



Wetumpka
AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
ALABAMA

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Location & Transportation

For several years, Elmore County has been among the fastest growing counties in the state of Alabama with the 2000 census showing almost 66,000. The 2010 count is expected to top 80,000. Wetumpka is located in the central region of Alabama just minutes north of Montgomery and is easily accessible by three of the state's major traffic arteries: I-65, I-85 and U.S. Highway 231, which passes directly through the city. The Wetumpka Municipal Airport's 3,000-foot, east-west runway can accommodate up to an eight-passenger aircraft. The airport provides engine repair, small aircraft service, flight training and airplane leasing. Wetumpka has two navigable rivers with nine-foot channels, the Alabama and Coosa.



Business & Industry

The climate of the area brings mild winters, pleasant summers and lingering spring and fall seasons. An average annual temperature of approximately 61 degrees allows the growing season to exceed 253 days. The moderate climate, combined with the richness of the soil, contributes greatly to the county's more than \$26.5 million agricultural industry, which includes the production of cotton, beef, nursery stock, dairy farming, pecans, fruits and vegetables.

Economic growth has remained rather constant while morphing from manufacturing to technology industries associated with automobile suppliers and aircraft manufacturing as well as information technology. A swell of professionally licensed occupants has populated the historic downtown section of Wetumpka in the shadow of the Elmore County Courthouse. A growing emphasis on tourism has seen the development of numerous related cottage industries.



Attractions

- Lake Jordan
- Lake Martin
- Elmore County Historical Society and Museum
- Museum of Black History
- Fort Toulouse/Jackson State Historic Site
- Bibb Graves Bridge



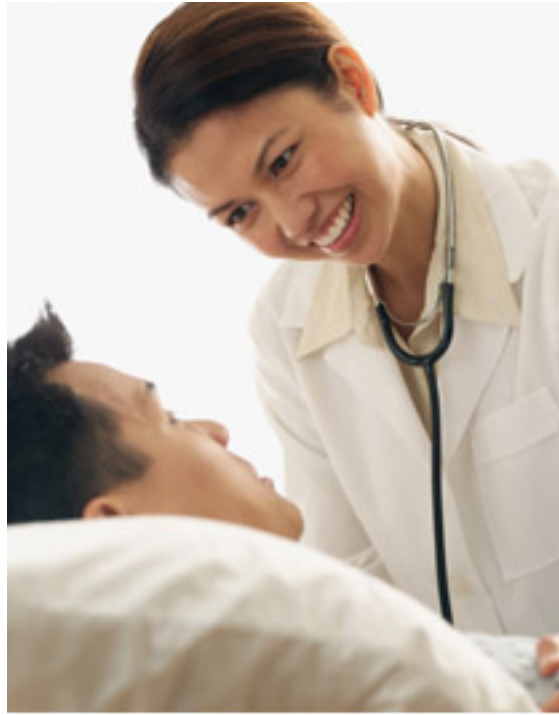
Festivals & Events

- November - Alabama Frontier Days
- December - Christmas on the Coosa
- August - Riverfest, Rumbling Waters Bass Tournament
- September - Coosa River Challenge Adventure Race



Education

The Elmore County Board of Education manages 17 campuses, including 14 schools, one technical center, one alternative school and one intensive treatment center, which collectively educate 10,892 students. This system is the largest employer in Elmore County and the 12th largest school system out of 132 districts across Alabama. More than 1,330 teachers and support personnel serve the needs of these youngsters, and they transport 7,055 of the total on 132 school buses. The system touts the Alabama Reading Initiative, the Alabama Math, Science and Technology Initiative, an Arts Specialist, an internationally recognized and award-winning Robotics program and a Teaching American History grant as only one of three systems in the state.



Healthcare

Elmore Community Hospital is a state-licensed, 69-bed, accredited facility providing full medical care. The hospital's new care units include kidney dialysis, cardiac, pediatrics, home health, chemical dependency, ENT and medical equipment. Medicaid approved assisted living units, licensed nursing and rehab facilities, mental health care for outpatient and day treatment therapy, air evacuation equipment, acute-care physicians and various vision and dental services give the area a well-rounded offering of healthcare for the entire family.



History

In the early 1700s, the area encompassing current-day Wetumpka was known as the heart of the Upper Creek lands. Once settled in the area in 1711, Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville sought to establish a fort within New France in order to seize the invading of the British, as well as to encourage and support the trade and cooperation of local Native Americans. Fort Toulouse, named in recognition of a French count, was built in 1714 and remained in use under French control until 1763 after financial issues forced them from the area. The land remained under British control until 1798, then becoming a part of the U.S. Territory of Mississippi until 1812.

It was not until 1817 that Wetumpka was established within the Alabama Territory, and in 1818, counties formed, placing western Wetumpka in Autauga County and eastern Wetumpka in Coosa County. The eastern portion of the town was incorporated on January 17, 1834, shortly followed by the west's incorporation on February 18th. The town's population increased to 1,200 in the following two years and in 1839, the two separated halves of Wetumpka were incorporated together. In the same year, the State Penitentiary was selected for construction in Wetumpka, with the facility's completion in 1841.

The city began to thrive, until the advent of the Civil War, which left Wetumpka, along with most of the South, in devastation. Once the war had ended, residents of Wetumpka took on the arduous task to reconstruct the once progressive town.

When Elmore County was established in 1886, Wetumpka was chosen as the site for the county courthouse and by the early 1900s, the town began to prosper once again as new businesses began opening shop along its streets. In 1897 the Fifth District Agricultural School, later to be known as Wetumpka High School, opened; a new jail was established in the early 1900s; electrical power and public water, along with a new depot of the L&N Railroad, reached the area in 1906; cement sidewalks were used in 1911 along the main streets; and, in 1913, the

popular Fain Theater opened.

The community continued to progress through both World Wars, constantly improving the foundation of the city. Now, Wetumpka is located within the third fastest growing county in the state and hails as the economic hub of Elmore County.



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