



2019 Wichita Employment Forecast

January 2019

Total nonfarm employment in the Wichita metropolitan area¹ increased by approximately 2,100 workers from October 2017 to October 2018, a 0.8 percent expansion of the workforce. This marked a return to the level of growth experienced in the Wichita area from 2012 to 2016, after experiencing a contraction in overall employment in 2017. Wichita's unemployment rate declined throughout 2018 to a low of 3.5 percent in October 2018, the lowest unemployment rate for the area since 1999.

Wichita is estimated to add approximately 2,500 jobs in 2018, and growth is projected to increase modestly to 0.9 percent in 2019, with more than 2,700 new jobs added.

- After declining in employment in both 2016 and 2017, Wichita's production sectors rebounded sharply in 2018, adding more than 1,500 jobs through October 2018, as compared to October 2017. Growth was primarily in the manufacturing sector, which added approximately 1,000 jobs, while the construction sector contributed another 500 jobs. With continued investment from local firms, the manufacturing sector is expected to increase by more than 800 jobs in 2019. The bulk of the growth is projected to be in the durable goods sector, after both durable and non-durable manufacturing employment grew in 2018. The construction sector is also forecast to grow substantially, adding more than 400 new jobs in 2019 with continued positive indicators from the residential market.
- In 2017, trade, transportation and utilities employment declined by 1,400 workers, and that trend continued through the first 10 months of 2018, with an additional decline of 200 workers. The job losses have primarily been concentrated in the retail trade sector, as retail sales have remained relatively flat in the area in 2016 and 2017. The trade sector is projected to gain more than 300 jobs in 2019, mostly in the transportation sector, while retail trade employment is forecast to remain flat while retail sales in the area are projected to increase slightly after a decline in 2017.
- The service sectors are forecast to grow 0.6 percent in 2019, adding almost 800 new jobs, following growth of 1,200 jobs through the first ten months of 2018. The professional and business services sector and leisure and hospitality sector are projected to comprise almost all

¹ The Wichita metropolitan consists of Sedgwick, Butler, Harvey, Kingman, and Sumner counties.
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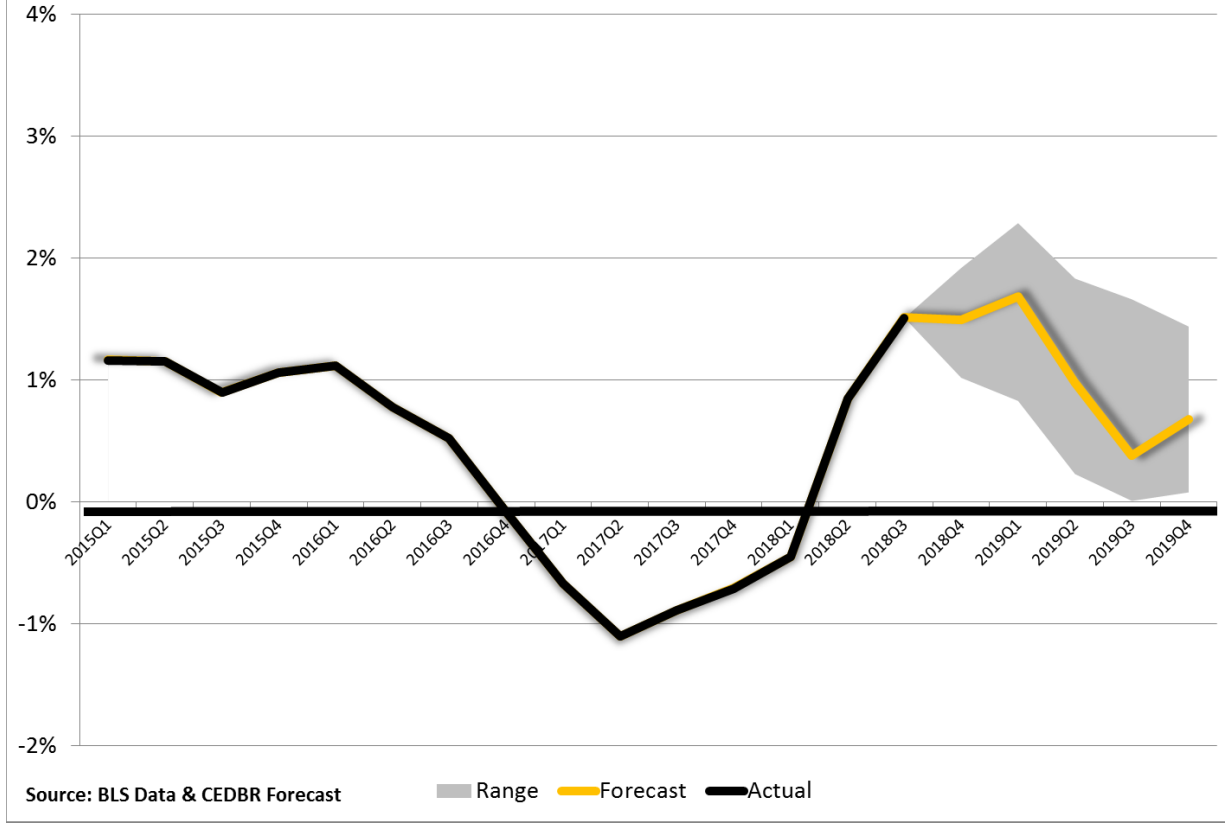
of the overall growth in the service sectors. Professional and business services are forecast to grow 2.1 percent in 2019, continuing the growth trend that began in 2018 with more than 1,000 jobs added. Employment in the leisure and hospitality sector has grown in each of the past seven years, and that trend is expected to continue in 2019 with more than 200 jobs added. Employment in the financial activities, education and health services, and other services sectors are all projected to remain relatively flat in 2019, while the information sector is forecast to decline by approximately 200 jobs.

- Wichita’s governmental sector employment is projected to grow 0.9 percent, adding more than 300 jobs. The local, federal, and state government sectors are each forecast to add approximately 100 jobs.

Nationally, real GDP grew 3 percent from the third quarter of 2017 to the third quarter of 2018, which was primarily driven by increases in personal consumption expenditures and private investment. National employment increased by 1.7 percent from October 2017 to October 2018.

Wichita Employment by Industry Summary*					
	2017 (a)	2018 (e)	2019 (f)	2018-2019 Level Change	2018-2019 Percent Change
Total Nonfarm	294,706	297,213	299,970	2,756	0.9%
Production Sectors	67,732	68,871	70,167	1,296	1.9%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	51,200	50,117	50,432	315	0.6%
Service Sectors	134,992	136,165	136,948	783	0.6%
Government	40,783	42,060	42,423	363	0.9%
*Annual values are derived from average quarterly observations and projections. (a) actual (e) estimated (f) forecasted Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics data & Wichita State University CEDBR forecast					

Wichita Total Nonfarm Employment Growth



The Center for Economic Development and Business Research can provide detailed industry, wage, retail, and other customized forecasts upon request. Contact Jeremy Hill at 316-213-3673 for costs and availability.