



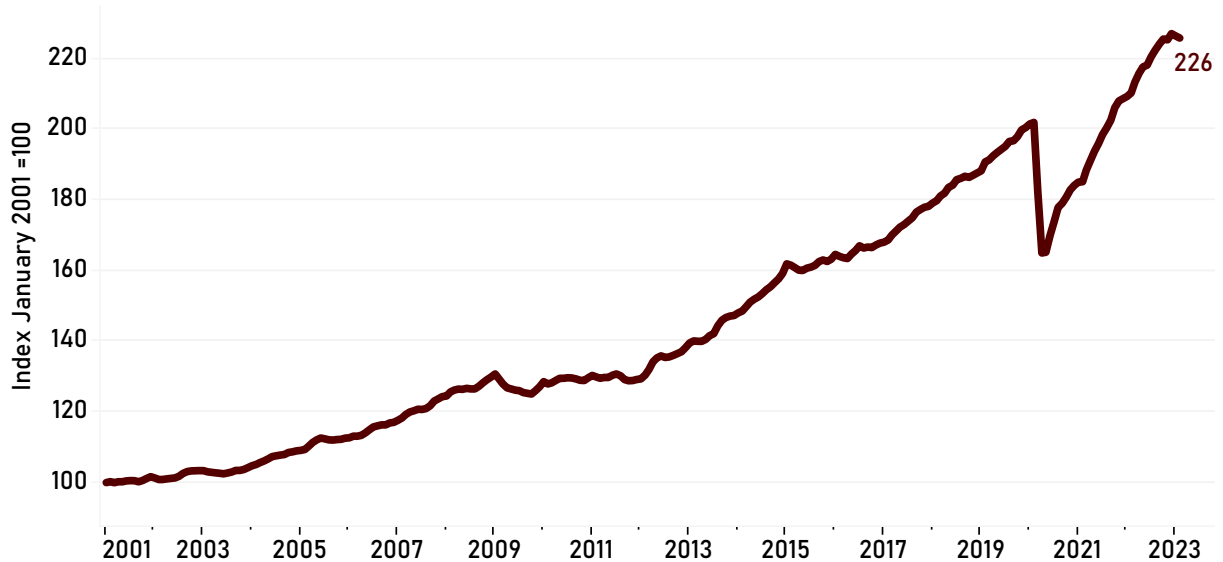
HIGHLIGHTS

- The Business-Cycle Index decreased 0.3% from January 2023 to February 2023.
- The local unemployment rate increased to 3.3% in February 2023 compared to 3.2% in January.
- February's local nonfarm employment decreased by 0.1% from January 2023.
- Inflation-adjusted taxable sales were up by 1% from January 2023 to February 2023.
- Local nonfarm employment in February 2023 was 8.5% higher than in the pre-pandemic month of February 2020, compared to the statewide growth of 6.5% over that same period.

THE COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN BUSINESS-CYCLE INDEX

The Business-Cycle Index for February 2023 fell by a few decimal points and is essentially unchanged at 226, a 0.3% decrease from its January 2023 value. This decrease results from an increased unemployment rate, a decrease in nonfarm employment, and an increase in inflation-adjusted taxable sales. Quarterly total wages were updated last month and were unchanged this month.

FIGURE 1. COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN BUSINESS-CYCLE INDEX

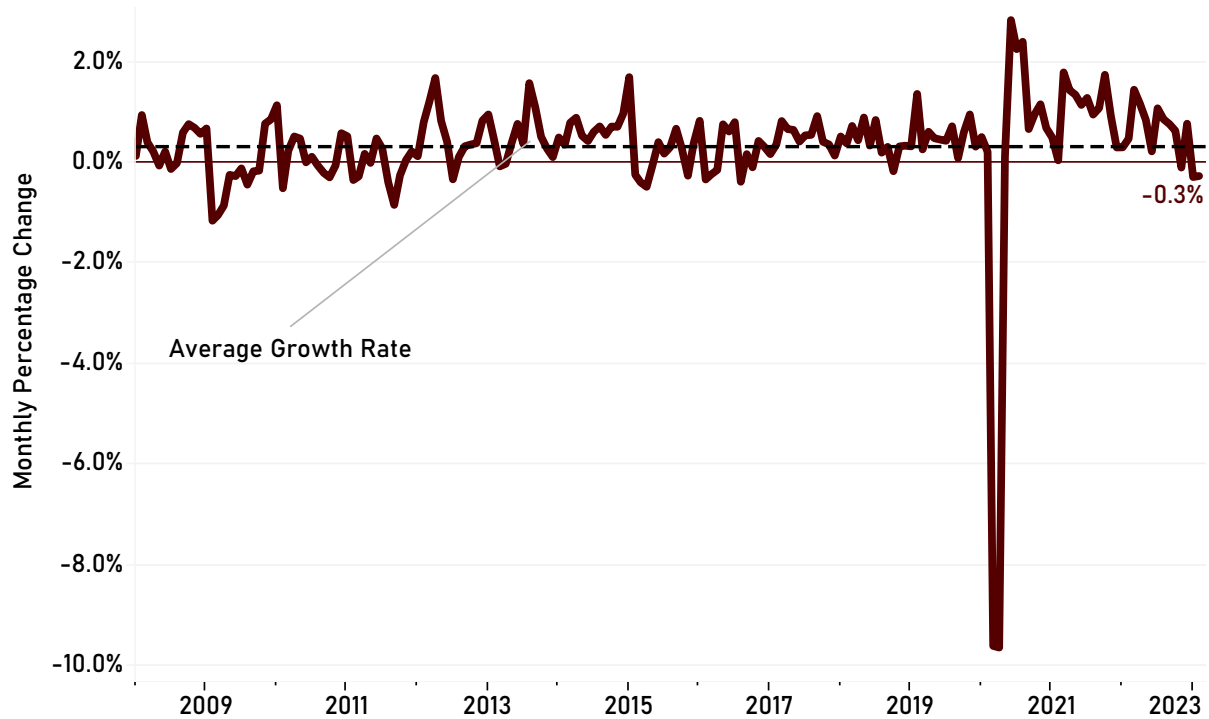


Last reported data point: February 2023 (monthly). Source: Private Enterprise Research Center.

THE COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN BUSINESS-CYCLE

The 0.3% decrease in the CSB Business-Cycle from January 2023 to February 2023 is shown in Figure 2. The decline was driven by the increase in the local unemployment rate to 3.3% in February from 3.2% in January 2023 and a decrease in nonfarm employment of 124 workers from 136,847 in January 2023 to 136,723 in February. The third monthly variable, inflation-adjusted taxable sales, increased by 1% between January and February. The fourth variable used to estimate in the business cycle, quarterly inflation-adjusted total wages, was not updated this month.

FIGURE 2. COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN BUSINESS-CYCLE

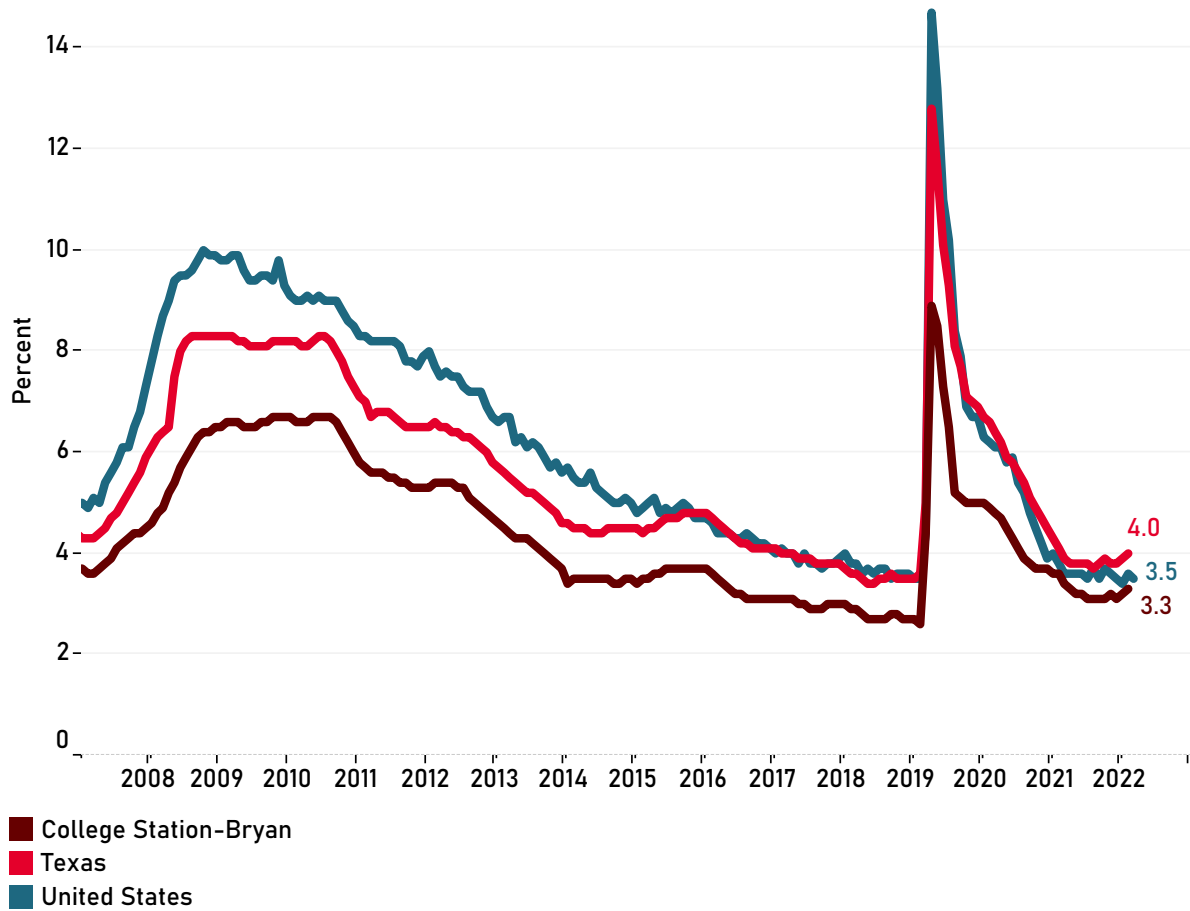


Month-to-month growth rates. Last reported data point: February 2023 (monthly). Source: Private Enterprise Research Center.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

Figure 3 shows the unemployment rates for College Station-Bryan and Texas from January 2008 to February 2023, and for the nation as a whole through March 2023. The unemployment rate in College Station-Bryan increased to 3.3% in February compared to 3.2% in January 2023. The Texas rate also increased to 4% compared to 3.9% in January. At the national level, however, the rate decreased from 3.6% in February to 3.5% in March. It is important to keep in mind that all of these unemployment rates are considered low by historical comparisons. The state and metropolitan area unemployment rates for March will be released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics on April 21 and May 3, 2023, respectively.

FIGURE 3. UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. Seasonally adjusted. Last reported data point: February 2023 for College Station-Bryan and Texas and March 2023 for the United States (monthly).

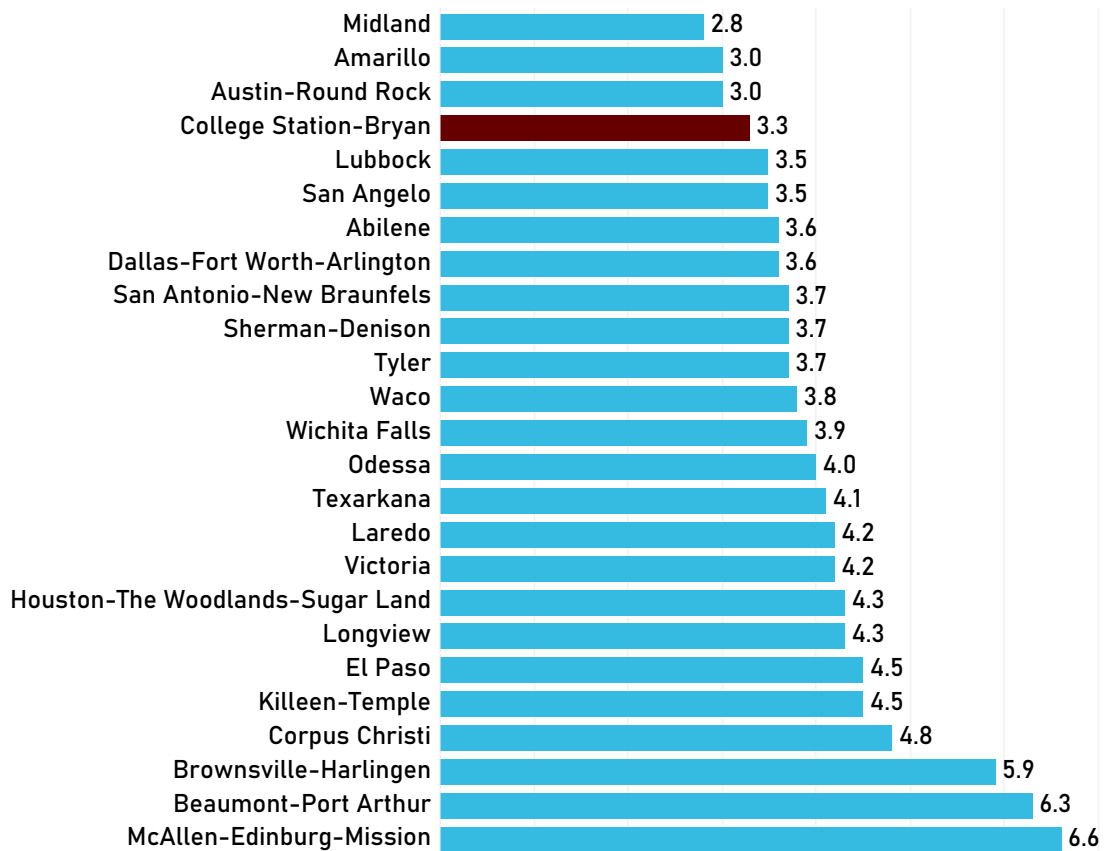
FOCUS ON THE COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN MSA

This month, we present the unemployment rates in the Texas Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) for the month of February. We also examine nonfarm employment across Texas MSAs compared to state and national figures, and employment by industry in the College Station-Bryan MSA. We also track local and national air travel.

TEXAS MSA UNEMPLOYMENT RATES

Figure 4 depicts the local unemployment rates for all Texas MSAs for February 2023. College Station-Bryan's rate of 3.3% was the third lowest, behind the 2.8% rate for Midland and 3.0% rates for Amarillo and Austin-Round Rock. At the other extreme, McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, Beaumont-Port Arthur, and Brownsville-Harlingen had the three highest unemployment rates at 6.6%, 6.3%, and 5.9%, respectively. Austin-Round Rock had the lowest unemployment rate among the four largest MSAs, while Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington's rate was 3.6%, San Antonio-New Braunfels' rate was 3.7%, and Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land again had the highest unemployment rate in this group at 4.3%. All of the four largest MSAs recorded an increase in unemployment rate in February. Of all the Texas MSAs, only Midland, Odessa, and McAllen-Edinburg-Mission reported a decrease in unemployment rate.

FIGURE 4. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES IN TEXAS MSAs, FEBRUARY 2023

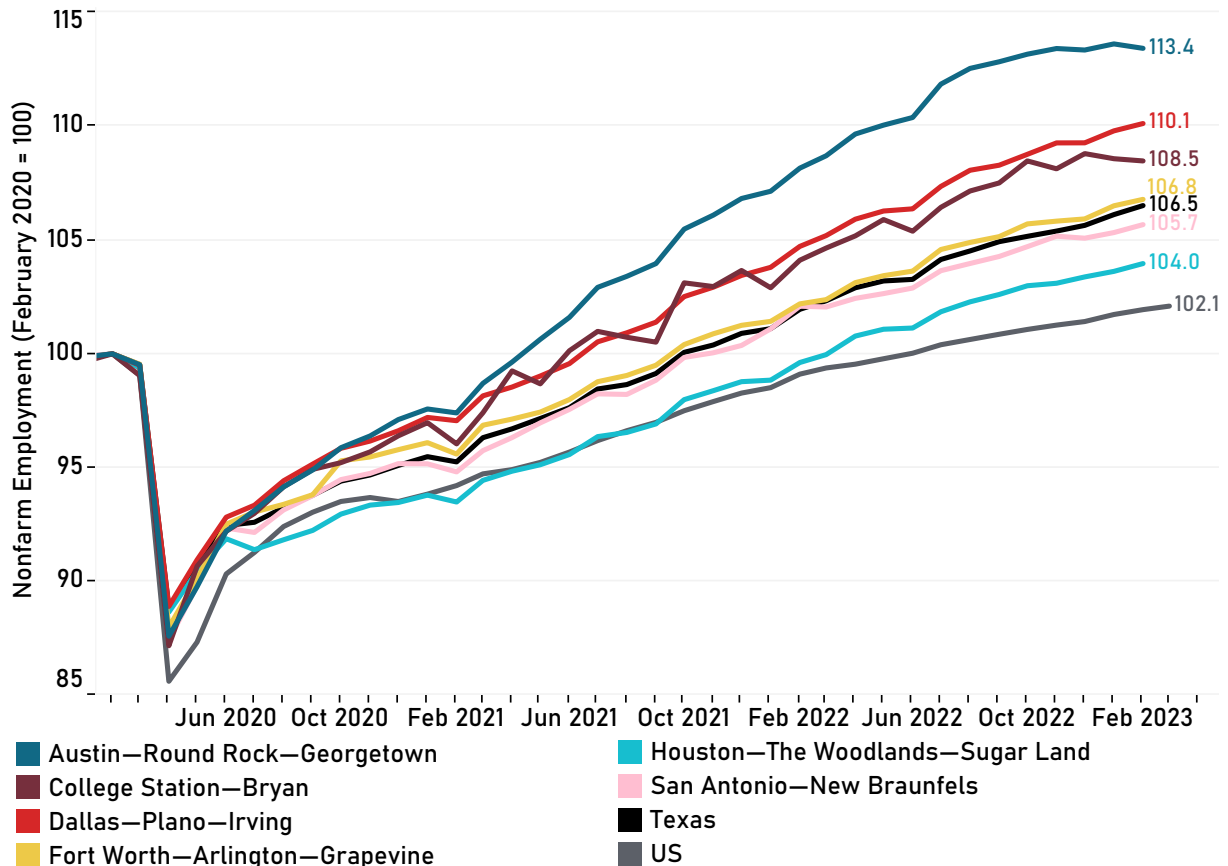


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, seasonally adjusted, February 2023.

NONFARM EMPLOYMENT IN SELECT TEXAS MSAs

Figure 5 presents 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 by February 2023 with employment 13.4% higher than in February 2020. Employment in Dallas-Plano-Irving was 10.1% higher in February 2023. Locally, employment was 8.5% higher in February 2023 than in February 2020. In Fort Worth-Arlington-Grapevine, employment was 6.8% higher in February than it was pre-pandemic while in San Antonio-New Braunfels February's employment was 5.7% higher. Of the MSAs in the figure, Houston-Woodlands-Sugarland has had the lowest rebound with February employment that was 4% higher than prior to the pandemic. Statewide, employment is 6.5% higher than in February 2020, which compares quite favorably to the nation as a whole, which is only 2.1% higher than its pre-pandemic level.

FIGURE 5. INDEXED NONFARM EMPLOYMENT IN SELECTED TEXAS MSAs

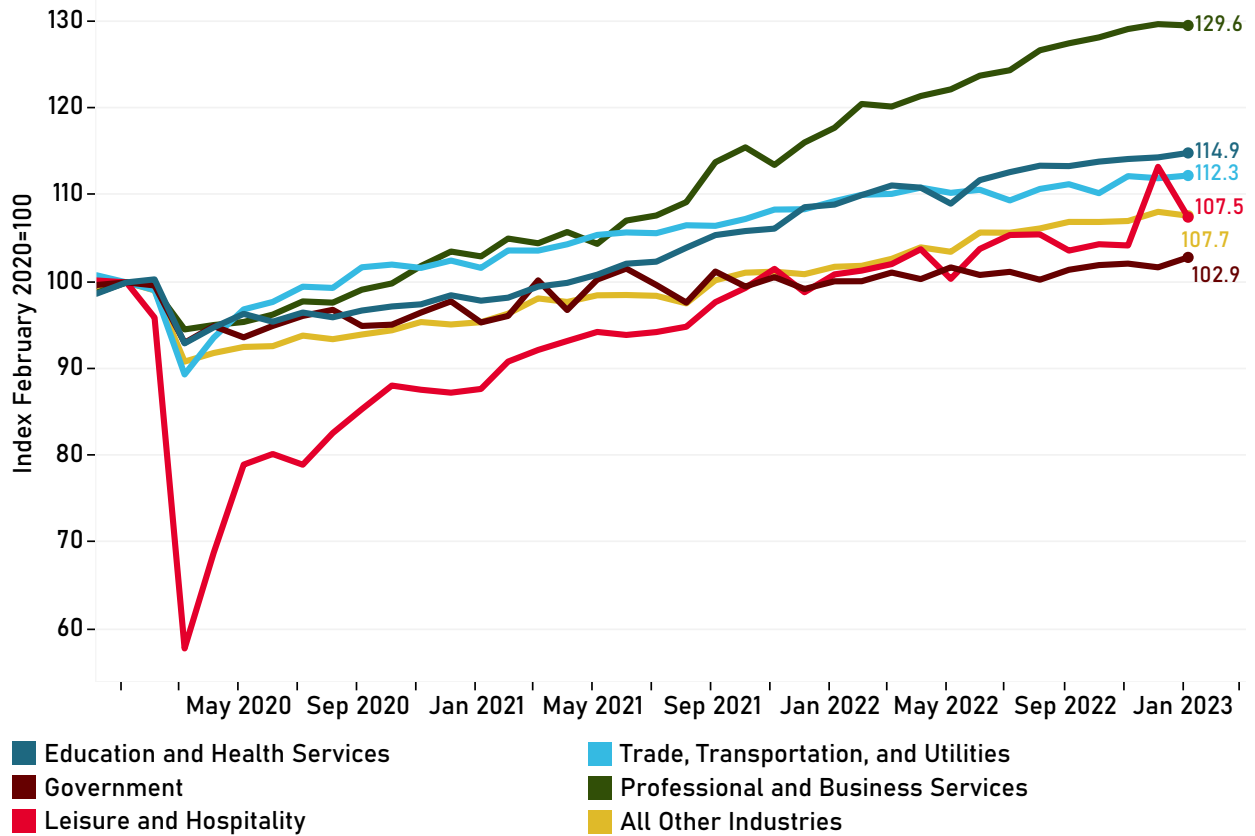


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, retrieved from Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY IN THE COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN MSA

Figure 6 illustrates how employment levels in each of the five largest industries in the College Station-Bryan MSA have changed relative to their pre-pandemic levels. The remaining industries are included in the ‘All Other Industries’ category. In the leading industry, Professional and Business Services, employment was up 29.6% from its level in February 2020. Employment in Trade, Transportation, and Utilities was 12.3% above its pre-pandemic level. February’s employment in All Other Industries was up 7.7% above employment in February 2020. Employment in (private) Education and Health Services was up by 14.9%. Government employment in February (including Texas A&M University) was up by 2.9%, while Leisure and Hospitality employment, the hardest hit during the pandemic, was up by 7.5% from February 2020.

FIGURE 6. EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY IN THE COLLEGE STATION-BRYAN MSA

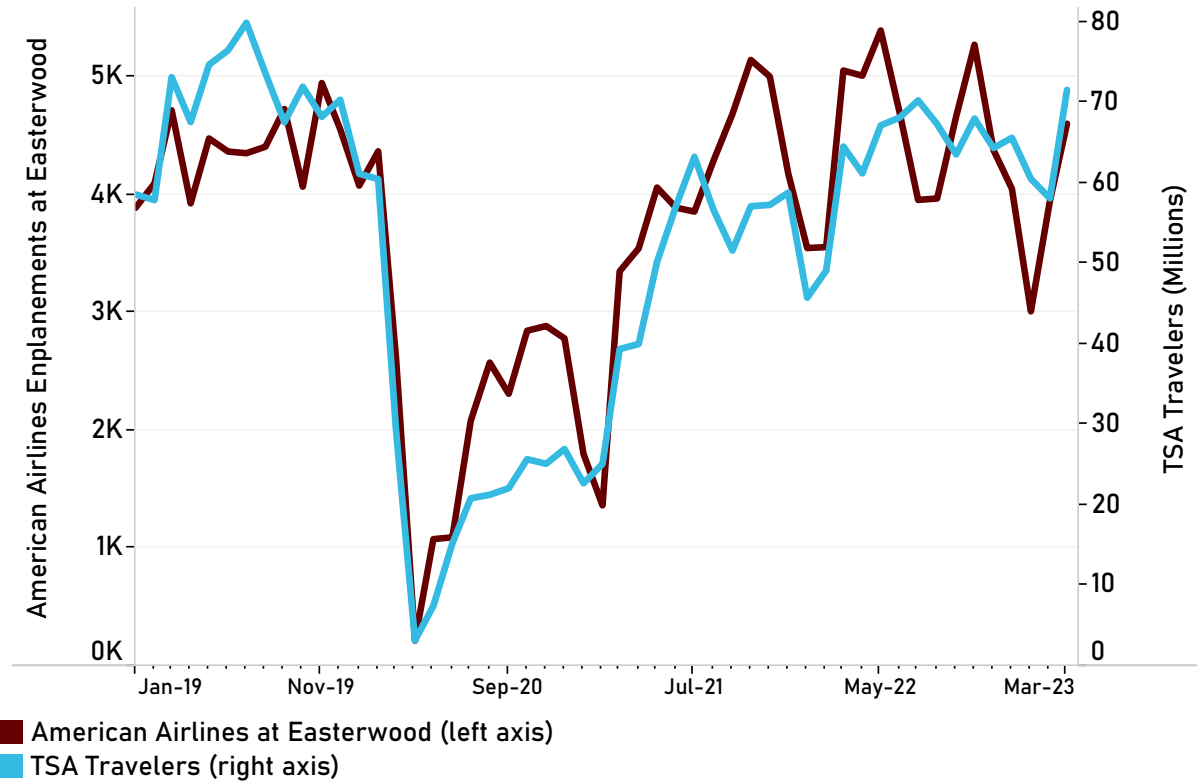


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, retrieved from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

AIR TRAVEL

Figure 7 depicts the enplanements at Easterwood Airport on American Airlines (left axis) and the number of travelers passing through Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoints (right axis) from January 2019 to March 2023. As seen in the figure, the national and local passenger counts have followed similar patterns from the beginning of 2019 to the present. Both show substantial declines in 2020 during the first months of the pandemic. Nationally, March’s air travel was 18% higher than the number of travelers in February 2020, just before the onset of the pandemic restrictions. National air travel was also up 11% from March 2022. Local air travel out of Easterwood Airport on American Airlines in March 2023 was 5% higher than in February 2020, however, it was 9% lower than in March 2022.

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



Sources: Texas A&M University System and Transportation Security Administration. Last reported data point March 2023 (monthly).

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 10, 2023.

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

Nonfarm Employment

Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Texas Workforce Commission, and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Total Nonfarm 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, All Employees: Total Nonfarm in College Station-Bryan, TX (MSA), retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/COLL748NA>

Nonfarm Employment by Metropolitan Statistical Area

Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, Texas Workforce Commission, and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Total Nonfarm 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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