

# 10-year forecast on jobs is strong

David Hendricks, Business Writer

Updated 12:48 a.m., Wednesday, January 11, 2012

[http://www.mysanantonio.com/business/business\\_columnists/david\\_hendricks/article/10-year-forecast-on-jobs-is-strong-2456679.php](http://www.mysanantonio.com/business/business_columnists/david_hendricks/article/10-year-forecast-on-jobs-is-strong-2456679.php)

## Projected job growth, 2012-2022

Metro area	Overall job increase	Avg. annual % increase
Dallas-Fort Worth	859,180	1.93
Houston-Sugar Land	713,220	1.84
<b>San Antonio-New Braunfels</b>	<b>273,520</b>	<b>2.08</b>
Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos	273,070	2.26
Laredo	32,040	2.51

Source: Woods & Poole Economics Inc.

Express-News

Most metropolitan and state economic forecasts coming out this month are for 2012 alone.

That's useful for understanding the current economic temperature and the current pace of hiring. But companies do not normally plan on one-year forecasts. If they are placing investments and jobs, they'll want a longer-term market projection.

That makes the new 10-year forecast from Washington, D.C.-based Woods & Poole Economics Inc. for San Antonio and other Texas cities intriguing.

Of 366 U.S. metropolitan areas, San Antonio ranks 21st in percentage of projected job gains through 2022.

The specific numbers are an increase to nearly 1.47 million jobs in the San Antonio metro area from 1.19 million now. That's a rise of 273,520 jobs and an average yearly increase of 2.08 percent.

Do you know how many U.S. metro areas would give their right arm to have more than 2 percent annual job gains projected over the next decade? More than 90 percent of them.

Here's another nice surprise. Guess what city tops Woods & Poole's list for percentage job gains over the next 10 years?

Laredo.

The border city will grow to a workforce of 145,860 from its current base of 113,830, an increase of 32,030. The projected growth represents a 2.51 percent annual gain, No. 1 in the nation.

Laredo, of course, starts with a smaller base than San Antonio.

Think of it this way. San Antonio's projected gain of 273,520 jobs over the next 10 years is much larger than the entire Laredo workforce is projected to be in 2022, which is 145,860.

Austin also will grow impressively over the next 10 years in both percentage and aggregate job growth. The Austin area's jobs will grow at an annual 2.26 percent rate to 1.36 million jobs in 2022, up from 1.08 million now, an increase of 273,070.

Woods & Poole comes up with its numbers by dividing the nation into 179 economic regions and then uses the industries in each region to predict job growth based on the amount of sales made by those industries to customers outside each region. [Martin Holdrich](#), a Woods & Poole economist, calls it an export-based model.

“Sales outside of a region are translated into wages,” Holdrich said.

“San Antonio weathered the economy well,” Holdrich added, “and as the U.S. economy expands, San Antonio will participate fully.”

Dallas and Houston will add more total jobs over the next 10 years because they have a larger base, but neither will match San Antonio's 2.08 percent annual job gain. In fact, of the top 25 metros with the best percent job gains over the next decade, only two will have larger increases in total jobs: Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, Calif., and Orlando, Fla.

That makes San Antonio a top big-city metro for job growth for the next decade.

San Antonio and Laredo actually will slow from their 1970-2010 job-growth rates because their workforces have grown. The San Antonio area had only 400,000 jobs in 1970. Laredo had 27,000.

More or less jobs than projected will end up materializing in the next decade, but the more important question is whether San Antonio, Austin and Laredo wind up ranked correctly in relation to other cities. From here, it looks accurate.

dhendricks@express-news.net

**Courtesy of JB Goodwin**