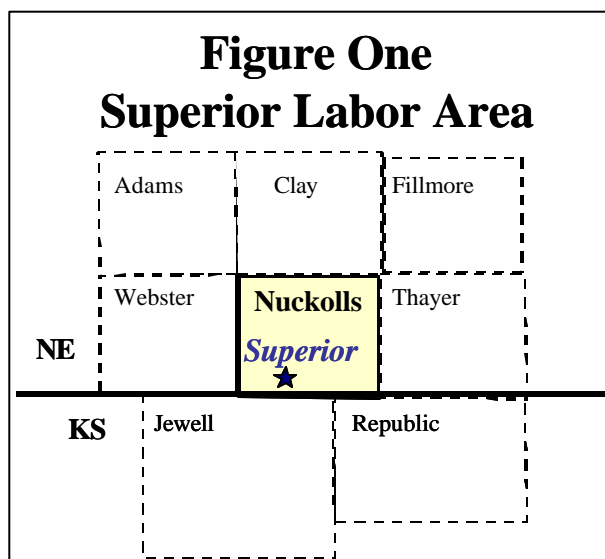


Labor Supply Factors and Labor Availability for the Superior (Nuckolls County) Labor Area



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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 Superior and Nuckolls County.

Some of the pertinent findings of the report include:

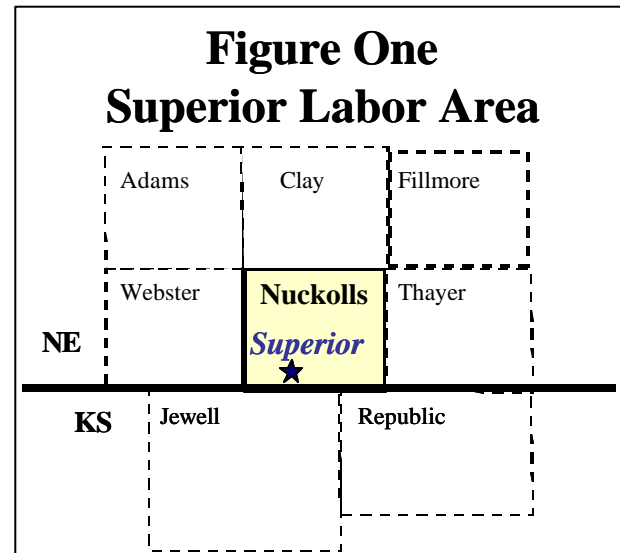
- Population in the Superior Labor Area (Nuckolls County plus the seven contiguous counties) totaled 68,416 people in 2001, and that population has declined substantially over the past several decades due to a lack of employment opportunities.
- The labor force in the Superior Labor Area totaled 35,010 persons in 2001, with 29,133 persons employed in non-farm wage and salary jobs.
- The number of people who lived in Nuckolls County and were employed totaled 2,294 in 2001; yet, there were only 1,738 persons employed (in non-farm wage and salary jobs) within Nuckolls County, indicating that a significant number of Nuckolls County residents were commuting out of the county for employment.
- Average wages in Nuckolls County were substantially less than both the surrounding area and Nebraska as a whole. For the year 2000, average annual wages in Nuckolls County (for all non-farm wage and salary employees employed within the county) were \$17,019, which was \$4,740, or 21.8 percent less than the average for the Superior Labor Area as a whole (eight-county area), and \$10,662, or 38.5 percent less than average wages for Nebraska as a whole.

The basic conclusion of this report, which follows from the data and analysis presented, indicates that Nuckolls County and the Superior Labor Area 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 Superior, 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 qualified applicants.

Labor Supply Factors and Labor Availability for the Superior (Nuckolls County) Labor Area

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

With a review of the data presented in this report, it will become evident that the Superior Labor Area has an adequate 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 include tables on labor force, employment, population characteristics and trends, as well as migration and commuting patterns for Nuckolls County and for the surrounding counties that make up the Superior Labor Area. Figure One shows a map outlining the geographic area defined as the Superior Labor Area. This area includes Nuckolls, Adams, Clay, Fillmore, Thayer, and Webster Counties in Nebraska and Jewell, and Republic Counties in Kansas.



An important resource for new or expanding businesses is a readily available supply of workers. Whether an employer requires 10 to 100 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 assist in identifying and quantifying the number and selected characteristics of workers available in the Superior 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 when they are optimistic about the outlook for 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 not 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. Despite the fact that many of the people not currently in the labor force are not now actively seeking employment, many of these individuals would take a job 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 not job opportunities available locally are the most likely to leave (migrate out) the area for employment opportunities elsewhere.

Labor Force and Employment

Table 1 provides data showing labor force and employment trends for the Superior Labor Area and for Nuckolls County for selected years from 1993 to 2001. These data indicate that non-farm employment in Nuckolls County grew by 27.5 percent between 1993 and 2001. The data in Table 1 (Parts A and B) provide alternate measures of employment for two distinct areas. The data presented in Part A of Table One include labor force, unemployment, employment, and non-farm wage and salary employment data for the entire Superior Labor Area (see Figure 1). As these data indicate, both the total labor force and total employment for the laborshed area as a whole have increased, with the area labor force growing by 21.5 percent between 1993 and 2001 and total employment growing by 20.6 percent during the same period. Non-farm wage and salary employment in the Superior laborshed area increased from 26,792 in 1993 to 29,133 in 2001, an increase of 27.5 percent. In the case of the labor force data (labor force, unemployment and employment), the respective measures are based on the county of residence of the individuals. The non-farm wage and salary employment are measured based on the county of employment of the worker, irrespective of their place of residence.

The labor force and employment measures presented for Nuckolls County (Part B) indicate that the total labor force in the county declined by 4.7 percent between 1993 and 2001, with total employment (of people residing in Nuckolls County) declining by 4.9 percent during this period.

It is also of interest to note that unemployment in Nuckolls County has remained relatively stable during this period, recording an unemployment rate of only 2.3 percent in 2001.

Table One
Labor Force and Employment, Superior Labor Area
Selected Years, 1993-2001

Part A
Labor Force and Employment
Superior Labor Area(a)

| (Place of Resid.) | 1993 | 1995 | 1997 | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | % Chg. 1993-01 |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Labor Force (b) | 34,936 | 35,663 | 34,666 | 34,604 | 34,679 | 34,317 | 35,010 | 21.5 |
| Unemp. (##) | 657 | 671 | 718 | 767 | 756 | 785 | 865 | 61.9 |
| Unemp. Rate | 1.9 | 1.9 | 2.1 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.5 | (N/A) |
| Employment | 34,279 | 34,992 | 33,948 | 33,837 | 33,923 | 33,532 | 34,145 | 20.6 |
| (Place of Work) | | | | | | | | |
| Nonfarm Emp. (c) | 26,792 | 27,677 | 28,256 | 28,172 | 28,854 | 28,837 | 29,133 | 27.5 |

Part B
Labor Force and Employment
Nuckolls County

| (Place of Resid.) | 1993 | 1995 | 1997 | 1998 | 1,999 | 2000 | 2001 | % Chg. 1993-01 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Labor Force (b) | 2,463 | 2,458 | 2,309 | 2,255 | 2,245 | 2,272 | 2,348 | -4.7 |
| Unemp. (##) | 50 | 65 | 44 | 52 | 49 | 56 | 54 | 8.0 |
| Unemp. Rate | 2.0 | 2.6 | 1.9 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 2.5 | 2.3 | (N/A) |
| Employment | 2,413 | 2,393 | 2,265 | 2,203 | 2,196 | 2,216 | 2,294 | -4.9 |
| (Place of Work) | | | | | | | | |
| Nonfarm Emp (c) | 1,708 | 1,673 | 1,678 | 1,636 | 1,645 | 1,684 | 1,738 | 1.8 |
| Manufacturing | 113 | 36 | 21 | 22 | 26 | 28 | 28 | -75.2 |
| Contr. & Mining | 28 | 48 | 31 | 30 | 31 | 34 | 36 | 28.6 |
| Trns., Comm. & Util | 55 | 56 | 54 | 49 | 52 | 54 | 57 | 3.6 |
| Wh. & Ret. Trade | 567 | 586 | 560 | 556 | 562 | 566 | 567 | 0.0 |
| Retail | 369 | 355 | 361 | 351 | 360 | 363 | 361 | -2.2 |
| Wholesale | 198 | 232 | 200 | 206 | 202 | 203 | 205 | 3.5 |
| Fin., Ins. & Real Est. | 82 | 93 | 87 | 85 | 83 | 75 | 74 | -9.8 |
| Services | 440 | 439 | 496 | 479 | 474 | 485 | 519 | 18.0 |
| Government | 422 | 415 | 428 | 415 | 417 | 442 | 458 | 8.5 |
| Federal | 36 | 39 | 35 | 35 | 35 | 33 | 31 | -13.9 |
| State | 11 | 11 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 10 | -9.1 |
| Local | 375 | 365 | 381 | 369 | 372 | 399 | 417 | 11.2 |

(a) The Superior labor area includes Nuckolls County and the contiguous counties (Adams, Clay, Fillmore, Thayer and Webster Counties in Nebraska, and Jewell and Republic Counties in Kansas).

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

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

Note: Total Nonfarm wage & salary employment estimated for Jewell Co. & Republic Co. KS for 2001.

Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, (<ftp.dol.state.ne.us/lmi/lfwf/>) and Kansas Labor Market Information (<http://laborstats.hr.state.ks.us/lfe/lfe.htm>).

As previously noted, the second employment measure presented for Nuckolls County, non-farm wage and salary employment, is based on the county where the person is employed irrespective of their county of residence. Using this measure, non-farm wage and salary employment in Nuckolls County increased by 1.8 percent between 1993 and 2001. The data presented in Table One show that the fastest growing employment sector in Nuckolls County during the 1993-2001 review period was the construction and mining sector (+28.6 percent). The other employment sector experiencing significant growth in employment between 1993 and 2001 was the services sector (+18.0 percent). Nuckolls County economic sectors with declines in employment during the 1993-2001 review period included manufacturing with a decline of 75.2 percent, from 113 employees in 1993 to 28 employees in 2001. Other sectors with employment declines included the Federal (-13.9 percent) and State government (-9.1 percent), sectors, as well as finance, insurance and real estate (-9.8 percent) and the retail trade sector (-2.2 percent).

Further review of the employment data reported for the Superior Labor Area (Part A of Table One) and for Nuckolls County (Part B of Table One) indicates there were significant differences between the non-farm wage and salary employment reported in the areas and the total employment of persons living in the respective areas. In the case of the Superior Labor Area, non-farm wage and salary employment was reported to be 29,133 in 2001, which was almost 6,000 less than the reported total employment of persons living within the eight-county Superior labor area. Recalling that non-farm wage and salary employment is based on the county of employment while the total employment data is based on the county of residence helps explain how this can occur. It would seem that a significant number of people living within the eight-county Superior labor area commute to other areas for employment.

Included in Table Two are additional employment data for 2001, showing the significant deviations between total employment and non-farm wage and salary employment for each county in the Superior Labor Area. In Nuckolls County, for example, the total employment of county residents (2,294) is 556 greater than non-farm wage and salary employment within the county (1,738). Although a further review of the data presented in Table Two might suggest that this difference would be accounted for by business and farm operators (proprietors), it also indicates that there are a significant number of persons living in Nuckolls County who commute out of the county for employment.

The farm employment for Nuckolls County presented in Table Two indicates that 577 people were employed in agriculture in 2000, the last year that agricultural employment data were available. However, it is important to note that, for Nebraska as a whole, approximately 60 percent of farm operators also have a full-time job off the farm and 75 percent work off the farm, either in full or part-time employment.

Table Two
Labor Force, Employment and Non-Farm Wage and Salary Employment,
Superior Labor Area, 2001

| | Labor Force (2001) ^(a) | Total Employment (2001) ^(a) | Non-Farm Wage & Salary Employment (2001) ^(b) | Total Employment Minus NF W&S Employment | Agricultural Employment (2000) ^(c) |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Nuckolls County | 2,348 | 2,294 | 1,738 | 556 | 577 |
| Adams County | 16,022 | 15,605 | 15,675 | -70 | 722 |
| Clay County | 3,535 | 3,445 | 2,826 | 619 | 690 |
| Fillmore County | 3,251 | 3,169 | 2,364 | 805 | 853 |
| Thayer County | 3,403 | 3,319 | 2,474 | 845 | 721 |
| Webster County | 1,794 | 1,751 | 1,081 | 670 | 507 |
| Jewell County, KS ^(d) | 1,927 | 1,896 | 900 | 996 | 672 |
| Republic County, KS ^(d) | 2,976 | 2,920 | 2,250 | 670 | 866 |
| Superior Labor Area | 35,256 | 34,399 | 29,308 | 5,091 | 5,608 |

^(a) The labor force and employment data is measured based on the county of residence.

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

^(c) The agricultural employment data is for 2000.

^(d) Labor force and employment data for Jewell and Republic Counties are for the year 2000.

Sources: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, (<ftp://dol.state.ne.us/lmi/lfwf/>) and

Kansas Labor Market Information (<http://laborstats.hr.state.ks.us/lfe/lfe.htm>).

Farm Employment Data - U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Accounts Data WEB Site (bea.doc.gov/bea/regional/data.htm).

A further review of the data presented in Table Two indicates that, with the exception of Adams County, all of the counties in the Superior Labor Area are most likely having a significant number of residents commute out of the county for employment. In the case of Adams County, the non-farm employment (place of work) is 70 greater than the number of Adams County residents who are employed, indicating that people from the surrounding counties are commuting into Adams County for employment. These data suggest that the creation of additional jobs within Nuckolls County would provide opportunities for local residents to work in the area of their residence, instead of commuting out of the area for employment.

The number of non-farm wage and salary workers in the Superior Labor Area is shown by major industry sector and by county in Table Three. The reader is reminded that non-farm 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 employed within the Superior Labor Area, by county and major industry category.

Table Three
Non-Farm Wage and Salary Employment, by Industry Sector
Superior Labor Area, by County, 2001

| County | Contr./ | | | | | | | Total NF W. & S. Emp |
|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Manufact. | Mining | TCU | Trade | FIRE | Services | Govt. | |
| Nuckolls County | 28 | 36 | 57 | 567 | 74 | 519 | 458 | 1,739 |
| Adams County | 3,183 | 769 | 505 | 3,867 | 447 | 4,433 | 2,471 | 15,675 |
| Clay County | 553 | 169 | 208 | 607 | 78 | 330 | 882 | 2,827 |
| Fillmore County | 134 | 284 | 152 | 552 | 154 | 291 | 797 | 2,364 |
| Thayer County | 639 | 75 | 56 | 549 | 146 | 325 | 685 | 2,475 |
| Webster County | 17 | 51 | 48 | 380 | 48 | 224 | 314 | 1,082 |
| Jewell County, KS ^{*(a)} | 10 | 10 | 33 | 216 | 60 | 49 | 477 | 855 |
| Republic County, KS ^(a) | 308 | 112 | 67 | 521 | 106 | 399 | 653 | 2,166 |
| Total Labor Area | 4,872 | 1,506 | 1,126 | 7,259 | 1,113 | 6,570 | 6,737 | 29,183 |
| Nebraska | 117,762 | 45,018 | 57,409 | 216,166 | 61,043 | 258,795 | 156,681 | 912,873 |

Percent of Total NonFarm Wage & Salary Employment

| | Contr./ | | | | | | | Total NF W. & S. Emp |
|------------------|------------------|---------------|------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Manufact. | Mining | TCU | Trade | FIRE | Services | Govt. | |
| Nuckolls County | 1.6 | 2.1 | 3.3 | 32.6 | 4.3 | 29.8 | 26.3 | 100.0 |
| Total Labor Area | 16.7 | 5.2 | 3.9 | 24.9 | 3.8 | 22.5 | 23.1 | 100.0 |
| Nebraska | 12.9 | 4.9 | 6.3 | 23.7 | 6.7 | 28.3 | 17.2 | 100.0 |

*Employment for manufacturing estimated for Jewell County Kansas.

^(a)Employment data for Jewell and Republic Counties (KS) are for the year 2000.

Sources: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, (<ftp.dol.state.ne.us/lmi/lfwf/>) and Kansas Labor Market Information (<http://laborstats.hr.state.ks.us/lfe/lfe.htm>).

In addition to displaying the number of workers by major industry sector, Table Three compares the percentage distribution of workers by industry in Nuckolls County and the Superior Labor Area with the distribution for the State of Nebraska. As these data show, the distributions for both Nuckolls County and the Superior Labor Area differ significantly from that for Nebraska as a whole. The most significant deviations from the Nebraska industry distribution occur in the manufacturing sector. Only 1.6 percent of the non-farm employment in Nuckolls County is in the manufacturing sector while for the state as a whole the percentage of workers involved in manufacturing was 12.9 percent. For the Superior Labor Area as a whole, 16.7 percent of non-farm employment were engaged in manufacturing, with much of the manufacturing employment occurring in Adams County.

Table Four provides data showing labor cost comparisons by county and industry for the Superior Labor Area. Obviously, labor cost is an important factor in any analysis of the labor availability in an area. Pay data for workers covered by unemployment insurance laws in Nebraska and Kansas is the source of the labor cost information. Employers report their covered workers and payroll each quarter by place of work. Average annual pay is calculated by dividing the total payroll for wage and salary workers for the year by the number of employees.

Table Four
Average Annual Pay and Average Weekly Wages of Wage and Salary Workers,
for All Industries, Superior Labor Area, by County, 2000

| County | Average Annual Employment | Average Weekly Wages | Average Annual Wages |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Nuckolls County | 1,664 | \$327 | \$17,019 |
| Adams County | 15,551 | \$452 | \$23,493 |
| Clay County | 2,868 | \$455 | \$23,657 |
| Fillmore County | 2,355 | \$392 | \$20,399 |
| Thayer County | 2,490 | \$379 | \$19,687 |
| Webster County | 1,088 | \$359 | \$18,668 |
| Jewell County, KS | 890 | \$318 | \$16,556 |
| Republic County, KS | 2,248 | \$349 | \$18,126 |
| Superior Labor Area | 29,154 | \$418 | \$21,759 |
| Nebraska | 883,517 | \$532 | \$27,681 |

Sources: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, (<ftp://dol.state.ne.us/lmi/lfwf/>) and Kansas Labor Market Information (<http://laborstats.hr.state.ks.us/lfe/lfe.htm>).

A review of the data in Table 4 indicates that average annual salaries in Nuckolls County (for all wage and salary employees for all industries) are lower than for any of the surrounding counties, except for Jewell County in Kansas. For example, average annual wages for all industry sectors in Nuckolls County (\$17,019) were \$4,740, or 21.8 percent less than the average for the Superior Labor Area as a whole (\$21,759), and \$10,661.86, or 38.5 percent less than the Nebraska average of \$27,681. For the Superior Labor Area as a whole, the average annual wages (\$21,759) were \$5,922, or 21.4 percent less than the Nebraska average. These data suggest, of course, that there would be a positive labor supply response to the creation of additional employment opportunities in Nuckolls County.

Commuting Patterns

Table Five provides data showing commuting patterns for workers in the Superior Labor Area. The most recent data available reporting the number of people commuting out of their county of residence is from the 1990 Census of Population. As the data in Table Five (A) indicate, a significant number (and percentage) of workers in the area were commuting outside of their county of residence for employment. In the case of Nuckolls County, 372, or 15.5 percent of the employed workers, commuted to other counties for employment. For three of the other counties in the Superior Labor Area, the percentage of commuters was even higher. In Clay County, 27.5 percent of employed workers commuted out of the county, while for Webster County the percentage was 24.5 percent and for Jewell County, Kansas 19.0 percent of workers commuted out of the county.

Table Five (A)
Commuting Data for Workers in the Superior Labor Area

Part A
Commuting Outside County

| County | Worked Outside | |
|------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| | County | Percent |
| Nuckolls County | 372 | 15.5 |
| Adams County | 1,158 | 8.2 |
| Clay County | 848 | 27.5 |
| Fillmore County | 457 | 14.6 |
| Thayer County | 421 | 14.1 |
| Webster County | 418 | 24.5 |
| Jewell County, KS | 366 | 19.0 |
| Republic County, KS | 397 | 13.4 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *1990 Census of Population and Housing*.

Table Five (B) provides further data illustrating the willingness of workers in the area to travel for employment. As these data indicate, a significant share of the Superior Labor Area workforce is willing to spend time commuting substantial distances for employment. In 1990, for example, 19.2 percent of Nuckolls county residents employed outside of their home, traveled 20 or more minutes commuting to their place of employment.

Table Five (B)
Travel Time Data for Workers in the Superior Labor Area

Part B
Travel Times for Workers, 1990-2000

| County | Workers 16 Years or Older, Working Away From Home, 1990 | | | | | Working Away from Home, 2000 | | | |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------|
| | Less Than 10 Minutes | 10 - 19 Minutes | 20 - 29 Minutes | 30 - 44 Minutes | 45 + Minutes | Average Total Time | Average Total Time | | |
| | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (%) | (Number) (Minutes) | (Number) (Minutes) | | |
| Nuckolls County | 56.2 | 24.7 | 9.4 | 6.3 | 3.5 | 2,210 | 11.4 | 2,178 | 16.8 |
| Adams County | 37.5 | 45.1 | 8.1 | 6.0 | 3.3 | 13,644 | 12.9 | 15,265 | 15.5 |
| Clay County | 44.7 | 21.7 | 16.6 | 13.7 | 3.3 | 2,742 | 14.4 | 3,068 | 19.9 |
| Fillmore County | 51.8 | 28.0 | 7.8 | 7.4 | 5.0 | 2,685 | 12.5 | 2,865 | 15.7 |
| Thayer County | 53.2 | 24.4 | 11.6 | 7.1 | 3.8 | 2,578 | 12.4 | 2,607 | 14.4 |
| Webster County | 54.4 | 16.3 | 9.0 | 9.0 | 11.3 | 1,560 | 15.0 | 1,617 | 20.7 |
| Jewell County, KS | 53.3 | 22.7 | 8.9 | 9.6 | 5.6 | 1,635 | 13.0 | 1,608 | 16.8 |
| Republic County, KS | 47.4 | 28.7 | 12.2 | 8.9 | 2.8 | 2,651 | 12.7 | 2,469 | 16.3 |
| Superior Labor Area | 44.8 | 33.9 | 9.7 | 7.5 | 4.0 | 29,705 | 12.9 | 29,499 | 16.3 |
| Nebraska | 29.2 | 38.8 | 17.5 | 9.8 | 4.7 | 730,851 | 15.8 | 832,681 | 18.0 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1990, 2000*.

Perhaps the data presented in Table Five (B) that is of more interest is the data showing the change in time spent traveling to work for 1990 and 2000. As these data indicate, the average time spent traveling to work for the Superior Labor Area as a whole was 12.9 minutes in 1990

and 16.3 minutes in 2000. This represents an increase in the average travel time of 28.6 percent between 1990 and 2000. The data showing average travel time to work for Nuckolls County residents exhibits an even greater increase in average travel time between 1990 and 2000. Average travel time for Nuckolls County residents working away from home increased 46.8 percent, from 11.4 minutes in 1990 to 16.8 minutes in 2000. These data affirm the previous assertions that greater numbers and a growing share of workers in Nuckolls County are finding it necessary to travel away from their place of residence for employment.

Population Trends

The data provided in Table Six show population trends for Superior Labor Area, by county, and for Nebraska for the 1950-2001 period. As these data indicate, the Nuckolls County population decreased by 47.4 percent between 1950 and 2000 and by an additional 1.4 percent between 2000 and 1999. With the exception of Adams County, all of the counties in the labor area experienced population decline during the review period. For the Superior Labor Area as a whole, population declined by 27.4 percent from 1950 to 2000 and by an additional 1.7 percent between 2000 and 2001.

Table Six
Population in the Superior Labor Area, by County, and Nebraska
Selected Years, 1950 - 2001

| COUNTY | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 2001 | % Chg. 1950-00 | % Chg. 2000-01 |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Nuckolls County | 9,609 | 8,217 | 7,404 | 6,726 | 5,786 | 5,057 | 4,987 | -47.4 | -1.4 |
| Adams County | 28,855 | 28,944 | 30,553 | 30,656 | 29,625 | 31,151 | 30,917 | 8.0 | -0.8 |
| Clay County | 8,700 | 8,717 | 8,266 | 8,106 | 7,123 | 7,039 | 6,926 | -19.1 | -1.6 |
| Fillmore County | 9,610 | 9,425 | 8,137 | 7,920 | 7,103 | 6,634 | 6,470 | -31.0 | -2.5 |
| Thayer County | 10,563 | 9,118 | 7,779 | 7,582 | 6,635 | 6,055 | 5,864 | -42.7 | -3.2 |
| Webster County | 7,395 | 6,224 | 5,396 | 4,858 | 4,279 | 4,061 | 4,015 | -45.1 | -1.1 |
| Jewell County, KS | 9,698 | 7,217 | 6,099 | 5,441 | 4,390 | 3,791 | 3,591 | -60.9 | -5.3 |
| Republic County, KS | 11,478 | 9,768 | 8,498 | 7,569 | 6,852 | 5,835 | 5,646 | -49.2 | -3.2 |
| Superior Labor Area | 95,908 | 87,630 | 82,132 | 78,858 | 71,793 | 69,623 | 68,416 | -27.4 | -1.7 |
| Nebraska | 1,325,510 | 1,411,330 | 1,485,333 | 1,569,825 | 1,578,417 | 1,711,263 | 1,713,235 | 29.1 | 0.1 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1950-2000* and Annual Population Estimates, July 1, 2001.

Table Seven presents data showing the age distribution of the population for the Superior Labor Area. 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 Superior Labor Area. In 2000, there were 2,363 people in Nuckolls County between the ages of 25 and 65, which represented 46.8 percent of the total population. For the Superior Labor Area as a whole, there were 33,144 people between the ages of 25 and 65, accounting for 47.6 percent of the total study area population.

Table Seven
Age Characteristics of the Population, Superior Labor Area,
by County, and Nebraska, 2000

| COUNTY | 0 - 14 | | 15 - 24 | | 25 - 44 | | 45 - 64 | | 65 - Older | | Median Age |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Number | % (a) | Number | % (a) | Number | % (a) | Number | % (a) | Number | % (a) | |
| Nuckolls County | 911 | 18.0 | 547 | 10.8 | 1,140 | 22.5 | 1,227 | 24.3 | 1,232 | 24.4 | 44.1 |
| Adams County | 6,324 | 20.3 | 4,987 | 16.0 | 8,149 | 26.2 | 6,749 | 21.7 | 4,942 | 15.9 | 36.5 |
| Clay County | 1,515 | 21.5 | 819 | 11.6 | 1,779 | 25.3 | 1,659 | 23.6 | 1,267 | 18.0 | 39.9 |
| Fillmore County | 1,354 | 20.4 | 732 | 11.0 | 1,592 | 24.0 | 1,545 | 23.3 | 1,411 | 21.3 | 41.4 |
| Thayer County | 1,150 | 19.0 | 603 | 10.0 | 1,352 | 22.3 | 1,464 | 24.2 | 1,486 | 24.5 | 44.1 |
| Webster County | 781 | 19.2 | 362 | 8.9 | 931 | 22.9 | 1,000 | 24.6 | 987 | 24.3 | 44.2 |
| Jewell County, KS | 647 | 17.1 | 353 | 9.3 | 814 | 21.5 | 994 | 26.2 | 983 | 25.9 | 46.2 |
| Republic County, KS | 1,005 | 17.2 | 558 | 9.6 | 1,288 | 22.1 | 1,461 | 25.0 | 1,523 | 26.1 | 45.7 |
| Superior Labor Area | 13,687 | 19.7 | 8,961 | 12.9 | 17,045 | 24.5 | 16,099 | 23.1 | 13,831 | 19.9 | 40.3 |
| Nebraska | 369,427 | 21.6 | 255,240 | 14.9 | 487,107 | 28.5 | 367,294 | 21.5 | 232,195 | 13.6 | 35.3 |

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

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

Table Eight provides information showing population data, the natural increase (births minus deaths) in population and net migration for the 1990-2001 review period for Nuckolls County, for the other counties that make up the Superior Labor Area, and for Nebraska. As these data indicate, the Superior Labor Area as a whole experienced significant net out-migration during this period, recording net out-migration of 1,223 people during the 1990 Census decade, with additional net out-migration of 1,058 people from 2000 to 2001. For Nuckolls County, net out-migration (people moving into the county less people moving out) during the 1990 decade totaled 445, or 7.69 percent of the 1990 population, with net out-migration of 32 people from 2000 to 2001, which accounted for a population loss equal to 0.63 percent of the 2000 population.

Table Eight
Population, Births, Deaths and Migration, Superior Labor Area,
by County, and Nebraska, 1990-2001

| County | Population | | | 1990 - 2001 | | | Net Migration | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | 2001 | Births | Deaths | Nat. Incr. | 1990 - 2000 | | 2000 - 2001 | |
| | | | | | | | Number | % of 1990 | Number | % of 2000 |
| Nuckolls County | 5,786 | 5,057 | 4,987 | 548 | 913 | -365 | -445 | -7.69 | -32 | -0.63 |
| Adams County | 29,625 | 31,151 | 30,917 | 4,638 | 3,633 | 1,005 | 618 | 2.09 | -328 | -1.05 |
| Clay County | 7,123 | 7,039 | 6,926 | 974 | 972 | 3 | -70 | -0.98 | -107 | -1.52 |
| Fillmore County | 7,103 | 6,634 | 6,470 | 902 | 1,093 | -191 | -289 | -4.07 | -150 | -2.26 |
| Thayer County | 6,635 | 6,055 | 5,864 | 720 | 1,135 | -415 | -215 | -3.24 | -142 | -2.35 |
| Webster County | 4,279 | 4,061 | 4,015 | 487 | 836 | -349 | 89 | 2.08 | -20 | -0.49 |
| Jewell County, KS | 4,390 | 3,791 | 3,591 | 365 | 609 | -244 | -389 | -8.86 | -166 | -4.38 |
| Republic County, KS | 6,852 | 5,835 | 5,646 | 564 | 1,135 | -571 | -522 | -7.62 | -113 | -1.94 |
| Superior Labor Area | 71,793 | 69,623 | 68,416 | 9,197 | 10,324 | -1,127 | -1,223 | -1.70 | -1,058 | -1.52 |
| Nebraska | 1,578,417 | 1,711,263 | 1,713,235 | 265,756 | 170,464 | 95,292 | 48,267 | 3.06 | -9,342 | -0.55 |

Sources: Population (1990, 2000) - U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Census of Population, 1990, 2000*;
2001 - U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Estimates, July 1, 2001*.

Births, Deaths, Natural Increase - U.S. Bureau of the Census and the Nebraska Department of Health;
Migration - computed using population and vital statistics data.

Table Nine presents data showing net population migration for the 1990-2000 decade, by age group, for Nebraska and for the Nebraska counties that are in the Superior Labor Area. As these data indicate, net out-migration has been very severe in the younger age groups for the more rural counties of the study area. For example, net out-migration in the 15-24 year age group for Nuckolls County during the 1990s totaled 360, accounting for a population loss equal to 73.6 percent of the 1990 population in this age group

Table Nine
Population and Migration, by Age Group, Superior Labor Area,
(Nebraska Portion), by County, and Nebraska, 1990 - 2000

| Age Group | --- Population --- | | | Net Migration, 1990-2000 | |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------|----------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | % Change | Number | % of 1990 Population |
| Nebraska | | | | | |
| 0 - 14 | 363,390 | 369,427 | 1.66 | 15,750 | 4.33 |
| 15 - 24 | 221,509 | 255,240 | 15.23 | 13,009 | 5.87 |
| 25 - 44 | 486,020 | 487,107 | 0.22 | 12,644 | 2.60 |
| 45 - 64 | 284,398 | 367,294 | 29.15 | 6,387 | 2.25 |
| OVER 65 | 223,068 | 232,195 | 4.09 | 476 | 0.21 |
| Total | 1,578,385 | 1,711,263 | 8.42 | 48,267 | 3.06 |
| Nuckolls County | | | | | |
| 0 - 14 | 1,256 | 911 | -27.47 | 60 | 4.81 |
| 15 - 24 | 490 | 547 | 11.63 | -360 | -73.57 |
| 25 - 44 | 1,447 | 1,140 | -21.22 | -75 | -5.21 |
| 45 - 64 | 1,236 | 1,227 | -0.73 | 0 | 0.03 |
| OVER 65 | 1,357 | 1,232 | -9.21 | -70 | -5.15 |
| TOTAL | 5,786 | 5,057 | -12.60 | -445 | -7.69 |
| Adams County | | | | | |
| 0 - 14 | 6,273 | 6,324 | 0.81 | 107 | 1.70 |
| 15 - 24 | 4,254 | 4,987 | 17.23 | 859 | 20.18 |
| 25 - 44 | 8,795 | 8,149 | -7.35 | -656 | -7.46 |
| 45 - 64 | 5,355 | 6,749 | 26.03 | 124 | 2.32 |
| OVER 65 | 4,948 | 4,942 | -0.12 | 185 | 3.74 |
| TOTAL | 29,625 | 31,151 | 5.15 | 618 | 2.09 |
| Clay County | | | | | |
| 0 - 14 | 1,605 | 1,515 | -5.61 | 187 | 11.66 |
| 15 - 24 | 752 | 819 | 8.91 | -306 | -40.67 |
| 25 - 44 | 1,917 | 1,779 | -7.20 | 70 | 3.67 |
| 45 - 64 | 1,454 | 1,659 | 14.10 | 38 | 2.61 |
| OVER 65 | 1,395 | 1,267 | -9.18 | -60 | -4.28 |
| TOTAL | 7,123 | 7,039 | -1.18 | -70 | -0.98 |
| Fillmore County | | | | | |
| 0 - 14 | 1,539 | 1,354 | -12.02 | 82 | 5.32 |
| 15 - 24 | 739 | 732 | -0.95 | -313 | -42.39 |
| 25 - 44 | 1,874 | 1,592 | -15.05 | -62 | -3.31 |
| 45 - 64 | 1,407 | 1,545 | 9.81 | -3 | -0.20 |
| OVER 65 | 1,544 | 1,411 | -8.61 | 7 | 0.46 |
| TOTAL | 7,103 | 6,634 | -6.60 | -289 | -4.07 |

Continued on following page.

Table Nine, Continued

| Age Group | --- Population --- | | | Net Migration, 1990-2000 | |
|---|----------------------|--------|----------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | % Change | Number | % of 1990 Population |
| | Thayer County | | | | |
| 0 - 14 | 1,355 | 1,150 | -15.13 | 119 | 8.78 |
| 15 - 24 | 628 | 603 | -3.98 | -364 | -57.95 |
| 25 - 44 | 1,589 | 1,352 | -14.92 | -36 | -2.25 |
| 45 - 64 | 1,335 | 1,464 | 9.66 | 71 | 5.34 |
| OVER 65 | 1,728 | 1,486 | -14.00 | -6 | -0.33 |
| TOTAL | 6,635 | 6,055 | -8.74 | -215 | -3.24 |
| Webster County | | | | | |
| 0 - 14 | 840 | 781 | -7.02 | 78 | 9.32 |
| 15 - 24 | 367 | 362 | -1.36 | -211 | -57.50 |
| 25 - 44 | 990 | 931 | -5.96 | 65 | 6.53 |
| 45 - 64 | 937 | 1,000 | 6.72 | 131 | 13.98 |
| OVER 65 | 1,145 | 987 | -13.80 | 26 | 2.28 |
| TOTAL | 4,279 | 4,061 | -5.09 | 89 | 2.08 |
| Superior Labor Area (Nebraska Portion) | | | | | |
| 0 - 14 | 12,868 | 12,035 | -6.47 | 633 | 4.92 |
| 15 - 24 | 7,230 | 8,050 | 11.34 | -696 | -9.63 |
| 25 - 44 | 16,612 | 14,943 | -10.05 | -694 | -4.18 |
| 45 - 64 | 11,724 | 13,644 | 16.38 | 362 | 3.09 |
| OVER 65 | 12,117 | 11,325 | -6.54 | 83 | 0.68 |
| TOTAL | 60,551 | 59,997 | -0.91 | -312 | -0.52 |

The net migration is calculated by subtracting the expected 2000 population (calculated by aging the 1990 population by 10 years) from the actual 2000 population, with adjustments made for the deaths for each age group (and births for the first two age groups). All of the figures can be obtained quite easily, except deaths by age group which must be estimated. Estimates of deaths by age group were derived by applying age-specific mortality rates obtained from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to each age cohort. The distribution of these estimates by age group was then used to distribute actual deaths by age group for each county.

Source: Calculated by Nebraska Public Power District from 1990 and 2000 Census of Population Data; Vital Statistics (Births and Deaths) from the Nebraska Department of Health; and, mortality tables from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics, *U.S. Decennial Life Tables for 1989-91*, Volume II, *State Life Tables Number 28, Nebraska* (April 1998).

For detailed data used in the calculations contact Donis N. Petersan, Nebraska Public Power District - (402) 563-5304 or E-Mail dnpeter@nppd.com.

Obviously the data presented in Tables Eight and Nine showing migration patterns for the Superior Labor Area suggest there is a significant need for job creation activities in the area to stem the out-migration, particularly among the younger population. Although one should recognize that we might expect to see some out-migration from rural areas even if there were increased job opportunities, it is clear that a significant amount of the net out-migration from the Superior Labor Area has occurred due to a lack of adequate employment opportunities. Based on the experience of selected non-metropolitan areas in Nebraska where significant job growth

has occurred, it is clear that population is attracted to such areas with a growing and vital economy and with the associated growth in employment opportunities.

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 Nuckolls County and the Superior Labor Area. The response to such employment opportunities would be significant, and it is anticipated that there would be an adequate labor supply response to a prospective new employer offering competitive wages and benefits in the Superior Labor Area. The labor force, employment, and demographic data presented in this report illustrate quite clearly that there the lack of employment opportunities in Nuckolls County and in the area making up the Superior Labor Area have resulted in substantial migration out of the area and in significant underemployment.

In conclusion, the data and analysis presented in this report indicate that the Superior Labor Area and, in particular, the immediate Superior area and Nuckolls 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 Superior, 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 qualified applicants.

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

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