



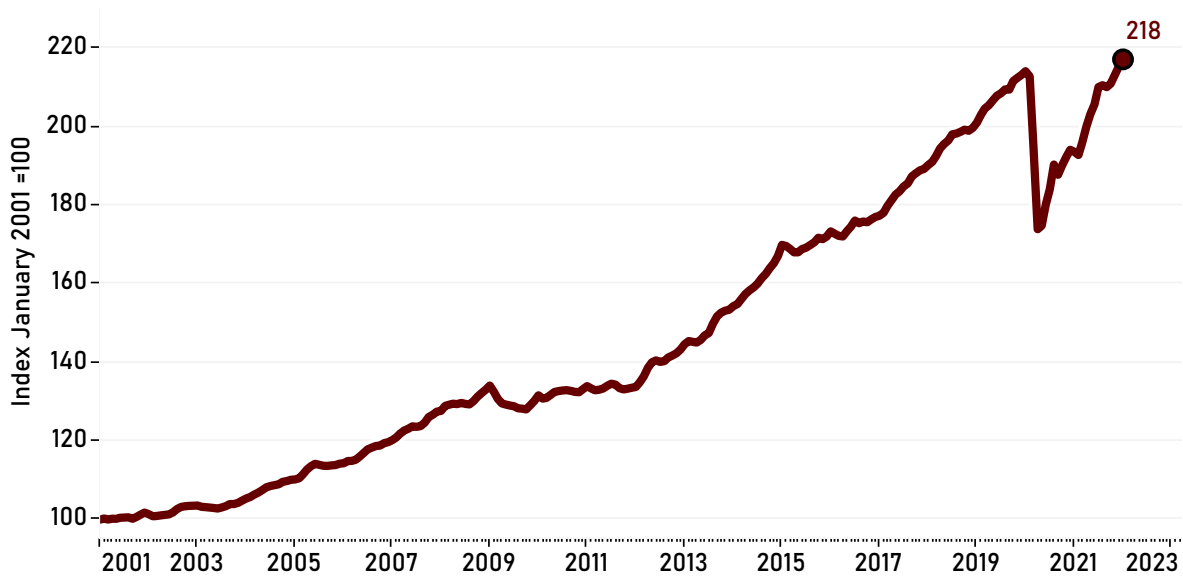
HIGHLIGHTS

- The Business-Cycle increased 0.3% from January 2022 to February 2022.
- The local unemployment rate for February remained the same as in January at 3.7%.
- Local nonfarm employment in February decreased slightly from January by 0.08%, and was 1.39% higher than its pre-pandemic high in February 2020.
- Local real taxable sales decreased 0.5% from January to February 2022, but this measure was 4.72% higher than the same month in 2020.
- Local employment in Leisure and Hospitality, previously estimated to be down by 20%, was substantially revised upwards, and is now estimated to be 97.7% of its pre-pandemic level.

THE COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN BUSINESS-CYCLE INDEX

The Business-Cycle Index rose to 218 in February 2022. The rise of 0.3% from January 2022 to February 2022 is seen in Figure 1. The increase resulted from the rise in real quarterly wages, despite no change in the unemployment rate and a decline in inflation-adjusted taxable sales accompanied by a slight decline in employment.

FIGURE 1. COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN BUSINESS-CYCLE INDEX

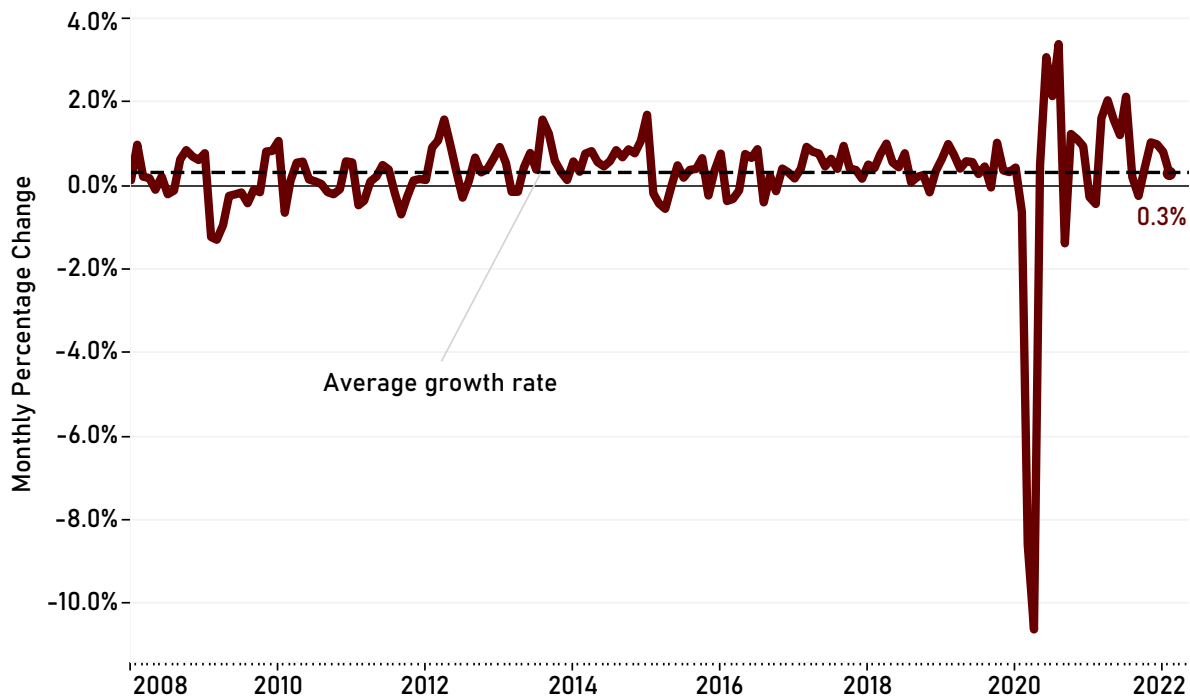


Last reported data point: February 2022 (monthly). Source: Private Enterprise Research Center.

THE COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN BUSINESS-CYCLE

A 0.3% increase in the CSB Business-Cycle from January 2022 to February 2022 is shown in Figure 2. The unemployment rate in February of 3.7% remained unchanged from January. Revised nonfarm employment decreased by 100 workers from 126,803 workers in January 2022 to 126,703 in February. The third monthly variable, inflation adjusted taxable sales, decreased 0.5% between January and February. Inflation-adjusted quarterly total wages for the third quarter of 2021, released last month, were up 0.7% from the second quarter of 2021. Rising inflation rates adversely affects the inflation-adjusted monthly taxable sales and quarterly total wage series and could slow the growth in the Business-Cycle Index if it persists.

FIGURE 2. COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN BUSINESS-CYCLE

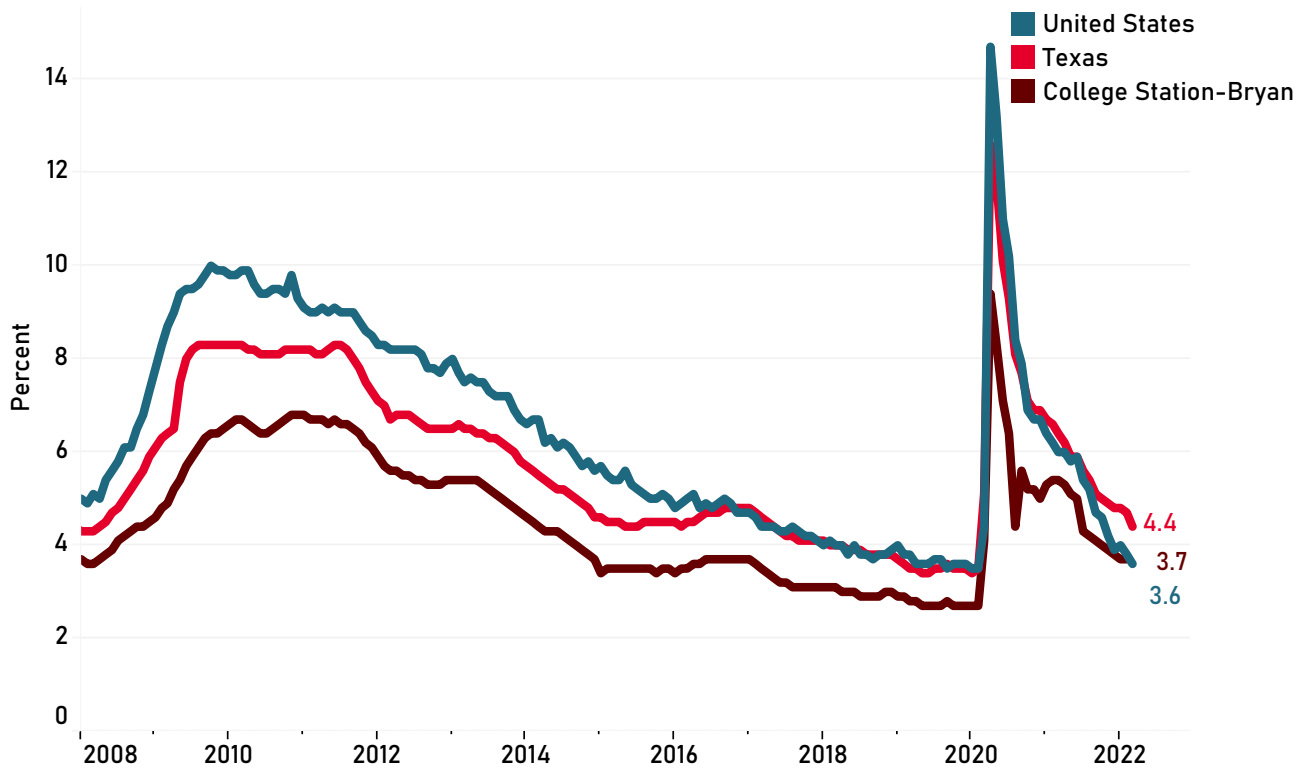


Month-to-month growth rates. Last reported data point: February 2022 (monthly). Source: Private Enterprise Research Center.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Figure 3 depicts the unemployment rates for the U.S. and Texas from January 2008 to March 2022 and through February 2022 for College Station-Bryan. As noted, the unemployment rate in College Station-Bryan remained at 3.7% in February. The March 2022 unemployment rate for Texas, released on April 15, fell to 4.4% from 4.7% in February. The national rate, also available up to March 2022, declined to 3.6% from 3.8% in February. The metropolitan area employment and unemployment rates for March will be released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on April 27.

FIGURE 3. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



Seasonally adjusted. Last reported data point: February 2022 for College Station-Bryan, March 2022 for the United States and Texas (monthly). Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

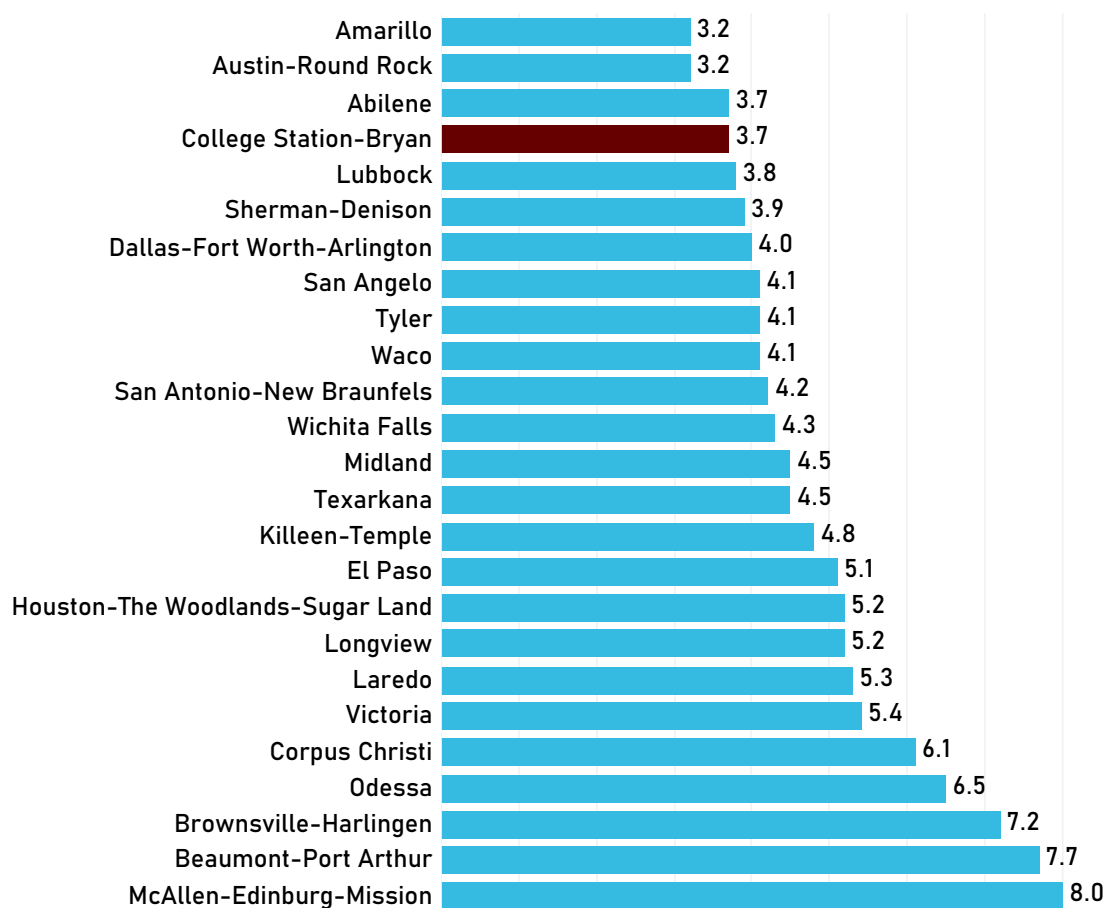
FOCUS ON THE COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN MSA

This month we present the unemployment rates in the Texas MSAs for February, analyze the recent revision of the local area's nonfarm employment series, and discuss local and national air travel.

TEXAS MSA UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

Figure 4 depicts all Texas MSA unemployment rates for February 2022. College Station-Bryan MSA's rate tied with Abilene at 3.7% in February and was the third lowest to both Amarillo and Austin-Round Rock at 3.2%. McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, Beaumont-Port Arthur, and Brownsville-Harlingen had the three highest February rates at 8.0%, 7.7%, and 7.2%, respectively. Austin-Round Rock had the lowest unemployment rate among the four largest MSAs, Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington's rate was 4.0%, San Antonio-New Braunfels recorded a rate of 4.2% and Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land again had the highest rate in this group at 5.2%.

FIGURE 4. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN TEXAS MSAs, FEBRUARY 2022



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, seasonally adjusted, February 2022.

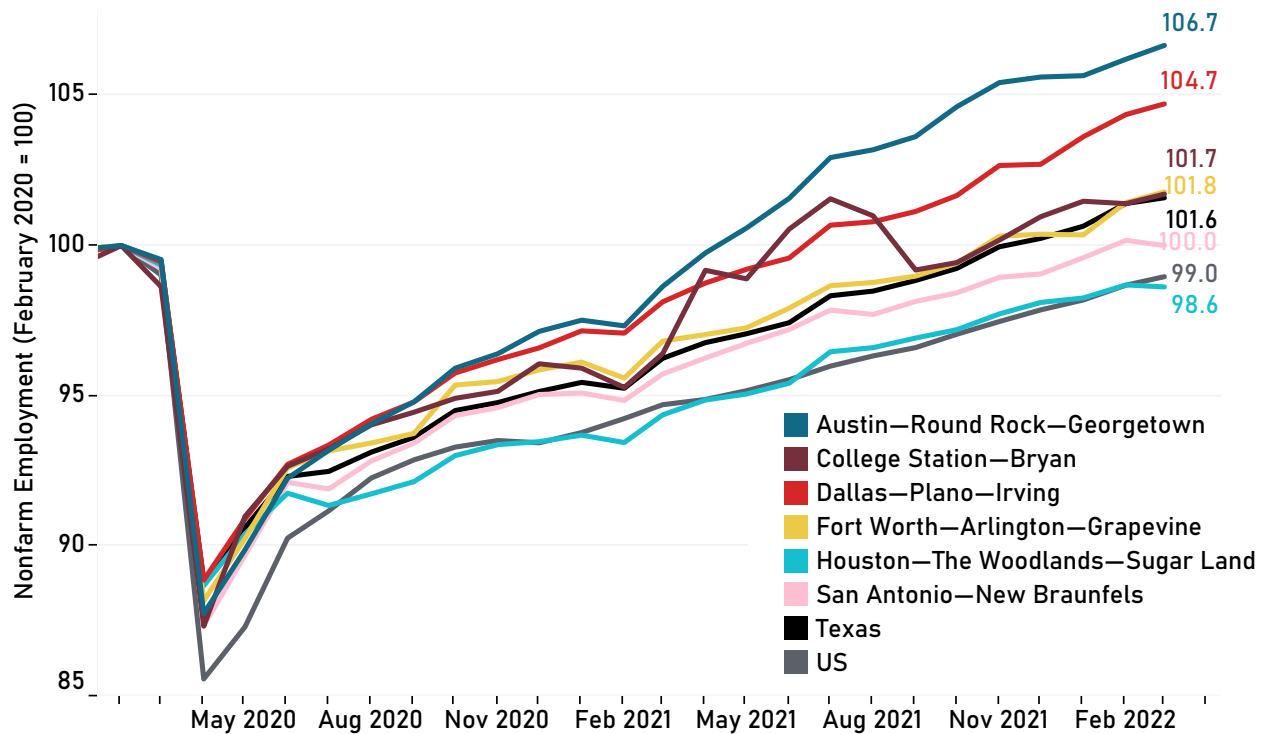
NONFARM EMPLOYMENT

As mentioned in last month’s issue of *Economic Indicators*, The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) made significant changes to the nonfarm employment series for states and metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) with their March data release. The next two figures illustrate how the rebound in local nonfarm employment compares to the rebound in other Texas MSAs and how the largest local industries have fared over the last two years, based on the new, revised data series. These data are available up to March of 2022.

Figure 5 illustrates how nonfarm employment levels in select Texas MSAs, the state, and the nation have changed relative to their respective pre-pandemic levels in February 2020. Austin-Round Rock saw the highest growth with March 2022 employment 6.7% higher than in February 2020. Employment in Dallas-Plano-Irving was 4.7% higher in March than in February 2020. In Fort Worth-Arlington-Grapevine, employment was 1.8% higher in March than it was pre-pandemic. Locally it was 1.7% higher, just slightly ahead of the statewide rebound of 1.6%. March’s employment in San Antonio-New Braunfels matched its February 2020 employment. Nationally, employment in March was 1% behind the pre-pandemic high and in Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, it was 1.4% lower.

As noted last month, the revised data resulted in dramatic increases in the estimates of the local area’s employment. Prior to the revision, the local area’s employment rebound was similar to the slower rebound in Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, but now it is equal to the state average.

FIGURE 5. INDEXED NONFARM EMPLOYMENT IN SELECT TEXAS MSAs

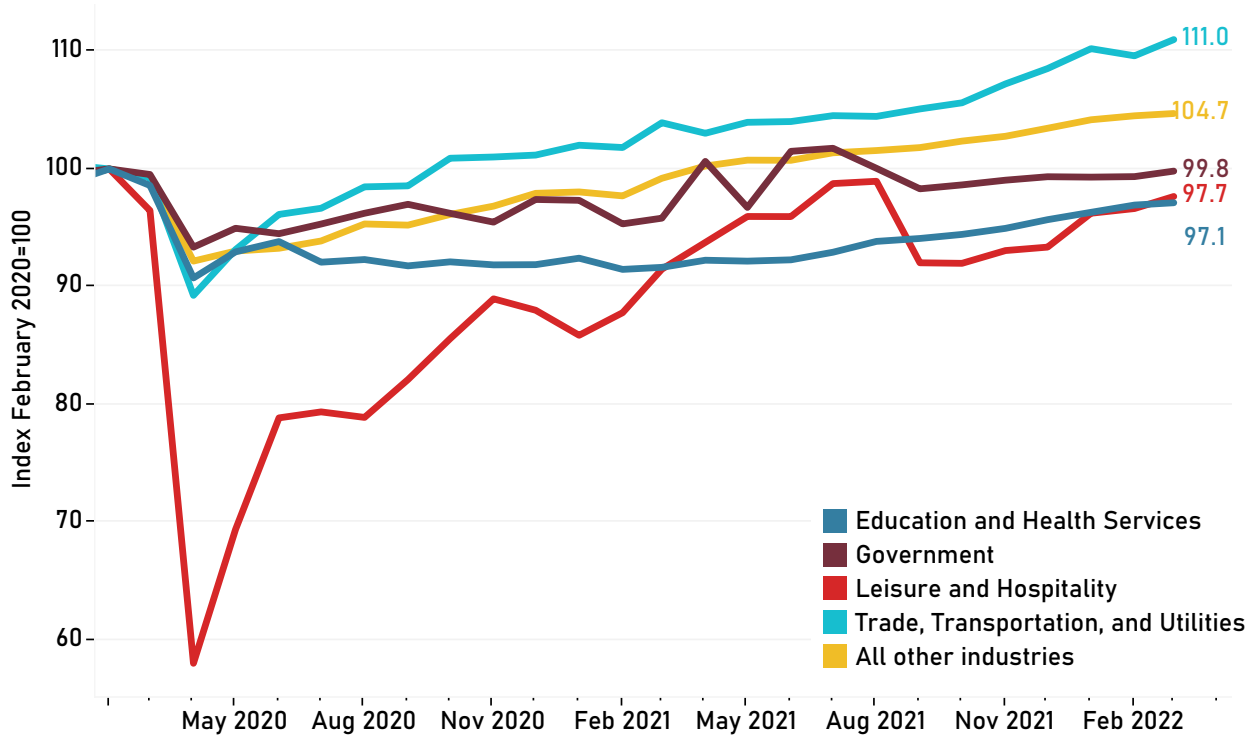


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, retrieved from the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

Figure 6 illustrates how employment levels in each of the local area’s four largest industries have changed relative to their pre-pandemic levels. The remaining industries are included in the ‘All other industries’ category. In March, employment in Trade, Transportation, and Utilities was 11% above its pre-pandemic level. March’s employment in All other industries was up 4.7% above employment in February 2020, while employment in (private) Education and Health Services was down 2.9% compared to pre-pandemic levels. Government employment in March (this category includes Texas A&M University) was about the same as its pre-pandemic level. Leisure and Hospitality employment was down 2.3% lower from its pre-pandemic level.

Prior to last month’s major revision in employment estimates for MSAs, local Leisure and Hospitality employment was estimated to be more than 20% lower than it had been in February of 2020. Much of the increase in the revised employment estimates for the local area is due to the substantial upward revision in the local area’s Leisure and Hospitality employment.

FIGURE 6. INDEXED EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN MSA

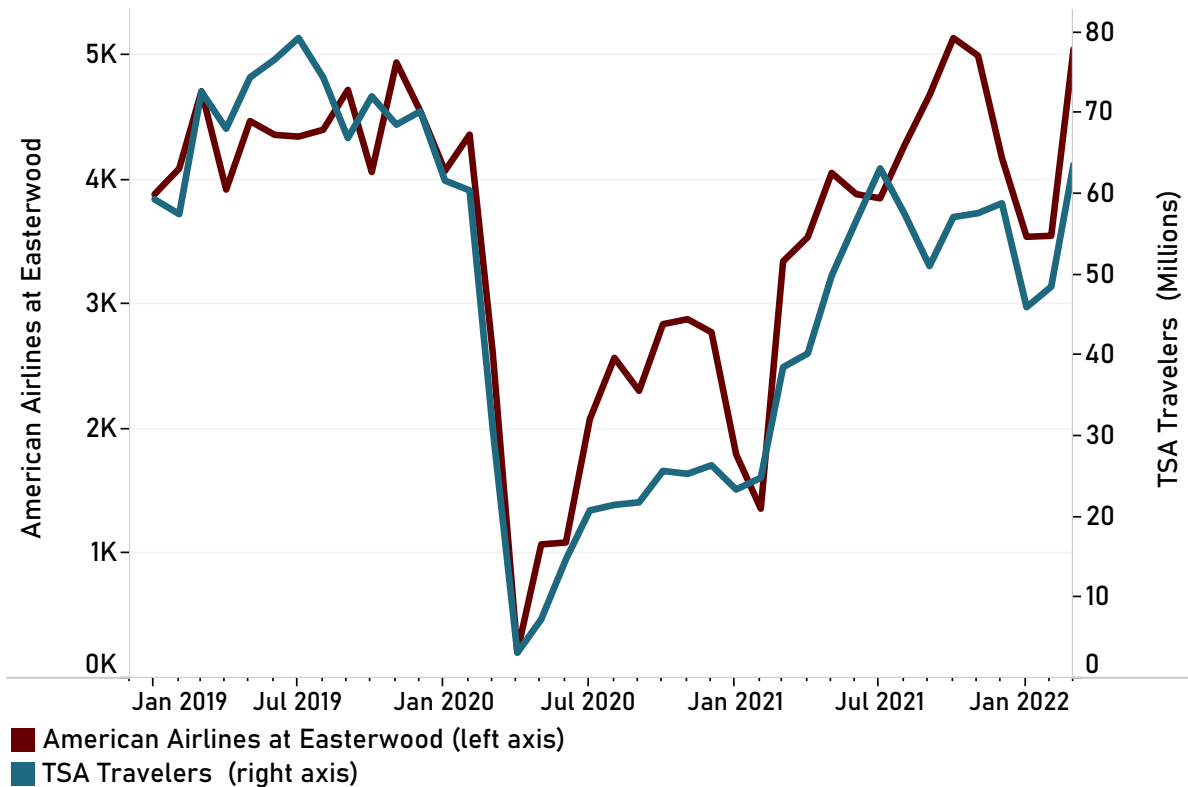


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

AIR TRAVEL

Figure 7 depicts the enplanements at Easterwood Airport on American Airlines and the number of travelers through Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoints from January 2019 to March 2022. As seen in the figure, the monthly national and local passenger counts have followed the same general pattern from the beginning of 2019 to the present. Nationally, March’s air travel was much higher than travel in March 2020 and 2021 but was 86% of the number of travelers in March 2019. Like national air travel, the number of travelers out of Easterwood Airport on American Airlines in March 2022 was higher than in March of the previous two years but was also 7% higher than in March 2019. As air travelers to and from College Station-Bryan adjust to the end of United Airlines’ local service, travel on American Airlines may increase.

FIGURE 7. AMERICAN AIRLINES ENPLANEMENTS AT EASTERWOOD AIRPORT & TRAVELERS THROUGH TSA CHECKPOINTS



Sources: Texas A&M University System and Transportation Security Administration.

NOTES AND LINKS

The extent of the College Station-Bryan MSA is defined by the Census Bureau and includes Brazos, Burleson, and Robertson counties. The Business-Cycle Index is re-estimated each month using the most recent data for the four economic variables included in the model: the unemployment rate, nonfarm employment, real wages, and real taxable sales. The real wage series is released on a quarterly basis and the other three are released monthly. The underlying data series are subject to revision. With new monthly data and revisions of past data, each month the Index and the Business-Cycle will differ from previous estimates.

For more details about the CSB Business-Cycle Index see: *Methodology for Constructing an Economic Index for the College Station-Bryan Metropolitan Statistical Area.*

DATA SOURCES

Enplanements at Easterwood Airport

Texas A&M University System based on email request. Received April 14, 2022.

Inflation

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items [CPIAUCSL], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/CPIAUCSL>. Wages and Taxable Sales are converted to real dollars (inflation-adjusted) using the CPI-U.

Nonfarm Employment

Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Texas Workforce Commission, and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Total Non-farm Payroll Employment for Texas Metropolitan Statistical Areas, two-step Seasonally Adjusted, retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/brysa.aspx>

Nonfarm Employment by Industry

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, State Employment and Unemployment, in College Station-Bryan, TX (MSA) [COLL748NA], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

Nonfarm Employment by Metropolitan Statistical Area

Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Texas Workforce Commission, and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Total Non-farm Payroll Employment for Texas Metropolitan Statistical Areas, two-step Seasonally Adjusted, retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/econdata/tx-emp.aspx#tab2>. For US retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

Taxable Sales (Sales and Use Tax Allocation)

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, Allocation Payment Detail, Current Period Collections. Data available through Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts: <https://mycpa.cpa.state.tx.us/allocation/AllocDetail>. Historical data prior to 2016 from Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts. Seasonal Adjustment by Private Enterprise Research Center.

Travelers through TSA Checkpoints

Transportation Security Administration <https://www.tsa.gov/coronavirus/passenger-throughput>.

Unemployment Rate

Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unemployment by Metropolitan Area, Seasonally Adjusted, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, retrieved from Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/lau/metrossa.htm>

Wages

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Total Quarterly Wages in College Station-Bryan, TX (MSA) [ENUC177830010SA], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/ENUC177830010SA>.

CONTACT



BRAZOS VALLEY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

The Brazos Valley Economic Development Corporation serves Brazos County, the City of Bryan, the City of College Station, Texas A&M University, the surrounding region and private sector investors through the Invest Brazos Valley program. BVEDC helps companies launch, grow, and locate in the Brazos Valley.

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