

Please see proof of AL Intel newsletter below!

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From: Audrey Hodges <ahodges@edpa.org>
Date: Wednesday, April 30, 2025 at 11:37 AM
To: Audrey Hodges <ahodges@edpa.org>
Subject: HTML Proof - AL Intel Insider | Strategic Growth, Industry Trends & What's Next for Alabama



The Alabama Business Intelligence Center (AL Intel) delivers quarterly insights on industry trends, economic development, and sector opportunities through an Alabama-focused lens. We highlight key research findings, growth initiatives, and economic priorities shaping the state's business landscape.

Want to engage with us? Reach out to Lauren Hyde, Executive Director at lhyde@edpa.org

Unlocking Your Community's Potential with Data: A Guide to Identifying Local Industry Strengths

Alabama's economy is growing, and every community contributes to that success. But how can local economic developers uncover their competitive edge and make strategic decisions?

The answer lies in data—and the Alabama New and Expanding Industry Dashboard is here to help.

The Alabama New & Expanding Industry dashboards powered by the New and Expanding Industry Report, published by the Alabama Department of Commerce.

Discovering Your Community's Strengths

The Alabama New & Expanding Industry Dashboard makes it easy to:

- Track your community's industries performance over time
Identify top-performing sectors by jobs and capital
Compare local trends to statewide priorities and align with the CatAllyst Plan
Filter by year, industry, county, and NAICS codes
Isolate project types (e.g., FDI, rural)

Navigating the CatAllyst Industry Spotlight Dashboard Page

One of the most powerful tools in the dashboard is the CatAllyst Industry Spotlight, which provides an overview of Alabama's performance across industries over time through interactive graphs and data tables.

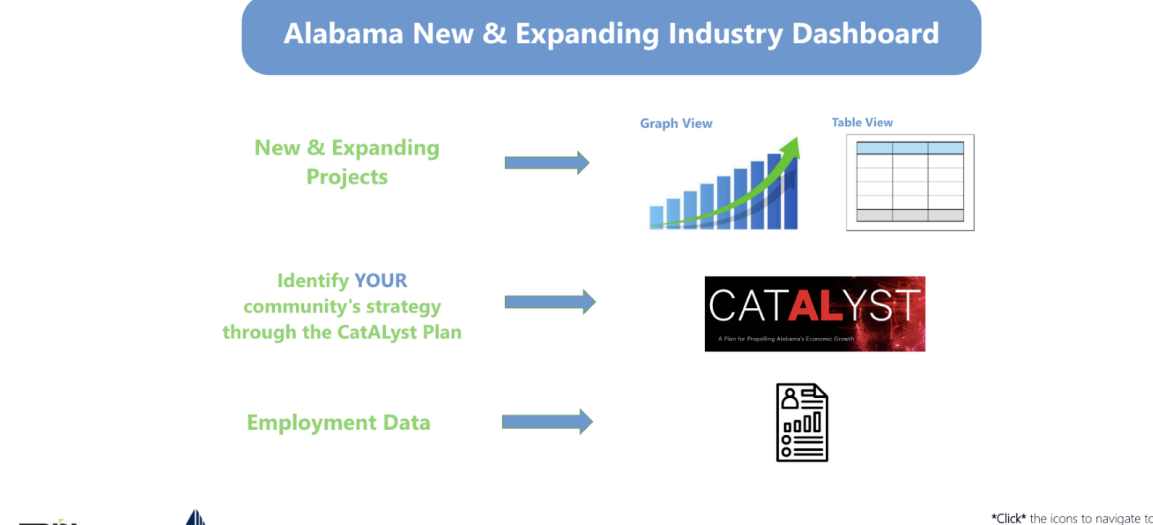
Features:

- Adjust year range: 2000-2023
Select: New vs. Expanding projects
Filter: County, FDI, and rural
Explore: CapEx, job creation, project count
View: Top-performing industries



Beyond the Industry Spotlight, the dashboard also includes:

- Graph View & Table View Pages - Providing different perspectives on new and expanding projects.
Alabama Workforce Data Page - Offering insights into employment base, labor force participation rate (LFPR), and unemployment rate to inform workforce development strategies.



Turning Insights into Action

The CatAllyst Plan highlights four focus sectors:

- Mobility (Automotive, Aerospace, and Logistics)
Defense (Cybersecurity, Aerospace, & Armored Vehicles)
Forestry & Wood Products (High-Value Manufacturing; CLT & Engineered Wood)
Bioscience (Biotech, Pharma, & Medical Devices)

Every community is unique. The dashboard helps uncover your economic identity and supports custom growth strategies through tools like Location Quotient (LQ) analysis.

Access the Dashboard: HERE
Download the CatAllyst Plan: HERE



Finding Your Fit: Aligning Local Workforce Data with the CatAllyst Plan

The CatAllyst Plan prioritizes:

- Agriculture & Food
Bioscience
Chemical Manufacturing
Defense
Forestry & Wood Products
Metal & Advanced Materials
Mobility
Technology

You might wonder: Where does my community fit into these statewide targets? Which industries are the best targets for my community? One way to answer those questions is by using freely available workforce data to help guide your target industry decisions.

Key Terms:

NAICS Codes

Used to classify industries by 2-6 digits. Example:

- NAICS 31 - Manufacturing
NAICS 311111 - Dog and Cat Food Manufacturing
Note: NAICS codes are self-reported, and companies may have more than one.

Location Quotient (LQ)

LQ measures a region's employment concentration in a specific industry compared to the national average.

- LQ = 1 - Same concentration as the U.S. average
LQ < 1 - Lower concentration than the U.S. (less specialized)
LQ > 1 - Higher concentration than the U.S. (more specialized)
LQ ≥ 1.5 - Strong comparative advantage

A higher LQ suggests that your community has a more specialized workforce in that industry—meaning a better chance of supporting and attracting new projects in that sector.

How to Find & Interpret Your LQ Data

The CatAllyst Plan provides NAICS codes linked to each of the target industry groups. You can use these to look up your county's employment specialization using the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) website.

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) QCEW Steps:

- Select option #12
Choose year/quarter & county
Click "Get Table"
Review wages and LQ values by NAICS
You'll receive a table showing wages and LQ values by NAICS code.

Interpretation Tips:

- LQ < 1 - Your community likely lacks a competitive edge in that industry
LQ 1-1.4 - You may have average or slight specialization—potentially worth targeting
LQ ≥ 1.5 - Strong advantage—likely a strong candidate for targeting

Need help? If you're unsure how to use the BLS tool or interpret your LQ data, we're here to help. Reach out to the EDPA team or, for rural communities, Carter Thomas with RuRAL for one-on-one support.

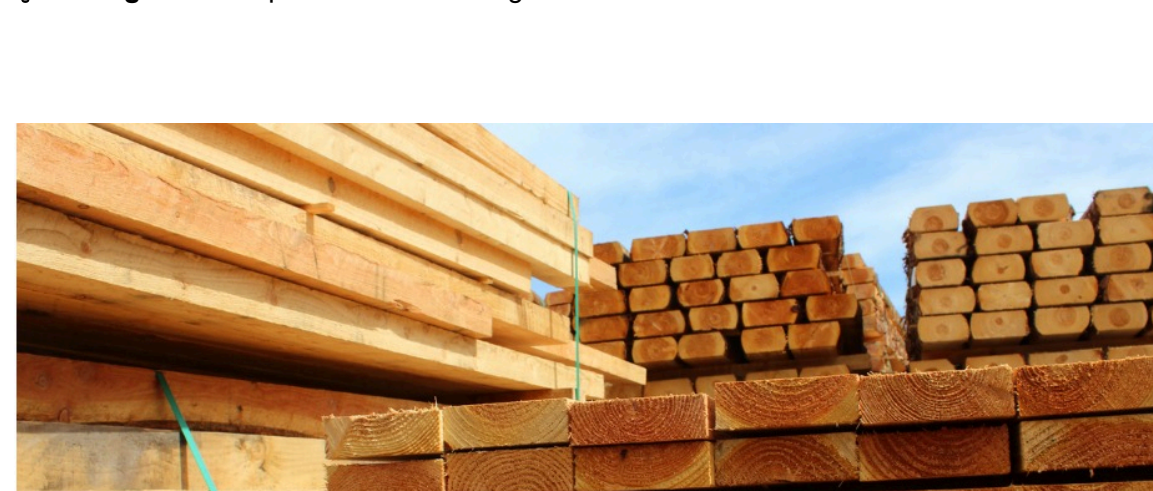
Industrial Directory: Introducing the AdvantageAlabama Supplier Database

A new tool is underway to identify suppliers quickly and accurately for RFIs/RFPs.

Search features include:

- Geographic (radius, drive time, polygon)
Wildcard (job/material specialization)
NAICS code
Automotive & Aerospace grouping

Coming Soon: Expansion to bordering-state counties



Earnings Calls Recap

Coverage from 55 public companies in Alabama reveals:

- Chemicals & Wood Products: Cost-cutting boosts earnings (Evonik, LP, Canfor)
Metals & Materials: Resilient in high-tariff environments (U.S. Steel, Nucor)

Next quarter focus: Tariff impact across sectors
See the full quarterly earnings calls report -> Click HERE



Drone Services Available

EDPA now offers drone footage for communities:

- Capture full buildings/site layout
Showcase ingress/egress, roof condition
Create short site videos with overlays

Need a drone shoot? Contact EDPA to schedule.

SEEDS Program Update

The Site Evaluation and Economic Development Strategy (SEEDS) program has awarded over \$53.5 million to fast-track industry-ready site development in Alabama.

Round 2 Results:

- 29 total projects
9 Development, 20 Assessment grants
14 from rural counties

Assessment Recipients include: Shoals EDA, City of Brewton, Greene County IDA, Morgan County EDA, City of Troy, and more.

Development Recipients include: OIDA, City of Auburn, Talladega Co. EDA, Mobile Airport Authority, and others.

SEEDS: Next Steps & Timeline

- Land/assessment apps: Complete within 6 months
Other development apps: 2-year deadline

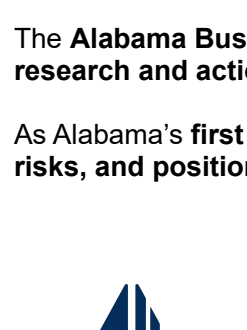
Next Round:

- \$20M funding request this session
Consultations: May-June 2025
Applications Open: July 1
Close: Sept 30
Judging: October
Site Visits: November

For more information, please contact Greg Blalock at gblalock@edpa.org.

About AL Intel

The Alabama Business Intelligence Center (AL Intel) provides statewide economic research and actionable insights to power business growth and investment. As Alabama's first centralized research hub, we work to identify opportunities, mitigate risks, and position the state for long-term economic success.



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