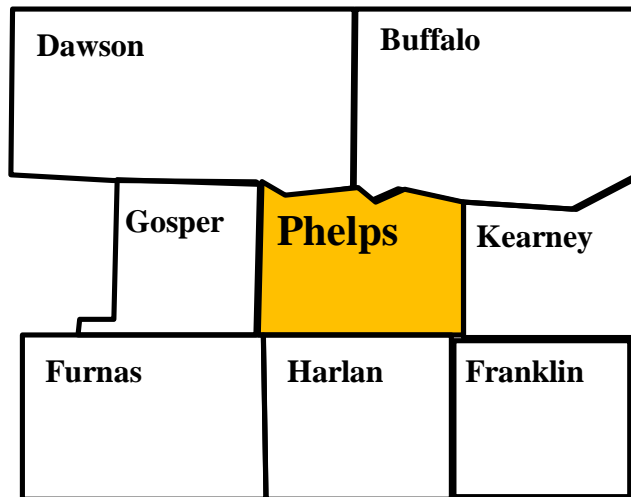


Labor Supply Factors and Labor Availability for the Phelps County Labor Area



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Labor Supply Factors and Labor Availability for the Phelps County Labor Area

Executive Summary

The information provided in this report indicates that a prospective new employer providing job opportunities with competitive wages and benefits and offering career opportunities would be a welcome addition to the employment base in the Phelps County Labor Area. The response to such employment opportunities would be substantial, and as this report shows, there is a sizeable labor force and population base living within the Phelps County Labor Area. Some of the pertinent findings of the report include:

- Population in the Phelps County Labor Area (Phelps County plus the seven contiguous counties) totaled 100,917 people in 2012, with the Phelps County population totaling 9,215. Population in Phelps County grew by 0.3 percent during the 2010–2012 period, compared to a population increase of 1.2 percent for the eight-county Phelps County Labor Area as a whole.
- The Phelps County Labor Area labor force totaled 58,117 in 2012, with 56,173 local residents employed in jobs either within or outside the area. A total of 48,265 persons were employed in nonfarm wage and salary jobs¹ located within the area.
- In 2011, 1,764 primary jobs (42.6 percent) held by Phelps County residents were located outside Phelps County. This confirms a large number of Phelps County residents are commuting to jobs in other counties.
- Average annual wages for all nonfarm wage and salary employees in the Phelps County Labor Area were \$5,694 less than the Nebraska average. Within the labor area, Phelps County had the highest average wage, \$35,248 or \$4,020 lower than the Nebraska average.

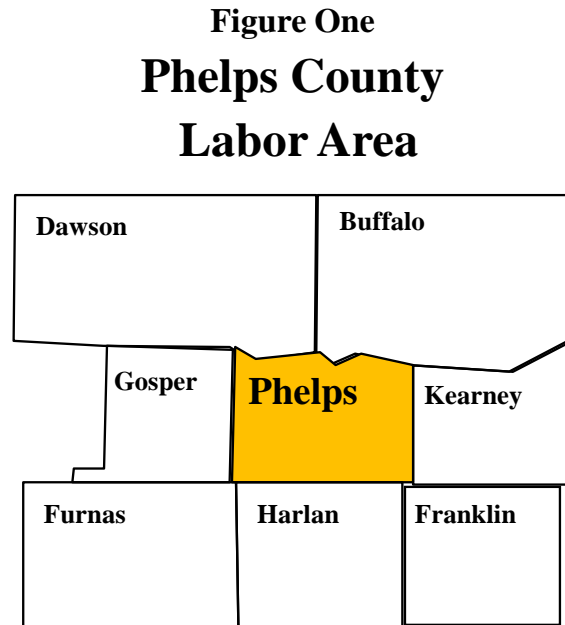
The basic conclusion of this report, which follows from the data and analysis presented, is that the Phelps County Labor Area and Phelps County would be able to provide a significant number of dedicated and skilled workers to meet the needs of additional employers in the area. While this report has not estimated a precise number of people that may be available for a prospective new employer in the Holdrege area, it is anticipated that if attractive working conditions with competitive wages and employee benefits were offered, a prospective new employer would be able to select their workforce from a substantial pool of applicants.

¹ Nonfarm wage and salary employment data are derived from businesses subject to State unemployment insurance laws and from Federal agencies subject to the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees program. Nonfarm wage and salary employment data includes 99.7% of all wage and salary civilian employment. Self-employed workers, unpaid family workers, workers in certain not-for-profit organizations, and several other small (primarily seasonal) worker categories are not included.

Labor Supply Factors and Labor Availability for the Phelps County Labor Area

This report presents selected labor-related and demographic data that provide insights into the labor supply situation in Phelps County and the surrounding area.

In reviewing the data presented in this report, it will be evident that the Phelps County Labor Area has a sizeable pool of labor to provide for the labor requirements of additional employers in the area, both in the near term and over the long run. Data presented in this report includes tables on labor force, employment, and population for Phelps County and for the surrounding counties that make up the potential laborshed area. Figure One includes a map outlining the geographic area which has been defined as the Phelps County Labor Area.



An important resource for new or expanding businesses is a readily available supply of workers. Whether an employer requires 5 or 500 workers, they need to have confidence there will be a sufficient number of workers available to meet their labor requirements. This report is provided as a key analytical tool to identify and quantify the number and selected characteristics of workers available in the Phelps County Labor Area.

Available labor supply is defined as the number of persons who would potentially apply for employment when a job becomes available. Potential workers are categorized into two groups; those currently employed who would consider other employment opportunities and those who do not currently have a job.

One factor contributing to the available supply of workers is the willingness of workers already employed to change jobs. Factors influencing this decision are related to wages, fringe benefits, hours, and working conditions. Generally, workers are more inclined to change jobs when the wages and benefits for the potential new job are better and/or when they are optimistic about the economy.

Factors contributing to the available supply of people without jobs include the unemployment rate, labor force participation, and migration. To be classified as unemployed, an individual must have been actively looking for work in the last four weeks, unless they were expecting recall from a layoff or waiting to start a job within 30 days.

There are also potential workers that are classified as not presently in the labor force. These individuals may not be participating in the labor force as employed or unemployed workers for various reasons. They may be unable to work because of school or family responsibilities or they may have an illness that has prevented them from becoming part of the labor force. There may also be workers who have not been able to find employment in the past and have become discouraged or who are no longer actively seeking employment because they perceive there are no attractive job opportunities available in the area. Retired persons are also classified as not in the labor force, although this population group often can provide substantial labor resources for selected business operations. Within the group of persons not currently in the labor force, and therefore not actively seeking employment, are many individuals who would accept a job with attractive working conditions, competitive wages, and employee benefits if one became available.

Population migration is another factor that affects the available labor supply of potential workers who are not presently employed (and may not be seeking work within the local labor market). Persons without jobs and who perceive that there are no job opportunities available locally are the most likely to leave (migrate out) the area for employment opportunities elsewhere.

Labor Force and Employment

Table One provides data showing labor force and employment trends for the Phelps County Labor Area and for Phelps County for selected years from 2007 to 2012. Data in Table One (Part A and Part B) provide two alternate measures of employment for two distinct areas. Data presented in Table One, Part A include labor force, unemployment, employment, and nonfarm wage and salary employment data for the entire Phelps County Labor Area (see Figure One). As these data indicate, the total labor force and total employment for the laborshed area as a whole both increased, with the area labor force growing by 2.7 percent between 2007 and 2012 and total employment growing by 1.8 percent during the same period.

Table One
Labor Force and Employment, Phelps County Labor Area^(a), 2007–2012
Part A

Labor Force and Employment Phelps County Labor Area^(a), 2007–2012							
(Place of Residence)	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% Chg. 2007–2012
Labor Force^(b)	56,595	56,608	56,009	56,480	57,381	58,117	2.7
Unemployment (#)	1,400	1,623	2,186	2,162	2,164	1,944	38.9
Unemployment Rate (%)	2.5	2.9	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.3	(N/A)
Employment	55,195	54,985	53,823	54,318	55,217	56,173	1.8
(Place of Work)							
Nonfarm Employment^(c)	47,921	47,668	46,882	46,898	47,198	48,265	0.7

Table One continued on following page; notes and sources on following page.

Table One -- Continued
Part B
Labor Force and Employment by Industry
Phelps County, NE

(Place of Residence)	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% Chg. 2007-2012
Labor Force^(b)	5,117	5,176	5,178	5,191	5,259	5,325	4.1
Unemployment (#)	116	123	185	177	183	148	27.6
Unemployment Rate (%)	2.3	2.4	3.6	3.4	3.5	2.8	(N/A)
Employment	5,001	5,053	4,993	5,014	5,076	5,177	3.5
(Place of Work)							
Nonfarm Employment^(c)	4,536	4,587	4,552	4,496	4,509	4,600	1.4
Goods Producing	1,309	1,311	1,270	1,215	1,277	1,322	1.0
Manufacturing & Construction	1,049	1,052	996	942	987	1,020	-2.8
Natural Resources	260	259	274	273	290	302	16.2
Service Providing	2,477	2,544	2,532	2,522	2,480	2,530	2.1
Trans., Warehousing & Utilities	819	864	863	865	913	950	16.0
Information	34	32	35	40	38	41	20.6
Financial Activities	188	192	199	206	206	204	8.5
Professional & Business Services	294	318	301	285	164	142	-51.7
Education & Health Services	678	683	699	718	755	764	12.7
Leisure and Hospitality	372	381	367	348	339	344	-7.5
Other Services, except Public	93	73	68	61	66	86	-7.5
Total Government	750	732	750	759	751	748	-0.3
Federal Government	41	40	38	47	43	42	2.4
State Government	43	42	41	42	38	37	-14.0
Local Government	666	650	671	670	670	669	0.5

^(a) The Phelps County Labor Area includes Phelps County, Nebraska and the contiguous counties (Buffalo, Dawson, Franklin, Furnas, Gosper, Harlan, and Kearney).

^(b) The labor force data are measured based on the county of residence, irrespective of the county of employment.

^(c) The Nonfarm Employment data are for wage and salary employment and are based on the place (county) where the individual is employed, irrespective of the county of residence.

* Estimated values provided by Ken Lemke, Nebraska Public Power District.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, www.bls.gov/cew/.

The second employment measure presented for the Phelps County Labor Area, nonfarm wage and salary employment increased from 47,921 in 2007 to 48,265 in 2012, an increase of 0.7 percent. In the case of the labor force data (labor force, unemployment, and employment), the respective measures are based on the county of residence. The nonfarm wage and salary employment data are measured based on the county of employment, irrespective of the place of residence of the workers.

The labor force and employment values presented for Phelps County (Table One, Part B) indicate that the total labor force in the county grew by 4.1 percent between 2007 and 2012, with total employment (of people residing in Phelps County, irrespective of their county of employment) growing by 3.5 percent during this period. It is also of interest to note that unemployment increased by 27.6 percent, from 116 in 2007 to 148 in 2012.

As previously noted, nonfarm wage and salary employment, is based on the county where the person is employed irrespective of their county of residence. Nonfarm wage and salary employment in Phelps County grew by 1.4 percent between 2007 and 2012. Data presented in Table One, Part B show that the fastest growing employment sector in Phelps County during the 2007–2012 review period was the Information sector, recording a 20.6 percent increase between 2007 and 2012. Other economic sectors experiencing significant growth in employment between 2007 and 2012 include the Natural Resources sector (16.2 percent), Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities (16.0 percent), and the Education & Health Services sector (12.7 percent). In the case of the Total Government Sector, employment in the State Government Sector declined by 14.0 percent while the Federal Government Sector employment grew by 2.4 percent and the Local Government Sector employment grew by 0.5 percent.

A review of the employment data reported in Table Two indicates differences between the nonfarm wage and salary employment reported in each of the counties and the total employment of persons living in these respective areas. In the case of the entire Phelps County Labor Area, nonfarm wage and salary employment was reported to be 48,265 in 2012, which was significantly less (7,908) than the reported total employment of persons living within the eight-county Phelps County Labor Area.

Table Two
Labor Force, Employment, and Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment,
Phelps County Labor Area, 2012

County	Labor Force 2012 ^(a)	Total Employment 2012 ^(a)	Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment 2012 ^(b)	Total Employment Minus NF W&S Employment	Agricultural Employment 2011 ^(c)
Phelps	5,325	5,177	4,600	577	595
Buffalo	28,853	27,979	26,042	1,937	996
Dawson	12,713	12,143	11,235	908	876
Franklin	1,837	1,779	824	955	324
Furnas	2,637	2,545	1,920	625	455
Gosper	1,090	1,059	438	621	220
Harlan	1,898	1,838	889	949	409
Kearney	3,764	3,653	2,317	1,336	483
Labor Area	58,117	56,173	48,265	7,908	4,358

^(a) Labor force and employment data are measured based on the county of residence.

^(b) Nonfarm Employment data are for wage and salary employment and are based on the place (county) where the individual is employed, irrespective of the county of residence.

^(c) Agricultural employment data are for 2011.

Sources: Labor Data - U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, www.bls.gov/lau/#data.

Farm Employment Data - U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Accounts Data website: www.bea.gov/regional/reis/.

There are two major reasons for differences in the total employment and nonfarm employment values. First, nonfarm wage and salary employment excludes self-employed workers, unpaid family workers, workers in certain not-for-profit organizations, and several other small (primarily seasonal and farm) worker categories—these workers are included in estimates of total employment. Second estimates of nonfarm wage and salary employment is based on the area where the jobs (businesses) are located while estimates of total employment are based on the area where workers live.

Table Two also includes information on agricultural employment, which includes farm proprietors. As shown in Table Two, 4,358 people in the Phelps County Labor Area were employed in agriculture in 2011, the last year that agricultural employment data were available. It is important to note, that for Nebraska as a whole, approximately 32 percent of farm operators also have a full-time job off the farm and 49 percent work off the farm, either in full- or part-time employment.

The number of nonfarm wage and salary workers in the Phelps County Labor Area is shown by major industry sector and by county in Table Three. The reader is reminded that nonfarm wage and salary workers are counted in the county where they are employed. Individuals with more than one job are counted at each establishment (and in each county) where they work. Table Three provides information about the number of workers in the labor area by county and major industry category.

Table Three
Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment, by Industry Sector
Phelps County Labor Area, by County, 2012

County	Natural Resources and Mining	Construction & Manufacturing	Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	Leisure and Hospitality	Financial Activities	All Other Services	Government
Phelps	302	1,020	950	344	204	1,032	748
Buffalo	495	4,584	5,768	3,151	817	7,354	3,873
Dawson	405	3,846	1,891	822	319	1,838	2,114
Franklin	67	17	162	37	46	159	336
Furnas	170	178	334	71	69	537	561
Gosper	37	34	81	21	48	42	175
Harlan	55	37	196	103	41	162	295
Kearney	151	464	357	142	80	627	496
Labor Area	1,682	10,180	9,739	4,691	1,624	11,751	8,598
Nebraska	14,030	137,283	187,577	84,132	61,857	277,539	157,837

Percent of Total Nonfarm Wage & Salary Employment							
	Natural Resources and Mining	Construction & Manufacturing	Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	Leisure and Hospitality	Financial Activities	All Other Services	Government
Labor Area	3.5	21.1	20.2	9.7	3.4	24.3	17.8
Nebraska	1.5	14.9	20.4	9.1	6.7	30.2	17.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, www.bls.gov/cew/.

In addition to displaying the number of workers by major industry sector, Table Three also compares the percentage distribution of workers by industry in the Phelps County Labor Area with the distribution for the State of Nebraska. As these data show, the industry distribution of employment for the Phelps County Labor Area is significantly different than that for Nebraska as a whole.

The most significant deviations between Nebraska and the Phelps County Labor Area occur in the Construction & Manufacturing sector employment, with 21.1 percent of nonfarm wage and salary workers in the Holdrege area employed in that sector, compared to 14.9 percent for Nebraska. Conversely, only 24.3 percent of nonfarm wage and salary workers in the Phelps County Labor Area are employed in the All Other Services sector, compared to 30.2 percent for Nebraska as a whole.

Table Four, Part A provides data showing labor cost comparisons, by county, for all private wage and salary workers for the Phelps County Labor Area. It is important to remember that the wage and salary employment is reported by county of employment, and does not provide an indication of the average weekly and annual wage for residents of the respective counties. Obviously, labor cost is an important consideration in any analysis of the labor availability in an area. Pay data for workers covered by unemployment insurance laws in Nebraska are the source of the labor cost information. Average annual pay is calculated by dividing the total payroll for wage and salary workers by the average annual number of employees.

Table Four
Average Pay, Phelps County Labor Area & Nebraska, 2012

Part A
Average Annual Pay and Average Weekly Wages
All Covered^(a) Wage and Salary Workers, All Industries

County	Average Employment	Average Weekly Wages	Average Annual Wages
Phelps	4,600	\$678	\$35,248
Buffalo	26,042	\$670	\$34,844
Dawson	11,235	\$617	\$32,108
Franklin	824	\$520	\$27,032
Furnas	1,920	\$593	\$30,845
Gosper	438	\$586	\$30,489
Harlan	889	\$512	\$26,614
Kearney	2,317	\$595	\$30,932
Labor Area	48,265	\$644	\$33,574
Nebraska	920,255	\$755	\$39,268

Table Four continued on following page; notes and sources on following page.

**Table Four -- Continued
Part B**

**Average Annual Pay All Covered^(a) Wage and Salary Workers
By Selected Industry Groups**

County	Goods-Producing	Manufacturing	Construction	Service-Providing	Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	Financial Activities	Professional and Business Services	Leisure and Hospitality
Phelps	\$43,533	NA	NA	\$30,671	\$36,246	\$42,881	\$36,758	\$9,251
Buffalo	\$43,052	\$45,321	\$37,409	\$31,315	\$29,028	\$40,357	\$49,168	\$12,576
Dawson	\$34,750	\$34,540	\$30,865	\$27,300	\$32,100	\$37,681	\$33,529	\$10,129
Franklin	\$38,303	NA	\$36,788	\$22,509	\$26,623	\$32,927	NA	\$8,249
Furnas	\$35,773	\$38,731	\$37,810	\$30,997	\$30,483	\$33,571	\$43,335	\$7,380
Gosper	\$33,600	NA	NA	\$33,107	\$35,265	\$43,719	NA	\$15,572
Harlan	\$30,073	\$28,839	\$22,084	\$23,992	\$31,727	\$45,120	\$16,799	\$9,859
Kearney	\$39,780	\$40,881	\$32,251	\$26,250	\$35,463	\$42,461	NA	\$10,885
Nebraska	\$42,566	\$43,600	\$42,624	\$37,692	\$33,975	\$53,760	\$51,864	\$13,642

NA Not available.

^(a) Includes employers that are subject to Nebraska Employment Security Laws.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, www.bls.gov/cew/.

A review of the data in Table Four, Part A indicates that average annual salaries in Phelps County (\$35,248 for all wage and salary employees for all private industries) are slightly higher than for the Phelps County Labor Area as a whole and all of the other counties that make up the area. Also, Phelps County average annual salaries are \$4,020 (10.2 percent) less than the state average. Average annual salaries for the Phelps County Labor Area (\$33,574) were \$5,694 (14.5 percent) less than the Nebraska average. These data suggest, of course, there would be a positive labor supply response in Phelps County to the creation of additional employment opportunities with competitive wages and benefits.

Table Four, Part B provides average annual wages, by county and by major industry sector, for the counties that make up the Phelps County Labor Area. As the data in Table Four indicate, the highest overall average annual wages in the area are for wage and salary workers employed in Phelps County. The average annual wage for all wage and salary workers (working) in Phelps County was \$35,248 in 2012 which was \$1,674 (5.0 percent) higher than the average for the Phelps County Labor Area as a whole, and \$4,020 (10.2 percent) less than the Nebraska average. A review of the industry specific data for average annual wages for Phelps indicates that the high average annual wage results from the extremely high average wage in the Goods Producing industries.

Table Five provides information on entry level, average, and experienced wages for selected occupations across all industry groups for businesses located in the Central Region of Nebraska. Entry level and experienced wage rates represent the means of the lower one-third (1/3) and upper two-thirds (2/3) of the wage distribution, respectively.

Table Five
Entry, Average, and Experienced Hourly Wage Levels, Selected Occupations
Central Region Nebraska^(a), 2nd Quarter, 2013

Occupation	Entry Level	Average	Experienced
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	11.45	20.18	24.53
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	16.28	30.73	37.96
Registered Nurses	20.71	25.93	28.54
Protective Service Occupations	9.22	16.62	20.32
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	8.21	11.08	12.51
Sales and Related Occupations	8.29	14.71	17.92
Construction and Extraction Occupations	11.00	16.20	18.79
Production Occupations	11.41	15.93	18.20
Team Assemblers	13.33	17.50	19.59
Machinists	12.28	16.31	18.33
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	12.64	16.77	18.84
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	9.20	12.47	14.09
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	9.55	14.74	17.33
Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer	12.35	18.07	20.93
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	9.24	12.55	14.19

^(a) The Central Region of Nebraska includes Adams, Blaine, Buffalo, Clay, Custer, Franklin, Garfield, Greeley, Hall, Hamilton, Harlan, Howard, Kearney, Loup, Merrick, Nance, Nuckolls, Phelps, Sherman, Valley, Webster, and Wheeler Counties.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information, Occupational Employment Statistics, July, 2013

Commuting Patterns

Table Six provides data from the 2011 U.S. Census, Local Employment Dynamics Program showing commuting patterns for workers living in the Phelps County Labor Area. Data in Table Six indicate, a significant number (and percentage) of workers in the area commuted outside of their county of residence for employment. Data for Phelps County indicate that 1,764, or 42.6 percent of the employed workers, commuted to other counties for employment. For five (5) of the other counties in the Phelps County Labor Area, the percentage of commuters was greater than for Phelps County, and in some cases substantially greater. In the case of Harlan County, 1,178, or 76.7 percent of employed workers commuted out of their county of residence for employment. Other counties with a high percentage of employed workers commuting to other counties for employment include Franklin (76.0 percent), Gosper (75.7 percent), Kearney (64.6 percent), and Furnas, with 49.2 percent of employed workers commuting out of their county of residence for employment.

Table Six
Commuting Patterns, Phelps County Labor Area
Jobs Outside County of Residence, 2011

County	County Residents Working Outside County	
	Number	Percent
Phelps	1,764	42.6
Buffalo	5,067	26.4
Dawson	2,745	28.0
Franklin	1,326	76.0
Furnas	794	49.2
Gosper	562	75.7
Harlan	1,178	76.7
Kearney	1,951	64.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Local Employment Dynamics*
<http://lehdmap4.did.census.gov/themap4/>.

Table Seven provides further detail illustrating the willingness of workers in Phelps County to travel for employment. In 2011, residents of Phelps County worked at a total of 4,138 jobs; a resident could work at more than one job. Of these 4,138 jobs, the largest number, 2,374 or 57.4 percent, were located in Phelps County, while 353 or 8.5 percent were located in Buffalo County. Other counties with high numbers of workers from Phelps County were Douglas (209 jobs), Adams (98 jobs), and Harlan (40 jobs).

Table Seven
Commuting Patterns, Phelps County Labor Area
Location of Jobs Held by Phelps County Residents, 2011

County Where Jobs are Located	Number of Phelps County Residents' Primary Jobs	Percent of Phelps County Residents' Primary Jobs
Phelps	2,374	57.4%
Buffalo	353	8.5%
Douglas	209	5.1%
Adams	98	2.4%
Harlan	40	1.0%
All Other Locations	1,064	25.7%
Total Resident Jobs	4,138	100.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Local Employment Dynamics* <http://lehdm4.did.census.gov/themap4/>.

Table Eight provides data showing the willingness of workers in other counties to commute to Phelps County for employment. In 2011, 1,868 (44.0 percent) of the 4,242 primary jobs in Phelps County were held by workers commuting from other counties. In 2011, Buffalo County was home to the greatest number of workers commuting into Phelps for primary jobs, 263 or 6.2 percent. Other counties with large numbers of workers commuting into Phelps County for their primary jobs included, Harlan, 192 or 4.5 percent; Kearney, 163 or 3.8 percent; Dawson, 133 or 3.1 percent; Franklin, 133 or 3.1 percent; and Furnas, 104 or 2.5 percent.

Table Eight
Commuting Patterns, Phelps County Labor Area
Sources of Holdrege and Phelps County Workers, 2011

County Where Workers Live	Number of Primary Jobs in Phelps County	Percent of Primary Jobs in Phelps County
Phelps	2,374	56.0%
Buffalo	263	6.2%
Harlan	192	4.5%
Kearney	163	3.8%
Dawson	133	3.1%
Franklin	133	3.1%
Furnas	104	2.5%
All Other Locations	880	20.7%
Total Primary Jobs	4,242	100.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Local Employment Dynamics* <http://lehdm4.did.census.gov/themap4/>.

Table Nine provides data for Phelps County showing the number of primary jobs (Workforce) located in the county and the number of primary jobs held by county residents (Labor Force Employment) by industry in 2011. When the Workforce for an industry exceeds the Labor Force (positive values in the last column of Table Nine), the difference between these values represents the net number of jobs in Phelps County held by workers commuting into the county from other areas. If the Workforce is less than the Labor Force (negative values in the last column of Table Nine), the difference represents the net number of jobs held outside of Phelps County by county residents.

As data in Table Nine indicate, residents of Phelps County were employed in 4,138 primary jobs in 2011, but there were 4,242 primary jobs within the area. This indicates workers from counties outside the study area commuted to at least 104 primary jobs within the study area. It is important to note this is an estimate of net in-commuting and most certainly understates the actual number of primary jobs within the area held by residents from outside the study area.

Table Nine
Primary Jobs, Phelps County, 2011
Resident Labor Force and Employers Workforce

Industry	Labor Force Employment (Employment of Area Residents)	Workforce (Area Jobs)	Net Number of Jobs Held by Workers Commuting Into Phelps County^(a)
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	198	268	70
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	11	3	-8
Utilities	45	36	-9
Construction	178	167	-11
Manufacturing	550	842	292
Wholesale Trade	303	363	60
Retail Trade	454	369	-85
Transportation and Warehousing	133	102	-31
Information	49	39	-10
Finance and Insurance	164	171	7
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	27	15	-12
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	121	90	-31
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	104	80	-24
Management of Companies and Enterprises	41	4	-37
Educational Services	389	380	-9
Health Care and Social Assistance	714	713	-1
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	62	68	6
Accommodation and Food Services	258	196	-62
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	68	62	-6
Public Administration	269	274	5
Total	4,138	4,242	104

^(a) A negative value indicates the net number of primary jobs outside of the area held by Phelps County Labor Area Residents.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Local Employment Dynamics*, <http://lehdmap4.did.census.gov/themap4/>.

Population Trends

The data provided in Table Ten show population trends for the Phelps County Labor Area, by county, and for Nebraska for the period 1960–2012. As these data indicate, the population of the Phelps County Labor Area was 99,756 in 2010. The Phelps County Labor Area population grew by 20.5 percent from 1960 to 2010 and grew 1.2 percent from 2010 to 2012. Population in Phelps County totaled 9,188 in 2010 and had declined by -6.2 percent from 1960 to 2010. During the latest Census decade from 2000 to 2010, the Phelps County population increased by 0.3 percent, compared to the increase for the Phelps County Labor Area as a whole of 1.2 percent, and to the State rate of growth of 1.6 percent.

Table Ten
Population in the Phelps County Labor Area, by County, and Nebraska
Selected Years, 1960–2012

County	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2012	% Chg. 1960–2010	% Chg. 2010–12
Phelps	9,800	9,553	9,769	9,715	9,747	9,188	9,215	-6.2	0.3
Buffalo	26,236	31,222	34,797	37,447	42,259	46,102	47,463	75.7	3.0
Dawson	19,405	19,467	22,304	19,940	24,365	24,326	24,220	25.4	-0.4
Franklin	5,449	4,566	4,377	3,938	3,574	3,225	3,188	-40.8	-1.1
Furnas	7,711	6,897	6,486	5,553	5,324	4,959	4,907	-35.7	-1.0
Gosper	2,489	2,178	2,140	1,928	2,143	2,044	2,029	-17.9	-0.7
Harlan	5,081	4,357	4,292	3,810	3,786	3,423	3,410	-32.6	-0.4
Kearney	6,580	6,707	7,053	6,629	6,882	6,489	6,485	-1.4	-0.1
Labor Area	82,751	84,947	91,218	88,960	98,080	99,756	100,917	20.5	1.2
Nebraska	1,411,330	1,483,493	1,569,825	1,578,385	1,711,230	1,826,341	1,855,525	29.4	1.6

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1960-2010* and *Population Estimates 2012*.

Table Eleven shows the age distribution of the resident population. Obviously, the age distribution of the population is important when evaluating the potential labor supply in an area. A key variable is the number of people in the working age populations of the counties making up the Phelps County Labor Area. In 2012, there were 4,573 people in Phelps County between the ages of 25 and 64, which represented 49.6 percent of the total population, compared to 48.7 percent of the population for the Phelps County Labor Area as a whole and 51.1 percent of the Nebraska population in this age range.

Table Eleven
Age Characteristics of the Population, Phelps County Labor Area,
by County, and Nebraska, 2012

County	0-14		15-24		25-44		45-64		65-Older		Median
	Number	% ^(a)	Number	% ^(a)	Number	% ^(a)	Number	% ^(a)	Number	% ^(a)	Age
Phelps	1,862	20.2	999	10.8	2,016	21.9	2,557	27.7	1,781	19.3	42.3
Buffalo	9,512	20.0	9,318	19.6	11,919	25.1	10,871	22.9	5,843	12.3	31.9
Dawson	5,728	23.6	3,157	13.0	5,835	24.1	5,984	24.7	3,516	14.5	36.1
Franklin	507	15.9	359	11.3	578	18.1	969	30.4	775	24.3	49.0
Furnas	891	18.2	534	10.9	918	18.7	1,425	29.0	1,139	23.2	47.2
Gosper	373	18.4	201	9.9	404	19.9	647	31.9	404	19.9	46.6
Harlan	564	16.5	327	9.6	610	17.9	1,090	32.0	819	24.0	49.9
Kearney	1,254	19.3	691	10.7	1,439	22.2	1,883	29.0	1,218	18.8	42.9
Labor Area	20,691	20.5	15,586	15.4	23,719	23.5	25,426	25.2	15,495	15.4	36.8
Nebraska	389,256	21.0	259,830	14.0	472,662	25.5	476,423	25.7	257,354	13.9	36.2

^(a) Percent of total population for each respective area.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Estimates 2012*.

Information in Table Twelve shows recent changes in the racial and ethnic composition for the resident populations of Phelps County, the Phelps County Labor Area and Nebraska statewide. As shown in Table Twelve, Phelps County population decreased 5.4 percent during the twelve year period while the Hispanic population increased by 981.0 percent. Over the same period, Phelps County Labor Area population increased 2.9 percent while Hispanic population increased 45.8 percent. Statewide, total population increased 8.4 percent and Hispanic population increased 90.6 percent.

Table Twelve
Population by Selected Race and Origin Characteristics
Phelps, Phelps County Labor Area, and Nebraska Statewide, 2000–2012

Category	2000		2012		Change 2000 - 12	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
---Phelps County---						
Total Population	9,746	100.0	9,215	100.0	-531	-5.4
Hispanic Origin	42	0.4	454	4.9	412	981.0
White, Non-Hispanic Origin	9,520	97.7	8,622	93.6	-898	-9.4
Non-White Alone & Non-Hispanic	6	0.1	139	1.5	133	2,216.7
---Phelps County Labor Area---						
Total Population	98,054	100.0	100,917	100.0	2,863	2.9
Hispanic Origin	8,669	8.8	12,636	12.5	3,967	45.8
White, Non-Hispanic Origin	87,768	89.5	84,917	84.1	-2,851	-3.2
Non-White Alone & Non-Hispanic	1,617	1.6	3,364	3.3	1,747	108.0
---Nebraska, Statewide---						
Total Population	1,711,230	100.0	1,855,525	100.0	144,295	8.4
Hispanic Origin	94,419	5.5	179,970	9.7	85,551	90.6
White, Non-Hispanic Origin	1,497,082	87.5	1,510,296	81.4	13,214	0.9
Non-White Alone & Non-Hispanic	119,729	7.0	165,259	8.9	45,530	38.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Estimates 2000 & 2012*.

Table Thirteen provides information showing population, the natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration for the 1990–2000 period for Nebraska, for Phelps County and for the Phelps County Labor Area. As these data show, the Phelps County Labor Area as a whole experienced net in-migration during the Census decade of the 1990s, while Phelps and Franklin counties experienced net out-migration. As indicated in the table, net in-migration for the Phelps County Labor Area as a whole accounted for a population growth of 5,742 people during the decade, contributing to a population increase equal to 6.5 percent of the population. In the case of Phelps County, net out-migration during 1990s totaled 62 people, or 0.6 percent of the 1990 population.

Table Thirteen
Population, Births, Deaths, and Migration
Nebraska and Phelps County Labor Area by County, 1990–2000

County	Population		1990–2000			Net Migration*, 1990–2000	
	1990	2000	Births	Deaths	Nat. Incr.	Number	% 1990 Pop.
Phelps	9,715	9,747	1,282	1,188	94	-62	-0.6
Buffalo	37,447	42,259	5,553	3,015	2,538	2,274	6.1
Dawson	19,940	24,365	3,931	2,347	1,584	2,841	14.2
Franklin	3,938	3,574	379	664	-285	-79	-2.0
Furnas	5,553	5,324	597	1,005	-408	179	3.2
Gosper	1,928	2,143	247	277	-30	245	12.7
Harlan	3,810	3,786	402	554	-152	128	3.4
Kearney	6,629	6,882	816	779	37	216	3.3
Labor Area	88,960	98,080	13,207	9,829	3,378	5,742	6.5
Nebraska	1,578,385	1,711,263	235,647	151,859	83,788	49,090	3.1

* Net Migration from the Bureau of the Census estimates, includes residual component not shown separately.
Sources: Population (1990, 2000) - U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1990, 2000*;
Births, Deaths, and Natural Increase – Nebraska Department of Health Vital Statistics Data;
Migration - computed using population and natural increase.

Table Fourteen provides information showing population, the natural increase (births minus deaths), and net migration for the 2000–2012 period. As these data show, the Phelps County Labor Area experienced significant net out-migration during this more recent twelve-year period. As indicated in the table, out-migration for the Phelps County Labor Area as a whole accounted for population decline of 2,853 during the 2000–2012 period, contributing to a population decrease equal to 2.9 percent of the 2000 population. In the case of Phelps County, net out-migration during this twelve-year period was 613, or 6.3 percent of the 2000 population.

Table Fourteen
Population, Births, Deaths, and Migration
Nebraska and Phelps County Labor Area, by County, 2000–2012

County	Population		2000–2012			Net Migration, 2000–2012*	
	2000	2012	Births	Deaths	Nat. Incr.	Number	% 2000 Pop.
Phelps	9,747	9,215	1,381	1,300	81	-613	-6.3
Buffalo	42,259	47,463	7,789	4,050	3,739	1,465	3.5
Dawson	24,365	24,220	5,060	2,557	2,503	-2,648	-10.9
Franklin	3,574	3,188	367	577	-210	-176	-4.9
Furnas	5,324	4,907	587	893	-306	-111	-2.1
Gosper	2,143	2,029	255	300	-45	-69	-3.2
Harlan	3,786	3,410	374	496	-122	-254	-6.7
Kearney	6,882	6,485	870	820	50	-447	-6.5
Labor Area	98,080	100,917	16,683	10,993	5,690	-2,853	-2.9
Nebraska	1,711,263	1,855,525	314,963	180,364	134,599	9,663	0.6

* Net Migration from the Bureau of the Census estimates, includes residual component not shown separately.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 2000, Population Estimates, 2012*.

Competitive Employment and Career Opportunities

An employer providing jobs with competitive wages and benefits and offering career opportunities would be a welcome addition to the employment base in the Phelps County Labor Area and in Phelps County. The expected response to such employment opportunities would be significant, and it is anticipated that there would be an adequate labor supply response for a prospective new employer offering competitive wages and benefits in the Phelps County area. The labor force, employment, and demographic data presented in this report illustrate quite clearly that there is a sufficiently large labor force and population base living within the Phelps County Labor Area, and that significant numbers of persons living in the area are commuting to other areas for employment.

In conclusion, the data and analysis presented in this report indicate that the Phelps County Labor Area and Phelps County would be able to provide a significant number of dedicated and skilled workers to meet the needs of additional employers in the area. While this report has not estimated a precise number of people that might be available to a prospective new employer in the Phelps County area, it is anticipated that if attractive working conditions with competitive wages and employee benefits were offered, a prospective new employer would be able to select their workforce from a substantial pool of applicants.

Questions concerning this report and the supporting data should be addressed to:

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