this understanding to craft and implement a smart development game plan. We hope this **Development Opportunity Profile** is helpful and contributes to your future development success.

Exploration ...

Dreaming ...

Visioning ...

Planning ...

Goal-setting ...

Action ...

Impact!

Asking the Right Questions

To be successful and achieve sustainable prosperity, every region needs to achieve two things, at a minimum – economic renewal and demographic renewal. These two things are intimately connected. New residents are attracted to and put down roots in places that offer diverse economic opportunities. And, a healthy population supports a more robust quality of life and the amenities that go with it – schools, health care, shopping, arts and recreation, for example. This **Development Opportunity Profile** helps you begin to answer a number of questions about your community or region:

1. What is the regional context for your place?
2. What are the demographic trends in your place?
3. How is your economy doing in terms of job creation?
4. How is your economy doing in terms of income generation?
5. What is driving your economy?

You may choose to address additional questions for your community – how are families doing; how is the ethnic makeup of your community changing? The answers to these and other questions will help you focus in on your genuine development opportunities.

The first section of this Profile provides an historical overview of your economy as a whole:

- The regional context
- Population trends
- Employment trends
- Personal income trends
- Economic drivers

The second section delves more deeply into the business or entrepreneurial economy, describing general business ownership trends and specific entrepreneurial attributes of your county. In the final section, we provide a summary of key development opportunities for your community as well as some identified development challenges.

Electronic Library

Research collected and analysis completed in support of this Profile is available through an Electronic Library at the following site:

<https://goo.gl/Zqfn2D>

Being a Smart Data Consumer. We provide a summary of research sources at the end of this Profile. Detailed source information can be found by reviewing specific research items in the Electronic Library. **Data used in this Profile is based on sampling and estimates. Through the sampling process, data can be skewed particularly in smaller, more rural counties. We encourage you to carefully review the data and question the results if they are at odds with your experience. At the same time, remember that others – prospective residents, employees, and entrepreneurs – are using this same secondary data to learn about your county.**

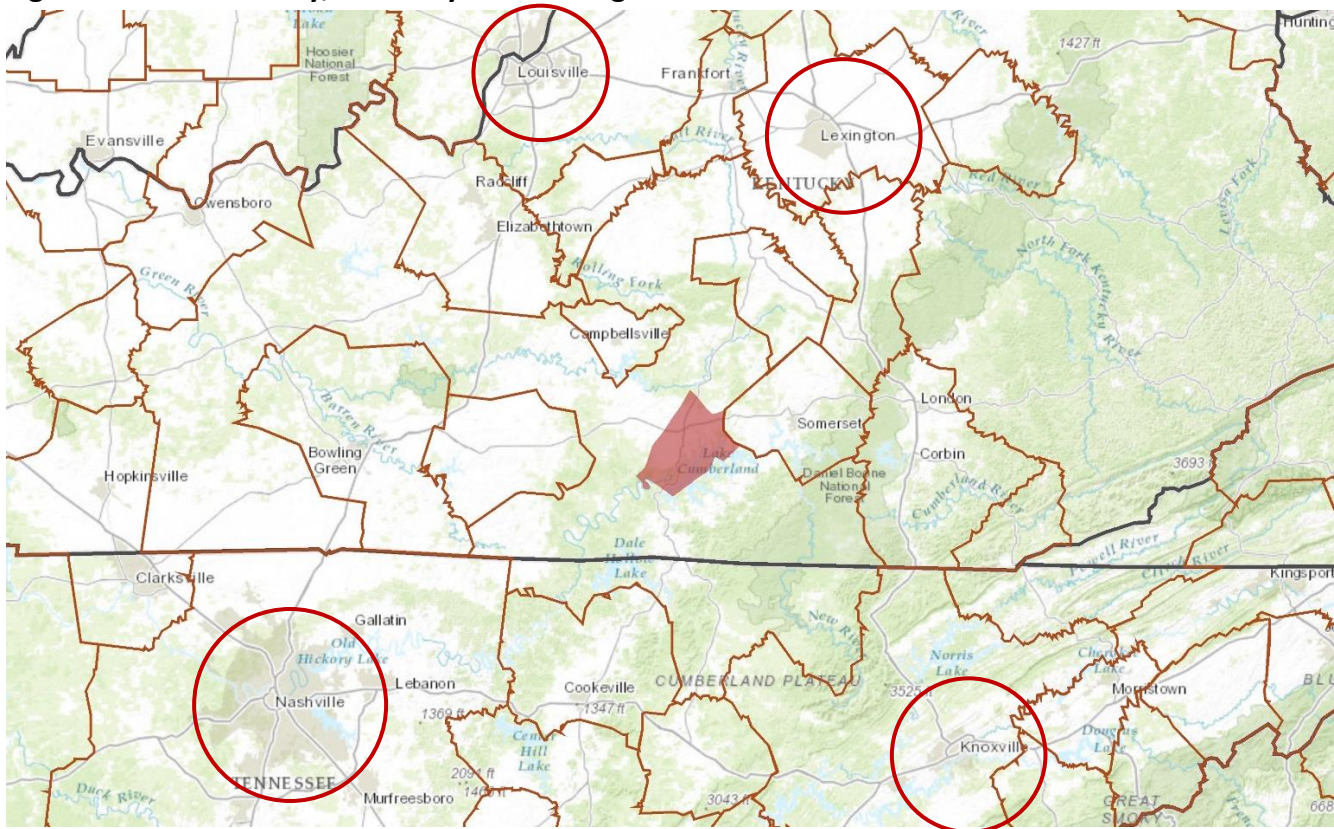
Understanding the Economy – Historical Overview

Regional Context

Every county has a unique location offering both opportunities and challenges. Even in our globally interconnected world, location still matters. Early in America's history, a county's access to water transportation was a plus. Today, a location with access to high speed internet and a unique quality of life might attract, for example, entrepreneurs or telecommuters who can choose to work from anywhere. Individual communities exist within a larger regional context that drives both economic and residential development.

Russell County is located in south central Kentucky. The Nunn Parkway runs through the county with Russell Springs located along the Parkway which is a major east west transportation corridor in southern Kentucky. Transportation corridors offer significant development opportunities as traffic volumes increase over time. The county is home to a significant portion of massive Lake Cumberland offering recreational opportunities. Natural amenities are increasingly important to recreationally-oriented younger generations and active retiring Baby Boomers. The county is also within one day's drive of four major metropolitan areas home to millions of potential consumers for local entrepreneurs.

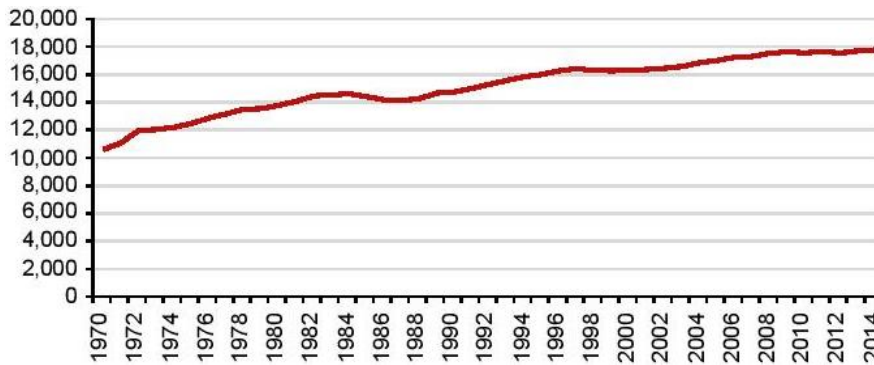
Figure 1. Russell County, Kentucky and the Region



Population Trends

The county has experienced population growth over the past 44 years. Growth was strong in the 1970s into the early 1980s followed by a slowdown and then a return to strong growth in the 1990s. Population growth has moderated in recent years (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2. Population Trends, Russell County, KY



Russell County, Kentucky Quick Demographic Profile

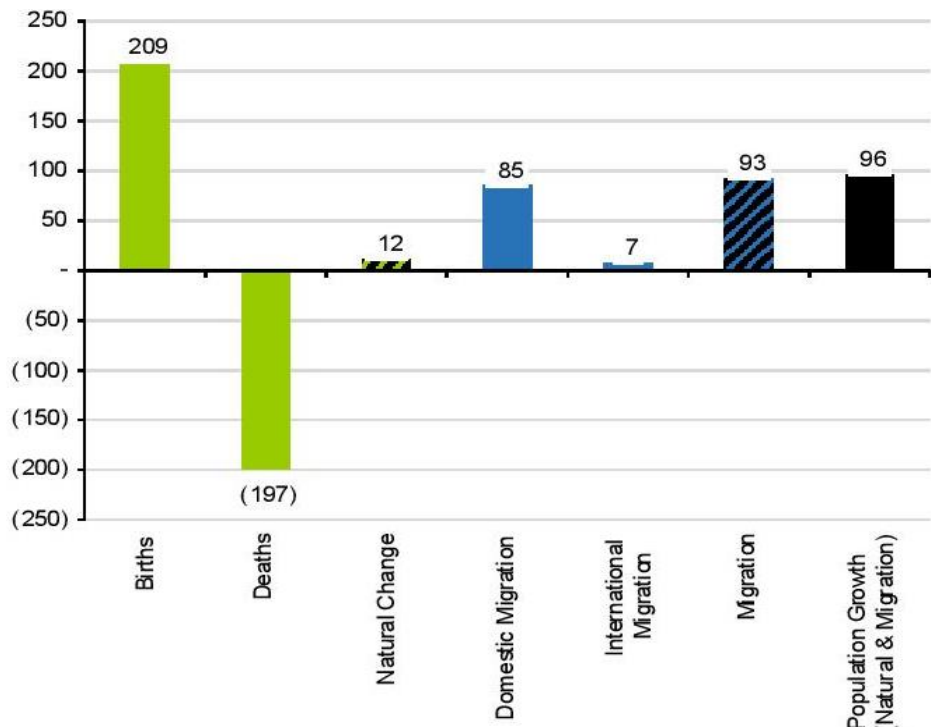
2010 Population – 17,565
Median Age – 43.4 Years
Households – 7,528
Average Household Size – 2.35

2015 Projection – 17,902
2020 Projection – 1618,363

Projected 2015-2020
Growth Rate = 0.51% per year

Figure 3. Population Change, Russell County, KY 2000-2014

Figure 3 shows average annual change in population, including natural change (births and deaths) and migration (in-migration and out-migration), for 2000 through 2014. Both natural population change and migration growth are positive. While rapid population growth is not necessary to move the community to increased prosperity, any development game plan must focus on stabilizing the community's population by attracting younger families and retaining aging residents as a first step toward demographic renewal.



The Census Bureau makes a minor statistical correction called a "residual" which is included in Figure 2, but omitted from Figure 3. Because of this correction, natural change plus net migration may not add to total population change in Figure 2.

Employment Trends

Employment growth was relatively strong from 1970 up to the early 1990s. Employment has fluctuated since the early 1990s rising and declining in several cycles. There has been moderate job growth during the 2000s with some moderation in the most recent years. The Great Recession

resulted in a net job contraction followed by a brief recovery. Returning to moderate job growth is critical to the county's future. However, for increased economic prosperity, the economy must not only create jobs, but create a wider range of career opportunities that are attractive to current residents and those who might be attracted to the region. In today's knowledge-driven economy, attracting and retaining human talent is a key to sustained economic prosperity.

Figure 4. Employment Trends, Russell County, KY

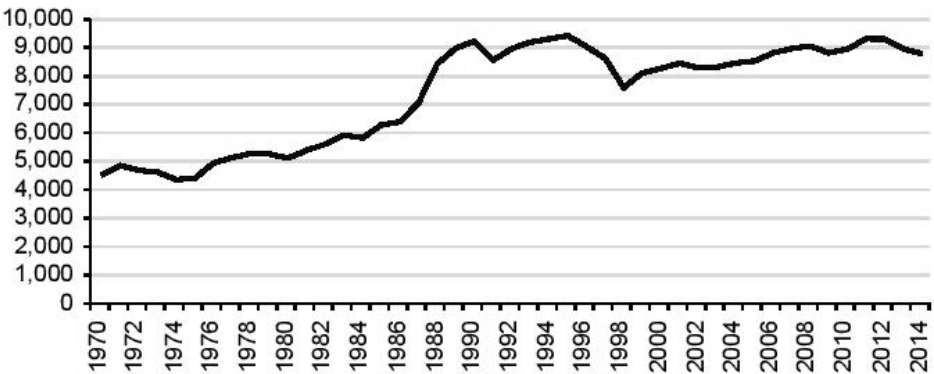
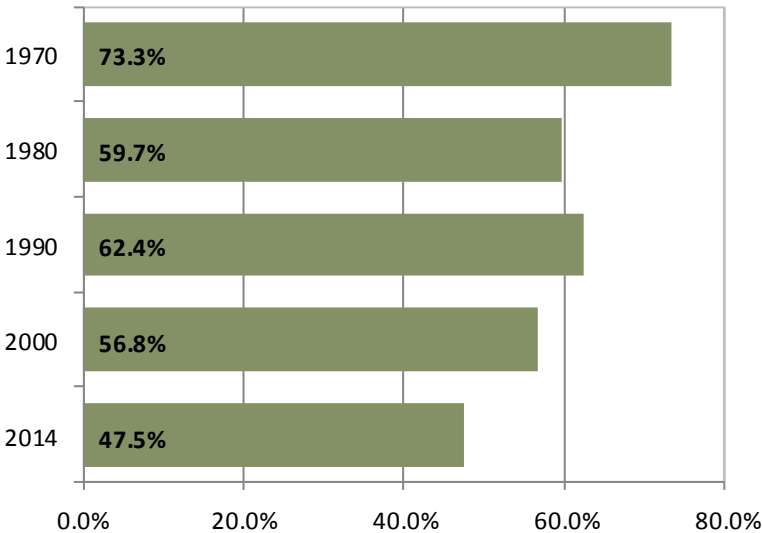


Table 1. Net Job Growth During Recession Periods

2001 Recession		Great Recession	
Recession (Mar-Nov 2001)	0.0%	Recession (Dec 2007-June 2009)	0.0%
Recovery (Dec 2001-Nov 2007)	0.1%	Recovery (July 2009-Present)	-0.3%

"Labor earnings to total personal income" is a good proxy for how dynamic or robust an economy is. Labor earnings reflect income flowing to households from employment; non-labor earnings are derived from transfer payments, retirement income, etc. Figure 5 shows labor earnings from 1970 to 2013. The Labor Earnings Ratio is an indicator of economic health and vitality. This ratio of labor earnings to total personal income has dropped from the 70% range in the 1970s to below 50% today. A Labor Earnings Ratio in the 60% range is considered healthy in today's economic climate. Rebuilding the economy so that this ratio increases over time is foundational to the future prosperity of the county.

Figure 5. Labor Earnings

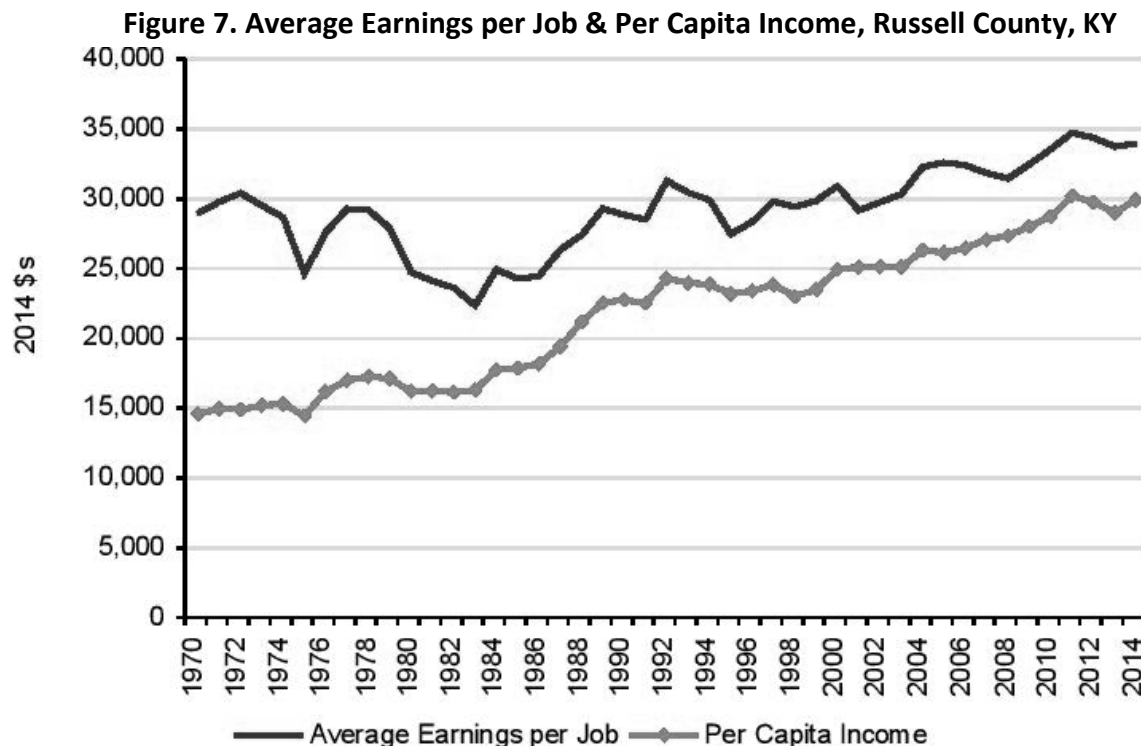


Personal Income Trends

Personal income, measured in real or inflation-adjusted dollars, has increased throughout the 1970-2013 period (Figure 6). Personal income has grown consistently over the past 44 years with minor declines during economic downturns. Growing non-labor income has been particularly important in supporting this trend.

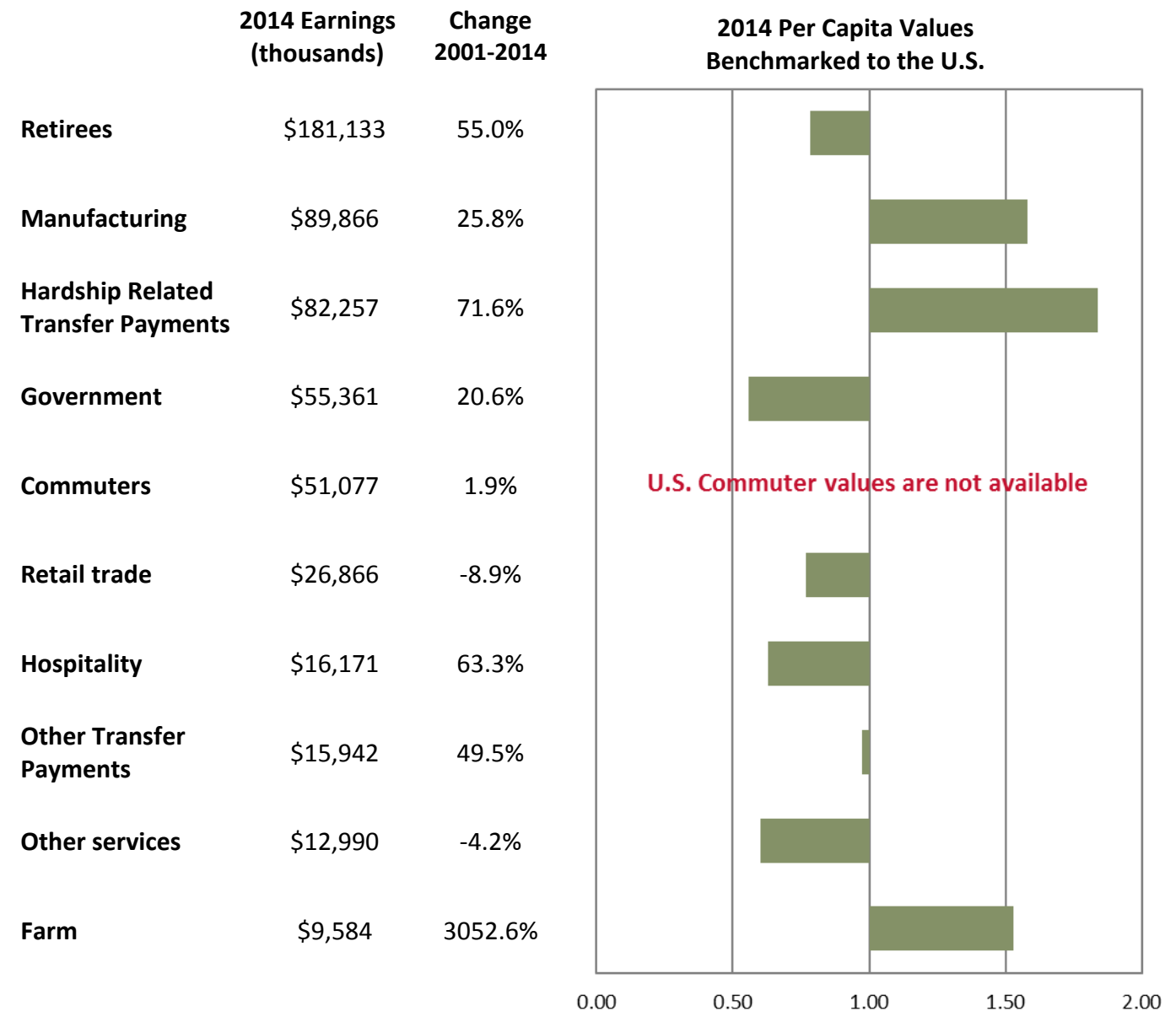


Per capita income or the total personal income divided by total permanent residents has grown steadily over time driven in large part by rising non-labor personal income. Average earnings per job declined during the 1970s into the early 1980s and then rose in real dollar terms into the early 1990s. A promising trend has now emerged with rising real wages climbing from below \$25,000 in the mid-1990s to nearly \$35,000 today. Rising real wages increases consumer spending and drives additional economic activity and growth.



Economic Drivers

Every community or state is shaped by certain **economic drivers** that generate income. Using data on total earnings by industry, this profile highlights the top 10 **economic drivers** for the community, how each of these has done in the last decade and its relative importance benchmarked to U.S. averages.



Retirees are the number one economic driver in Russell County generating \$181 million in personal income in 2014 and increasing by 55% between 2001 and 2014. Age Related Transfer Payments (e.g., Social Security, Medicare, etc.) grew from \$12 million in 1970 to \$61 million in 2010 and \$104 million in 2014 increasing by \$43 million between 2010 and 2014 alone.

Manufacturing is critically important to this county. It offers important economic diversification and jobs. Manufacturing is the second largest economic driver in the county generating \$90 million in personal income in 2014 and rising by 26% between 2001 and 2014. Manufacturing dependence is greater in the county when compared to the U.S. averages. Manufacturing employment dropped by 1,945 in 2001 to 1,662 in 2010 and has since rebounded back up to 1,768 workers in 2014 an increase of 106 net new positions. Personal income change displays a similar pattern to job changes. Between 2010 and 2014, manufacturing related personal income grew from \$76 to \$90 million or by \$14 million.

Hardship related transfer payments (e.g., Medicaid, welfare payments, unemployment insurance, etc.) are the third largest source of personal income in the county's economy. Part of this dependence is related to an aging population and part due to historic and current economic distress. Hardship related income now accounts for \$82 million of all personal income (compared to \$48 million in 2010) and has grown by 72% between 2001 and 2014. Hardship payments are more important to the county's economy when compared to the U.S. averages.

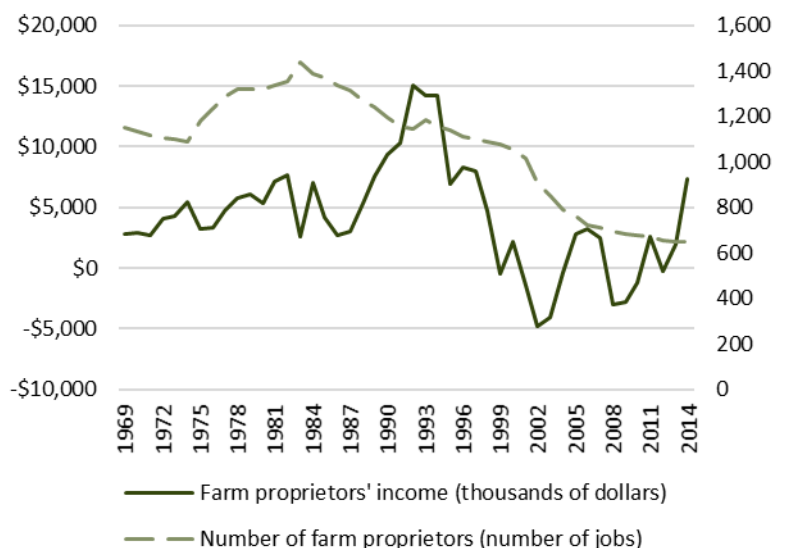
Government. Government includes federal, state and local agencies. Public education from K-12, health care, public universities, colleges and community colleges fall into this category. Government is the fourth largest source of personal income in the county in 2014. Government generated \$55 million in personal income in 2014 growing by 21% between 2001 and 2014. Government created 1,127 jobs in 2014. Future government growth is constrained by budget cutting efforts at the federal, state and local levels.

Commuters. Commuters are another non-traditional economic sector but one that is very important to this community. Commuters include both "inflow commuters" or those who live in the county but work outside of the county and "outflow commuters" or those who live outside of the county but commute into the county to work. In 2014 inflow commuters brought in nearly \$51 million in personal income while Outflow commuters are even more significant leaking \$62 million.

Retail Trade. Later in this profile, we will provide additional information on the county's retail trade sector. Capturing county spending is an important component of the economy. There has been a rebound in retail trade employment in the 2010 to 2014 period rising from 931 to 1,028 jobs.

Other Leading Economic Sectors. Other important sectors include Hospitality, Other Transfer Payments, Other Services and Farming. Compared to farm personal income total farm spending is typically much higher creating economic impacts throughout the economy.

**Figure 8. Farm Proprietors,
Russell County, KY**



Understanding the Business/Entrepreneurial Economy

Big Picture Overview

A central driver of regional prosperity is the business community. Figures 9-11 provide an overview of Russell County's business community, including for-profit, non-profit and governmental enterprises, from 1995 through 2013. Figure 9 highlights the change in total establishments over this period, showing growth from the early 2000s until the Great Recession followed by declining business numbers since 2008.

Russell County, Kentucky 2015

Total Businesses
912

Businesses per 1,000 Residents
Russell County – 51
Kentucky – 38
U.S. – 77

Total Employees
7,971

Employees per 1,000 Residents
Russell County – 445
Kentucky – 477
U.S. – 447

Figure 9. Establishments

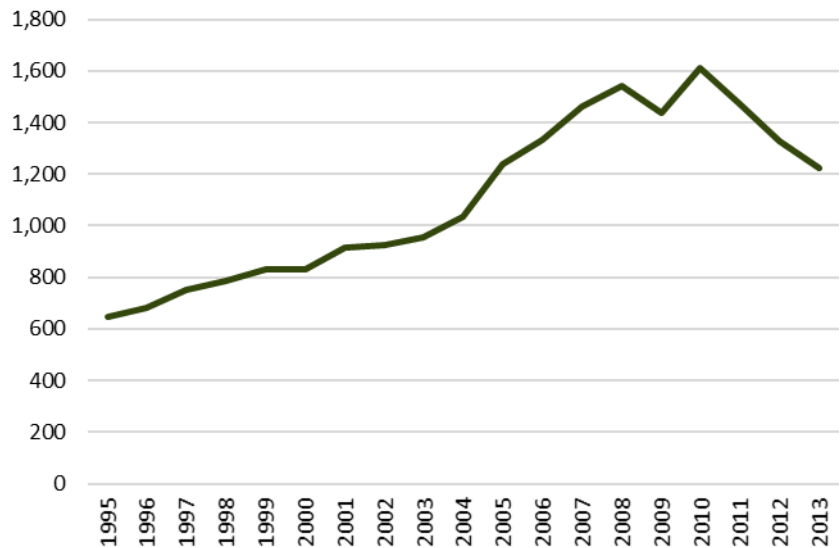


Figure 10. Jobs

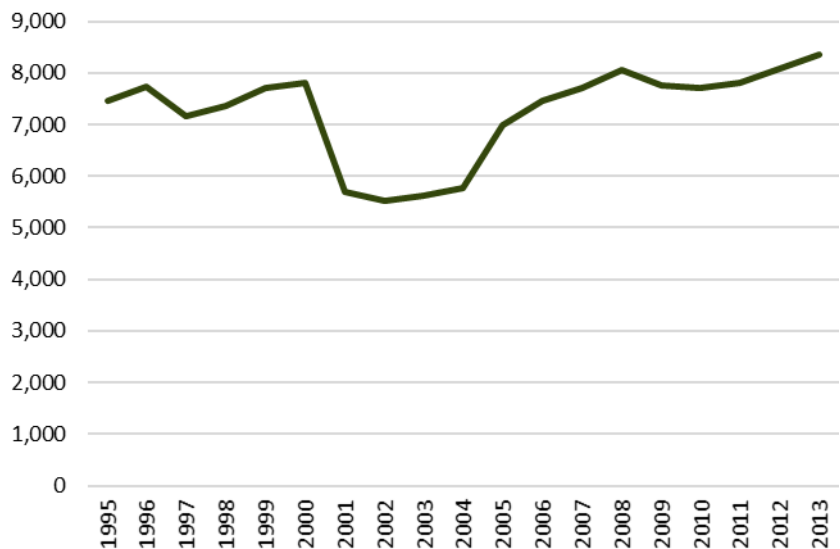


Figure 10 provides a comprehensive view of jobs in Russell County. After a steep drop in jobs in the late 1990s and early 2000s, there has been job growth up to the Great Recession and now once again during the recovery period. Total jobs for the county in 2013 are projected at over 8,000.

Data in Figures 9-11 is from www.youreconomy.org. Find the source data for these figures in the electronic library.



COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT
PHILANTHROPY



NEW
GENERATION
PARTNERSHIPS



Figure 11. Sales (millions)

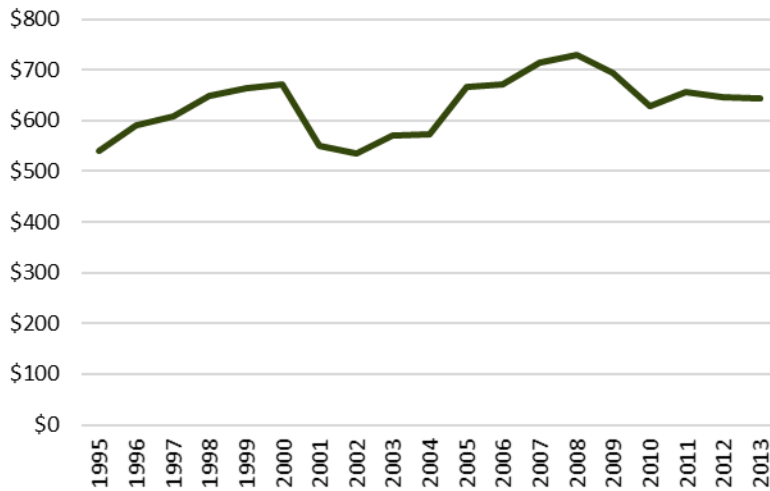


Figure 11 shows that total business sales from 1995 to 2013 for Russell County. Coinciding with the job losses in the late 1990s and early 2000s, there was a drop in business sales followed by growth from over \$500 to over \$700 by the start of the Great Recession. Sales declined during the Great Recession and have since rebounded and stabilized in the recovery timeframe.

Esri (www.esri.com) produces community-level analysis of businesses and employment by sector. The data provides a useful overview of the relative importance of specific sectors in the Russell County

economy in 2015 (Table 2). Economic sectors are organized into two components. A region's **traded sectors** produce products and services that are sold outside the region, bringing new income into the region. Traded sectors are also referred to as **basic industries**. Strong regional economies have strong and diverse traded sectors.

Local sectors are also important, enhancing the economy by capturing and re-circulating local spending to create additional economic activity. **Local sectors** (also called **non-basic industries**) help create more livable and competitive communities and regions. Local access to a wide range of goods and services such as shopping, entertainment, health care and education is essential to thriving communities and regions. Two particularly important sectors warrant additional analysis – retail trade (a **local sector**) and hospitality (a **traded sector**).

Retail Trade nationally has undergone major changes as once dominant locally-owned retailers are now competing with externally-owned big box stores and online sellers. A strong and diverse retail sector is important to capturing local spending and generating additional economic growth. According to Esri, Russell County has a positive retail trade balance. Total regional **retail demand** in 2015 was \$179 million and total **retail supply** (provided by businesses within the county) was \$208 million, resulting in a **retail surplus** of \$29 million. The **Retail MarketPlace Profile** that follows provides more detail on retail demand and supply, identifying positive trade balances (in red) and spending leakages (in green). The electronic library includes a more detailed Retail MarketPlace Profile. Russell County might want to consider a two-part retail strategy focusing on (1) assisting business transitions in the **local sector** and (2) finding competitive niches for existing or new retail businesses.

Table 2. Economic Sectors in Russell County, KY, 2015

Sector	Businesses	Employees
Agriculture	11	25
Mining & Utilities	4	28
Construction	71	540
Manufacturing	30	1,067
Wholesale Trade	34	566
Retail Trade*	170	1,260
Transportation & Warehousing	21	139
Information	18	157
Finance & Insurance*	56	183
Real Estate	39	128
Professional Services	43	126
Management & Administrative	24	96
Education	21	458
Health Care	58	1,026
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	31	323
Accommodations	16	377
Food Service	40	443
Hospitality Sector**	87	1,143
Other Services	156	409
Public Administration	49	553
Unclassified Establishments	20	67
Total	912	7,971

*Esri provides additional detail for these sectors including sub-sector information.

**Hospitality Sector is created by combining the three preceding sectors.

Hospitality Sector represents a **traded sector** with potential in Russell County. The county has a moderately sized hospitality sector with 87 businesses employing 1,143 workers. A focused tourism development strategy that strengthens entrepreneurial activity in this area could grow this **traded sector** of the economy, adding diversification and growth. While these hospitality-related businesses and their employees may emphasize services to visitors, they also provide services to local residents and non-tourist visitors.



Retail MarketPlace Profile

Russell County, KY
Russell County, KY (21207)
Geography: County

Prepared by Esri

Summary Demographics						
2015 Population						17,902
2015 Households						7,528
2015 Median Disposable Income						\$24,385
2015 Per Capita Income						\$16,766
Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$179,204,193	\$207,751,027	-\$28,546,834	-7.4	204
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$165,068,085	\$192,939,942	-\$27,871,857	-7.8	165
Total Food & Drink	722	\$14,136,108	\$14,811,085	-\$674,977	-2.3	39
Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$39,742,633	\$33,633,610	\$6,109,023	8.3	33
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$32,369,256	\$22,082,085	\$10,287,171	18.9	12
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$5,081,782	\$7,950,098	-\$2,868,316	-22.0	10
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$2,291,595	\$3,601,427	-\$1,309,832	-22.2	11
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$3,769,009	\$19,934,220	-\$16,165,211	-68.2	8
Furniture Stores	4421	\$2,290,582	\$1,219,434	\$1,071,148	30.5	3
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$1,478,427	\$18,714,786	-\$17,236,359	-85.4	5
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$5,690,837	\$1,090,746	\$4,600,091	67.8	2
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$7,923,027	\$6,136,216	\$1,786,811	12.7	12
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$6,706,282	\$5,253,775	\$1,452,507	12.1	9
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$1,216,745	\$882,441	\$334,304	15.9	3
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$29,676,815	\$60,231,069	-\$30,554,254	-34.0	21
Grocery Stores	4451	\$27,135,948	\$56,983,586	-\$29,847,638	-35.5	16
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$787,996	\$3,247,483	-\$2,459,487	-60.9	5
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$1,752,871	\$0	\$1,752,871	100.0	0
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$11,052,712	\$12,200,095	-\$1,147,383	-4.9	10
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$13,173,210	\$21,607,084	-\$8,433,874	-24.2	13
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$5,655,991	\$2,004,893	\$3,651,098	47.7	7
Clothing Stores	4481	\$3,688,632	\$1,431,412	\$2,257,220	44.1	4
Shoe Stores	4482	\$969,338	\$573,481	\$395,857	25.7	3
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$998,021	\$0	\$998,021	100.0	0
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$4,109,617	\$2,704,108	\$1,405,509	20.6	11
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$3,133,749	\$2,389,407	\$744,342	13.5	10
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$975,868	\$314,701	\$661,167	51.2	1
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$33,909,723	\$21,858,526	\$12,051,197	21.6	14
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$26,356,238	\$15,480,578	\$10,875,660	26.0	5
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$7,553,485	\$6,377,948	\$1,175,537	8.4	9
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$8,120,627	\$11,539,375	-\$3,418,748	-17.4	34
Florists	4531	\$276,451	\$574,395	-\$297,944	-35.0	7
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$1,708,346	\$387,144	\$1,321,202	63.0	4
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$474,192	\$1,192,788	-\$718,596	-43.1	11
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$5,661,638	\$9,385,048	-\$3,723,410	-24.7	12
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$2,243,884	\$0	\$2,243,884	100.0	0
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$935,013	\$0	\$935,013	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$269,657	\$0	\$269,657	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$1,039,214	\$0	\$1,039,214	100.0	0
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$14,136,108	\$14,811,085	-\$674,977	-2.3	39
Full-Service Restaurants	7221	\$6,828,745	\$8,203,448	-\$1,374,703	-9.1	30
Limited-Service Eating Places	7222	\$6,779,170	\$6,607,637	\$171,533	1.3	9
Special Food Services	7223	\$286,079	\$0	\$286,079	100.0	0
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$242,114	\$0	\$242,114	100.0	0

Data Note: Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. For more information on the Retail MarketPlace data, please click the link below to view the Methodology Statement.
<http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/esri-data-retail-marketplace.pdf>

Source: Esri and Infogroup. Copyright 2015 Infogroup, Inc. All rights reserved.

March 16, 2016

Entrepreneurial Profile

Entrepreneurs play a central role in revitalizing community and regional economies. Where you have more robust entrepreneurial activity, you typically have more competitive, dynamic and prosperous economies. This is particularly true when there are rooted entrepreneurs who are part of the overall community, contributing to the economy and actively engaging in the civic and social life of the region. Healthy economies support a range of entrepreneurial talent – a **pipeline of entrepreneurs** – from aspiring and startup to growth-oriented and breakout entrepreneurs.

Startup Entrepreneurs are the seeds of an entrepreneurial economy, making up the mouth of the pipeline. Successful startups create opportunities for business growth that generates employment and ultimately drives the economy. One good proxy for startup entrepreneurs is the number of **self-employed** (where the owner/operator is the only employee). Figure 12 shows self-employment trends for Russell County from 1995 through 2013 (www.youreconomy.org). In 1995, self-employment was 190 and grew steadily (except for a dip during the initial year of the Great Recession) peaking in 2010 at over 600, a three-fold increase.

There was a particularly strong spike in self-employment in 2009-2010, what we call the “Recession Effect.” When finding a traditional wage and salary job is hard (as is the case in a severe recession), a talented and motivated person may choose self-employment as a career and/or survival strategy. As the county recovered from the Great Recession, self-employment dropped from over 600 in 2010 to 359 in 2013.

What happened to these startup entrepreneurs? There are three possible reasons for this almost 50% decline. One, as wage and salary jobs

became available, those who entered self-employment as a temporary solution transitioned into those jobs. Two, some of these startup ventures may have failed. Three, some of these startups ventures grew into Stage 1 (2-9 employees) or Stage 2 (10-99 employees) businesses.

Despite the recent contraction, Russell County saw a net gain of 169 self-employed ventures, a 89% increase, from 1995 to 2013. This is a very positive indicator and county leaders should explore the following questions:

- Who are these self-employed startups?
- What are they doing?
- How could we help them be more successful?

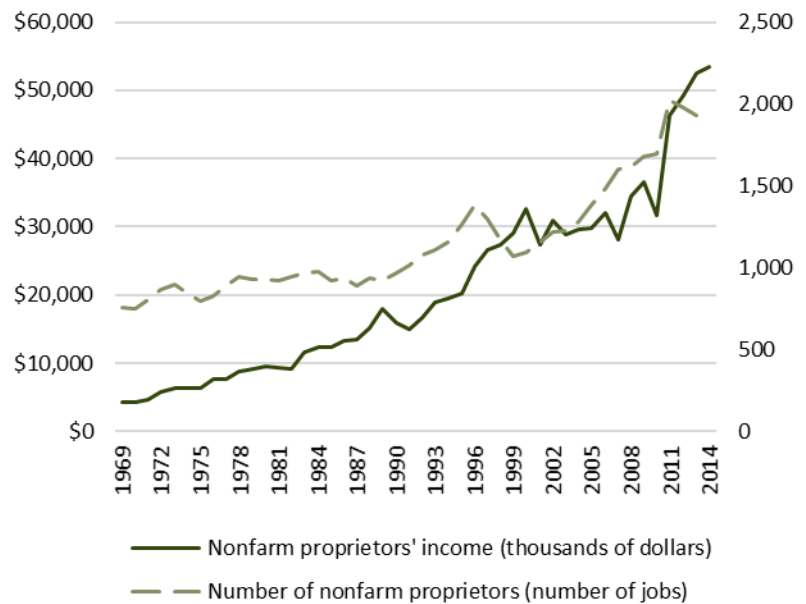
Figure 12. Self-Employed



Established, Locally-Owned Entrepreneurial Ventures

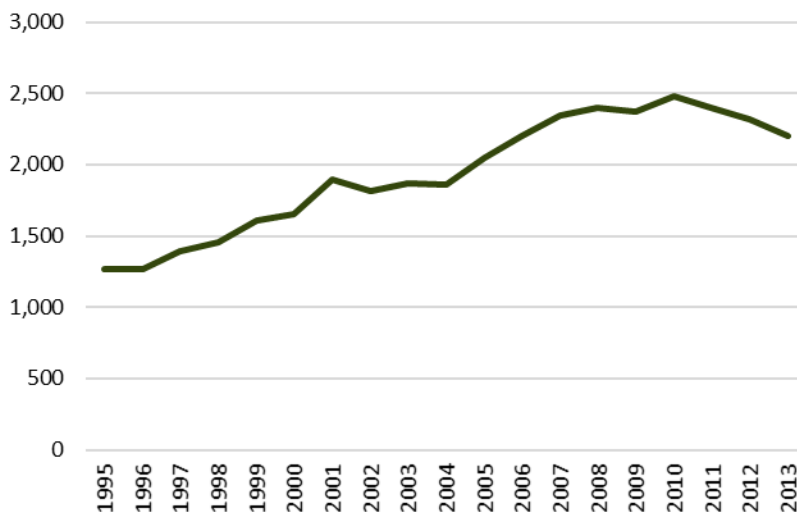
are important components of a community's entrepreneurial pipeline. When family-owned, local businesses prosper, they hire more employees, pay more local taxes and are able to more actively support their communities. We use two sets of data to describe these entrepreneurs. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (Figure 13) tracks nonfarm proprietors, typically small main street type businesses that are not incorporated. Youreconomy.org (Figure 14) tracks ventures based on the number of employees, with Stage 1 businesses (2-9 employees) representing small, most likely family-owned or locally-owned businesses.

Figure 13. Nonfarm Proprietors, Russell County, KY



There has been consistent long-term growth and very strong recent growth in both nonfarm proprietor employment and income – a very positive trend for Russell County.

Figure 14. Employment in Stage 1 (2-9 employees) Ventures



There was strong job growth in Stage 1 businesses (Figure 14) all the way up to the Great Recession. Since, employment has declined. This trend line is counter to what we are seeing with rising nonfarm proprietor employment and income.

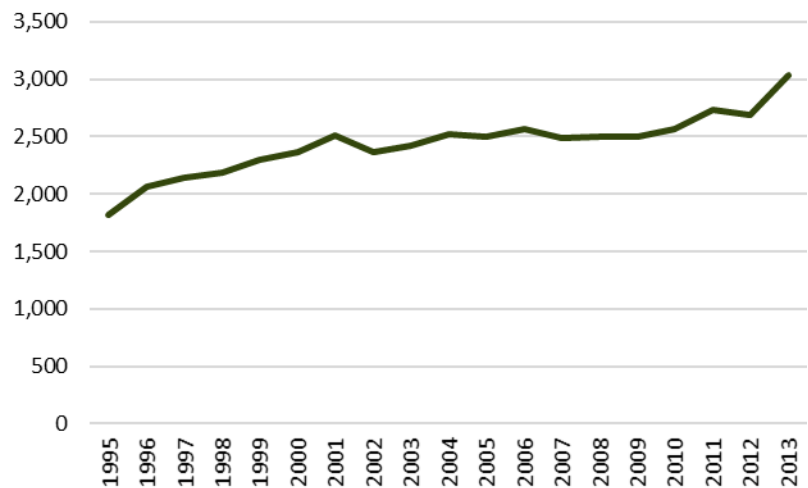
The trend lines for what we are describing as established, locally-owned entrepreneurial ventures are relatively strong, suggesting development opportunities for Russell County. Leaders should consider identifying and visiting these

entrepreneurs to discover their challenges and opportunities, and to determine how best to support their growth in the future. These ventures may be very important contributors to the **local sector** described earlier in this profile, and some of them may be primed for growth creating development impacts for the county.

Growth-Oriented Entrepreneurs comprise an important part of the entrepreneurial pipeline. These entrepreneurs have the desire to grow and have – or are seeking – the market opportunities to turn that desire into a reality. There is a great deal of attention paid to **growth entrepreneurs** – Economic Gardening (www.edwardlowe.org/tools-programs/economic-gardening) focuses almost exclusively on these entrepreneurs. In most community and regional economies, we have found fewer growth entrepreneurs and much larger numbers of **growth-oriented entrepreneurs**. This latter group includes entrepreneurs who are actively exploring ways to grow their businesses but who may still benefit from the types of business development assistance most regions and communities can offer. Helping growth entrepreneurs often requires much higher level resources, including diverse forms of capital.

As a proxy for growth-oriented entrepreneurs, we use employment for Stage 2 ventures (10-99 employees). Figure 15 shows recent strong growth in Stage 2 business employment rising from around 2,500 in the mid-2000s to over 3,000 workers in 2013. This is a very positive trend line.

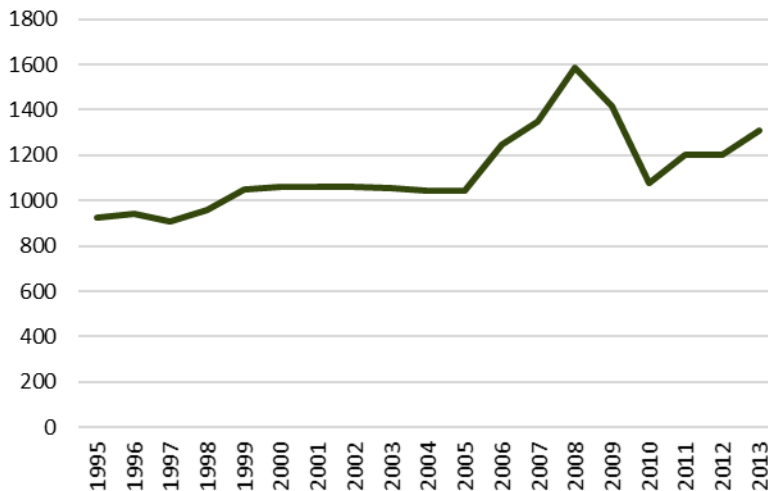
Figure 14. Employment in Stage 2 (10-99 employees) Ventures



Breakout Entrepreneurs are very important to both local and regional economies. Ideally, these entrepreneurial ventures create many jobs, stimulate economic growth and increase overall economic prosperity as new employee spending drives retail, service, construction and other sectors of the economy. In the **new economy**, many businesses are experiencing rapid sales growth but creating few jobs as they rely instead on contract employees and outsourcing strategies. As part of the entrepreneurial pipeline, communities should focus on those existing businesses that achieve breakout or rapid growth status **and** create many jobs in the process. According to Christine Hamilton-Pennell (former market research analysis with Littleton, Colorado's Economic Gardening program), the typical high growth entrepreneurial venture is one that has been around for several decades and reaches a point where there is both motivation and opportunity for high growth. It often takes an entrepreneur time to figure out how to achieve higher growth, creating opportunities for the community to provide support and resource connections. This observation also suggests that county leaders should not limit their focus to new entrepreneurial ventures. It is important to look at existing, established entrepreneurs who may be on the cusp of breakout growth.

As a proxy for breakout entrepreneurs, we use employment associated with Stage 3 ventures (100-499 employees). Many Stage 3 ventures achieve a certain level of growth and plateau. If we see employment among Stage 3 ventures, there is a strong probability that there is breakout entrepreneurial activity. After a sharp rise in employment in the mid-2000s and an associated decline during the Great Recession, we are now seeing employment growth once again among Stage 3 ventures.

**Figure 14. Employment in Stage 3
(100-499 employees) Ventures**



At the local level, it is relatively easy to identify potential breakout entrepreneurs (remember, they can be non-profits and public enterprises). At this stage, businesses are often moving out of existing space and building new office complexes or even campuses. They may be actively expanding their leadership teams or seeking new supplier relationships. County leaders should be watching for such evidence and meeting with these entrepreneurial teams to understand their plans and consider what support the community can provide.

Just as a water or natural gas pipeline is critical community infrastructure, the **entrepreneurial pipeline** is the lifeblood of a community or regional economy. A diverse set of entrepreneurial talent, across the entire pipeline, is one key to building a strong, diverse entrepreneurial economy. For Russell County, Table 3 provides a comprehensive picture of all private, public and non-profit business establishments across the entrepreneurial pipeline, using data from www.youreconomy.org.

Among the county's largest employers (Figure 15) or Stage 4 ventures there has been a recovery in employment since the early 2000s. This is positive.

This county has elements of the entrepreneurial pipeline in place, with more businesses in the earlier stages of venture development. Local and county leaders should focus on understanding the entrepreneurial talent that exists in the county across this pipeline and targeting resources toward those with the desire, capacity and opportunity to grow.

**Figure 15. Employment in Stage 4
(500+ employees) Ventures**

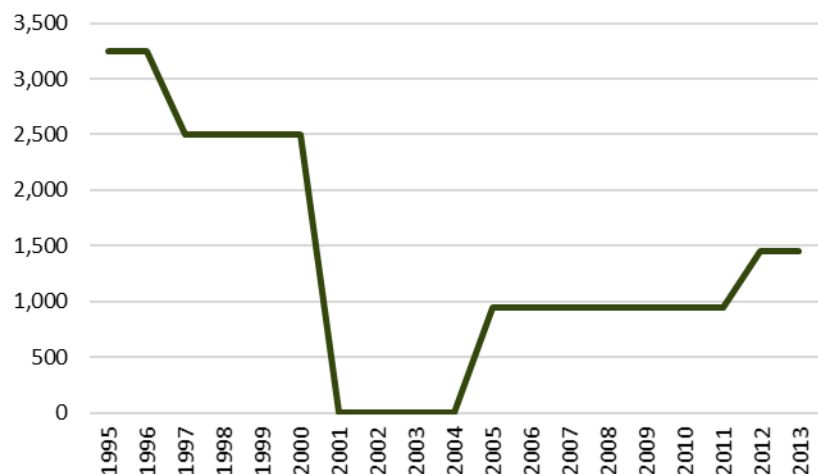


Table 3. Russell County's Entrepreneurial Pipeline

Establishments	1995	2001	Change	2001	2013	Change
Total	647	914	267	914	1,224	310
Self-Employed (1)	190	240	50	240	359	119
Stage 1 (2-9)	374	567	193	567	742	175
Stage 2 (10-99)	76	100	24	100	113	13
Stage 3 (100-499)	6	7	1	7	8	1
Stage 4 (500+)	1	0	-1	0	2	2
Jobs	1995	2001	Change	2001	2013	Change
Total	7,453	5,708	-1745	5,708	8,350	2,642
Self-Employed (1)	190	240	50	240	359	119
Stage 1 (2-9)	1,265	1,900	635	1,900	2,202	302
Stage 2 (10-99)	1,821	2,507	686	2,507	3,032	525
Stage 3 (100-499)	927	1,061	134	1,061	1,307	246
Stage 4 (500+)	3,250	0	-3250	0	1,450	1,450

Using this Development Opportunity Profile

This **Development Opportunity Profile** is meant to be used as a conversation starter in your community or region. We believe that the best development decisions are made after a thorough assessment of your assets and opportunities. This Profile provides one set of information to get you started. We encourage you to share this profile with a diverse group of community stakeholders and residents. The data shared here will be enriched by conversations with a range of partners who bring new and unique perspectives on your economy and opportunities. An entrepreneur is likely to look at this information from a different perspective than a community banker or county commissioner. Yet, all of these perspectives can help you establish a better understanding of your starting point, and create the space for you to dream about what might be possible in your community going forward.

At the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, we have studied local and regional economies throughout North America. We have deep and long-term experience helping communities understand their development opportunities and create entrepreneur-focused development strategies. Based on this experience, we offer some initial insights into potential development opportunities for Russell County, Kentucky. We hope these insights provide the fodder for your initial community conversations.

<h3>Retirees</h3> <p>Retirees are the single largest driver in the regional economy. Retiree spending provides stability to local and regional economies. A focused development strategy on meeting the needs of retirees should be considered. Each day 10,000 Baby Boomers are retiring. Many are retiring to more rural communities. These trends offer business development opportunities.</p>	<h3>Manufacturing</h3> <p>Manufacturing is foundational to the county’s economy. A focused manufacturing strategy to ensure future competitiveness and opportunity for growth is strongly recommended. Growing a more competitive manufacturing sector will create higher skill and compensated jobs and careers.</p>	
<h3>Hardship Transfer Payments</h3> <p>The third largest economic driver in the county is Hardship Related Transfer Payments (e.g., Medicaid, public assistance, etc.). These payments are sustaining the current economy and can only be reduced through expanding economic activity and increasing job offerings.</p>	<h3>Rural Life</h3> <p>This county and its communities offer a unique rural and smaller town quality of life. This is a development asset worth further exploration.</p>	<h3>Location</h3> <p>This county is rural in character. It is physically large. But within one day’s driving distance there are major metropolitan areas and many regional trade centers. The region’s location offers significant opportunities through market development with these urban centers with millions of consumers.</p>
<h3>Retail Capture</h3> <p>Based on Esri data for 2015 the county has a relatively strong retail spending capture profile. But there is room for improvement. Retail competition is intense and a focused strategy to help locally based and owned retailers improve their competitive positions is recommended. Retail ownership transition should also be considered. The Hospitality sector appears to be important and warrants further investigation and potential support as a development strategy.</p>		<h3>Entrepreneurial Energy</h3> <p>While the county has entrepreneurs across the pipeline, more of the entrepreneurial talent is concentrated in early stage ventures. There is an opportunity to identify those entrepreneurs who have growth-orientation and target resources toward helping them grow. We recommend a particular focus on nonfarm proprietorships and Stage 2 ventures which are both experiencing growth.</p>
<h3>Government</h3> <p>The county is highly dependent upon government and government related transfer payments. This spending is sustaining the current economy in many important ways. Nevertheless, these sources of income are under stress with likely continued pressure for cuts. Diversifying the economy beyond government is likely to be very important to overall regional prosperity.</p>		<h3>Commuters</h3> <p>The county is part of a regional economy with relatively high levels of both inflow (living in the county and working outside of the county) and outflow (living outside the county and working in the county). For many commuters, getting off the road becomes a personal goal and can offer development possibilities.</p>

Sources

Data for this **Development Opportunity Profile** were obtained from the following:

- Esri (www.esri.com), Assorted Esri Market Intelligence Reports, August 2015
- Edward Lowe Foundation (www.youreconomy.org), August 2015
- Headwaters Economics (www.headwaterseconomics.org), Various Profile Reports, August 2015
- Google Maps
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Census of Agriculture 2012*, August 2015

Research documents associated with these sources can be found in the E-Library at <https://goo.gl/Zqfn2D>.

Reading Library

Useful reading related to entrepreneur-focused economic development:

- [Overview of Economic Development](#) (Don Macke and Nancy Arnold, RTC, The University of Montana Rural Institute, 2012.)
- [Creating Entrepreneurial Communities: Building Community Capacity for Ecosystem Development](#) (Deborah M. Markley, Thomas S. Lyons and Donald W. Macke, *Community Development*, Vol. 46, No. 5, December 2015.)
- [Creating Entrepreneurial Communities in Kansas](#) (Deborah Markley and Ahmet Binerer, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, 2014.)
- [Energizing Entrepreneurial Communities – A Pathway to Prosperity](#) (Donald Macke, Deborah Markley and John Fulwider, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, 2014.)
- [The E Myth Revisited – Why Most Small Businesses Don’t Work and What to Do About It](#) (Michael E. Gerber, HarperCollins Books, 2001.)
- [Innovation and Entrepreneurship](#) (Peter F. Drucker, HarperCollins Books, 1985.)
- [Startup Communities](#) (Brad Feld, John Wiley & Sons, , 2012.)
- [The Good Jobs Strategy](#) (Zeynep Ton, New Harvest – Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014.)
- [Investing in Entrepreneurs – A Strategic Approach for Strengthening Your Regional and Community Economy](#) (Gregg A. Lichtenstein and Thomas S. Lyons, Praeger, 2010.)
- [The Illusions of Entrepreneurship](#) (Scott A. Shane, Yale University Press, 2008.)

Other Center Resources

These additional [Empowering Research](#) tools can help you better understand your community and economy, the first step toward creating a vision and optimal prosperity plan.

More Development Opportunity Resources

- Economic Diversity report
- Economic Cluster report
- Manufacturing sector report
- Tourism sector report
- Agriculture sector report
- Community conversation report

Philanthropic Opportunity Profile draws on research unique to your community to help you better understand the drivers of wealth in your community and the potential for community-based philanthropy to support your economic development dreams and plans.

More Philanthropic Opportunity Resources

- [Donor Opportunity analysis](#)
- [Transfer of Wealth Opportunity analysis](#)
- Philanthropic Sector analysis
- Charitable Giving analysis

Generational Diversity Profile will help you understand generational change, some of the differences across the generations and potential impacts on community leadership, philanthropy and development.

More Generational Diversity Resources

- [Generational Diversity analysis](#)
- Generational Scenario analysis

We can also help you share this research with key stakeholders in your community through webinars, workshops and other types of engagements.

- Consultations
- Webinars
- Toolkits
- Keynotes
- Customized workshops and training institutes
- Coaching support
- Community-based projects and initiatives

To learn more, go to the [Get Started](#) page on our [website](#).

About the Center

The Center for Rural Entrepreneurship's mission is to help community leaders build a prosperous future by supporting and empowering business, social and civic entrepreneurs. With our roots and hearts in rural America, we help communities of all sizes and interests by bringing *empowering research* together with *effective community engagement* to advance *community-driven strategies* for prosperity.

Our **Solution Area Teams** – [Entrepreneurial Communities](#); [Community Development Philanthropy](#); [New Generation Partnerships](#) – empower community leaders to find their own answers to the economic development challenges and opportunities they face.

To learn more about the Center, go to www.energizingentrepreneurs.org.

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Our Team



Don Macke is Co-Founder and Director of the Entrepreneurial Communities solution area. Through this work, Don helps communities and regions throughout North America grow entrepreneur-focused economic development strategies. He works with a group of strategic partners across the country to deliver customized economic development solutions.



Deborah Markley is Co-Founder and Managing Director of the Center. Deb guides the Center's measurement and research agendas, including development and implementation of tools for measuring success, practice-driven research, and evaluation of model entrepreneurship development systems and initiatives in rural places.

Ann Chaffin is Senior Associate for Marketing Communications with the Center. Ann heads the Center's Communications team and is responsible for overseeing and branding all content the Center distributes and keeping communications current and professional for each of our solution areas.



Dana Williams is Project Associate with the Center. Dana provides management assistance and operational support across the Center, including providing executive assistance to each of the Center's solution areas and has been actively engaged in product development, supporting the creation of a number of online toolkits.



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