

CHAPTER III: Socioeconomic Conditions

DEMOGRAPHIC

Overall Population Changes: In 1950, the City of Helena's corporate boundary extent remained, as it was in 1940, a small circle around the area of Old Town with a population of 421. In fact, this was a significant dip of nearly thirty-seven percent from a peak of 667 in 1940. Although the city limits expanded significantly easterly toward Pelham and southerly toward Alabaster forming a more rectangular shape by 1960, the population grew less than twenty-five percent to 523, and still had not even reached its 1930 population level of 549.

Between 1960 and 1970 the rectangular shaped city began to be populated and the City experienced a 112 percent growth rate, ending the decade with a population of 1,110; this, even though Interstate 65 had yet to be built in northern Shelby County. As the city limits expanded, primarily westward to the Cahaba River, the growth rate continued. From 1970 to 1980 the population grew by 91.89 percent to 2,130. The again from 1980 to 1990 the City experience an 83.94 percent change growing to a population level of 3,918. It was during this period that Interstate 65 was completed, and yet Helena had still not seen the growth explosion that its neighbors had encountered by 1990.



Dearing Downs Subdivision in Shelby County

Helena's growth explosion finally came during the 1990's as the decade experienced a whopping 162.79 percent change from the 1990 population level of 3,918 to the 2000 population level of 10,296. The subdivisions south of Old Town from the Pelham city limits to the Alabaster city limits to roughly County Road 17 had nearly reached capacity and the areas west of County Road 17, once used for coal mining, had now become areas targeted for residential uses. Annexations continued westward crossing the Cahaba River and reaching Jefferson County and actually incorporating a small area of Jefferson County. Growth continued from 2000 through 2010 as developments off County Road 52 continued to be populated, and additional annexations and residential developments within Jefferson County off South Shades Crest Road occurred. While Helena's population grew during this time period, stymied by an economic downturn, its growth rate paled in comparison to the growth rates experienced over the previous four decades. Even so, Helena's growth rates since 1960 have continually surpassed those of the two counties in which it lies. In looking at surrounding municipalities, Helena did not gain ground on its Shelby County neighbors of Alabaster and Pelham, but did gain ground on its Jefferson County neighbor of Bessemer and bypassed the population of Hueytown.

The following tables depict changes in population per the US Census records since 1930.

TABLE 5 Helena Population Counts by Census Year										
County	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2014 ¹
Jefferson	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2,225	
Shelby	549	667	421	523	1,110	2,130	3,918	10,293	14,568	
Total	549	667	421	523	1,110	2,130	3,918	10,296	16,793	17,883
% Change		21.49	(36.88)	24.23	112.24	91.89	83.94	162.79	63.10	6.10

Source: US Bureau of the Census ¹July 2014 estimate
 Note: Block data for breakdown by county will be available in the 2020 Census

TABLE 6 County Population Counts by Census Year										
County	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2014 ¹
Jefferson	431,493	459,930	558,928	634,864	644,991	671,371	651,525	662,047	658,466	660,793
% Change		6.59	21.52	13.59	1.60	4.09	(2.96)	1.61	(0.54)	0.04
Shelby	27,576	28,962	30,362	32,132	38,037	66,298	99,358	143,293	195,085	206,655
% Change		5.03	4.83	5.83	18.38	74.30	49.87	44.22	36.14	5.6

Source: US Bureau of the Census ¹July 2014 estimate

TABLE 7 Surrounding Municipality Population Counts by Census Year										
Municipality	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2014 ¹
Birmingham	259,678	267,583	326,037	340,887	300,910	284,413	265,968	242,820	212,237	212,247
Hoover	NA	NA	NA	NA	688	19,792	39,788	62,742	81,619	84,353
Alabaster	NA	NA	NA	1,623	2,642	7,079	14,732	22,619	30,352	31,545
Bessemer	20,721	22,826	28,445	33,054	33,428	31,729	33,497	29,672	27,456	26,949
Pelham	NA	NA	NA	NA	931	6,759	9,765	14,369	21,352	22,699
Helena	549	667	421	523	1,110	2,130	3,918	10,296	16,793	17,883
Hueytown	NA	NA	NA	5,997	7,095	13,309	15,280	15,364	16,105	15,815
Calera	NA	1,092	1,361	1,928	1,655	2,035	2,136	3,158	11,620	12,972
Montevallo	1,245	1,490	2,150	2,755	3,719	3,965	4,239	4,825	6,323	6,601

Source: US Bureau of the Census ¹July 2014 estimate



Laurel Lakes Subdivision in Jefferson County

Population Changes by Groups: The figures which stand out are the percent changes from 2000 to 2010 of Helena’s elderly population, especially the 161.2 percent for the 55 to 64 age group and the 93 percent for those over 64 years of age. Helena needs to be geared for the elderly population that it currently has, and those within the next age group down which will be part of that elderly population within the next decade.

Although the population through 24 years of age has seen double digit percentage increases over the past decade, the adult age group of 25 to 34 experienced a slight dip of negative 4.5%. This dip may be just an anomaly but could expand not only within this age group but others above it if the effects of the recession continue. Members of the 25 to 34 age group will not only need to go where the jobs are but to find housing they can afford.



Helena Senior Citizens Center

TABLE 8 Population by Age and Gender							
Age Group	Total	Total	Percent Change 2000-2010	Males	Males	Females	Females
	2000	2010		2000	2010	2000	2010
Under 5 Years	1,043	1,430	37.1	501	723	542	707
5 to 14	1,555	2,536	63.1	764	1,297	791	1,239
15 to 24	976	1,802	84.6	458	895	518	907
25 to 34	2,434	2,323	-4.6	1,169	1,101	1,265	1,222
35 to 44	1,961	2,658	35.5	938	1,319	1,023	1,339
45 to 54	1,246	2,135	71.3	596	1,052	650	1,083
55 to 64	551	1,439	161.2	268	695	283	744
65 Years and Over	530	1,023	93.0	208	435	322	588
TOTAL	10,296	15,346	49.0	4,902	7,517	5,394	7,829

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; Nielsen Claritas

Members of age groups 25 and older are becoming more educated by obtaining better degrees than their predecessors did. Concerning the dip in this particular age group, degreed individuals will go where the quality jobs and affordable housing are located.

TABLE 9				
Comparative Educational Attainment Persons 25 Years and Older				
Education Level	2000 Total	Percent	2010 Total	Percent
Less than 9th grade	71	1.1	95	1.0
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	261	4.0	280	2.9
High school graduate	1,218	18.5	1,749	18.3
Some college, no degree	1,666	25.3	2,326	24.3
Associate degree	391	5.9	768	8.0
Bachelor's degree	2,322	35.3	3,288	34.3
Graduate or professional degree	650	9.9	1,072	11.2
Total	6,579	100	9,578	100

Sources: US Bureau of the Census; Nielsen Claritas

Economic Development: Helena has continued to grow due to its close proximity to the major employment hub of Birmingham. In the past, raw materials such as coal, not people, moved north out of Helena to the factories, but now residents are commuting north to workplaces at corporations and universities. As a proud “bedroom community” of Birmingham, Helena has received recent quality of life national praise. In 2009, Money Magazine ranked Helena 90th in its “Best Places to Live: Top 100” bettering its 91st rank by the magazine in 2007. Helena had garnered the magazine’s “#1 Place to Live in Alabama” for 2007. Money Magazine’s criteria focused on the best combination of economic opportunity, good schools, safe streets, things to do, and a real sense of community. Business Week recognized Helena as the 13th “Best Place to Raise Your Kids” in 2007 based on school test scores, crime rates, cost of living, recreational/cultural activities, and the number of schools. Both magazines have since restricted their rankings to cities of at least 50,000 residents.



Business Week #13 Best Place to Raise Your Kids



Money Magazine #1 Place to Live in Alabama

The median family income increased 24.1% between 2000 and 2010 from \$62,908 to \$78,056. Although not all of the population figures were pleasant, the household income numbers are encouraging. Households with incomes of \$100,000 to \$149,999 grew over 290%, while households with incomes of at least \$200,000 swelled 697%. All households with incomes of at least \$50,000 experienced double digit percent changes. However, the two low end income

groups which experienced negative percent changes might seem to be good news on the surface, but the distinct possibility exists that members of these groups dropped to lower groups. Each income group below a group, which had a negative percent change, expanded over 60%. *This data should be check and adjusted at the next census to see what, if any, long term impact the economic downturn has had on the wealth of Helena’s citizens.*

TABLE 10 HOUSEHOLD INCOME											
Income	2000	% Chg.	2010	% Chg.	2011	% Chg.	2012	% Chg.	2013	% Chg.	2014
Less than \$15,000	127	66.1	211	32.2	311	-31.8	212	19.4	263	-25.9	195
\$15,000 to \$24,999	253	-2.0	248	-22.2	193	21.9	247	-14.6	211	2.3	216
\$25,000 to \$34,999	232	63.8	380	5.2	401	-30.9	277	-1.1	274	17.0	330
\$35,000 to \$49,999	670	-2.8	651	-25.7	484	21.8	619	9.0	680	2.6	698
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,139	11.9	1,275	-2.7	1,241	-14.3	1,063	-0.1	1,062	-11.0	945
\$75,000 to \$99,999	852	43.0	1,218	2.6	1,251	11.0	1,406	-9.7	1,270	6.0	1,351
\$100,000 to \$149,999	328	290.5	1,281	0.3	1,284	7.0	1,382	6.9	1,485	5.1	1,564
\$150,000 to \$199,999	117	163.2	308	-14.9	262	14.4	306	5.3	323	13.2	372
\$200,000 or more	32	696.9	255	0.0	255	-0.8	253	-7.9	233	-33.0	154
Total Households	3,750		5,827	-2.5	5,682	1.4	5,765	0.6	5801	0.4	5,825

Sources: US Bureau of the Census, American Fact Finder

Although the city prides itself on being a small quaint community, it is still home to its own major corporations and has its own share of large employers. MSpark, Inc. (formerly MailSouth, Inc.), Vulcan Engineering Company, ABC Polymer Industries, Dudley C. Jackson Inc., and Metro Goals Inc. are all headquartered in Helena. Shelby County Economic Development Authority shows MSpark, Inc. as one of the top manufacturing employer within Shelby County with 200 employees at two county locations including Helena, and they estimate the total employees at Vulcan Engineering Company and Vulcan Materials, both located in Helena, to be approximately 160. With the location of Helena Elementary School, Helena Intermediate School, Helena Middle School and Helena High School within the city limits, Shelby County Schools is one of Helena’s largest employers with 323 employees working within the city limits. The City of Helena is a large employer as well with over 61 full time employees. Other major industries with operations within Helena are Vulcan Materials Company which operates the Helena Quarry and Plantation Pipe Line Company which operates the tank farm at the intersection of Highway 52 and CR 95.



MSpark, Inc. Corporate Offices on Highway 52 East

Helena has over one hundred fifty nonagricultural and non-home based establishments within the Private Goods Producing Industries and the Private Service Providing Industries. As in all populated areas, the primary type of industry found within the city limits with nearly one hundred thirty places of business is the Private Service Providing Industry, which is composed of Trade, Transportation, and Utilities; Information; Financial Activities; Professional and Business Services; Educational and Health Services; and Leisure and Hospitality sections.



Helena Industrial Park Entrance off Highway 52 East

Ranging from department stores to personal care stores to food stores to warehouses, the Trade, Transportation, and Utilities section boasts around sixty five places of business. With thirty-three establishments, the Leisure and Hospitality section is comprised of restaurants; and arts, entertainment, and recreational facilities. With roughly nineteen entities, the Financial Activities section encompasses banks, insurance companies, and real estate firms. The Educational and Health Services section is comprised of fourteen institutions, and the Professional and Business Services section has ten companies. With around twenty three facilities, the Private Goods Producing Industry consists of the Natural Resources and Mining; Construction; and Manufacturing sections. In addition to the abovementioned establishments found within commercial and industrial areas, Helena has nearly one hundred home based businesses.

The nation experienced a recession from December 2007 through June 2009, but the effects of the longest recession since World War II are still being felt nationwide, especially in the Helena area. For a city which experienced tremendous growth during the first part of the decade, the recession hit Helena hard as housing starts waned to a trickle. Foreclosures and existing home sales proliferated adding more to the supply of houses than what the public demanded.

Since reaching a low of 17 in 2011, building permits for new residential construction have risen steadily to 181 at the end of 2014, and with 138 permits issued as of August of 2015 were well on their way to meeting or exceeding that level again. Just as slow housing starts are an indicator of a declining economy, rising housing starts are an indicator of an improving economy and Helena appears on its way to establishing a new level of economic wellbeing during the next decade.

Opportunities to continue improving Helena's economy are present in a variety of areas. As Helena's population ages, the City should work to attract businesses that cater to its senior residents. A variety of senior housing options such as assisted living facilities and independent senior living would allow Helena residents opportunities to find appropriate living arrangements, as they age, without requiring that they move to another community. Quality single family dwellings and condominiums at varying price points would attract a variety new residents to the City, including young professionals in medical, legal and service industries.

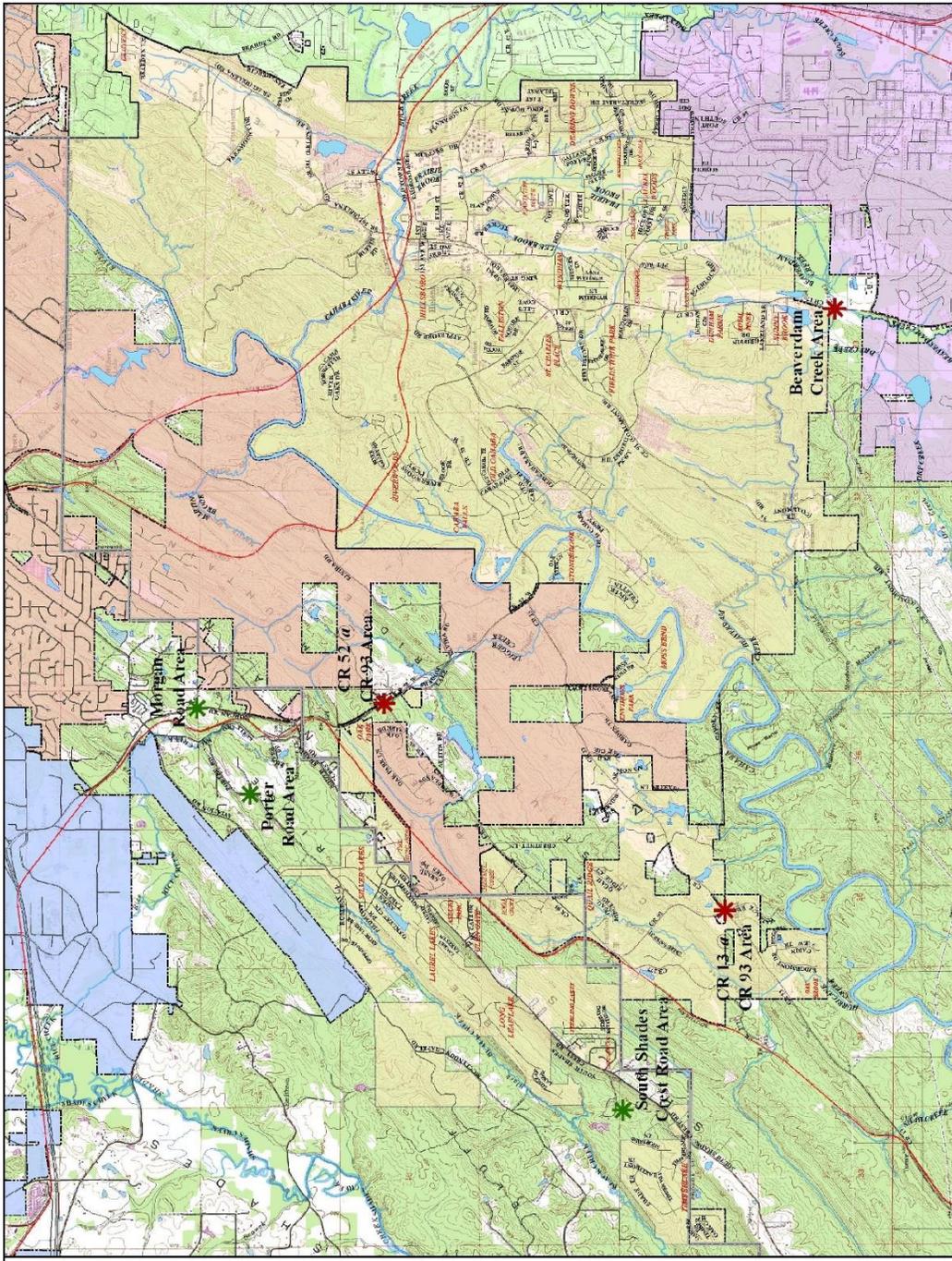
Adding a medical office park within the city limits would give residents a centralized location to visit doctors and dentists

Opportunities abound on the west side of the Cahaba River where shopping options are limited for residents along CR 13, CR 93, and South Shades Crest Road.



Helena Market Place/Walmart Shopping Center – Highway 17

The unincorporated areas along Highway 52 West/Morgan Road between the river and Bessemer Airport should be prime targets of annexation to provide land for potential commercial development. Because of this areas proximity to I-459 annexation action also has the potential to provide opportunities for light industrial development such as distribution industries that need direct access to the interstate and potentially to the new intermodal rail facility in McCalla. Annexing of land completely surrounded by Helena such as along CR 13 and of land within unincorporated gaps along South Shades Crest Road should be objectives as city services such as police and fire pass through these areas daily.



POTENTIAL ANNEXATION AREAS

LEGEND

- Potential Annexation Areas
- Shelby County
- Jefferson County
- Helena
- Alabaster
- Hoover
- Pelham
- Bessemer

1 Inch = 3,750 Feet

0 1,250 2,500 3,750 Feet

NORTH

FISCAL

The fiscal conditions which exist within any municipality are extremely important in that adequate revenue is needed to cover both annual expenses for operations and long term savings for future capital expenditures. When municipalities experience tremendous growth as occurred within Helena during the 1990's and the first half of the 2000's, the main sources of revenue, ad valorem and sales taxes, increased and stayed robust as houses are constructed and residents purchase local goods. Under these conditions, expenses are easily met and capital projects can be undertaken. However, when a recession occurs, as one did at the end of the last decade, revenues decline as construction and sales take major hits. Revenues from ad valorem taxes ultimately take a hit since they are done in arrears and properties might be revalued less than what they were prior to the recession due to lack of sales and an increase in foreclosures. In order to cover expenses with less revenue, cities are forced to put off capital projects and trim budgets.

The fiscal health of Helena can be examined by looking at its fiscal year departmental budgets over the past four years to examine annual expenditures and annual revenues. Only the Fire Department showed an annual increase in expenditure from FY2010 through FY2013; and with the exception of Administration, Police, and Sanitation, all departments had expenditures greater in Fiscal Year 2013 than in Fiscal Year 2010. However it should also be noted that during FY2012 all departments experienced increased expenditures, many of them significant; but in most cases that increase was offset by decreases in FY 2013 and the overall total expenses for 2013 were down by nearly five (5) percent.

As Helena grows, either rapidly as in the past or slowly as during the post-recession years, expenditures will need to be increased in order to maintain, and improve, the standard of living desired by Helena residents. Personnel costs, including salaries, benefits, and training, are a major component in each department's expenditure outlay. In particular, qualified, continually-trained firefighters and police officers comprise large segments of their respective department's expenses. In order to maintain the high quality public safety services Helena's citizen enjoy, such expenses will continue to increase as our City grows. Annexations into Jefferson County have stretched the coverage areas of all departments whose services include daily vehicle use, including but not limited to, the Police Department, Fire Department, Sanitation, and Streets.

**TABLE 11
HELENA ANNUAL EXPENDITURES**

	FY 2010	% Chg.	FY 2011	% Chg.	FY 2012	% Chg.	FY 2013¹	% Chg.	FY 2014
Administration	1,424,701	(1.8)	1,399,752	4.8	1,470,589	(28.7)	1,049,554	14.1	1,222,514
Fire Dept.	1,327,088	4.4	1,388,736	1.5	1,409,753	12.4	1,690,555	(7.0)	1,572,707
Inspections	146,082	13.3	168,573	6.8	180,832	(9.6)	163,398	12.2	186,113
Library	197,266	(4.8)	187,682	7.5	202,916	(.5)	201,832	14.6	236,268
Parks & Rec.	306,380	(3.6)	295,435	7.7	320,126	9.5	353,894	26.9	483,992
Police Dept.	1,965,845	(2.7)	1,912,266	8.0	2,078,529	(7.8)	1,917,166	13.8	2,223,592
Sanitation	476,436	(4.8)	453,357	7.9	492,374	(3.4)	475,841	²	²
Streets	266,976	(7.3)	247,380	7.6	267,840	0.8	269,998	11.8	845,781
TOTAL	\$6,110,773	(0.9)	\$6,053,180	5.6	\$6,422,960	(4.7)	\$6,781,392		\$6,770,968

Source: City of Helena

¹Does not include 1 Cent Use Tax

² Streets & Sanitation were combined in FY2014: Percent Change from FY13-FY14 represents the Combined FY13 Expenditures as compared to FY14 Expenditures

When the economy and growth are strong, problems with revenue sources are almost non-existent, but in a recession the reverse is true. This showed to be the case in Helena during 2010 and 2011. Up until that time, during the period 2006-2009, revenue sources such as ad valorem and motor vehicle taxes, franchise fees, and garbage fees showed yearly increases. In 2010 ad valorem taxes began to decrease somewhat and continued to do so through 2012, However, in 2012 they began to rebound but had not reached 2009 levels by the end of FY 2014. As was indicated in the previous Comprehensive Plan, Sales and Use Taxes showed yearly decreases from FY2006 through 2010, but like ad valorem taxes they began to improve in 2012 and as of the end of FY 2014 they had grown to exceed the 2006 revenues by thirty-eight (38) percent. Building permit revenue dropped 72 percent from 2006 to 2010, but in 2011 began growing steadily and by the end of FY 2014 were only 5.4 percent less than they had been in 2006.

**TABLE 12
HELENA ANNUAL SOURCES OF REVENUE**

	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY2014
ABC	\$67,848	\$68,373	\$79,099	\$91,498	\$86,920
Ad Valorem Taxes	\$889,266	\$883,852	\$858,578	\$876,817	\$877,890
Boat Transfers	\$1,565	\$3,670	\$3,602	\$3,952	\$6,878
Building Permits	\$59,586	\$43,994	\$82,336	\$157,662	\$198,370
Concessions					
Copies/Accident/I&O Reports	\$6,412	\$5,789	\$6,534	\$7,651	\$7,032
Federal Grants (Police)	\$39,384	\$28,936	\$33,421	\$51,336	\$97,370
Federal Grants (Fire)	\$35,784	\$246,610	\$441,059	\$78,440	
Fines	\$460,665	\$486,455	\$468,221	\$489,095	\$551,826
Franchise Fees	\$689,527	\$704,335	\$965,713*	\$770,570	\$867,469
Garbage Fees	\$846,373	\$867,813	\$873,249	\$887,080	\$394,834*
Gasoline Taxes	\$150,642	\$140,425	\$136,861	\$139,773	\$149,820
Interest Income	\$3,712	\$948	\$1,828	\$1,092	\$745
Miscellaneous Income	\$83,210	\$100,908	\$114,070	\$143,464	\$388,755*
Motor Vehicle Taxes	\$47,377	\$47,528	\$49,021	\$42,859	\$53,832
Newsletter Ads	\$87,853	\$83,803	\$78,545*	\$8,640	
Privilege Licenses	\$411,801	\$411,692	\$436,986	\$445,975	\$485,696
Rental Taxes	\$48,463	\$48,518	\$47,066	\$56,329	\$59,085
Sales/Use Taxes	\$1,831,041	\$1,929,106	\$2,506,916*	\$2,835,969	\$3,508,264
Tobacco Taxes	\$25,408	\$24,925	\$27,857	\$30,279	\$28,902
Yard/Garage Sales	\$2,190	\$2,296	\$2,142	\$2,089	\$2,287
TOTAL	\$5,788,107	\$6,129,976	\$7,213,104	\$7,120,570	\$7,765,975

**The decrease in garbage collection revenue is as a result of the City contracting with a private entity for household pick-up services. There are still revenues shown for the City provided yard debris pick-up; additionally the City collects a franchise fee from the private service provider.*

Source: City of Helena



Chadwick Subdivision in Shelby County

Pertaining to municipalities, the total general sales tax rates for Helena are different based on which county the tax is administered. In 2011, Helena increased its city sales tax by one percent (1%) and many of her neighboring cities followed suite shortly thereafter. Of the cities examined by the following table, in 2015 within Shelby County Helena's total general sales tax rate, at nine percent (9%), is equal to Alabaster, Birmingham, Calera, Montevallo and Pelham. Columbiana and Hoover are currently 1% lower at eight percent (8%). Further, in Jefferson County, the total rate in Helena is ten percent (10%), as are those of Bessemer and Birmingham, with Hoover again lower at nine percent (9%). Although the State rate of four percent is the same in both counties, the county rates differ (Shelby 1% and Jefferson 2%) and both Hoover and Columbiana have city rates of three percent (3%). The difference in county rates could entice Jefferson County residents within the Highway 52 West/Morgan Road corridor to shop on the Shelby County side depending on size of purchase and travel costs. It is, however, much more likely that the variety of choices in surrounding communities is what will entice Helena residents to shop outside the City limits. Additionally, as has always been the case, most of Helena's residents work outside the City limits and the potential will continue to exist for them to shop within these neighboring municipalities on their way back home.

The primary issue for Helena in attracting more tax revenue is not that of sales tax rates. It is rather an issue of attracting a more diverse assortment of businesses to the City and recruiting more businesses and industry that pay a living wage to encourage more citizens to both live and work in Helena.

TABLE 13
2015 GENERAL SALES TAX RATES
SELECT CITIES BY COUNTY

SHELBY COUNTY				
MUNICIPALITY	CITY RATE	COUNTY RATE	STATE RATE	TOTAL RATE
Alabaster	4.00%	1.00%	4.00%	9.00%
Birmingham	4.00%	1.00%	4.00%	9.00%
Calera	4.00%	1.00%	4.00%	9.00%
Columbiana	3.00%	1.00%	4.00%	8.00%
HELENA	4.00%	1.00%	4.00%	9.00%
Hoover	3.00%	1.00%	4.00%	8.00%
Montevallo	4.00%	1.00%	4.00%	9.00%
Pelham	4.00%	1.00%	4.00%	9.00%
JEFFERSON COUNTY				
Bessemer	4.00%	2.00%	4.00%	10.00%
Birmingham	4.00%	2.00%	4.00%	10.00%
HELENA	4.00%	2.00%	4.00%	10.00%
Hoover	3.00%	2.00%	4.00%	9.00%

Source: Alabama Department of Revenue



Crow's Corner/Publix Shopping Center – Highway 17

As the following Table shows, total millage rates vary significantly among the municipalities surrounding and including Helena within both counties. In Shelby County, the state rate of 6.5 and the county rate of 7.5 are the same for all municipalities, and the school rate of 30 is the same for all municipalities except Birmingham, Hoover and Vestavia Hills.

For every \$100 of assessed value, Helena property owners within Shelby County pay \$4.90 in total tax, not figuring in homestead or other exemptions. Helena collects \$0.50 in tax for every \$100 of assessed value. As an example, a single family owner-occupied townhouse with a market value of \$100,000 would have an assessed value of \$10,000 since such residences have a Class III assessment rate of ten percent. On this particular property, the owner would be paying a total tax of \$490 with \$50 of that going to Helena. Shelby County Schools would get \$300, the

State would receive \$65, and Shelby County would collect \$75. If such dwelling was within Alabaster, the city would obtain \$100, and if said dwelling was within Pelham, the city would be given \$140.

TABLE 14						
2014 MUNICIPALITY MILLAGE RATES						
<i>SELECT CITIES BY COUNTY</i>						
SHELBY COUNTY						
MUNICIPALITY	CITY RATE	COUNTY RATE	SCHOOL RATE	STATE RATE	TOTAL RATE	PER \$100
Alabaster	10.0	7.5	30.0	6.5	54.0	5.40
Birmingham	36.2	7.5	16.0	6.5	66.2	6.62
Calera	10.0	7.5	30.0	6.5	54.0	5.40
Columbiana	10.0	7.5	30.0	6.5	54.0	5.40
HELENA	5.0	7.5	30.0	6.5	49.0	4.90
Hoover	30.5	7.5	22.0	6.5	66.5	6.65
Montevallo	7.0	7.5	30.0	6.5	51.0	5.10
Pelham	14.0	7.5	30.0	6.5	58.0	5.80
JEFFERSON COUNTY						
Bessemer	35.1	13.5	13.6	6.5	68.7	6.87
Birmingham	28.5	13.5	24.1	6.5	72.6	7.26
HELENA	5.0	13.5	30.1	6.5	55.1	5.51
Hoover	30.5	13.5	22.1	6.5	72.6	7.26

Source: Alabama Department of Revenue

Within Jefferson County, Helena’s total rate is twenty-sixth among all municipalities. The state rate of 6.5 remains the same, but the county rate is 13.5 for all municipalities. All municipalities without city school systems have the same school rate of 30.1 – the second highest in Jefferson County, although those with city schools contribute a portion of their city rate to the city schools. Helena’s city rate is 5, but its neighbors Hoover and Bessemer with city schools have city rates of 30.5 and 35.1, respectively. Hueytown on the other side of Bessemer with a population similar to Helena has a city rate of 10.

Overall, Helena’s millage rates fall below the mean rate of all municipalities in both Shelby and Jefferson Counties. In the future the City of Helena may need to explore an increase in this rate – even a small increase could provide a significant revenue boost for the City.

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