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**CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT INCREASES IN 231 OUT OF 358 METRO AREAS FROM OCTOBER 2018 TO OCTOBER 2019 AS FIRMS HIRE DESPITE TIGHT LABOR MARKET**

*Dallas-Plano-Irving, Texas and Omaha-Council Bluffs, Neb.-Iowa Have Largest Gains; New York City and Fairbanks, Alaska Lag the Most as Industry Calls for* *Measures to Boost Supply of Qualified Workers*

Construction employment grew in 231, or 65 percent, out of 358 metro areas between October 2018 and October 2019, declined in 69 and was unchanged in 58, according to a new analysis of federal employment data released today by the Associated General Contractors of America. Association officials said hourly craftworker positions remain difficult to fill despite the widespread job gains, and they urged federal officials to promote more workplace-based immigration, along with career and technical education.

“Employers in most areas remain busy and eager to hire workers, but they struggle to find qualified employees in many metros,” said Ken Simonson, the association’s chief economist. “The fact that job openings in construction set record highs each month suggests that more metros would post gains in construction employment if eligible workers were available.”

The Dallas-Plano-Irving, Texas metro area added the most construction jobs during the past year (14,300 jobs, 10 percent). Other metro areas adding a large number of construction jobs during the past 12 months include Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, Ariz. (9,800 jobs, 8 percent); Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale, Calif. (9,700 jobs, 6 percent) and Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, Nev. (8,000 jobs, 12 percent). The largest percentage gain occurred in Omaha-Council Bluffs, Neb.-Iowa (20 percent, 5,900 jobs), followed by Auburn-Opelika, Ala. (15 percent, 400 jobs) and Bend-Redmond, Ore. (14 percent, 1,000 jobs). Construction employment reached a new October high in 76 metro areas and a new October low in two areas.

The largest number of job losses between October 2018 and October 2019 occurred in New York City (-6,200 jobs, -4 percent), followed by Chicago-Naperville-Arlington Heights, Ill. (-4,700 jobs, -3 percent); Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, Calif. (-3,100 jobs -3 percent) and Baton Rouge, La. (-2,500 jobs, -4 percent). The largest percentage decrease took place in Fairbanks, Alaska (-13 percent, -400 jobs), followed by Watertown-Fort Drum, N.Y. (-10 percent, -200 jobs); Longview, Texas (-10 percent, -1600 jobs) and Wichita Falls, Texas (-10 percent, -300 jobs).

Association officials said the growing number of construction job openings shows the importance of measures to increase the supply of potential workers. The officials urged the Trump administration and Congress to make it easier to bring in workers for specific jobs that cannot be filled domestically and to strengthen career and technical education opportunities for students seeking alternatives to college.

“Sustained economic growth depends on having a growing supply of both qualified workers and new entrants to expanding sectors such as construction,” said Stephen E. Sandherr, the association’s chief executive officer. “Construction firms are doing their best to address labor shortages, but federal officials can play a major role by putting in place needed immigration reforms and by adequately funding career and technical education.”

View the metro employment [data](https://www.agc.org/sites/default/files/Metro_Empl_1910_alpha.pdf), [rankings](https://www.agc.org/sites/default/files/Metro_Empl_1910_rank.pdf), [top 10](https://www.agc.org/sites/default/files/Metro_Empl_1910_top.pdf), [history](https://www.agc.org/sites/default/files/Metro_Empl_1910.pdf) and [map](https://www.agc.org/sites/default/files/Metro_Empl_1910_map.pdf).

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