

LEE COUNTY COMMUTING PATTERNS

Majority of County's Workforce Works Outside the County

Its rural nature, small employment base, Interstate access and location (surrounded by four large counties) are all contributing factors that make Lee County a supply source of workers for other areas.

Over fifty-seven percent (57%) of workers who reside in Lee County travel outside the County for employment. Data recently released by the U.S. Census Bureau for the year 2000, show that of the 7,310 workers who reside in Lee County, 4,195 commute to jobs outside the County. A comparison of Lee workers' commuting patterns between 1990 and 2000 shows significant changes in the employment structure of the county.

	1990	2000	Nr. Change	% Change
Total Lee County Workforce	7,165	7,310	145	2.0%
Live/Work in Lee County	4,015	3,125	-890	-22.2%
Work Outside Lee County	3,150	4,185	1,035	32.9%
Commute to Lee County for Work	1,464	1,335	-129	-8.8%

Source: US Census Bureau

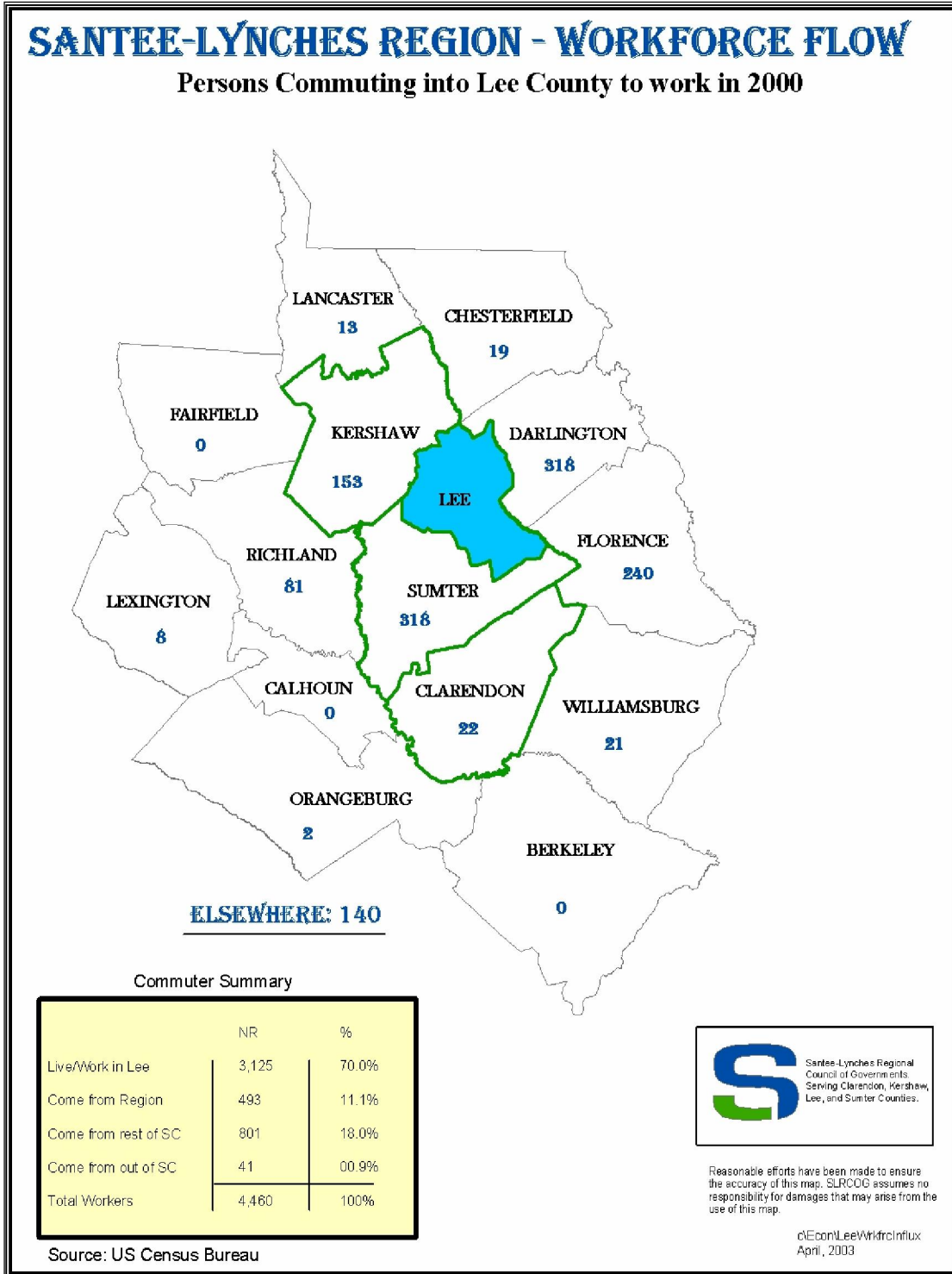
Despite a slight workforce increase since 1990, over 1000 more Lee County workers now cross the county line for work than did ten years ago. This corresponds to the approximately 1000 fewer workers employed in the county in 2000. In past decades, this job loss would have resulted in many workers moving out of the county and closer to their new jobs. However, the increasing mobility of today's workforce has changed that dynamic. In the past, work location often dictated where a person lived. The new economy is more about people choosing where they want to live and willing to travel further for employment. This is the case with Lee County where the mean one-way travel time to work rose from 22.2 minutes in 1990 to 29.7 minutes in 2000. More significantly, 3,363 or forty-six percent (46%) of Lee County workers spend 30 or more minutes commuting to work.

The counties that benefit the most from the Lee County workers are Sumter and Kershaw Counties. Between them they account for the employment of 2,551 Lee workers.

In 2000, there were approximately 4,460 jobs in Lee County and thirty percent (30%) of the jobs are filled by workers from outside Lee County. Darlington and Sumter Counties provide almost half of these out of county workers. Since Lee has a total of 7,310 resident workers and 4,460 in-county jobs, it is a net exporter of 2,850 workers to jobs outside the county.

The attached maps depict the workforce flow from and to Lee County for the year 2000.

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