

**Availability of Jobs is a Key Factor in Determining Quality of Life in Chattanooga Area**

Among all Hamilton County residents, 77% of survey respondents indicated that “availability of jobs that pay a living wage” was very important to their quality of life in the Chattanooga Area – among fifteen factors, availability of jobs ranked fifth overall.

**But Most Chattanooga Area Residents Believe the Availability and Quality of Jobs in Hamilton County is Either Fair or Poor**

When asked about the employment situation in Hamilton County today, in terms of quality and availability, most respondents indicated that it was either fair or poor – 68% -- as opposed to excellent or good – 29%.

	Percent
Excellent	3%
Good	25%
Fair	40%
Poor	28%
Don't Know	3%

There were significant differences based on race, gender and education level of the respondent.

African American respondents had a significantly more negative perception on the employment situation in the county, with over half indicating that they believe it is poor -- compared to just 22.1% of white respondents.

	Excellent/Good	Fair	Poor
White	31.8%	42.0%	22.1%
African American	13.2%	34.3%	52.5%

Women were also somewhat more negative than men in their view of the employment situation in the Chattanooga Area.

	Excellent/Good	Fair	Poor
Men	32.2%	40.3%	24.7%
Women	25.2%	39.2%	31.7%

Finally, respondents with different levels of educational attainment also differed in their assessment of the employment situation – with individuals with higher education more likely to rate the employment situation as excellent or good and less likely to rate it as poor.

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	Excellent/Good	Fair	Poor
High School Education or Less	26.8%	35.2%	33.5%
Some College	27.2%	40.0%	30.1%
College Graduate	31.9%	44.4%	20.9%

How do attitudes in Hamilton County compare to those in other parts of the United States? In 2004 and 2005, the Council for Excellence in Government (CEG) and Goldman Sachs commissioned a series of surveys on economic development in six metropolitan areas – Kansas City, Fresno, Baton Rouge, Cleveland, Baltimore and San Antonio. Researchers also asked residents about the employment situation in their area – the only difference in the question was that the CEG surveys offered a possible answer of “not so good” between “just fair” and “poor.”

	Excellent	Good	Fair/Not so Good/Poor
San Antonio	5%	34%	57%
Kansas City	4%	33%	58%
Baltimore	5%	28%	55%
Baton Rouge	3%	26%	66%
Chattanooga	3%	25%	68%
Fresno	3%	21%	71%
Cleveland	0%	6%	92%

**Chattanooga Area Residents Cite Good Quality of Life, Effective Local Government, Quality Public Schools, Public Safety and Affordable Cost of Living as Top Factors to Bring New Jobs to Hamilton County**

How do Chattanooga area residents believe government can improve the quality and availability of jobs? When asked whether different factors were important in creating a good environment for creating jobs in Hamilton County, more than 80% of Chattanooga area residents identified five factors as either one of the most important or very important – good quality of life (86%), an effective local government that is free of corruption (86%), quality public schools (84%), public safety (83%) and affordable cost of living (82%).

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	One of most important	Very important
Effective local government	19%	67%
Good quality of life	14%	72%
Quality public schools	19%	65%
Public safety	13%	70%
Affordable Cost of Living	14%	68%
Well educated workforce	12%	67%
Low taxes	15%	58%
Quality colleges and universities	10%	60%
Infrastructure, such as roads and airports	8%	61%
Availability of investment capital	6%	43%

Again, the results from the Chattanooga area can be compared to the results from the CEG 2004 and 2005 surveys. In the CEG surveys, respondents were asked whether different factors were an “absolute priority, a high but not top priority, a medium priority, a lower priority or not a priority.” Chattanooga area residents were more likely to cite “affordable cost of living” and “low taxes” than residents of the five other regions. They were also the least likely to cite availability of investment capital.

*Effective Local Government that is Free of Corruption*

	Absolute/High Priority One of Most/Very Important
Baton Rouge	89%
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>86%</b>
Fresno	79%

*Good Quality of Life*

	Absolute/High Priority One of Most/Very Important
Baton Rouge	89%
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>86%</b>
San Antonio	83%
Baltimore	82%
Fresno	81%
Cleveland	81%
Kansas City	80%

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*Quality Public Schools*

	Absolute/High Priority One of Most/Very Important
Baton Rouge	92%
Kansas City	87%
San Antonio	87%
Baltimore	86%
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>84%</b>
Cleveland	84%
Fresno	83%

*Public Safety*

	Absolute/High Priority One of Most/Very Important
Baton Rouge	86%
Baltimore	86%
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>83%</b>
Fresno	80%
Kansas City	77%
Cleveland	75%

*Affordable Cost of Living*

	Absolute/High Priority One of Most/Very Important
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>82%</b>
Kansas City	80%
Baton Rouge	79%
Baltimore	79%
Cleveland	78%
San Antonio	77%
Fresno	70%

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*Well Educated Workforce*

	Absolute/High Priority One of Most/Very Important
Baton Rouge	88%
San Antonio	83%
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>79%</b>
Baltimore	79%
Kansas City	74%
Cleveland	71%
Fresno	65%

*Low Taxes*

	Absolute/High Priority One of Most/Very Important
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>73%</b>
San Antonio	62%
Baton Rouge	61%
Cleveland	60%
Fresno	59%
Baltimore	56%
Kansas City	50%

*Quality Colleges and Universities*

	Absolute/High Priority One of Most/Very Important
Baton Rouge	87%
San Antonio	81%
Fresno	72%
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>70%</b>
Kansas City	68%
Cleveland	63%
Baltimore	62%

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*Infrastructure*

	Absolute/High Priority One of Most/Very Important
Baton Rouge	79%
San Antonio	70%
Baltimore	70%
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>69%</b>
Kansas City	69%
Fresno	63%
Cleveland	60%

*Investment Capital*

	Absolute/High Priority One of Most/Very Important
Baton Rouge	66%
San Antonio	60%
Kansas City	58%
Cleveland	56%
Baltimore	55%
Fresno	54%
<b>Chattanooga</b>	<b>49%</b>

**Chattanooga Area Residents See Manufacturing, Technology and Health Care as Top Industries to Be Recruited to Region**

Hamilton County residents were asked which industries are most important for state and local government to focus on as part of efforts to bring good jobs to the region.

	Top Choice	Second Choice
Manufacturing	34%	19%
Technology	20%	20%
Health Care	15%	19%
Tourism	7%	9%
Corporate Headquarters	7%	9%
Transportation	5%	10%
Finance and Insurance	5%	9%
Retail	2%	4%

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There were, however, significant differences in response based on respondent race, gender and education level.

*Top Three Industries (First and Second Choice) by Race*

<i>African Americans</i>		<i>Whites</i>	
1. Health Care	50.7%	Manufacturing	55.6%
2. Manufacturing	38.8%	Technology	39.9%
3. Technology	35.0%	Health Care	29.9%

*Top Three Industries (First and Second Choice) by Gender*

<i>Women</i>		<i>Men</i>	
1. Manufacturing	47.5%	Manufacturing	57.2%
2. Health Care	41.3%	Technology	38.8%
3. Technology	34.6%	Health Care	33.5%

*Top Three Industries (First and Second Choice) by Educational Attainment*

<i>High School or Less</i>		<i>Some College</i>		<i>College Graduate</i>	
1. Manufacturing	55.5%	Manufacturing	54.6%	Technology	52.5%
2. Health Care	44.8%	Technology	40.3%	Manufacturing	47.4%
3. Technology	25.7%	Health Care	30.4%	Health Care	24.6%

**Chattanooga Area Residents Back Higher Minimum Wage: Majority Support Minimum Wage of More than \$7 Per Hour**

Tennessee is one of just six states that do not have minimum wage laws. As of April 2006, 17 states now have minimum wage laws that set the minimum wage higher than the federal law of \$5.15.

Chattanooga area residents were asked “under current law the hourly minimum wage is 5 dollars and 15 cents. Do you think it should be higher, lower, the same or don’t you think there should be a minimum wage?”

	Percent
Higher	77
Lower	0
Same	12
No minimum wage	8
Don’t Know	2

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Those respondents who supported a higher minimum wage were asked how much they thought it should be:

	Percent
\$5.16 - \$5.99	2
\$6.00 - \$6.99	28
\$7.00 - \$7.99	39
\$8.00 - \$9.99	18
\$10 +	8
Don't Know	8

### **Methodology**

Results are based on a phone survey of a random sample of 1000 residents of Hamilton County conducted during April 2006 on behalf of the Community Research Council by The Mellman Group. For the overall sample, the margin of error is +/- yy%: margins of error are higher for subsamples. The survey was conducted as part of the State of Chattanooga Region Report (SOCRR). The full SOCRR will be released in the Fall. Questions for the SOCRR survey were developed by CRC in consultation with civic and neighborhood leaders.

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