



Select Camp Verde
THE CENTER OF IT ALL | ARIZONA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Focused on Success

**Camp Verde
5-Year
Community
& Economic
Development
Strategic Plan**

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Town Council

Town Manager Russ Martin
 Mayor Dee Jenkins
 Vice-Mayor Joe Butner
 Council Member Jackie Baker
 Council Member Bill LeBeau
 Council Member Cris McPhail
 Council Member Jessie Murdock
 Council Member Robin Whatley

Economic Development Team

Steve Ayers - Economic Development Director
 Jessica Bryson - Economic Development Project Manager

Community Development Team

Melinda Lee - Community Development Director
 Bobbi Webb - Administrative Assistant

Steering Committee

Peggy Kellogg - Outdoor Recreation / Resident
 Bob Weir - VACTE / Camp Verde Arena Association / Resident
 Dee Jenkins - Mayor / Resident / Business Community
 Dobie Champion - Residential Realtor / Resident
 Cris McPhail - Councilwoman / Town Volunteer / Verde Lakes Resident
 Justin Chambers - Commercial Realtor
 Ken Krebs - Verde Lakes Resident / Fire Marshal
 Linda Buchanan - Yavapai College / Resident / Water Focus
 John Bassous - Business Owner / Developer/Resident
 Todd Scantlebury - Planning & Zoning / Resident /
 Business Owner / Agriculture
 Danny Briggs - Business Owner / Resident / Arts Community /
 Homeschool Parent
 Pam Bridgnell - Business Owner / Resident
 James Cornelius - Business Owner / Outdoor Recreation/Resident
 Ed Mezulis - Resident/Outdoor Recreation
 Tina Redd - Dean of Yavapai College
 Heather Mulcaire - Associate Dean Yavapai College / Agriculture
 Zach Wolfe - Agriculture/Resident
 Kelly Patton - APS
 Darla DeVille - APS

Preamble

The Town of Camp Verde has a sustained partnership with its energy provider, Arizona Public Service (APS), to assist with community and economic development efforts. As part of this partnership, APS has worked with the community several times through its Focused Future program. Focused Future was developed by APS to provide local communities technical assistance in developing a grassroots strategic plan. The next step of this program - Focused on Success - is a more targeted strategic planning effort focused on driving responsible and sustainable growth, utilizing both traditional and non-traditional development initiatives.

Led by Local First Arizona (LFA), community outreach and engagement for the creation of the Focused on Success plan was thoughtful and intentional, with a goal to answer three basic questions:

1. How can we add depth and breadth to previously outlined and accomplished economic and community development goals?
2. What proactive strategies and partnerships can be developed to strengthen traditional economic development, community development, and placemaking initiatives
3. How can we engage and energize more stakeholders in the community and reinforce buy-in (and effort) to help build a more self-reliant Camp Verde community

Engagement

Over the course of 2021, LFA and the Town of Camp Verde conducted a series of meetings and workshops that engaged and obtained insights from over 130 community members. The intent of the conceptualization and strategic plan was a product that was inclusive of community perspective and community-driven.

Prior to engaging the Community Action Team in formal strategic planning sessions, LFA met with Town Staff to learn and understand their expectations and desires for the strategic plan, and their expectations and aspirations for the Focused on Success Initiative. Together, LFA and Town Staff established a planning framework.

The Town staff selected a diverse set of business owners, residents, elected officials, community partners who represented various sectors of the community to serve on the Community Action Team. Together, this team of individuals identified areas of priority, passion, and interest which resulted in four focus areas for this plan: **Open Spaces & Trails, Business Attraction, Workforce and Workforce Housing, and Quality of Life.**

The Community Action Team then identified individuals who represented each of the focus areas defined to participate in topic-related discussions and surveys. In order to capture as much input and feedback from the community

as possible, multiple surveys were conducted including a Community Feedback survey (with 106 respondents) and a Quality of Life survey (with 61 high school senior respondents).

As a final step in the strategic planning process, the Community Action Team was re-convened, the draft report was circulated, and input was received and integrated into the final Camp Verde 5-Yr Strategic Plan.

Plan Layout

ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

Compiled near the end of the project to ensure relevant data was captured and evaluated, this section includes data that Town Staff can use to better understand the community's economic context. Considered a "snapshot in time" utilizing the available and accessible data at the time this report was compiled.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

This section sets the stage for the plan, providing the reader a primer on economic development and outlining the community's guiding principles and economic development vision.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The operating feature of the plan, this section outlines the goals, strategies, and baseline performance indicators for each of the four focus areas.

IMPLEMENTATION

This section outlines recommendations for successful implementation, how the plan will be monitored and updated, and the roles and responsibilities of regional partners whose contributions are collectively needed in order to attain the intended outcomes.

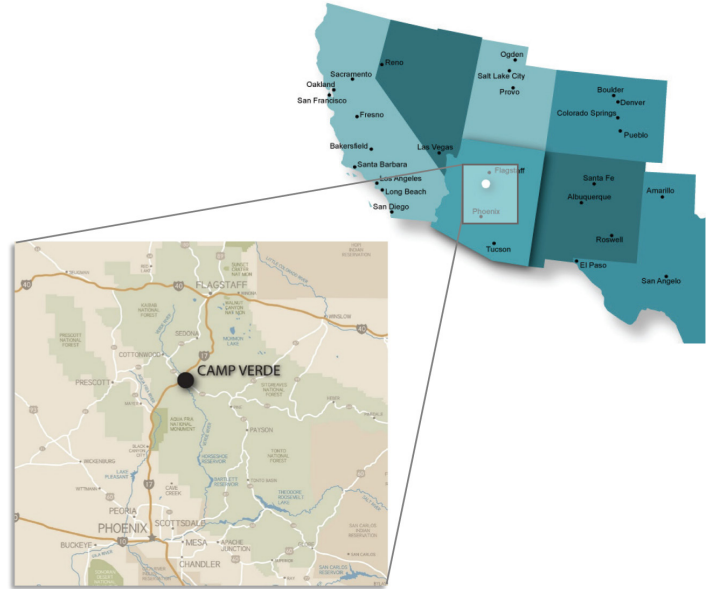
PLAN EVALUATION AND UPDATE

This section outlines the importance of regular tracking, measurement, and reporting of the objectives and strategies outlined in the plan. Transparency in challenges and successes will be key to keeping the community engaged and informed on progress and outcomes.



Camp Verde's Strategic Position

Camp Verde is located in the geographic center of Arizona. Strategically positioned along Interstate 17 (I-17), Camp Verde is an hour south of Flagstaff (57 miles), and an hour and a half north of Phoenix (90 miles).

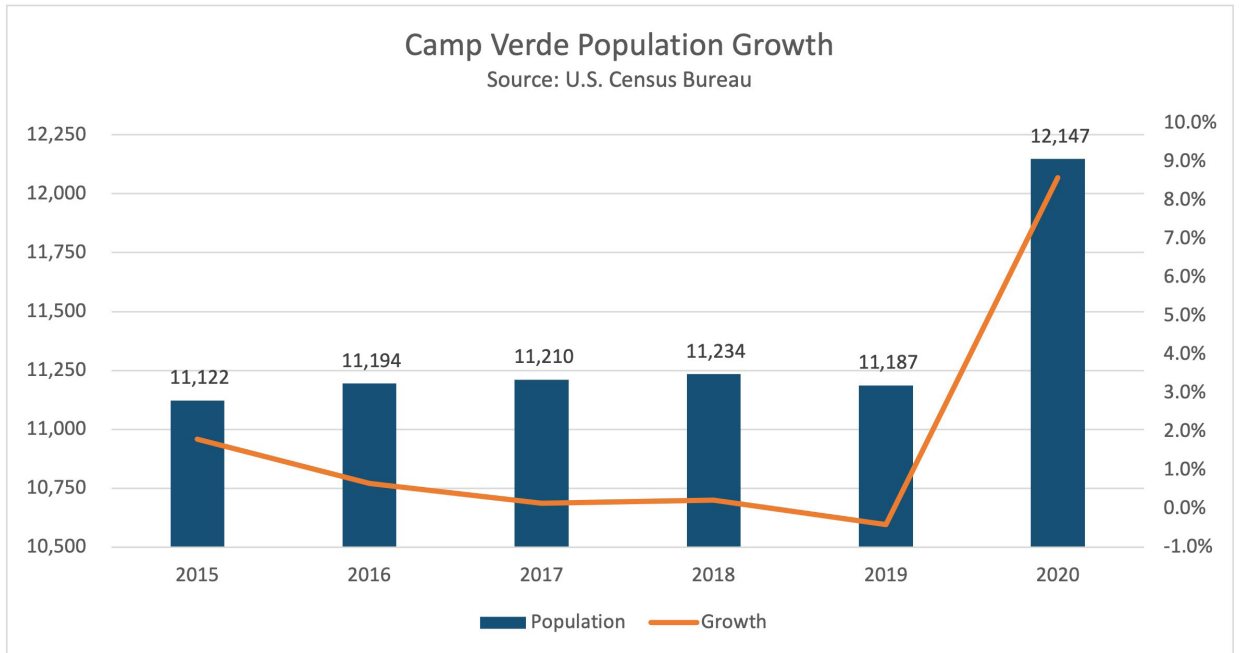


Economic Context

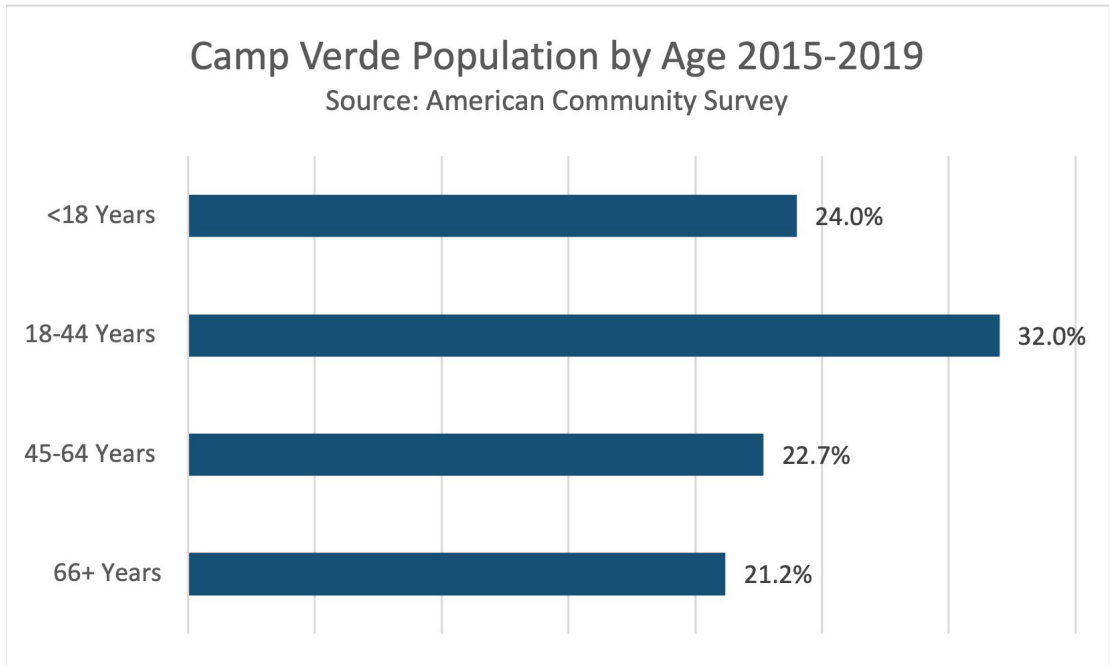
The economic context includes aspects measuring economic performance: population, labor force, income, economy, construction, assessed value, and quality of life. Indexing local data relative to statewide trends suggests that the Town is lagging behind the state in terms of economic recovery.

Population

In 2015-2020, Camp Verde, Arizona experienced a 9 percent growth. Between 2019 and 2020 alone, Camp Verde saw a growth in population of 8.6 percent, from 11,187 to 12,147. This made them the most rapidly growing community in Yavapai County. In 2019, 5,283 (47.2 percent) females and 5,913 (52.8 percent) males were counted within the population. The median age was 40.7 years.



Note: 2015-2019 numbers were Census estimates. 2020 numbers were measured in the 2020 census and are accurate through Oct. 15, 2020.



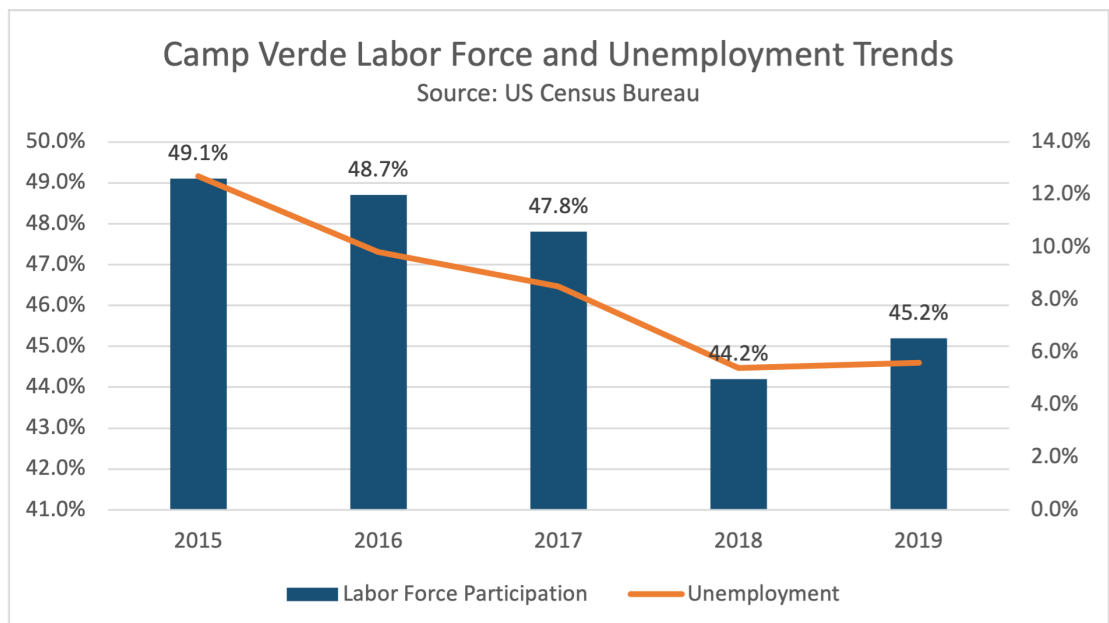
For people reporting one race alone, 79.4 percent were White; 0.5 percent were Black or African American; 9.3 percent were Native American and Alaska Native; 0.2 percent were Asian; 0.0 percent were Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and 7.2 percent were some other race.

An estimated 24.8 percent of the people in Camp Verde were Hispanic. An estimated 63.0 percent of the people in Camp Verde were White non-Hispanic. People of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Labor Force

Labor force trends are a good overall indicator of the level of economic opportunity. From 2015-2019, Camp Verde's labor force participation rates dropped from 49.1 percent to 45.2 percent. This means that of the population that is able to participate in the workforce (3,998), less than half are actively working or seeking work at the time of the data collection. In comparison, labor force participation at the state level is 59.7 percent.

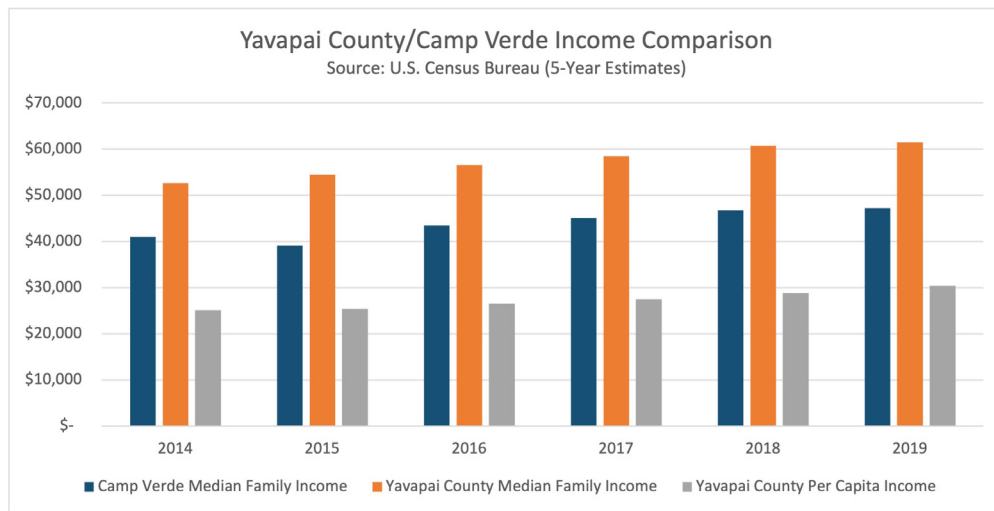
The unemployment rate in Camp Verde has also declined (a more promising indicator) from 12.7 percent in 2015 to 5.6 percent in 2019. This is more in line with the state unemployment rate of 5.9 percent. Through the job creation, business attraction, and talent retention initiatives outlined in this plan, Camp Verde should continue to see these numbers improve.



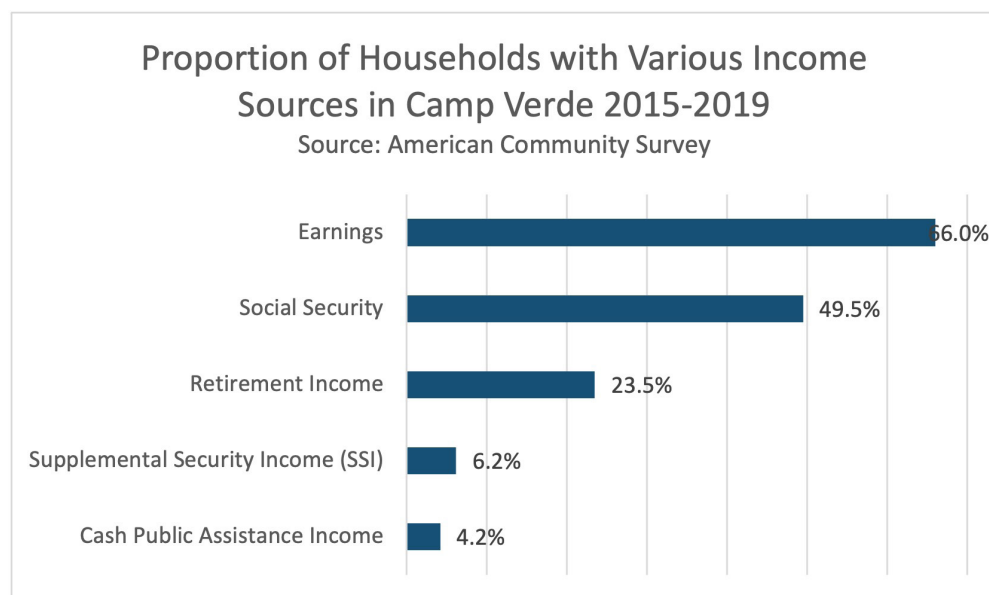
Income

The most valid available measure of income at the local level is per capita income. Per capita income levels in Yavapai County increased 21 percent from 2014 to 2019 compared to a 25 percent increase statewide. Per capita income in Yavapai County in 2013 was only 85 percent of the state's per capita income, but in 2019 it had risen to 94.3 percent. Male full-time year-round workers had median earnings of \$42,543. Female full-time year-round workers had median earnings of \$37,721.

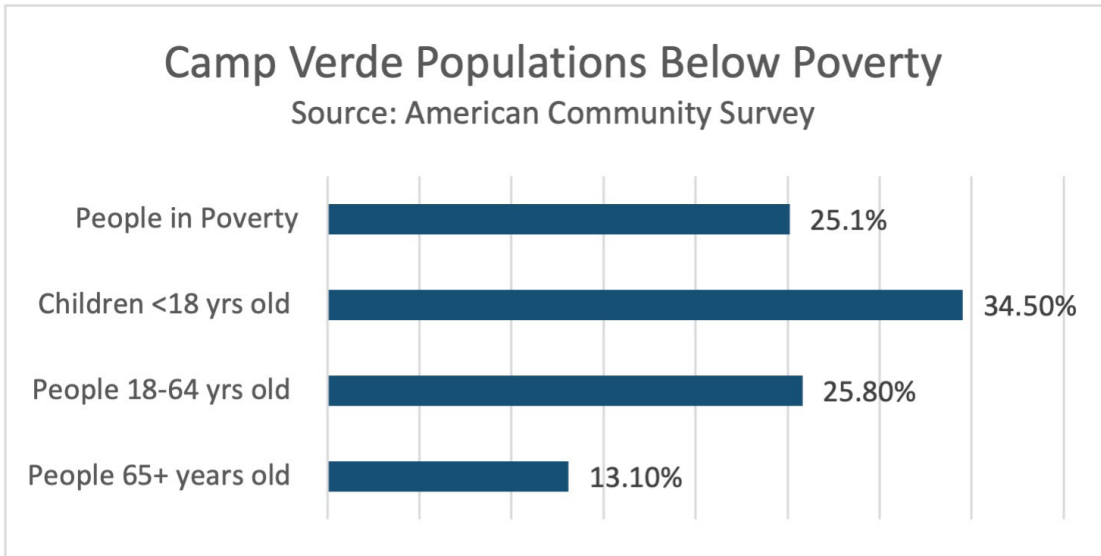
Median family income in Camp Verde increased by 15 percent during the 2014 to 2019 period compared to a 17 percent increase in Yavapai County. In 2019, family income in Yavapai County was higher than the statewide average by 2.8 percent (\$61,412 compared to \$59,700 respectively), whereas Camp Verde's family income in the same year was 21 percent less (\$47,148).



From 2015-2019, an estimated 66 percent of households received earnings. An estimated 49.5 percent of households received Social Security (County?) and an estimated 23.5 percent of households received retirement income other than Social Security. The average income from Social Security was \$21,044. These income sources are not mutually exclusive; that is, some households received income from more than one source.



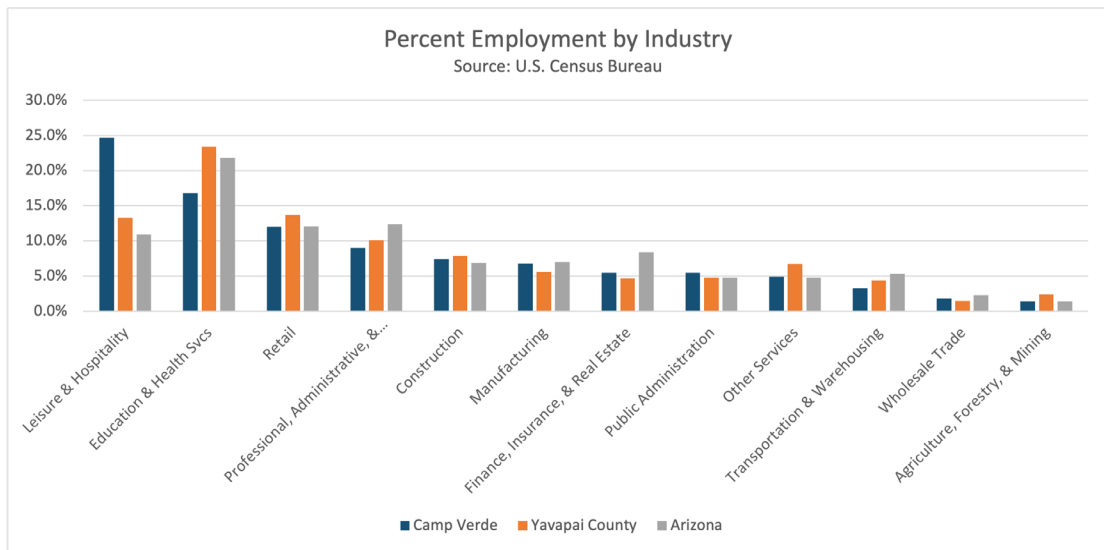
The poverty rate in Camp Verde in 2015-2019 was at 25.1 percent. An estimated 34.5 percent of children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 13.1 percent of people 65 years old and over. An estimated 25.8 percent of people 18 to 64 years were below the poverty level. Yavapai County was significantly below Camp Verde with 12 percent and below the statewide poverty rate of 13.5 percent. **This means that Camp Verde's poverty rate is 86 percent higher than the statewide average.** This can be attributed to almost half of the community identifying social security as their primary source of income, and to the industry and occupation mix of jobs provided and currently filled in Camp Verde.



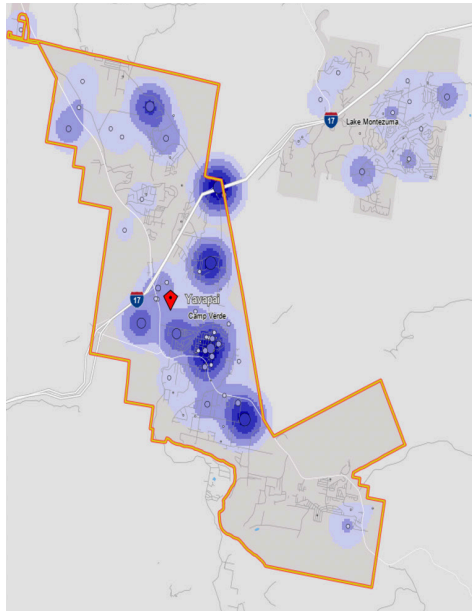
Note: that with the decreasing unemployment rate in Camp Verde, there is still a high level of poverty. This indicates an urgent need to attract higher paying jobs to the community.

Economy

In 2015-2019, the civilian employed population 16 years and older in Camp Verde, Arizona worked in the following industries:



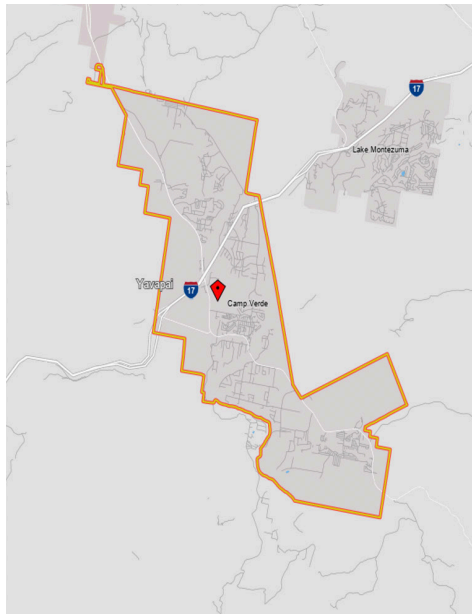
Note: Camp Verde is home to a high number of employees that support the leisure and hospitality industries of surrounding communities like Cottonwood and Sedona (as seen in the charts below).



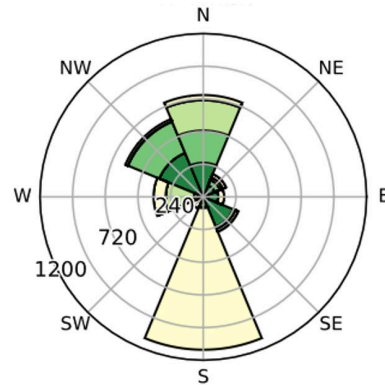
The Workers of Camp Verde

Destination of Commuters	Share
Phoenix	15.7%
Flagstaff	5.8%
Sedona	5.1%
Cottonwood	4.9%
Prescott	3.9%
Lake Montezuma	2.7%
Scottsdale	2.7%

-United States Census Bureau, Longitudinal Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

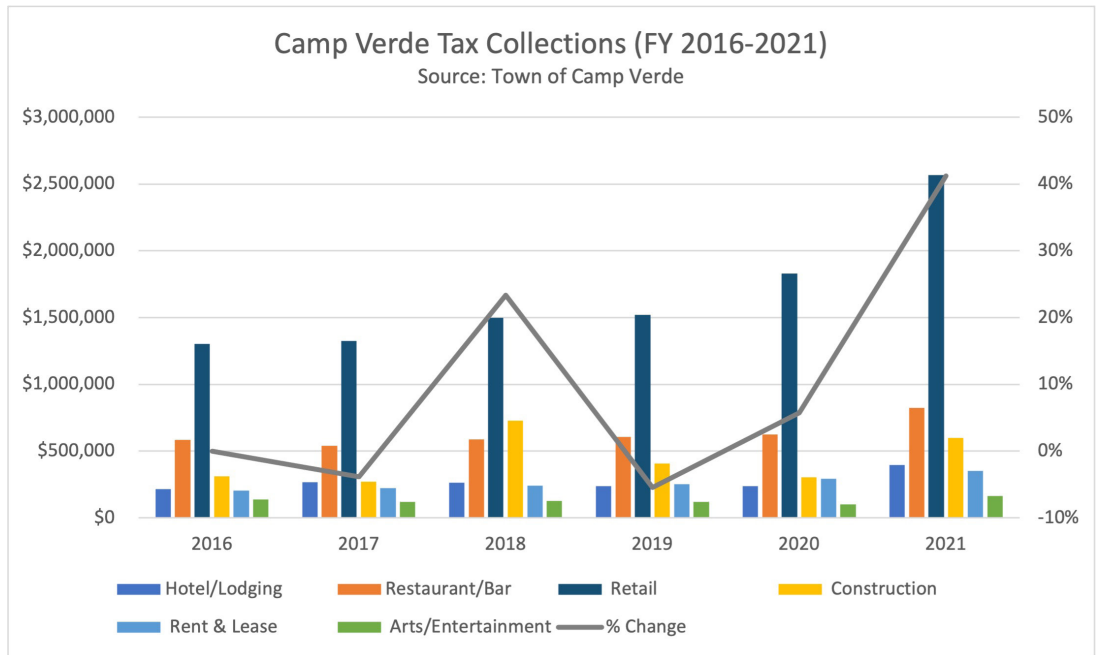


The Workers of Camp Verde



-United States Census Bureau, Longitudinal Origin-Destination Employment Statistics

Leisure and hospitality comprise the highest amount of the employed population at 24.7 percent, with education and healthcare coming in second at 16.8 percent, and retail rounding out the top three industries at 12.0 percent. This aligns closely with the economic development focus of the region (tourism), along with the needs of a mature resident population requiring healthcare services. The magnitude of jobs in leisure, hospitality, and retail corresponds to the poverty levels and low-income populations within Camp Verde.



	Hotel/Lodging	Restaurant/Bar	Retail	Construction	Rent & Lease	Arts/Entertainment	% Change
2016	\$215,340	\$584,080	\$1,301,806	\$311,253	\$204,516	\$139,139	0%
2017	\$265,761	\$541,909	\$1,325,102	\$269,701	\$223,180	\$120,638	-4%
2018	\$262,413	\$586,327	\$1,498,555	\$726,683	\$240,953	\$128,372	23%
2019	\$238,543	\$605,933	\$1,521,385	\$406,745	\$253,630	\$120,745	-5%
2020	\$239,807	\$623,237	\$1,830,309	\$303,651	\$294,478	\$101,823	6%
2021	\$396,625	\$825,415	\$2,566,410	\$599,326	\$352,143	\$163,295	41%

The poverty rate in Camp Verde in 2015-2019 was at 25.1 percent. An estimated 34.5 percent of children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 13.1 percent of people 65 years old and over. An estimated 25.8 percent of people 18 to 64 years were below the poverty level. Yavapai County was significantly below Camp Verde with 12 percent and below the statewide poverty rate of 13.5 percent. This means that Camp Verde’s poverty rate is 86 percent higher than the statewide average. This can be attributed to almost half of the community identifying social security as their primary source of income, and to the industry and occupation mix of jobs provided and currently filled in Camp Verde.

Housing

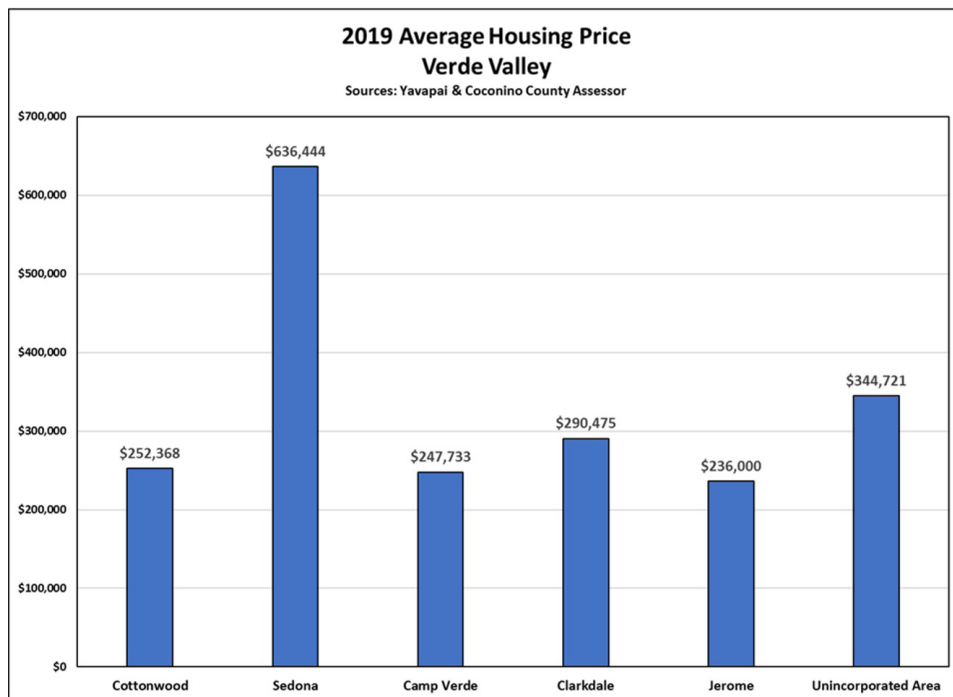
In 2015-2019, Camp Verde had 3,809 housing units that were occupied or had people living in them, while the remaining 488 were vacant. Of the occupied housing units, the percentage of these houses occupied by owners (also known as the homeownership rate) was 74.8 percent while renters occupied 25.2 percent. The average household size of owner-occupied houses was 2.52 and in renter-occupied houses it was 3.35.

Year Built	Camp Verde	Clarkdale	Cottonwood	Jerome	Sedona	Uninc. Area	Verde Valley
Mobile Homes	1,081	138	978	6	829	2,232	5,264
Before 1979	320	-	138	6	417	590	1,471
% Before 1979	29.6%	0.0%	14.1%	100.0%	50.3%	26.4%	27.9%

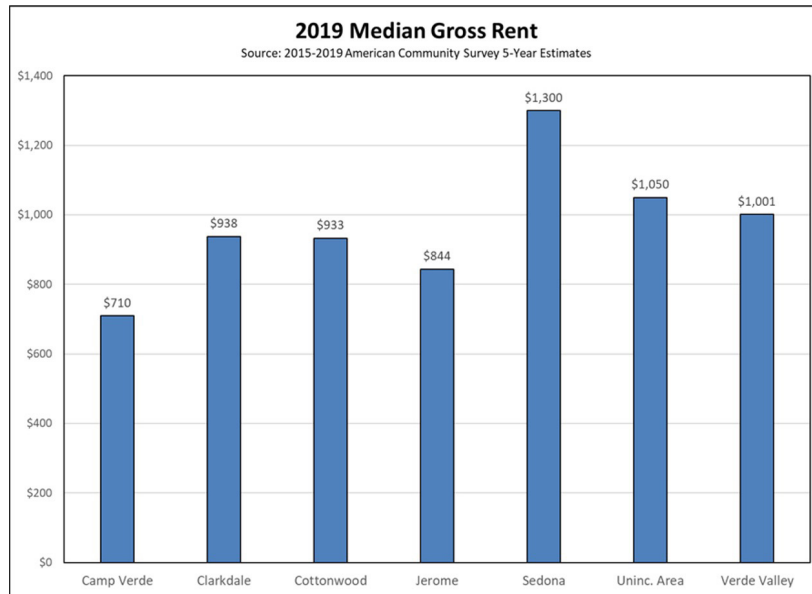
Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

24.3 percent of householders of these occupied houses had moved into their house since 2015, while 7.3 percent moved into their house in 1989 or earlier. Households without a vehicle available for personal use comprised 5.1 percent and another 27.5 percent had three or more vehicles available for use.

In 2015-2019, the median property value for owner-occupied houses in Camp Verde was \$193,100. The average housing price in 2019 was \$247,733. Of the owner-occupied households, 44.2 percent had a mortgage. 55.8 percent owned their houses without a mortgage or loan on the house. The median monthly housing costs for owners with a mortgage was \$1,125 and for owners, without a mortgage, it was \$381.



For renter-occupied houses, the median gross rent for Camp Verde was \$710. Gross rent includes the monthly contract rent and any monthly payments made for electricity, gas, water and sewer, and any other fuels to heat the house.



Note: Steering committee notes that the subsidized properties in the community must be bringing this number down as it is not realistic for average rents.

Households that pay thirty percent or more of their income on housing costs are considered cost-burdened. In 2015-2019, cost-burdened households in Camp Verde accounted for 40.8 percent of owners with a mortgage, 16.1 percent of owners without a mortgage, and 59.8 percent of renters.

Community	Occupied Housing Units	Cost Burdened Units	% Cost Burdened Units	Share of Verde Valley Burdened Units
Camp Verde	3,956	1,144	28.9%	11.1%
Clarkdale	2,226	1,034	46.5%	10.0%
Cottonwood	5,253	2,135	40.6%	20.7%
Jerome	227	62	27.3%	0.6%
Sedona	5,348	2,275	42.5%	22.0%
Uninc. Area	11,414	3,686	32.3%	35.7%
Totals	28,424	10,336	36.4%	100.0%

Source: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Tribal Neighbors

The Yavapai-Apache Nation with 636 acres of Yavapai and Dilze'e Apache tribal lands, divided into 5 communities, 3 of which are located within Town boundaries. The last population data available in 2000 shows 743 residents and 245 in the civilian labor force-which had grown to 315 in 2007. The Nation's holdings include 180 acres of agricultural land and another 180 acres for cattle ranching and also operate a convenience store, service station, recreational RV park, and casino and hotel. Aligning with the Nation's priorities and collaborating on regional economic and environmental initiatives are important considerations for long-term success.

Environment

Situated centrally in the state at 3,100 feet elevation, Camp Verde is known for its mild climate and rich ecosystem. The high desert community brings people from north and south to enjoy the Verde River, fertile farmlands, and light winters- which are also a huge draw for new residents and companies. The realities of climate change affecting the globe present increasing challenges to communities across Arizona. Camp Verde’s ecosystem, and thus the vibrancy of the local economy dependent on those environmental assets, should be prepared for future threats of water insecurity, extreme drought, and increasing summer temperatures.

Statewide, we are expected to see in the next year the first ever shortage declaration for the Colorado River, due to regional climate changes. This means water supply cuts across Arizona and planning for an economy that can thrive in a drier climate. As a key tributary to the Colorado River, the Verde River is deeply impacted by unrestricted groundwater pumping across the Verde Valley. In addition, the Colorado River and its tributaries like the Verde River provide 36% of Arizona’s water supply. The recent Verde River report card gave the overall health of the Verde River watershed a ‘C+’, citing drastic declines in base level flows for the past 3 decades and a lack of water quality data collection. As Town leaders look towards economic development and responsible growth, they carry an important responsibility and opportunity to lead local, regional, and statewide water security policy and discussions.

In addition, drought conditions in Arizona are increasing in severity. Since the 1990s, annual precipitation has been on the decline and is not projected to return to average levels any time soon. In conjunction with increasing temperatures, these ecosystem changes will impact water availability and pose a challenge to the agricultural sector.

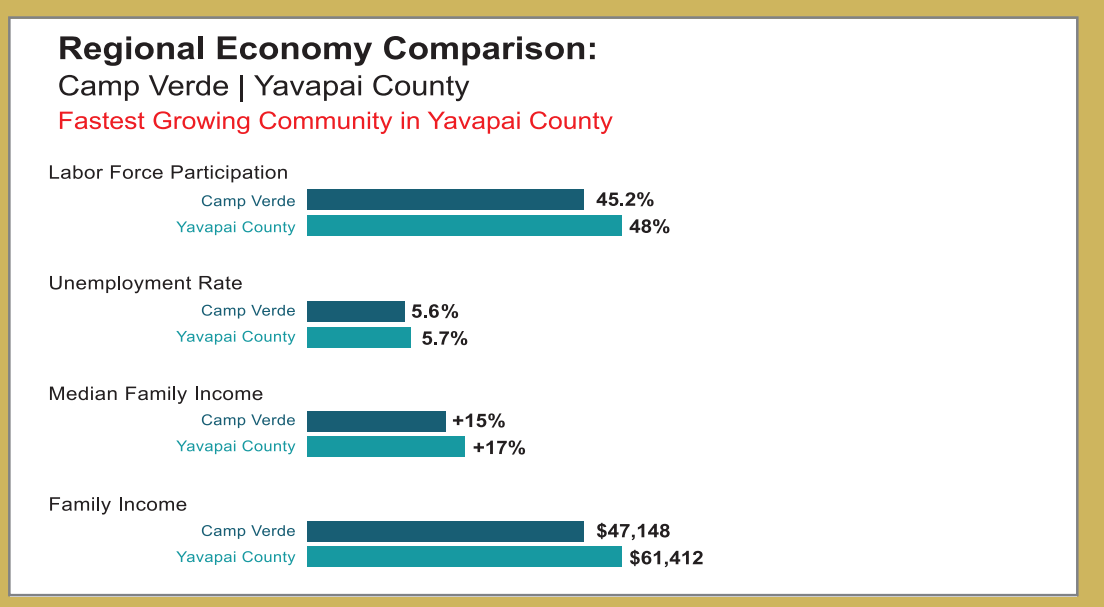
In a survey of almost 100 local residents the following perceptions of conservation were measured:

- 93.8% view preservation and protection of the environment positively
- 74.7% prioritize preservation and protection of the environment in their day-to-day life
- 72.9% feel knowledgeable about green practices
- 82.3% make a conscious effort to conserve water

Clear dedication to ecosystem health from the community of Camp Verde can continue to be leveraged and expanded to plan for projected future ecosystem states and the growing pressures of development across Verde Valley and in the Phoenix metro area.

COVID Impacts

Undetermined at the time of this report.



The community and economic development plan is intended to be an action-oriented strategy to:

- strengthen Camp Verde's economy
- enhance and protect its quality of life
- serve as a guide to local decision making
- provides a strategic guide for the next five years
- serve as a benchmark for monitoring progress over time

It is not intended to address every issue or tackle every problem facing the community. The objective is to identify those actions that are realistic and can provide results that build upon the community's assets and opportunities. The plan also recognizes the need for strong partnerships between government (municipal, tribal, and educational) agencies, citizens, service organizations, and the business community. The plan respects the existing roles and responsibilities of the various organizations but encourages collaboration in achieving many of the strategic initiatives. Effective implementation of this plan will require cooperation and collaboration over time to realize sustained success.

Economic Development | Community Development | Placemaking

For the purpose of this plan, economic development is defined as efforts that work to increase the standard of living for residents. These strategies typically focus on economic growth through business retention, expansion, and attraction or expansion of the tax base. However, economic development initiatives should also address the area's overall quality of life while ensuring that the local economy is sustainable over time.

Community development, as outlined in this plan, builds a stronger and more resilient community through an ongoing process of identifying community needs and assets, and prioritizing investments to enhance community resilience and sustainability. These strategies typically include housing, infrastructure improvements, parks and recreation, walkability, and other initiatives that build new wealth from basic local resources that can be enhanced or already exist.

Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design, and management of a community's experience - a sense of place. Placemaking harnesses local assets to build stronger bonds between residents and visitors and the essence of their 'place', community, or town, with the intent to promote health, inspire creativity, and enhance economic and human well-being as a whole.

Guiding Principles

Guiding principles reflect the community's core values. The Action Team articulated that development efforts would be balanced and sustainable so as not to compromise the reasons why people live and do business in Camp Verde. These principles are intended to guide decision-making processes and define the manner in which Camp Verde will grow and develop.

- Provide opportunities for residents from a wide range of economic levels and age groups to live, work, and thrive in the community.
- Develop, grow, and prosper in a manner that always reflects and respects the capacity of natural resources and protects their availability for future generations.
- Foster sustainable development, encourage small businesses and entrepreneurs, and balance future growth with cultural/historic preservation.
- Leverage existing social capital and foster an ethic of community investment.
- Capitalize on opportunities to collaborate with partners and strategically align regional investments.
- Integrate land use, circulation, and economic development planning.
- Implement development decisions in a predictable, fair, and cost-effective manner that preserves the health, safety, and welfare of residents and visitors.
- Seek opportunities that complement existing and potential competitive advantages.
- Define and communicate the true costs associated with development projects, including the impacts of non-contiguous and resource-demanding development.
- Use arts and culture to foster a creative economy and to further define a sense of place.

Community and Economic Development Vision

A vision is an articulation of an ideal and unique future that inspires, motivates, and transforms desire into action. Camp Verde's prosperity is generated largely through the natural resources and unique assets that surround and traverse our community. Our prosperity is connected to the health of the Verde River and surrounding landscape; therefore, we balance community and economic development with the need to preserve such assets for current and future generations.



“We successfully preserve our rich cultural history, agrarian heritage, and natural resources while fostering a strategically designed, resilient economy that supports a quality of life that enables our community to thrive.”

Focus Area: Opportunity Zone Revitalization Plan/Verde Valley Affordable Housing Action Plan

In April 2018 the United State Treasury Department designated Census Tract 04025001601, as a low-income Qualified Opportunity Zone (QOZ) in Camp Verde. The zone is a 20 square mile portion of town with a population of 6,600 that includes the historic downtown townsite, the current commercial area on Finney Flat Road and extending west along the State Route 260 corridor towards Cottonwood. Ever since the Town of Camp Verde incorporated in 1986, the area within the QOZ has been designated as the town's "growth corridor." Investments in this area could have very positive impacts on the attractiveness and dynamism of this zone. Particularly, dense multifamily developments, especially in a walkable environment. Regionally, this type of housing is in high demand, and when developed greatly increases our ability to attract young professionals. In Camp Verde, housing is of high importance as we see it as the key to future development of the town and the entire region. :

Area Characteristics

SR260 – Finnie Flat

The 260 West area is primarily undeveloped land that is suitable for future residential services, commercial, and industrial uses. It is approximately 7.47 square miles in size, and consists of rolling hills with natural drainage southwest of the Verde River. It interchanges with Interstate 17 where it meets the Verde River and travels SW to the Town boundaries for approximately 2.57 miles. This area includes a Planned Area Development (PAD) that consists of 0-11 dwelling units per acre.

The Finnie Flat Road area is comprised of 2.6% U.S. Forest Service Land and 2.82% is State Inlands. Much of the area is comprised of commercial uses along SR260, Industrial Drive and Finnie Flat Road. The residential areas in the Finnie Flat character area are high density residential and are comprised of site built, manufactured and modular homes. This area also includes PADs and Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) that consist of 0-11 dwelling units per acre.

With a per capita income of under \$20,000 a year, the QOZ contains some of the lowest cost housing areas in the Town and some of the largest tracts of undeveloped land in Camp Verde, making it an attractive area for revitalization as well as an idea area for new affordable housing developments, businesses and other multi-use projects. Currently, the median home value in the QOZ is \$216K, which is 15% lower than the median home value for the state of Arizona of \$260,000. However, the median household income is \$36,000, 42% lower than the state of Arizona of \$62,000. The poverty rate in the QOZ is 26%, which is 13% higher than the rate for the state of Arizona of 13%. Building affordable housing units in this area, and further developing the QOZ, would significantly help to lift the residents out of poverty, reach higher attainment, and establish long-term roots in the Town of Camp Verde. The median age in the QOZ is 39, which is a key indicator that revitalization and development of the QOZ would significantly increase the likelihood that these residents stay in Camp Verde and establish long-term family units in the area.

The area has been targeted and began development in the Town's 2016 General Plan, the 2016 River Recreation Master Plan and the 2020 Urban Upland Trail Plan as a focus area for development. In addition, the Town of Camp Verde took out a loan for \$1.2 million in 2021 to fund the engineering of a wastewater collection main line that will run the length of the QOZ not already served by the Town's wastewater collection system.

Goals for Revitalization of the QOZ:

1. Utilize the tax benefits that will be beneficial to developers that will create jobs, and many affordable housing developments within the Camp Verde QOZ. This will help create:
 - More affordable housing choices for low-income residents
 - Secure units for residents in these affordable housing developments
 - Establish walkable neighborhoods, creating long lasting communities
 - Establish transportation options for those without reliable transportation
 - Ensure the health and well-being of the residents
2. Develop recreational facilities, trails, trailheads, bike paths and river access points within the QOZ to improve transportation alternatives, livability and access to public lands.
3. Beautify the SR260 corridor and create attractive entrances along the roadway.
 - This will help create a regional greenway system to promote active lifestyles and community health, with links to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the center of the Town
4. Become a model for the rest of the Yavapai County and similar QOZ's so that the entire region thrives well into the future.
 - Promote the commerce corridor as a place for new businesses by partnering with other regional economic development agencies.
 - Encourage regional commercial and employment centers to support the regions needs.
5. Encourage tourism-related uses, amenities and infrastructure that complement and/or expand new or existing tourism uses and destinations.
 - Consider improvements in such aspects as streetscapes, public spaces, safety and overall community appearance.
6. Promote communication with the Yavapai-Apache Nation.

Strategies

1. Implement the Five-Year Affordable Housing Action Plan outlined in the Verde Valley Affordable Housing Action Plan (Town of Camp Verde, City of Cottonwood, Town of Clarkdale, City of Sedon, VVREO)
2. Work with developers to ensure affordable housing units make up at least 30% of any developments within the QOZ.
3. Implement the development of Parsons Riverfront Preserve and Homestead Riverfront Park as conceptualized in the 2016 River Recreation Master Plan (Town of Camp Verde, USFS, AZ State Parks, Friends of the Verde River, TNC, AZ Game and Fish, private foundations)
4. Develop the Grief Hill Dispersed Recreation Area including multimodal trailheads and trails (Town of Camp Verde, USFS, Az State Parks).
5. Promote commercial and mixed-use development adjacent to SR260.
 - Develop a strategic plan, with design elements for the seven roundabouts located along the SR260 (Town of Camp Verde, ADOT)
 - Facilitate the development of a corridor overlay plan to coordinate access, design, circulation and utilities.

The community and economic development strategic plan is outlined through focus areas. Each focus area outlines goals, strategies, and indicators. Goals and strategies are not prioritized in this document.

Goals

Are desired ends or conditions that, if pursued over time, will ultimately result in the attainment of the community vision.

Strategies

Are the specific activities that help to achieve the goal.

Focus Area: Workforce Development and Workforce Housing

By 2023, Camp Verde would like to recruit, attract, and retain businesses that provide economically diverse opportunities that help to retain young talent, offer competitive wages, and create one of the best skilled workforces for trades in the state. Additionally, the Town of Camp Verde is concerned with finding succession solutions, as older business owners look to retire and wish to pass along their business to younger generations.

In June 2021, Local First Arizona convened a focus group of individuals that either live or work in Camp Verde to discuss workforce and workforce housing. Through this conversation, a number of priorities and considerations were brought to light that will be addressed through this plan. Considerations identified include:

- **Quality of Life.** Quality of life is an important factor in workforce discussions. If people want to be here, they will stay. What does quality of life look like for Camp Verde residents? What makes Camp Verde a desirable place for a business or job seeker to start or relocate to?
- **Cost & Availability of Housing.** The current cost and availability of housing make it challenging or impossible to recruit and retain talent from outside the community. New talent may come for a career opportunity and/or quality of life, but without housing, they leave.
- **Utilization of External Talent.** Although it's cheaper for employers to attract a lateral hire, Camp Verde is unable to attract this talent due to the cost of living. External talent can bring new ideas, energy, diverse perspectives, and advanced experience/skills/training so addressing this barrier is critical to growing the employment base in Camp Verde.
- **Understanding the Future Workforce.** The future workforce is another generation with different values, interests, and goals. It is critical to understand if the future workforce feels prepared, ready, and motivated to enter the workforce; and if so, what type of workforce are they willing to enter?
- **Balancing Growth While Maintaining Character.** Some residents are resistant to growth. Development needs to have balance to maintain Camp Verde's rural character including core elements like Main Street, locally owned businesses, Fort Verde, and the Verde River.

To address the future workforce, 61 high school students were surveyed to gather their input and distill data on their perception of career readiness after graduation. **Key takeaways included:**

- 50.8% intended to attend a community college or 4-year university
- 75.4% felt prepared to begin your career or continue your education post-graduation
- 77% planned to leave Camp Verde after graduation. Of those, only 15% said they would consider moving back in the future
- 68.9% rated the availability of internships as low. Of those, 60.6% said they would likely participate in internships if they were available
- 55.7% rated the availability of mentorship opportunities as low | 64% said they would likely participate in mentorship opportunities if they were available
- 72.1% rated the availability of volunteer opportunities as high
- 45.9% stated they were most interested in skilled trades (construction was separate at 23%)
- 75.4% had considered starting a business (but main barrier was funding)



“I want to go to Yavapai (College), then switch to a university. Eventually I want to come back because there is a huge market for my profession and I think my skills and future family will flourish here later on in life.”

The Workforce & Workforce Housing focus group was also surveyed to identify the Return on Investment (ROI) of different workforce strategies. **Key takeaways included:**

- ROI would be high for apprenticeships
- ROI would be high for soft skills training
- ROI would be mid to high for internship programs
- ROI would be high for entrepreneurship programs
- ROI would be high (unanimously) for mentorship programs

In-Demand Sectors

Data was gathered from regional workforce partners, namely the Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG), to identify the in-demand sectors for Yavapai County. The Workforce & Workforce Housing focus group was presented with these in-demand sectors and then revised them to better represent growing and/or thriving industries in Camp Verde specifically. The sectors identified include:

- Agriculture
- Construction
- Hospitality / Food Service
- Supply Chain for Craft Beverage
- Education
- Quarrying, Sand, and Gravel
- Skilled Trades
- Manufacturing
- Warehousing
- Entrepreneurial Technology
- Telemedicine

Goals:

1. Build an educational pipeline that prepares Camp Verde youth and adults for in-demand and high-paying careers
2. Connect the upcoming workforce with a network of supportive mentors, peers, partners, and immediate opportunities with local industries
3. Improve access to local, affordable, and diverse housing options
4. Explore solutions for succession planning in key industries.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Strategy	Tactic	Accountability / Partnership	1-2 years	3-5 years
Employer Engagement	Create industry collaboratives around in-demand sectors	Town of Camp Verde, Arizona@Work, & Local First Arizona (TPM)	X	
	Conduct wage analysis across in-demand sectors	Town of Camp Verde, Arizona@Work	X	
	Launch Rural Business Academy Recruitment & Retention Course	Town of Camp Verde, Local First Arizona	X	
	Enhance/Create “Do What You Love” Career Exploration event or program	Town of Camp Verde ED, Camp Verde School District		X
	Launch PipelineAZ to better connect students and job seekers to local employers and career pathways	Town of Camp Verde, PipelineAZ.com		X
	Implement programming to help retiring business owners transition their business	Town of Camp Verde, SBDC, Project Equity		X
Youth Engagement	Develop mentorship program	Big Brothers Big Sisters of Yavapai County, Home-Based Businesses, Greater Business Community	X	
	Develop internship program through USDA RBDG grant and additional employer partnerships	Town of Camp Verde, NAU, VACTE, Yavapai College	X	
	Revive Internship Fair	Town of Camp Verde ED, Camp Verde School District, VACTE, Yavapai College, NAU, Business Community		X
	Launch youth entrepreneurship/pitch program	Town of Camp Verde, VVREO, SBDC, Moonshot		X
	Engage youth in civic	Town of Camp Verde, Verde		X

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

	leadership	Valley Leadership		
	Launch Young Professionals Coalition	CVCBA		X
Talent Partner Engagement	Create the Entrepreneurial & Workforce Innovation Center (entrepreneurial certificate, soft skills training, business planning, accelerator training, co-working)	Town of Camp Verde ED, Yavapai College, NACOG, Arizona@Work, VACTE, SBDC, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Local First Arizona	X	
	Strengthen Community Kitchen and create incubator program for food entrepreneurs/food service training	Town of Camp Verde, Local First Arizona, Goodwill	X	
	Identify new programs and partners in workforce development	Town of Camp Verde, Goodwill of Central Arizona, Center for Future of Arizona		X
Housing	Continue to engage in Verde Valley Housing Coalition	Town of Camp Verde, VVREO, regional municipalities	X	
	Provide training to employers to build stronger/creative benefits packages	Town of Camp Verde, SHRM	X	
	Research incentive programs that supplement down payments required	Town of Camp Verde, Developers	X	
	Create Verde Lakes Revitalization Plan to address housing/quality of life	Town of Camp Verde, Verde Lakes Community		X
	Launch financial literacy training for future home-buyers	Town of Camp Verde, Financial partner		X
	Review Deed-Restricted Workforce Housing solutions	Town of Camp Verde		X
	Launch affordable housing awareness/educational campaign	Town of Camp Verde, VVREO, Habitat for Humanity		X

Focus Area: Business Attraction

The strength of a community’s businesses is often indicative of the economic well-being that correlates with general camaraderie and quality of life. A city or town might have a low GDP, but its people often may still prosper because the local economy is stable, it has enough money to cover expenses, it’s self-sustaining, it’s well-integrated into the community, and its people are active, innovative, and supportive of each other. By 2023, Camp Verde would like to cultivate a thriving business community by attracting businesses that align with the Town’s values, resources, and vision.

In June 2021 Local First Arizona convened a focus group of individuals that either live or work in Camp Verde to discuss business attraction strategies for the community. Additional information was gathered through an electronic Community survey, an electronic City Leader survey, and an electronic Business Leader survey. In order to create these strategies, current spending patterns, assets for attraction, and community values were discussed to help ensure that relevant types of businesses were being pursued.

Spending patterns identified key areas of economic leakage that include:

- Agriculture & Livestock products
- Business supplies
- Contractors/skilled trades
- Retail stores (Shoes, Clothing)
- Sporting goods

When asked what businesses are in highest demand in Camp Verde, the group identified:

- Medical Services (supplies, services, and wellness)
- Service Businesses (Internet, light manufacturing, youth entertainment)
- Food/Dining: Food distribution hub, craft beverage supply chain, restaurants
- Retail and shopping

Key assets defined for business attraction include:

- Opportunity zones
- A business-friendly climate
- Freeway access/transportation
- Climate and scenery
- Recreation: river, trails, RV parks

Community values that need to be aligned with new businesses entering the market include:

- Engaged, cooperative, good stewards
- Excellent customer service and quality product
- Trustworthy, high integrity
- Committed, honest, regionality
- Volunteering in the community
- No extractive qualities

Note: although the focus group perceived the Town to be business-friendly, the survey results from the community and the businesses showed a different result. 55.6 percent of business respondents stated they do not feel the Town supports local businesses and 44 percent of them said they don’t feel the Town collaborates with local businesses to meet the needs of the community. Licensing and permitting also were identified as a source of frustration. Conversely, 72.8 percent of Community survey respondents stated they believe the Town supports local businesses.

Goals:

1. Cultivate a thriving business community by attracting businesses that align with the Town’s values, resources, and vision.
2. Attract businesses that provide a good, living wage and fill the needs identified by the community and surrounding region.
3. Retain existing businesses in the community by creating opportunities for success and helping to overcome obstacles that impede growth.

Strategies:

Strategy	Tactic	Accountability / Partnership	1-2 years	3-5 years
Economic Development	Implement SR260 Sewer Main Line/EDA Grant	Town of Camp Verde	X	
	Install/expand broadband infrastructure	Town of Camp Verde, Yavapai County	X	
	Town purchase of the Water Company	Town of Camp Verde	X	
	Create business attraction promotional package: Brochure, website, asset inventory, opportunity zones	Town of Camp Verde Economic Development	X	
	Create environmental resiliency	Town of Camp Verde,	X	
	framework for new and existing businesses interested in supporting ecosystem health	Friends of the Verde River, Local First AZ		
	Create professional development/capacity-building program for small business owners	Town of Camp Verde ED, CVCBA, SBDC, Local First AZ		X
	Conduct formal economic leakage / traffic analysis to quantify business/retail opportunities	Town of Camp Verde ED, Private Developers		X
	Conduct feasibility study on regional food hub to support agricultural expansion	Town of Camp Verde, SEDI		X
	Complete Marijuana Cultivation Economic Impact Study	Town of Camp Verde ED		X
	Participate in regional business attraction initiatives, leveraging community strengths to align with interested employers	Town of Camp Verde ED, VVREO, PVEDF, Yavapai County, Yavapai College		X
Community Development	Downtown Development: Business recruitment and character/community enhancements	Town of Camp Verde, Business Community	X	
	Wayfinding and business district signage	Town of Camp Verde Community Development, ADOT		X
	Develop environmental resiliency framework for community development projects	Town of Camp Verde, Friends of the Verde River, Local First AZ	X	

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Business Retention	Conduct business roundtable to determine Town Business Climate	Town of Camp Verde, Facilitator	X	
	Conduct business retention and expansion initiative to understand needs/opportunities in business community	Town of Camp Verde, Local First Arizona	X	
	Strengthen Camp Verde Business Alliance board development and programming	CVCBA, Town of Camp Verde, Alliance of Arizona Nonprofits, Local First Arizona	X	
	Strengthen Local Lovin' program with a fresh look, promo items, online presence	Town of Camp Verde ED, CVCBA	X	
	Strengthen Verde Grown campaign to support ag/food entrepreneurs	Town of Camp Verde, Local First AZ	X	
	Refresh Tourism map and distribution in the community	Town of Camp Verde, Business Community	X	
	Expand/promote a micro-loan fund for small businesses (\$5-\$25k)	Town of Camp Verde, CDFI, NARBA, VVREO		X
	Launch business recognition program for value alignment, community impact, and sustainable practices	Town of Camp Verde		X
	Implement local procurement policy for Town of Camp Verde	Town of Camp Verde, Local First AZ		X
	Launch sustainable business training course and/or business alliance for local and regional ecosystem conservation	Town of Camp Verde, Friends of the Verde River, Local First AZ	X	
	Develop support for business contingency plan for ongoing and future public health closures	Town of Camp Verde, SBDC, Local First AZ	X	

Focus Area: Quality of Life

One of the primary goals of the Town of Camp Verde's 2021-2026 strategic plan, is a commitment to maintaining and enhancing the community's Quality of Life. Quality of life was consistently mentioned throughout the strategic planning process; whether speaking about open spaces and trails, workforce, business attraction, and even with youth.

In August 2021, Local First Arizona conducted one-on-one outreach with a small group of community stakeholders and also utilized the survey sent to high school seniors with intent to determine the community's definition of quality of life, and to understand top priorities for improving and/or maintaining the existing quality of life in Camp Verde. After analyzing both qualitative and quantitative input, a Quality of Life in Camp Verde could be summarized as:



Quality of Life [kwol•i•tee•uv•lyf]

- the level of satisfaction and comfort that a person or group enjoys
- general well-being

“The level of ease with which we can connect to our surroundings.”

Incorporated in this statement are key priorities that were identified by the community:

- **Human connectivity:** knowing one another, small-town values, and supporting your neighbor
- **Transportation connectivity:** the ability to walk, bike, and/or drive to your destination without congestion or stress from traffic or other obstacles
- **Technology connectivity:** access to internet and phone service that helps to connect to resources and people outside the community
- **Connection to the outdoors:** protection, appreciation, and stewardship of the trails, rivers, dark skies, and landscapes of Camp Verde
- **Connection to resources:** the ability to make a good living, afford a comfortable home, and purchase healthy food

Key areas of input from the youth survey included:

- 67.2% said Camp Verde has a high quality of life
- 72.1% said Camp Verde is a safe community
- 52.5% said Camp Verde has good neighborhoods
- 60.7% said there are not enough opportunities for youth engagement outside of school
- 55.8% said they were proud to be from Camp Verde



When asked “What is one thing you would like to tell community leaders that would improve the community for youth”, one student responded, “Keep going”.

Goal:

Maintain and protect Camp Verde's quality of life while thoughtfully strengthening the community value proposition

Strategy	Tactic	Accountability / Partnership	1-2 years	3-5 years
Connection to Place	Complete Phase I of the Sports Complex	Town of Camp Verde	X	
	Revive Youth Advisory Committee	Town of Camp Verde	X	
	Homestead Park and Parsons Riverfront Preserve	Town of Camp Verde, Arizona State Parks, PNF, CNF, local nonprofit groups	X	
	Build out roundabouts	Town of Camp Verde	X	
	Complete design/installation of wayfinding signage	Town of Camp Verde ED, NPS, ADOT	X	
	Strengthen/support Arts Alliance and add a cultural component	Town of Camp Verde, Arts Alliance of Camp Verde, Yavapai-Apache Nation, local artists	X	
	Planning & Zoning review of code, housing inventory, and General Plan alignment	Town of Camp Verde, Planning & Zoning	X	
	Create a task force for engaging with Native and Hispanic communities in community design and planning projects	Town of Camp Verde, Yavapai-Apache Nation, Local First AZ, Indigenous Design Collaborative (ASU)		X
	Expand Volunteer Network	Town of Camp Verde, local nonprofit groups, local schools, employers		X
	Develop the Communities Facilities District for 260 sewer line expansion	Town of Camp Verde CDX		
	Utilize Brownfield grants to address blight / adaptable reuse opportunities	Town of Camp Verde CD, ADEQ	X	
	Launch a conservation coalition to build local ambassadors	Town of Camp Verde, Friends of the Verde River, Local First AZ		X
	Create programs and events that advocate for community health through the use of trail systems	Town of Camp Verde, Verde Valley Trail Fund		X



“There need to be more strategic ways of bringing more community and the arts out supporting the things that are being made in CV, more housing options, and more jobs.”

Focus Area: Trails and Open Spaces

In December 2020, the Camp Verde Town Council approved the Urban Upland Trail Plan, with the goal of developing a series of connected trails throughout the Town of Camp Verde, along with developed trailheads and access points, allowing access to public lands that surround the town.

In July 2021, Local First Arizona convened the original steering committee for the development of the Urban Upland Trail Plan to discuss capacity constraints and infrastructure challenges recognized thus far, impacts and opportunities for other community organizations as they relate to trail development and funding and partnerships that would need to be developed to ensure the overall success of the plan.

Driven by tourism and providing a recreational place for residents, the goal of the plan and trail system was to build out a very specific trail plan - establishing trailheads in, and directly adjacent to the town, and a system that connects trailhead to trailhead, and park to park. The Urban Upland Trail Plan is a(n):

- Living document that will evolve over time
- Point of reference for the build-out of the trail system
- Asset inventory of trail routes and trailheads
- Blueprint for the trails

The Plan was created to address issues with the current trail system including:

- Access to U.S. Forest Service trails that are not currently maintained
- Hikers accessing trails by crossing through private properties
- Inability to promote and direct visitors to the trails because they are not recognized by the Forest Service
- Lack of parking near trails

Goal:

Complete work outlined in the Urban Upland Trail Plan which includes building a series of connected trails throughout the Town of Camp Verde, along with developed trailheads and access points.

Strategy	Tactic	Accountability / Partnership	1-2 years	3-5 years
Trail & Trailhead Development	Identify funding opportunities that include grants, Town of Camp Verde, and other partnerships	Town of Camp Verde, Arizona Economic Recovery Center, Verde Valley Trail Fund, Verde Valley Cyclists	XX	
	Develop and design maintenance standards for the urban portion of the UUTS	Town of Camp Verde, ASU, Interns	X	
	Assist with Verde Trail and Access Plan as it relates to Camp Verde	Prescott National Forest, Town of Camp Verde, Verde Front	X	
	Organize a trail advocacy group to build, maintain and assist with UUTS	Town of Camp Verde, Greater Business Community, CVCBA, Camp Verde Bicycle	X	

	Create a marketing program to promote UUTS	Town of Camp Verde ED, Parks & Rec, CVCBA		X
	Plan and implement trail expansion in Jackson Flat	Town of Camp Verde, Coconino National Forest		X
	Begin collaboration on Verde Valley Circle Trail	Town of Camp Verde	X	
	Develop trail networks in Parsons Riverfront Preserve and Homestead Park	Town of Camp Verde, Prescott National Forest, AZ State Parks, Friends of the Verde River, Verde Valley Archaeology Center, Private Partners		X
	Connect community to existing systems of non-motorized, multi-use trails and pathways	Town of Camp Verde		X
	Develop trailheads at Oasis, Grief Hill, and Jackson Flat	Town of Camp Verde		X



Framework for Success

The Camp Verde Focused on Success: Community and Economic Development Strategic Plan is intended to help expand the regional economy and improve residents' standard of living. The following guidance helps to frame how success can be realized.

Coordinated Approach

Entities, organizations, and agencies involved in economic development must work together to achieve mutually agreed-upon goals to ensure a sustainable effort. Implementing the shared vision, goals, and strategies as articulated within this plan is the first step toward cohesive and coordinated efforts.

Regional Collaboration

A comprehensive understanding of the region and a commitment to collaborating with entities throughout the region is critical. Regional partners include the towns of Clarkdale and Jerome and the cities of Cottonwood and Sedona, Yavapai County, Yavapai-Apache Nation, Yavapai College, federal agencies such as the United States Forest Service and National Park Service, and regional entities, including the Northern Arizona Council of Governments (NACOG), Economic Collaborative of Northern Arizona (ECoNA), and the Verde Valley Regional Economic Organization (VVREO). The greater Camp Verde community should not consider themselves alone in growing a thriving economy; regional collaboration and synergistic efforts benefit all contributing partners.

Long-Term Commitment

Economic development is not a simple checklist; overnight achievements should not be expected. Successful economic development programs require long-term investments (e.g., infrastructure and resource management) and political leaders committed to forwarding objectives and measuring progress.



Plan Evaluation and Update

The Camp Verde Focused on Success: Community and Economic Development Strategic Plan serves as a guide for regional community and economic development efforts. However, it is critical to monitor how the plan is put into action. The town, in collaboration with its partners, is responsible for monitoring how the plan's implementation is progressing.

Adoption

The Town of Camp Verde shall adopt or accept this plan in coordination with the Town's General Plan Update. Policy direction provided herein is anticipated to become or serve as the framework for the update of the economic development element.

Communication

The Focused Future process is grassroots in nature, fueled by the contributions of volunteers and input from the community. Communication about the plan and its progress is critical. Upon adoption or acceptance, the plan's goals and strategies, as well as the Town and its partners' short-term action plans, should be widely communicated and progress reported.

Plan Distribution and Presentations

Because of the collaborative nature of this plan and the various agencies and allies needed for its success, the town shall announce its adoption or acceptance of this plan and distribute this framework to regional entities and partners. It's important that the community's economic vision is understood and that regional efforts contribute to its realization.

Keeping Score

While many of the outlined strategies will comprise the work program of the Town's Economic Development Director, other Town departments, agencies and organizations will serve as leaders for executing other strategies. While the town shoulders accountability for this plan, its success will rest on the contributions of the entire community.

Devising a strategy, whereby the Town and its partners report and track progress, should be an immediate priority. Observing changes in data can take years and may not be accurate as a measurement method until the final 3-5 years of the plan. Authoring regular (annual) reporting on strategy achievements is another mechanism for tracking effort.

The following implementation recommendations are offered:

- Employ the Focused on Success Community Action Team (or similar entity) to serve as steward to this plan, meeting biannually to review and track progress.
- Create an annual progress report, authored in the first quarter of the year, to assist in budget and capital improvements planning.
- Submit annual progress reports to the community, partners, and the program sponsor, APS.

As the plan is implemented and changes occur in the local and regional economy, the plan should also evolve. In keeping with the collaborative nature of the Focused on Success program, the Town and its partners should cooperatively review and identify potential changes or edits to the plan. Any recommended changes would be presented to elected officials and considered in the same manner in which the plan was originally adopted or accepted.