



Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District

2024–2028 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

DECEMBER 2023



Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District

818 Highway 62 North
Harrison, AR 72601

nwaedd.org

Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District 2024–2028 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

December 2023



Arkansas Economic
Development Institute

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YourAEDI.com

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CEDS Committee

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Chamber of Commerce

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Benton County Judge

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Patty Methvin

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Workforce Administrator

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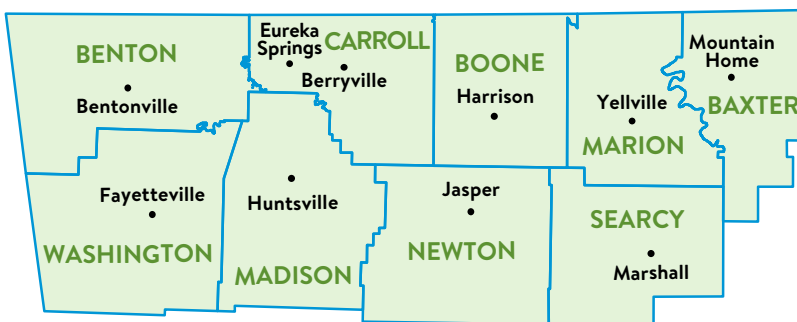
President ASU-Mountain Home

CEDS Introduction

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy or CEDS is a document designed to engage cooperation between the public and private sectors in the resiliency and health of the local economy. A CEDS analyzes the target area's economic and social well-being and serves as a guide to establishing regional goals, strategies, investment priorities, and resources to benefit Northwest Arkansas. A CEDS seeks to maximize the target area's unique advantages and minimize its disadvantages. Finally, a CEDS provides a benchmark for regional economic success.

The CEDS is a mandated document by the Economic Development Administration, (EDA) to define Economic Development Districts throughout the nation. The Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District (NWAEDD) and the CEDS Strategy Committee are to provide this document to reference economic conditions, development strategies, and projects throughout the 9-county district; this CEDS is not intended to be a "stand-alone" document. The CEDS is just one tool used in economic development.

NWAEDD 9-County District Boundaries and Seats:



- Baxter County.....City of Mountain Home
- Benton County.....City of Bentonville
- Boone CountyCity of Harrison
- Carroll CountyCities of Berryville and Eureka Springs
- Madison County.....City of Huntsville
- Marion CountyCity of Yellville
- Newton CountyCity of Jasper
- Searcy County.....City of Marshall
- Washington County...City of Fayetteville

CEDS Timeline 2023

FEBRUARY

NWAEDD and the Arkansas Economic Development Institute (AEDI) partnered to complete the NWAEDD CEDS. NWAEDD identified 18 community leaders and regional stakeholders to form the CEDS committee.

MARCH – APRIL

AEDI began data collection to present to the CEDS Committee.

APRIL – AUGUST

AEDI and NWAEDD partnered to host two community meetings to present and analyze regional data, perform a SWOT analysis by gathering input from community leaders and develop focus areas of the CEDS report.

SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER

AEDI prepared the CEDS document and delivered a draft to NWAEDD CEDS Committee for final review.

NOVEMBER

AEDI finalized the CEDS document and prepared for desktop publishing.

DECEMBER

The CEDS plan submitted to EDA.



CEDS Summary Background

Northwest Arkansas is one of the **fastest-growing regions** in the state and is projected to experience a 7.3% increase in population over the next few years, putting the projected increase at more than 752,000 residents by 2027.

The urban counties of Benton and Washington contain approximately 78% of the population of Northwest Arkansas, with the remaining rural counties having 22% of the area's population.

**PROJECTED
POPULATION
INCREASE
BY 2027**

7.3% 

**MORE THAN
113,000
JOBS
COLLECTIVELY**

Manufacturing, Healthcare & Social Assistance, and Retail Trade industries are the three dominant industries in the region, accounting for more than 113,000 jobs collectively.

Over the next five years, **the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation industry** is projected to experience a 2.6% increase, the largest of any industry in the area. This industry was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and thus is experiencing a rebound in growth.

**LARGEST
INDUSTRY
INCREASE
PROJECTED**

2.6% 

Environment and Outdoor Recreation

The NWAEDD region is vast and encompasses the picturesque Ozark Mountains and several state parks. The eastern portion of Northwest Arkansas is largely rural, with many small towns and communities scattered throughout. Residents can enjoy the peacefulness and tranquility of rural living, with open spaces and a closer connection to nature.

The western part of the region includes the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers metro area, which is the second-largest metro area in the state.

The area has abundant natural resources including the Bull Shoals and Norfork Lakes which are two of the largest in the state. Additionally, numerous streams, rivers, and lakes provide water recreation opportunities. Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy mountain biking, camping, fishing, and rock climbing.

Culture

Urban centers, villages, and rural communities with a sense of place are a common feature of communities within Northwest Arkansas. Residents often have strong ties to their communities, participating in local events, festivals, and community organizations.

Artists and creative workers in the area have a large and growing impact on the regional and state economies. The cultural and artistic opportunities that abound attract residents, and visitors and increase tourism and tax collection revenue.

The Crystal Bridges Museum, Museum of Native American History, botanical gardens, and film festivals are some of the many offerings in the region.

Demographic and Economic Data

The NWAEDD region has a population of over 700,00 people and has grown by 21% over the last 11 years. The area is projected to experience an increase of 7.3% over the next few years.

Table 1: NWAEDD Demographic Data

2010 CENSUS	2021 ESTIMATE	2027 PROJECTION	2010–2021 CHANGE	2021–2027 CHANGE
579,161	701,180	752,074	21.1%	7.3%
FEMALE	MALE	MEDIAN AGE	UNDER 18 YEARS	65+ YEARS
50.0%	50.0%	36.7	23.9%	15.8%
Unemployment Rate 2.5%				

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; Esri Geoenrichment Services; Bureau of Labor Statistics



Population

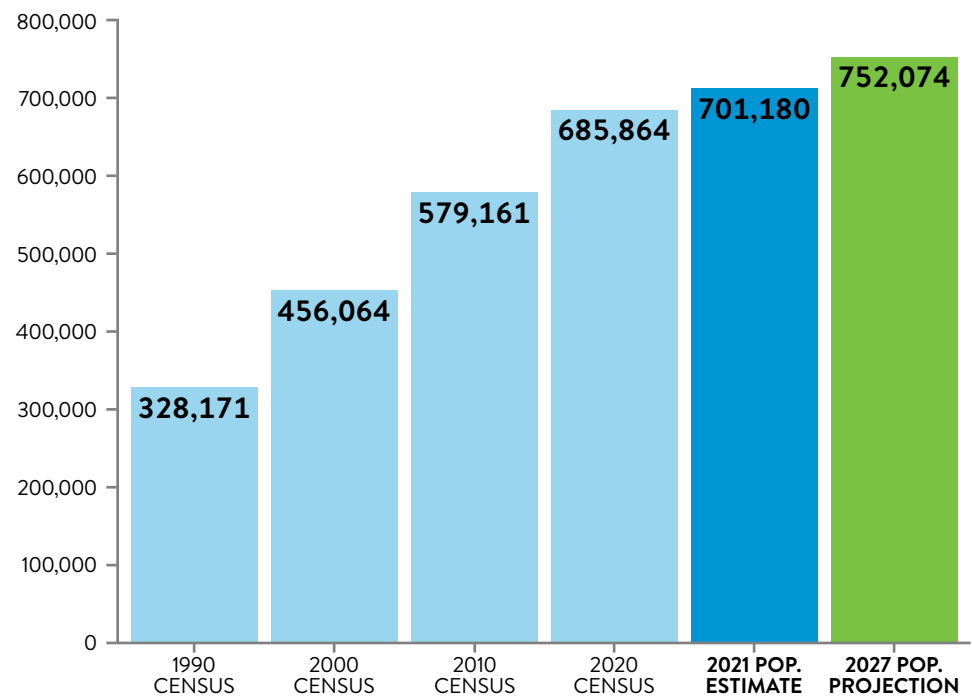
**NWAEDD 2027
POPULATION
PROJECTED**

752,074

A growing population can signal the economic growth of a community.

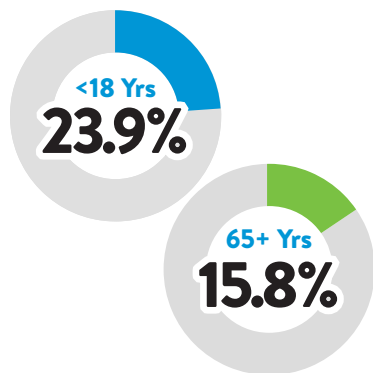
As of 2021, the NWAEDD region had a population of approximately 701,180 and is one of few locations across the state that is projecting a population increase over the next few years.

Figure 1: NWAEDD Population by Year



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2020 Census, and Population Division; ESRI Geoenrichment Service

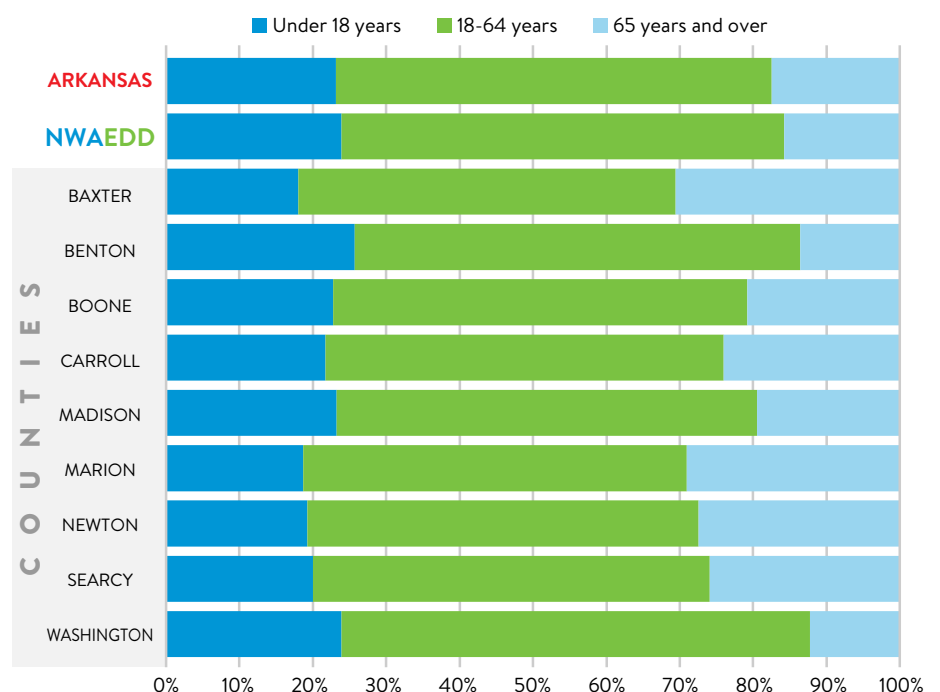
Population Age



The age distribution of a community helps leaders prioritize community investments and services to accommodate resident's needs.

The population in the region that's under 18 years and 65 years and older makes up 23.9% and 15.8% of the population, respectively.

Figure 2: Population Age by County



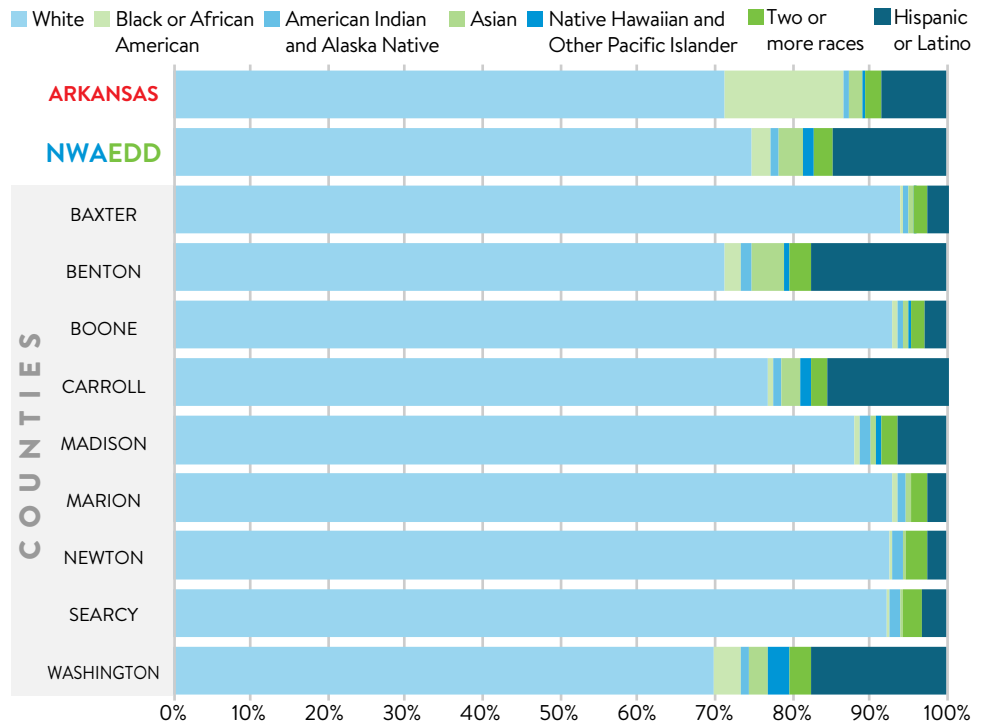
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Race/Ethnicity

Research shows that a diverse population and inclusive policies can contribute to a thriving economy.

Northwest Arkansas has somewhat of a diverse population with 74.9% of the population identifying as White alone, not Hispanic; 14.9% identifying as Hispanic or Latino; 3.0% identifying as Asian alone, not Hispanic; and 2.4% identifying as two or more races, not Hispanic.

Figure 3: Population Race/Ethnicity by County



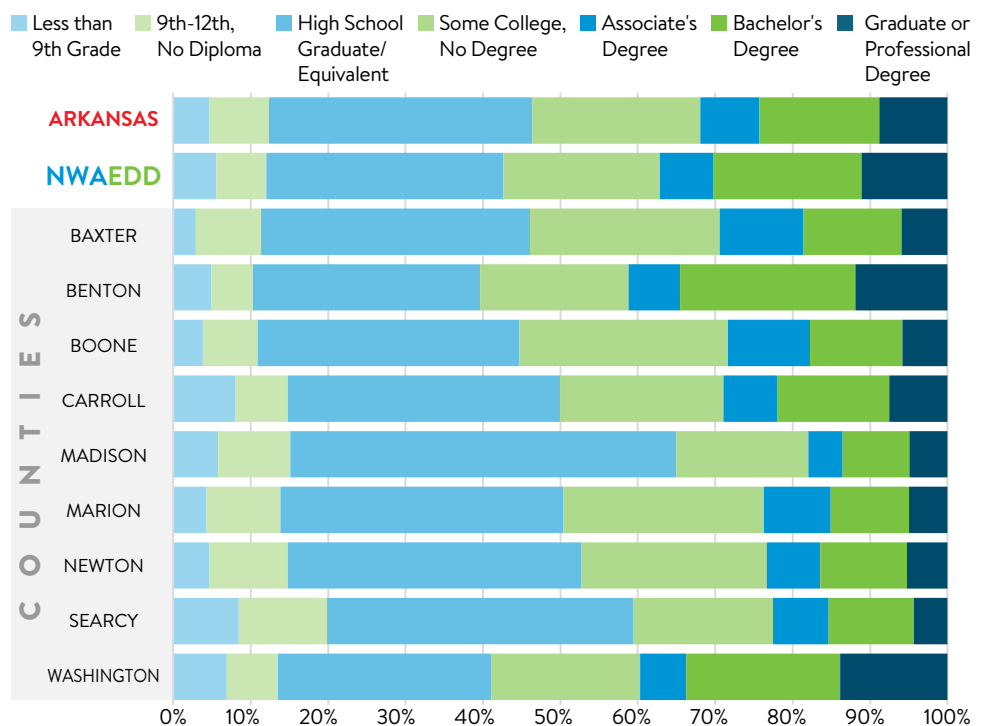
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Educational Attainment

As technology and knowledge-based industries become central to the global economy, highly skilled workers will become more in demand.

30.6% of the population in the region who are 25 years and older has a high school graduate or equivalent education only, followed by 20.3% with some college, no degree, and 19.0% with a bachelor's degree.

Figure 6: Personal Per Capita Income by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Poverty Rate

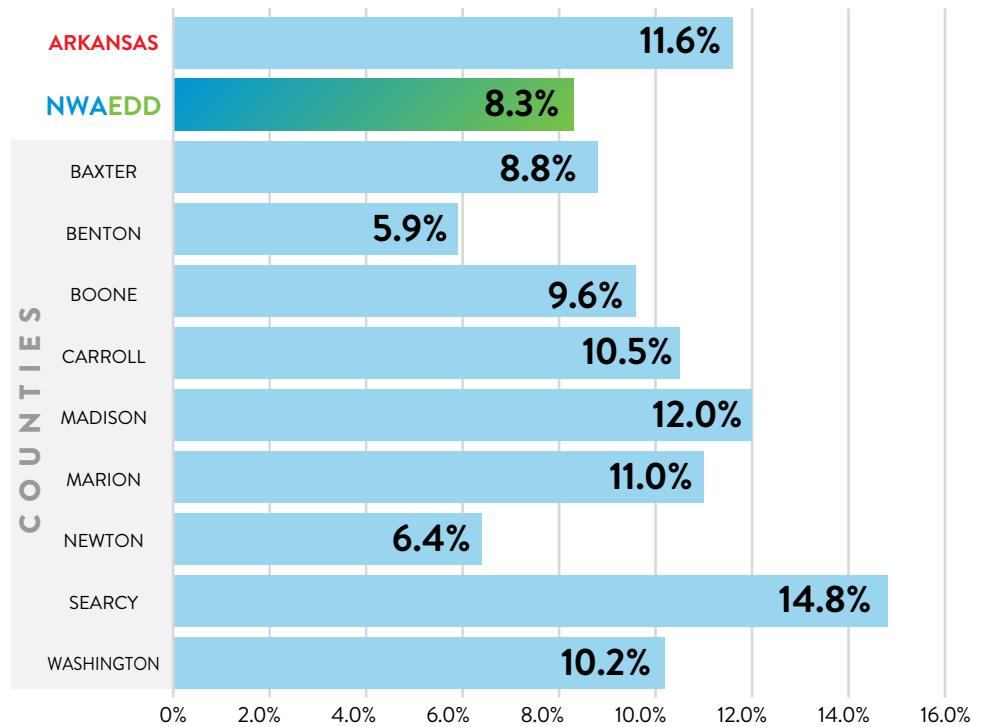
**NWAEDD
FAMILIES LIVING
BELOW THE
POVERTY LEVEL**

8.3%

High poverty rates are typically associated with low educational attainment and a lack of high-quality job opportunities. Persistent high poverty rates can put a heavy demand on social services.

8.3% of families in the NWAEDD region live below the poverty level.

Figure 5: Families Below Poverty Level



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income

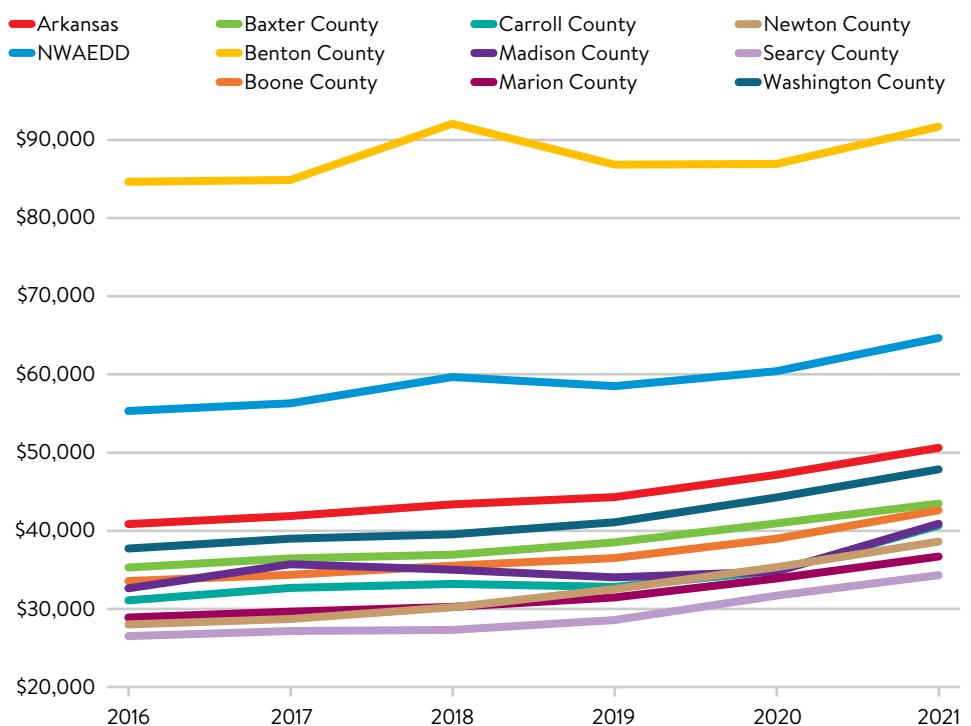
**2021 NWAEDD
PPCI**

\$64,686

The personal per capita income has grown for all counties within the area since 2016.

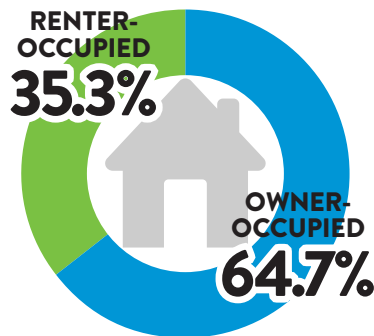
The personal per capita income for the NWAEDD region was \$64,686 in 2021.

Figure 6: Personal Per Capita Income by County



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

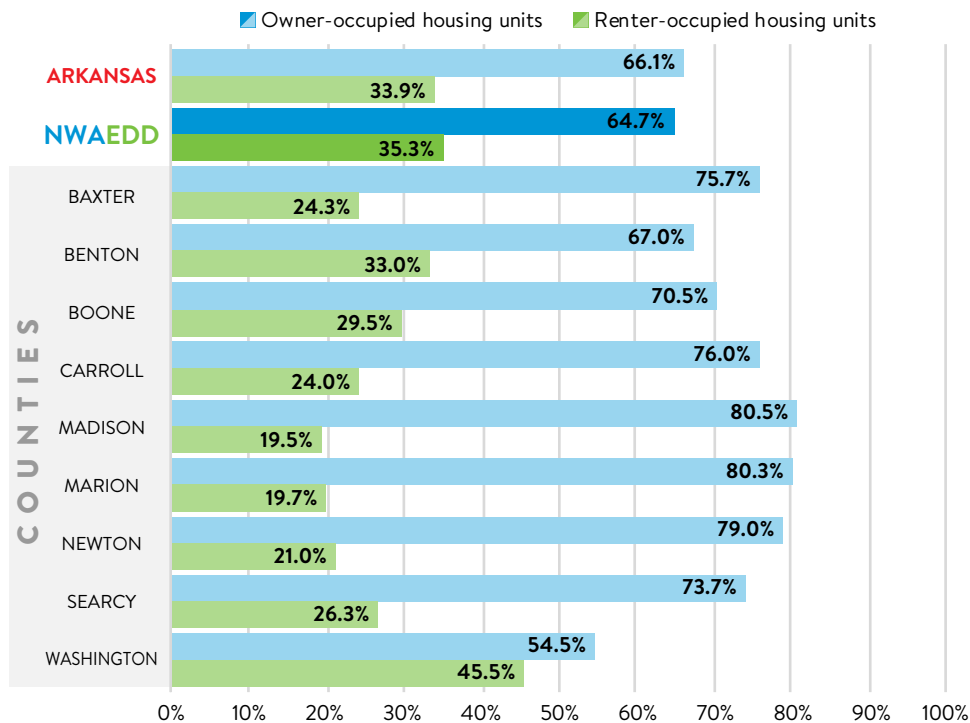
Homeowners vs Renters



Maintaining a diverse supply of housing at all price points is critical to attracting and maintaining an adequate labor force and economic competitiveness.

64.7% of the households in the NWAEDD region are owner-occupied and 35.3% are renter-occupied.

Figure 7: Owner vs Renter Occupied Housing Units by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

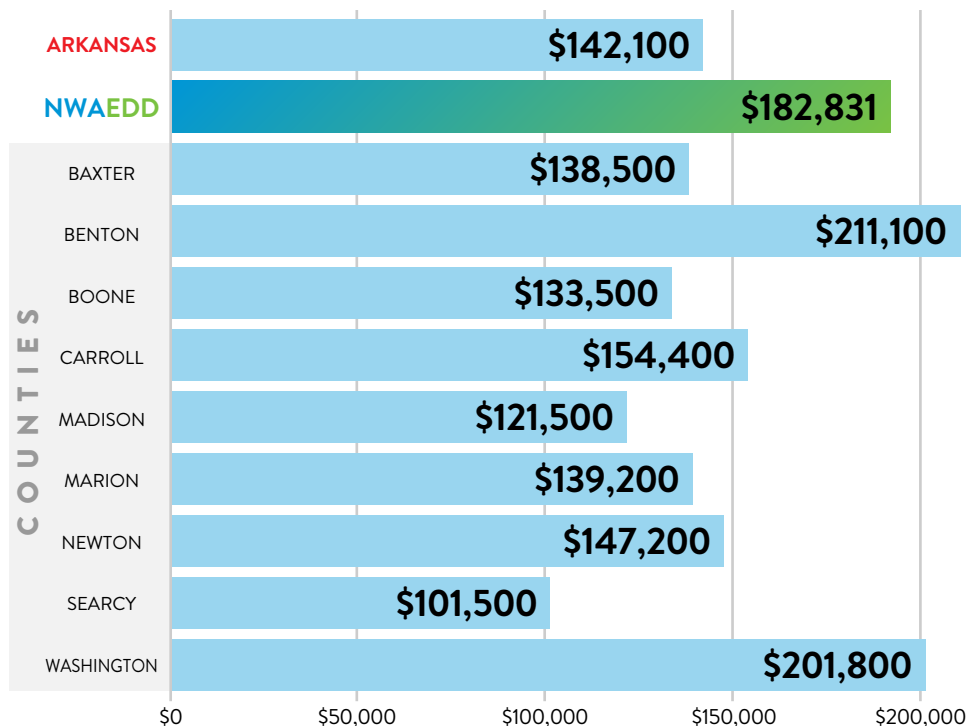
Median Home Value

NWAEDD
MEDIAN
HOME VALUE
\$182,831

Home prices have increased significantly over the years and housing shortages have attributed to higher home prices. The topic of affordable and workforce housing dominates local and national headlines.

The median home value for the NWAEDD region is \$182,831.

Figure 8: Median Home Value by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Homeowner Vacancy Rate

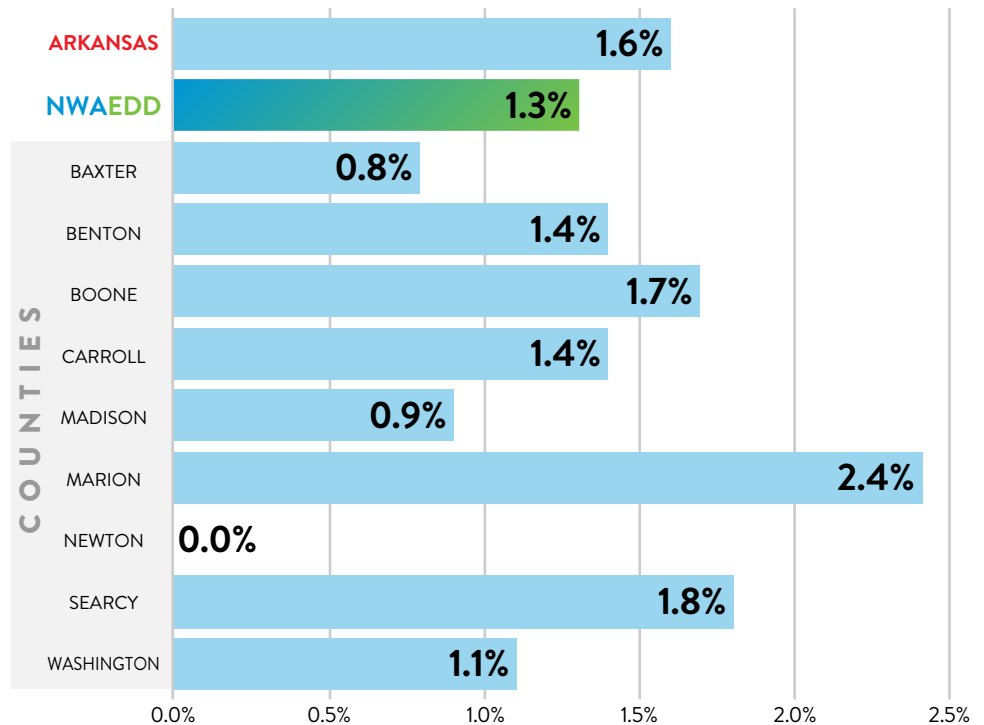
**NWAEDD
HOMEOWNER
VACANCY RATE**

1.3%

Low vacancy rates are a factor that drives up housing costs. When fewer houses are vacant or available to buy, owners can increase prices to maximize their profits.

The homeowner vacancy rate for the NWAEDD region is 1.3%.

Figure 9: Homeowner Vacancy Rate by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Rental Vacancy Rate

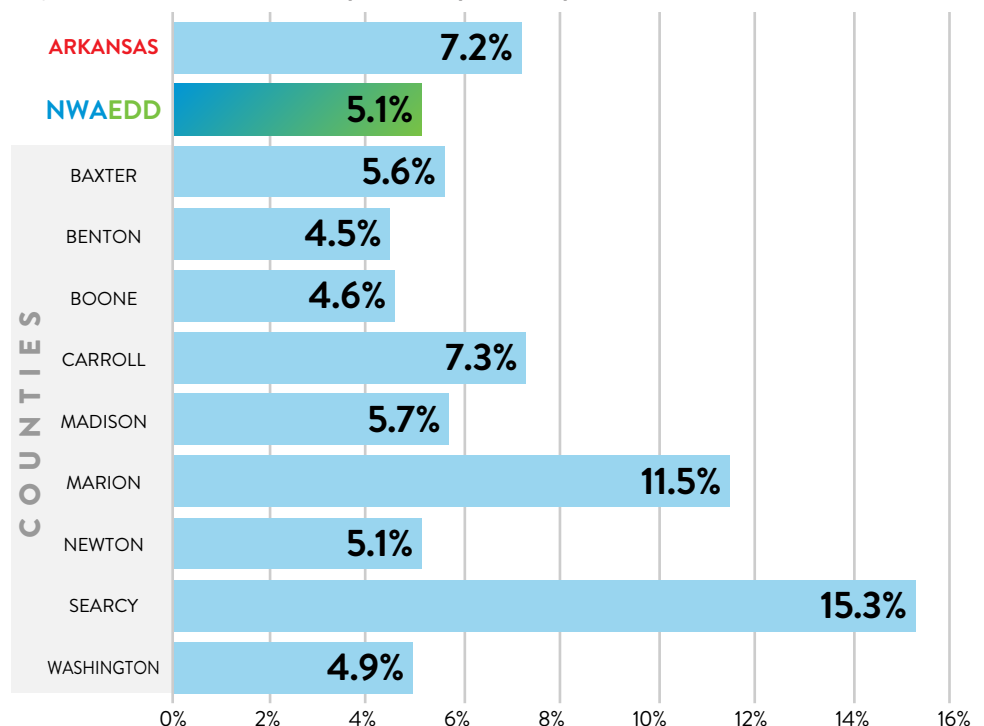
**NWAEDD
RENTAL
VACANCY RATE**

5.1%

Rental vacancy rates are similar to low vacancy rates for homes. With rental housing, low vacancy rates are also factors that drives up rental costs. When fewer rental properties are vacant or available to rent, landlords can increase prices to maximize their profits.

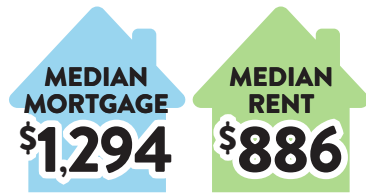
The rental vacancy rate for the NWAEDD region is 5.1%.

Figure 10: Renter Vacancy Rate by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

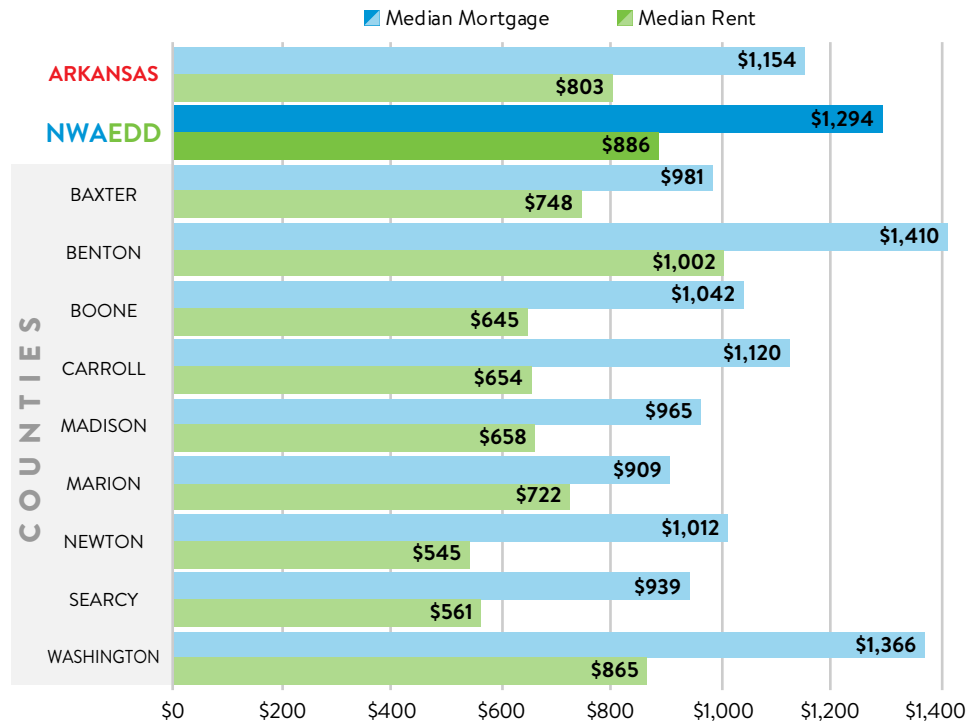
Median Rent/Mortgage



Mortgage and rent costs have increased over the years due to inflation and the lack of housing inventory. These factors in addition to others have increased the barriers to homeownership for millions of Americans. Housing affordability also affects businesses as they seek to attract and retain workers.

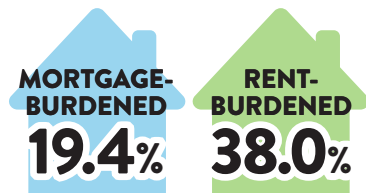
The median rent for the NWAEDD region is \$886 and the median mortgage payment is \$1,294.

Figure 11: Median Housing Costs by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

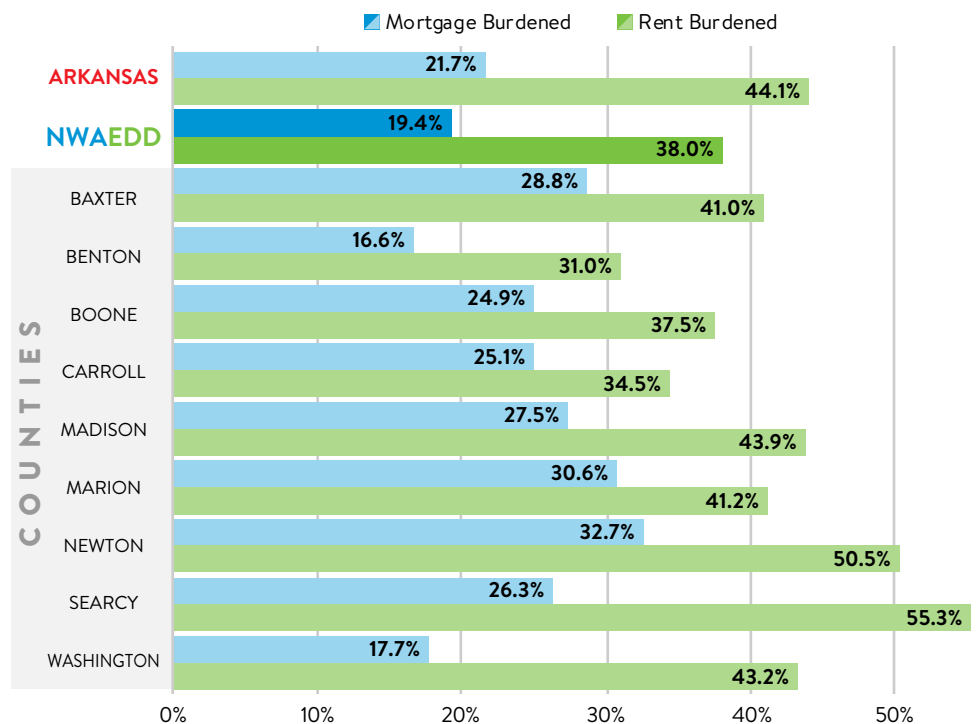
Rent/Mortgage Burdened



When residents spend a large share of their income on housing costs it impacts the amount of money they are able to save or use for other essential and nonessential expenses. The U.S. Census Bureau defines households as burdened if they spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing costs.

38.0% of renters in the NWAEDD region are rent-burdened and 19.4% of homeowners are mortgage-burdened.

Figure 12: Housing Burdened Rate by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Workforce Development

In the 21st century, talent is the new currency. Workplaces of the future now seek to maximize advanced and digital technologies by integrating artificial intelligence while scaling up cybersecurity to minimize cyber-attacks. All of these innovations require a highly skilled and adaptable workforce.

Northwest Arkansas's ability to attract and support business depends on maintaining a diverse, prepared, and motivated workforce employable in all sectors of the economy. As of July 2023, the labor force in the NWAEDD region totaled more than 366,000 people with 44% of the labor force being located in Benton County and 38% in Washington County. The unemployment rate for the area was 2.5% and the unemployment rate was the lowest in Washington County at 2.2%. Searcy County had the highest unemployment rate at 4.6%.

The region and many places across the country are experiencing historically low unemployment numbers which make it hard for employers to find talent.

Table 2: Labor Force - July 2023. All data is preliminary and subject to change.

	LABOR FORCE	EMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYED	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	
ARKANSAS	1,405,641	1,360,070	45,571	3.2%	
NWAEDD	366,702	357,646	9,056	2.5%	
COUNTIES	BAXTER	17,152	16,553	599	3.5%
	BENTON	159,636	155,869	3,767	2.4%
	BOONE	15,828	15,330	498	3.1%
	CARROLL	12,629	12,300	329	2.6%
	MADISON	8,173	7,976	197	2.4%
	MARION	6,311	6,049	262	4.2%
	NEWTON	3,207	3,091	116	3.6%
	SEARCY	2,781	2,652	129	4.6%
	WASHINGTON	140,985	137,826	3,159	2.2%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Higher Education

The NWAEDD region has a robust workforce development system and is home to seven higher education institutions enrolling more than 44,300 students combined. Additionally, several trade schools are located within the 9-County region.

Table 3: Colleges and Universities

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY	LOCATION	HIGHEST AWARD OFFERED	ENROLLMENT
Arkansas State University – Mountain Home	Mountain Home	Associate's	1,247
Ecclesia College*	Springdale	Master's	157
John Brown University*	Siloam Springs	Master's	2,326
North Arkansas College	Harrison	Associate's	1,856
Northwest Arkansas Community College	Bentonville	Associate's	7,593
Northwest Technical Institute	Springdale	Certificate	201
University of Arkansas – Fayetteville	Fayetteville	Doctor's	30,936

(*) Indicates a private university or college.

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, College Navigator

Economy

Around the world economic resilience was tested with the shock of COVID-19. Industries were disrupted, supply chains were upended, and economic activity across the world came to a halt.

Some of the lingering effects accelerated and magnified by COVID-19 include workforce shortages, supply chain issues, inflation, and store closures.

COVID-19 also highlighted the importance of diversifying the regional economy and avoiding the overreliance on any particular, specific industry. The area is fueled by Fortune 500 companies including J.B. Hunt Inc., Tyson Foods, and Walmart.

The NWAEDD region has a diverse economy with the Manufacturing, Healthcare and Social Assistance,

Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Management of Companies and Enterprises industries collectively employing 51% of workers in the area.

The Management of Companies and Enterprises industry has the highest average annual wages at \$127,694 and the Accommodation and Food Services industry has the lowest average annual wages at \$22,630.

Table 4: Industry Data

NAICS	INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT	AVG ANNUAL WAGES	LQ	5-YEAR HISTORY ANNUAL %	5-YEAR FORECAST ANNUAL % GROWTH
31	Manufacturing	39,105	\$51,856	1.47	1.7%	1.0%
62	Healthcare and Social Assistance	38,551	\$57,826	0.82	1.5%	2.0%
44	Retail Trade	35,370	\$35,543	1.08	1.1%	0.8%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	30,120	\$22,630	1.08	2.0%	2.4%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	25,317	\$127,694	5.01	0.8%	1.9%
61	Educational Services	25,042	\$50,100	0.96	0.9%	1.3%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	21,662	\$65,327	1.33	2.9%	1.7%
23	Construction	21,264	\$53,163	1.09	4.4%	1.4%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	17,079	\$72,105	0.71	4.0%	2.1%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	15,500	\$50,041	0.73	2.5%	1.4%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	12,377	\$31,665	0.88	2.0%	1.8%
42	Wholesale Trade	11,761	\$96,490	0.95	1.9%	1.6%
92	Public Administration	7,328	\$54,127	0.49	2.6%	1.0%
52	Finance and Insurance	7,243	\$81,191	0.55	1.4%	1.4%
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	5,644	\$47,785	1.31	-0.2%	0.4%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,328	\$28,128	0.84	3.9%	2.6%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	4,438	\$50,275	0.76	4.2%	1.2%
51	Information	2,819	\$63,926	0.42	-0.5%	2.1%
22	Utilities	1,876	\$75,297	1.13	1.4%	0.6%
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	158	\$51,544	0.14	0.1%	0.9%
Total - All Industries		327,983	\$59,442	1.00	1.9%	1.6%

Source: JobsEQ® Data, 2022Q4

The Management of Companies and Enterprises industry has the highest location quotient (LQ) at 5.01 and the Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction industry has the lowest LQ at 0.14.

Over the past five years, the Information industry has experienced the largest decrease at -0.5%, and the Construction industry has experienced a 4.4% increase over the past five years.

Over the next five years, the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation industry is projected to experience the largest increase at 2.6% and the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting industry is projected to experience the lowest increase at 0.4% over the next five years. No industries are projected to experience a decrease over the next five years.

Seven key industries (Table 5) were identified in the previous CEDS study for the NWAEDD region based on the large industry presence in the area or the potential for growth in order to diversify the economy.

Table 5: Seven Key Industries

INDUSTRY	EMPLOYMENT	AVG ANNUAL WAGES	LQ	5-YEAR HISTORY ANNUAL %	5-YEAR FORECAST ANNUAL % GROWTH
Manufacturing	39,105	\$51,856	1.47	1.7%	1.0%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	38,551	\$57,826	0.82	1.5%	2.0%
Retail	35,370	\$35,543	1.08	1.1%	0.8%
Education	25,042	\$50,100	0.96	0.9%	1.3%
Logistics	21,662	\$65,327	1.33	2.9%	1.7%
Agriculture	5,644	\$47,785	1.31	-0.2%	0.4%
Tourism	5,328	\$28,128	0.84	3.9%	2.6%

Source: JobsEQ® Data, 2022Q4

Equity

The NWAEDD region has increasingly become more diverse over the years.

As people from a multitude of backgrounds call Northwest Arkansas home, conversations and strategies to advance equitable opportunities related to education, employment, healthcare, and quality of life are constantly being discussed and implemented.

As the NWAEDD region continues to grow and evolve, policies, investments, and partnerships will continue to be established with the desire to build an inclusive and equitable community for all.

“ Since 1990, there has been a

23%

INCREASE

in racial/ethnic diversity in Northwest Arkansas.

Source: EngageNWA.
Accessed November 29, 2023 ”

CEDS Region/County Profiles

Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District

EDUCATION

≥ High School Graduate	87.9%
≥ Bachelor's Degree	30.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time	20.7 min.
Means of Transportation to Work	
• Drove Alone	78.6%
• Carpooled	10.1%
• Public Transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.3%
• Walked	1.5%
• Bicycle	0.3%
• Taxicab, Motorcycle, or other means	0.6%
• Worked at Home	8.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$60,793
Per Capita Personal Income	\$64,686
Families Below Poverty Level	8.3%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	6.4%
Unemployment Rate	2.5%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

HOUSING

Median Value		\$182,831	
Homeowner Vacancy Rate		1.3%	
Rental Vacancy Rate		5.1%	
Occupied Housing Units		256,370	
Mortgage		Rent	
Median	Burdened*	Median	Burdened*
\$1,294	19.4%	\$886	38.0%

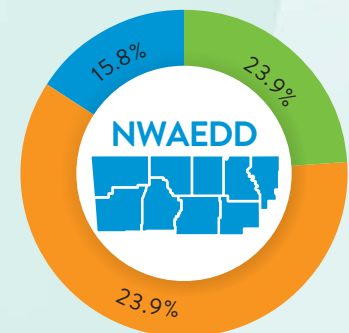
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Definition: Spending more than 30 percent of household income on rent or mortgage.

POPULATION

2010 CENSUS	579,161
2021 ESTIMATE	701,180
2027 PROJECTION	752,074
2010–2021 CHANGE	21.1%
2021–2027 CHANGE	7.3%
MINORITY	25.1%
FEMALE	50.0%
MALE	50.0%
MEDIAN AGE	36.7

■ <18 Years ■ 18–64 Years ■ 65+ Years



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2027 Projection: Esri GeoEnrichment Service

NWAEDD LARGEST INDUSTRIES, 2022Q4¹

	CURRENT JOBS	5-YEAR HISTORY	5-YEAR PROJECTION	AVG. ANNUAL WAGES
Manufacturing	39,105	1.7%	1.0%	\$51,856
Healthcare and Social Assistance	38,551	1.5%	2.0%	\$57,826
Retail Trade	35,370	1.1%	0.8%	\$35,543
Accommodation and Food Services	30,120	2.0%	2.4%	\$22,630
Management of Companies and Enterprises	25,317	0.8%	1.9%	\$127,694
Educational Services	25,042	0.9%	1.3%	\$50,100
Transportation and Warehousing	21,662	2.9%	1.7%	\$65,327
Construction	21,264	4.4%	1.4%	\$53,163
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	17,079	4.0%	2.1%	\$72,105
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	15,500	2.5%	1.4%	\$50,041

Source: JobsEQ*. Data as of 2022Q4. Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding. ¹All data based upon a four-quarter moving average.

NWAEDD: Baxter County

EDUCATION

≥ High School Graduate	88.7%
≥ Bachelor's Degree	18.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time	17.4 min.
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Means of Transportation to Work

• Drove Alone	80.0%
• Carpooled	12.5%
• Public Transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.0%
• Walked	1.8%
• Bicycle	0.0%
• Taxicab, Motorcycle, or other means	0.7%
• Worked at Home	5.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$43,530
Per Capita Personal Income	\$43,479
Families Below Poverty Level	8.8%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	8.3%
Unemployment Rate	3.5%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

HOUSING

Median Value	\$138,500		
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.8%		
Rental Vacancy Rate	5.6%		
Occupied Housing Units	18,835		
Mortgage		Rent	
Median	Burdened*	Median	Burdened*
\$981	28.8%	\$748	41.0%

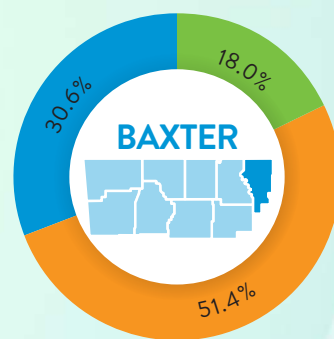
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Definition: Spending more than 30 percent of household income on rent or mortgage.

POPULATION

2010 CENSUS	41,513
2021 ESTIMATE	42,144
2027 PROJECTION	41,745
2010–2021 CHANGE	1.5%
2021–2027 CHANGE	-0.9%
MINORITY	6.1%
FEMALE	51.2%
MALE	48.8%
MEDIAN AGE	51.6

■ <18 Years ■ 18–64 Years ■ 65+ Years



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2027 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service

NWAEDD LARGEST INDUSTRIES, 2022Q4¹

	CURRENT JOBS	5-YEAR HISTORY	5-YEAR PROJECTION	AVG. ANNUAL WAGES
Healthcare and Social Assistance	4,064	0.8%	0.8%	\$54,890
Manufacturing	2,652	2.4%	-0.1%	\$43,427
Retail Trade	2,517	0.9%	-0.5%	\$33,981
Accommodation and Food Services	1,477	-1.1%	1.2%	\$20,521
Construction	932	1.2%	0.0%	\$37,802
Educational Services	908	2.0%	0.0%	\$40,726
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	682	5.4%	0.1%	\$36,632
Finance and Insurance	614	1.5%	-0.1%	\$71,556
Other Services (except Public Administration)	582	-2.5%	0.4%	\$27,663
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	580	2.7%	0.3%	\$45,823

Source: JobsEQ*. Data as of 2022Q4. Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding. ¹All data based upon a four-quarter moving average.

NWAEDD: Benton County

EDUCATION

≥ High School Graduate	89.7%
≥ Bachelor's Degree	34.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time	20.6 min.
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Means of Transportation to Work

• Drove Alone	80.0%
• Carpooled	8.1%
• Public Transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.1%
• Walked	1.0%
• Bicycle	0.3%
• Taxicab, Motorcycle, or other means	0.5%
• Worked at Home	9.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$76,887
Per Capita Personal Income	\$91,687
Families Below Poverty Level	5.9%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	4.5%
Unemployment Rate	2.4%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

HOUSING

Median Value	\$211,100		
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1.4%		
Rental Vacancy Rate	4.5%		
Occupied Housing Units	101,109		
Mortgage		Rent	
Median	Burdened*	Median	Burdened*
\$1,410	16.6%	\$1,002	31.0%

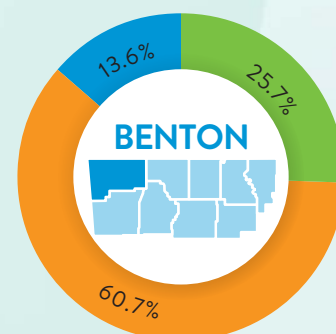
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Definition: Spending more than 30 percent of household income on rent or mortgage.

POPULATION

2010 CENSUS	221,339
2021 ESTIMATE	293,692
2027 PROJECTION	327,191
2010–2021 CHANGE	32.7%
2021–2027 CHANGE	11.4%
MINORITY	28.7%
FEMALE	49.9%
MALE	50.1%
MEDIAN AGE	35.9

■ <18 Years ■ 18–64 Years ■ 65+ Years



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2027 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service

NWAEDD LARGEST INDUSTRIES, 2022Q4¹

	CURRENT JOBS	5-YEAR HISTORY	5-YEAR PROJECTION	AVG. ANNUAL WAGES
Management of Companies and Enterprises	21,332	1.1%	2.0%	\$121,515
Retail Trade	14,020	1.3%	1.5%	\$36,261
Manufacturing	13,319	2.2%	1.9%	\$56,117
Transportation and Warehousing	12,775	5.0%	2.1%	\$68,085
Accommodation and Food Services	12,558	2.9%	3.0%	\$23,799
Healthcare and Social Assistance	11,982	2.8%	2.7%	\$57,550
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	10,108	3.7%	2.5%	\$78,823
Construction	8,634	4.7%	2.0%	\$54,353
Educational Services	7,882	0.7%	1.8%	\$46,915
Wholesale Trade	6,951	3.9%	1.9%	\$107,994

Source: JobsEQ*. Data as of 2022Q4. Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding. ¹All data based upon a four-quarter moving average.

NWAEDD: Boone County

EDUCATION

≥ High School Graduate	89.1%
≥ Bachelor's Degree	17.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time	19.2 min.
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Means of Transportation to Work

• Drove Alone	80.5%
• Carpooled	9.3%
• Public Transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.2%
• Walked	1.7%
• Bicycle	0.0%
• Taxicab, Motorcycle, or other means	0.3%
• Worked at Home	8.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$48,625
Per Capita Personal Income	\$42,642
Families Below Poverty Level	9.6%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	9.8%
Unemployment Rate	3.1%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

HOUSING

Median Value		\$133,500	
Homeowner Vacancy Rate		1.7%	
Rental Vacancy Rate		4.6%	
Occupied Housing Units		15,190	
Mortgage		Rent	
Median	Burdened*	Median	Burdened*
\$1,042	24.9%	\$645	37.5%

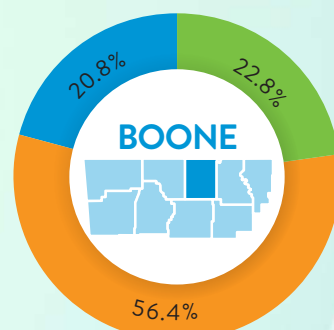
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Definition: Spending more than 30 percent of household income on rent or mortgage.

POPULATION

2010 CENSUS	36,903
2021 ESTIMATE	37,830
2027 PROJECTION	37,674
2010–2021 CHANGE	2.5%
2021–2027 CHANGE	-0.4%
MINORITY	6.9%
FEMALE	50.5%
MALE	49.5%
MEDIAN AGE	42.1

■ <18 Years ■ 18–64 Years ■ 65+ Years



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2027 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service

NWAEDD LARGEST INDUSTRIES, 2022Q4¹

	CURRENT JOBS	5-YEAR HISTORY	5-YEAR PROJECTION	AVG. ANNUAL WAGES
Healthcare and Social Assistance	2,389	0.7%	0.6%	\$51,132
Retail Trade	2,329	2.5%	-0.8%	\$32,564
Manufacturing	1,795	-0.7%	-0.7%	\$45,894
Transportation and Warehousing	1,414	3.1%	-0.2%	\$74,404
Accommodation and Food Services	1,271	1.6%	0.9%	\$19,853
Educational Services	1,266	-0.6%	-0.1%	\$37,674
Construction	1,146	2.2%	-0.2%	\$44,997
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,085	-3.3%	-0.3%	\$51,090
Other Services (except Public Administration)	617	1.2%	-0.1%	\$30,094
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	516	-0.5%	-0.8%	\$26,795

Source: JobsEQ*. Data as of 2022Q4. Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding. ¹All data based upon a four-quarter moving average.

NWAEDD: Carroll County

EDUCATION

≥ High School Graduate	85.2%
≥ Bachelor's Degree	22.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time	21.0 min.
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Means of Transportation to Work

• Drove Alone	74.3%
• Carpooled	10.8%
• Public Transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.1%
• Walked	3.9%
• Bicycle	0.2%
• Taxicab, Motorcycle, or other means	2.0%
• Worked at Home	8.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$53,366
Per Capita Personal Income	\$40,689
Families Below Poverty Level	10.5%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	5.8%
Unemployment Rate	2.6%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

HOUSING

Median Value	\$154,400		
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1.4%		
Rental Vacancy Rate	7.3%		
Occupied Housing Units	11,168		
Mortgage		Rent	
Median	Burdened*	Median	Burdened*
\$1,120	25.1%	\$654	34.5%

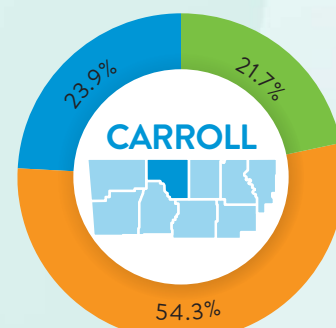
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Definition: Spending more than 30 percent of household income on rent or mortgage.

POPULATION

2010 CENSUS	27,446
2021 ESTIMATE	28,435
2027 PROJECTION	28,631
2010–2021 CHANGE	3.6%
2021–2027 CHANGE	0.7%
MINORITY	23.0%
FEMALE	49.9%
MALE	50.1%
MEDIAN AGE	44.7

■ <18 Years ■ 18–64 Years ■ 65+ Years



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2027 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service

NWAEDD LARGEST INDUSTRIES, 2022Q4¹

	CURRENT JOBS	5-YEAR HISTORY	5-YEAR PROJECTION	AVG. ANNUAL WAGES
Manufacturing	3,818	0.0%	-0.1%	\$40,417
Accommodation and Food Services	1,556	1.5%	1.5%	\$22,335
Retail Trade	1,229	0.0%	-0.4%	\$28,123
Healthcare and Social Assistance	888	-5.6%	1.3%	\$47,223
Construction	809	3.4%	0.2%	\$36,934
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	701	1.8%	-0.3%	\$59,867
Educational Services	681	2.0%	0.0%	\$37,650
Public Administration	437	1.2%	-0.1%	\$38,188
Other Services (except Public Administration)	378	0.9%	0.3%	\$25,489
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	375	-6.2%	0.0%	\$43,504

Source: JobsEQ*. Data as of 2022Q4. Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding. ¹All data based upon a four-quarter moving average.

NWAEDD: Madison County

EDUCATION

≥ High School Graduate	84.9%
≥ Bachelor's Degree	13.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time	32.5 min.
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Means of Transportation to Work

• Drove Alone	87.3%
• Carpooled	6.1%
• Public Transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.0%
• Walked	0.5%
• Bicycle	0.1%
• Taxicab, Motorcycle, or other means	0.2%
• Worked at Home	5.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$47,862
Per Capita Personal Income	\$40,884
Families Below Poverty Level	12.0%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	11.5%
Unemployment Rate	2.4%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

HOUSING

Median Value		\$121,500	
Homeowner Vacancy Rate		0.9%	
Rental Vacancy Rate		5.7%	
Occupied Housing Units		6,056	
Mortgage		Rent	
Median	Burdened*	Median	Burdened*
\$965	27.5%	\$658	43.9%

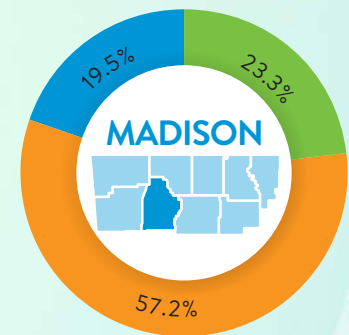
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Definition: Spending more than 30 percent of household income on rent or mortgage.

POPULATION

2010 CENSUS	15,717
2021 ESTIMATE	16,960
2027 PROJECTION	17,044
2010–2021 CHANGE	7.9%
2021–2027 CHANGE	0.5%
MINORITY	12.0%
FEMALE	49.7%
MALE	50.3%
MEDIAN AGE	41.5

■ <18 Years ■ 18–64 Years ■ 65+ Years



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2027 Projection: Esri GeoEnrichment Service

NWAEDD LARGEST INDUSTRIES, 2022Q4¹

	CURRENT JOBS	5-YEAR HISTORY	5-YEAR PROJECTION	AVG. ANNUAL WAGES
Manufacturing	1,323	2.3%	0.5%	\$46,197
Retail Trade	568	1.2%	0.1%	\$29,961
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	545	-0.4%	0.2%	\$45,322
Educational Services	394	0.7%	0.9%	\$41,824
Construction	339	3.9%	0.8%	\$41,225
Healthcare and Social Assistance	258	-3.4%	1.6%	\$39,521
Accommodation and Food Services	184	0.0%	1.6%	\$16,905
Transportation and Warehousing	183	1.6%	0.7%	\$51,970
Public Administration	169	1.2%	0.5%	\$44,174
Other Services (except Public Administration)	134	1.9%	1.1%	\$29,756

Source: JobsEQ*. Data as of 2022Q4. Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding. ¹All data based upon a four-quarter moving average.

NWAEDD: Marion County

EDUCATION

≥ High School Graduate	86.2%
≥ Bachelor's Degree	15.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time	25.4 min.
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Means of Transportation to Work

• Drove Alone	77.4%
• Carpooled	13.5%
• Public Transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.4%
• Walked	1.9%
• Bicycle	0.1%
• Taxicab, Motorcycle, or other means	0.9%
• Worked at Home	5.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$41,038
Per Capita Personal Income	\$36,684
Families Below Poverty Level	11.0%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	9.1%
Unemployment Rate	4.2%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

HOUSING

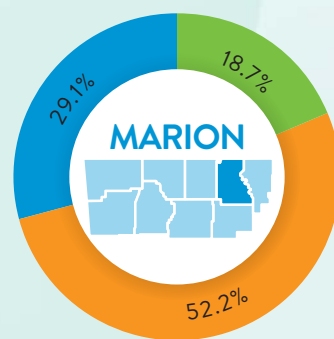
Median Value	\$139,200		
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	2.4%		
Rental Vacancy Rate	11.5%		
Occupied Housing Units	6,950		
Mortgage		Rent	
Median	Burdened*	Median	Burdened*
\$909	30.6%	\$722	41.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
*Definition: Spending more than 30 percent of household income on rent or mortgage.

POPULATION

2010 CENSUS	16,653
2021 ESTIMATE	16,978
2027 PROJECTION	16,903
2010–2021 CHANGE	2.0%
2021–2027 CHANGE	-0.4%
MINORITY	6.9%
FEMALE	50.4%
MALE	49.6%
MEDIAN AGE	51.9

■ <18 Years ■ 18–64 Years ■ 65+ Years



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2027 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service

NWAEDD LARGEST INDUSTRIES, 2022Q4¹

	CURRENT JOBS	5-YEAR HISTORY	5-YEAR PROJECTION	AVG. ANNUAL WAGES
Manufacturing	1,589	-1.3%	-0.7%	\$46,104
Retail Trade	515	0.7%	-0.5%	\$28,688
Educational Services	328	4.9%	0.0%	\$39,963
Healthcare and Social Assistance	321	-3.8%	0.7%	\$43,902
Construction	249	3.5%	0.0%	\$31,576
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	221	-1.1%	-0.6%	\$23,282
Accommodation and Food Services	218	-0.8%	0.9%	\$18,535
Public Administration	150	-1.3%	-0.3%	\$33,109
Other Services (except Public Administration)	124	4.4%	0.0%	\$20,911
Finance and Insurance	116	-1.9%	-0.1%	\$53,953

Source: JobsEQ*. Data as of 2022Q4. Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding. ¹All data based upon a four-quarter moving average.

NWAEDD: Newton County

EDUCATION

≥ High School Graduate	85.2%
≥ Bachelor's Degree	16.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time	32.8 min.
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Means of Transportation to Work

• Drove Alone	76.2%
• Carpooled	7.7%
• Public Transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.0%
• Walked	1.3%
• Bicycle	0.0%
• Taxicab, Motorcycle, or other means	1.1%
• Worked at Home	13.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$42,817
Per Capita Personal Income	\$38,629
Families Below Poverty Level	6.4%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	11.5%
Unemployment Rate	3.6%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

HOUSING

Median Value		\$147,200	
Homeowner Vacancy Rate		0.0%	
Rental Vacancy Rate		5.1%	
Occupied Housing Units		2,769	
Mortgage		Rent	
Median	Burdened*	Median	Burdened*
\$1,012	32.7%	\$545	50.5%

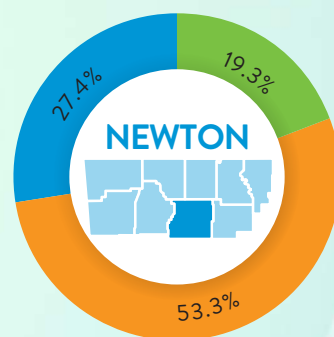
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Definition: Spending more than 30 percent of household income on rent or mortgage.

POPULATION

2010 CENSUS	8,330
2021 ESTIMATE	7,204
2027 PROJECTION	6,876
2010–2021 CHANGE	-13.5%
2021–2027 CHANGE	-4.6%
MINORITY	7.5%
FEMALE	49.1%
MALE	50.9%
MEDIAN AGE	49.4

■ <18 Years ■ 18–64 Years ■ 65+ Years



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2027 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service

NWAEDD LARGEST INDUSTRIES, 2022Q4¹

	CURRENT JOBS	5-YEAR HISTORY	5-YEAR PROJECTION	AVG. ANNUAL WAGES
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	281	-0.8%	-1.2%	\$15,014
Healthcare and Social Assistance	221	-2.4%	0.9%	\$35,556
Educational Services	211	-1.4%	-0.5%	\$34,790
Accommodation and Food Services	159	-0.2%	0.6%	\$21,759
Public Administration	130	-2.0%	-0.9%	\$33,871
Retail Trade	122	-0.5%	-1.8%	\$29,250
Construction	98	2.7%	-0.5%	\$34,921
Manufacturing	42	-2.9%	-0.8%	\$48,945
Utilities	36	1.1%	-1.6%	\$57,651
Transportation and Warehousing	33	-2.9%	-1.1%	\$47,118

Source: JobsEQ*. Data as of 2022Q4. Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding. ¹All data based upon a four-quarter moving average.

NWAEDD: Searcy County

EDUCATION

≥ High School Graduate	80.2%
≥ Bachelor's Degree	15.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time	27.1 min.
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Means of Transportation to Work

• Drove Alone	77.3%
• Carpooled	16.3%
• Public Transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.3%
• Walked	0.6%
• Bicycle	0.0%
• Taxicab, Motorcycle, or other means	0.5%
• Worked at Home	5.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$39,627
Per Capita Personal Income	\$34,335
Families Below Poverty Level	14.8%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	11.5%
Unemployment Rate	4.6%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

HOUSING

Median Value	\$101,500		
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1.8%		
Rental Vacancy Rate	15.3%		
Occupied Housing Units	2,964		
Mortgage		Rent	
Median	Burdened*	Median	Burdened*
\$939	26.3%	\$561	55.3%

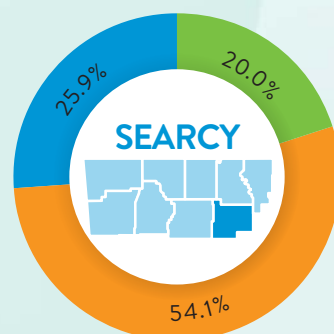
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Definition: Spending more than 30 percent of household income on rent or mortgage.

POPULATION

2010 CENSUS	8,195
2021 ESTIMATE	7,880
2027 PROJECTION	7,728
2010–2021 CHANGE	-3.8%
2021–2027 CHANGE	-1.9%
MINORITY	7.7%
FEMALE	49.0%
MALE	51.0%
MEDIAN AGE	48.5

■ <18 Years ■ 18–64 Years ■ 65+ Years



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2027 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service

NWAEDD LARGEST INDUSTRIES, 2022Q4¹

	CURRENT JOBS	5-YEAR HISTORY	5-YEAR PROJECTION	AVG. ANNUAL WAGES
Healthcare and Social Assistance	458	2.6%	0.6%	\$34,977
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	272	-5.0%	-1.4%	\$14,051
Retail Trade	202	0.2%	-1.7%	\$28,349
Educational Services	192	-0.5%	-0.4%	\$38,258
Accommodation and Food Services	164	1.5%	0.2%	\$16,311
Construction	159	0.2%	-0.8%	\$35,835
Public Administration	115	0.6%	-1.1%	\$30,785
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	107	7.8%	-0.9%	\$45,484
Manufacturing	105	-12.1%	-1.0%	\$38,455
Other Services (except Public Administration)	49	0.1%	-1.3%	\$24,595

Source: JobsEQ*. Data as of 2022Q4. Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding. ¹All data based upon a four-quarter moving average.

NWAEDD: Washington County

EDUCATION

≥ High School Graduate	86.5%
≥ Bachelor's Degree	33.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time	20.2 min.
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Means of Transportation to Work

• Drove Alone	76.5%
• Carpooled	12.0%
• Public Transportation (excluding taxicab)	0.6%
• Walked	1.7%
• Bicycle	0.6%
• Taxicab, Motorcycle, or other means	0.5%
• Worked at Home	8.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$56,610
Per Capita Personal Income	\$47,836
Families Below Poverty Level	10.2%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	6.7%
Unemployment Rate	2.2%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates; Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

HOUSING

Median Value	\$201,800		
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1.1%		
Rental Vacancy Rate	4.9%		
Occupied Housing Units	91,329		
Mortgage		Rent	
Median	Burdened*	Median	Burdened*
\$1,366	17.7%	\$865	43.2%

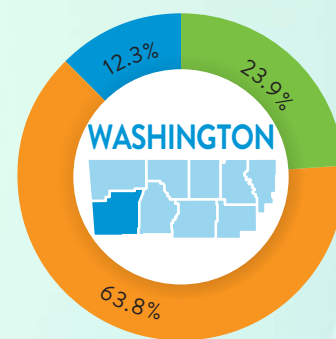
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

*Definition: Spending more than 30 percent of household income on rent or mortgage.

POPULATION

2010 CENSUS	203,065
2021 ESTIMATE	250,057
2027 PROJECTION	268,282
2010–2021 CHANGE	23.1%
2021–2027 CHANGE	7.3%
MINORITY	30.3%
FEMALE	49.8%
MALE	50.2%
MEDIAN AGE	32.8

■ <18 Years ■ 18–64 Years ■ 65+ Years



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2027 Projection: Esri GeoEnrichment Service

NWAEDD LARGEST INDUSTRIES, 2022Q4¹

	CURRENT JOBS	5-YEAR HISTORY	5-YEAR PROJECTION	AVG. ANNUAL WAGES
Healthcare and Social Assistance	17,970	1.7%	2.0%	\$61,456
Manufacturing	14,462	2.4%	1.1%	\$54,493
Retail Trade	13,869	1.0%	0.8%	\$36,900
Educational Services	13,181	1.0%	1.3%	\$55,404
Accommodation and Food Services	12,535	1.8%	2.3%	\$22,275
Construction	8,898	5.0%	1.3%	\$57,714
Transportation and Warehousing	6,725	0.1%	1.3%	\$60,017
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	6,658	2.6%	1.3%	\$54,054
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	5,618	4.6%	1.7%	\$66,535
Other Services (except Public Administration)	5,071	2.2%	1.7%	\$35,348

Source: JobsEQ*. Data as of 2022Q4. Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding. *All data based upon a four-quarter moving average.

CEDS SWOT Analysis

During the August CEDS meeting, AEDI and the Northwest Arkansas CEDS Committee worked with various community leaders throughout the region to analyze its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A summary of the findings are found in Figure 13.

Figure 13: SWOT



(*) Indicates areas where strengths and weaknesses may greatly differ depending on the location within Northwest Arkansas.

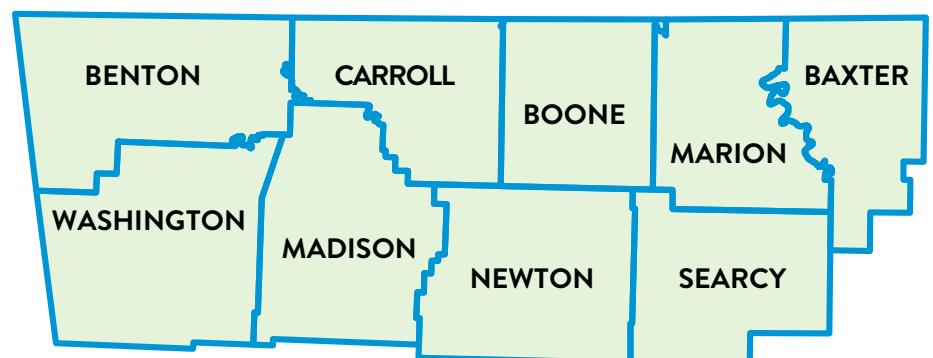
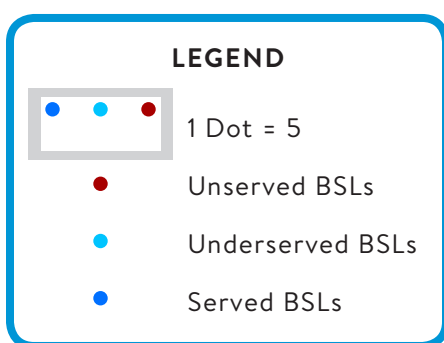
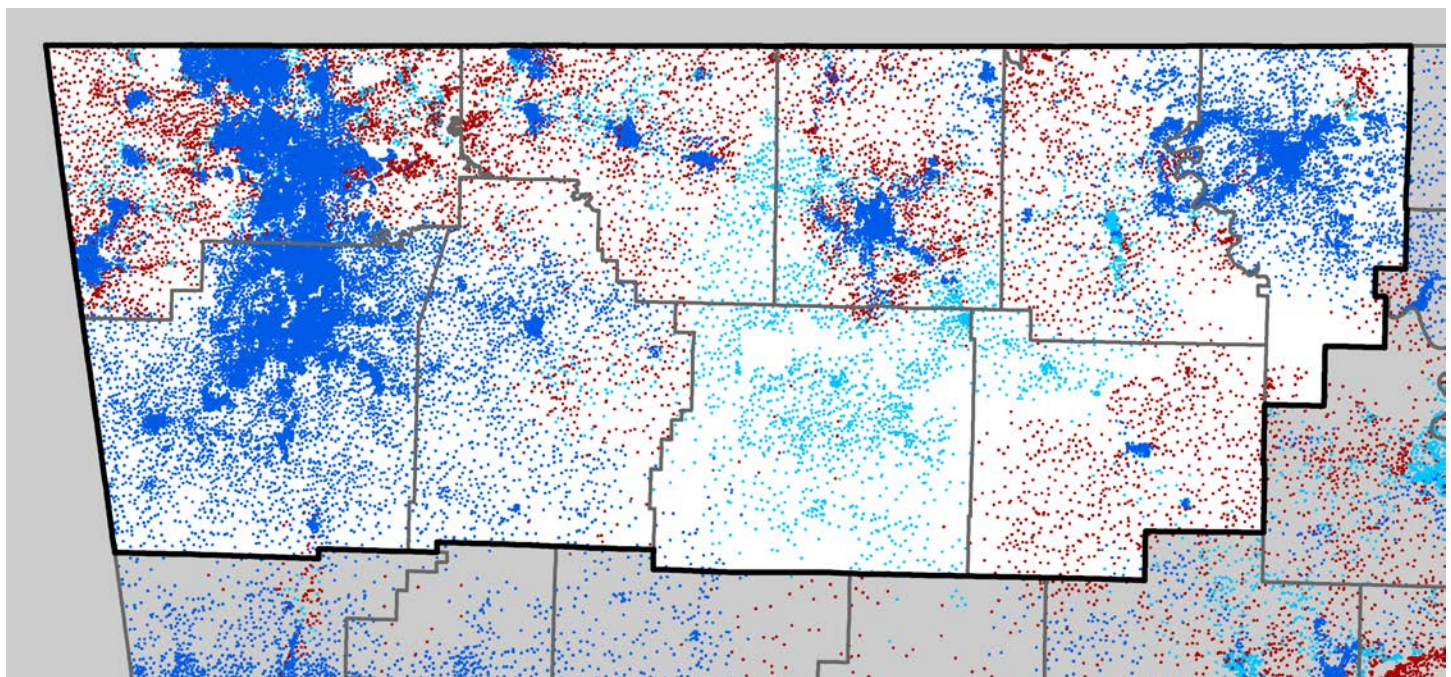
CEDS Broadband

Broadband was considered an opportunity of the Northwest region in the SWOT analysis as it varies dramatically from among communities across the area. Using broadband serviceable locations (BSLs) data from

the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the only counties with majority served locations are Washington, Madison, and Baxter, while Benton, Carroll, Boone, Marion, and Searcy all contain large unserved zones.

Newton County remains a majority underserved zones showing that broadband is accessible but not served to a level considered adequate by the FCC.

Map 2: Broadband Serviceable Locations (BSLs) by Block with Corresponding Speed Tier: NWAEDD, June 2022



***Unserved:** All service that is not low-latency or less than 25/3 Mbps, and all Geostationary Satellite, Non-geostationary Satellite, Unlicensed Terrestrial Fixed Wireless, and Other.

***Underserved:** Low-latency Fiber, Cable, Copper, or Terrestrial Licensed Fixed Wireless offering of speeds less than 100/20 Mbps, but greater than or equal to 25/3 Mbps.

***Served:** Low-latency Fiber, Cable, Copper, or Licensed Terrestrial Fixed Wireless offering of speeds greater than or equal to 100/20 Mbps.

Source: FCC, Fixed Broadband Deployment Data: June 2022

CEDS Resilient Communities

The **diverse** and **robust economy** of Northwest Arkansas derives from the strength of local communities and the powerful economic engine provided by Washington and Benton counties. The area's economic opportunities and the **rich** and **unique qualities** of life in the Ozarks continue to attract new businesses and persuade existing businesses to expand their operations. This creates a **resilient economy** critical to long-term growth and financial stability for area families.

NWAEDD believes that furthering **economic resilience** for local and regional economies will require better anticipating threats, assessing the risk posed to the economy of the area and developing mitigation strategies and response capability to ensure the continuity of every aspect of our economy. Often, the shocks or disruptions to the economic base of an area or region occur in three ways:

1

Downturns or other significant events in the national or international economy that affect demand for locally produced goods and consumer spending.

2

Downturns in particular industries constitute a critical component of the area's economic activity.

3

Other external shocks-national or human-caused disaster, closure of a major employer, etc.

The district can help Northwest Arkansas respond to changes in the economy through steady-state and responsive initiatives.

Steady-state initiatives are long-term efforts that bolster the community's ability to withstand or avoid a shock.

Responsive initiatives provide economic development organizations the capability to assist with recovery. The Region has adopted this two-pronged approach to develop strategies and performance measures.

Steady-state Initiatives include:

- Incorporating economic resiliency into existing planning efforts, such as hazard mitigation or transportation plans. Including aligning priorities of HMPs and CEDS
- Ensuring our workforce development and community/economic development teams work together to identify employment training or infrastructure investment opportunities when emerging sectors are identified
- Continuing to work with the education and workforce training communities to build a resilient workforce that can easily shift between jobs or industries
- Leading efforts to capitalize on the region's strengths identified through the CEDS
- Continuing to promote strategic economic assessments at the community level to identify strengths and weaknesses
- Informing elected officials on resiliency by scheduling speakers at NWAEDD board meetings

Responsive Initiatives include:

- Strengthening coordination between the local Workforce Development Board and economic development entities within the region to address both employer and employee needs during times of economic downturn
- Inviting businesses and economic development leaders to meetings regarding workforce initiatives, i.e. the local partners meeting coordinated by WIOA staff members
- Utilizing the local Workforce Development Board to communicate directly with businesses to understand the needs of the business community
- Considering economic resiliency and hazard mitigation priorities when developing CEDS and HMPs

CEDS Focus Areas and Action Plan

The Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District CEDS identified 4 areas of focus through discussions between the planning committee. The regional focus areas are as follows:

FOCUS AREA:

Workforce
Housing

FOCUS AREA:

Workforce
Development,
Retention, and
Education

FOCUS AREA:

Healthcare, Law
Enforcement,
and Human
Infrastructure

FOCUS AREA:

Regional
Infrastructure
Improvement

The following strategies were developed to address these focus areas and better serve the NWAEDD.

Workforce Housing

FOCUS AREA:

Housing Affordability and Regional Competitiveness

STRATEGY:

Address housing affordability and availability to sustain the region's economic competitiveness.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:

Diverse and affordable housing options attract and retain workforce while stimulating the regional economy.

ISSUE:

An inadequate supply of affordable housing paired with sharply increased real estate prices has made overall affordability of the area difficult for workers.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Identify and convene stakeholders to build consensus on prioritizing workforce housing needs and options across the region.
- Identify and inventory available land for the development of workforce housing.
- Continue the workforce housing efforts of the Northwest Arkansas Council.
- Expand the housing research efforts of the Northwest Arkansas Council to include remaining counties in the NWAEDD territory.
- Leverage local, state, and federal resources for affordable workforce housing efforts.
- Sustain a range of housing opportunities and choices that meets the need of a diverse population.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, City and County Governments and Planning Commissions, Builders and Developers, Local and Regional Financial Institutions.

RESOURCES NEEDED:

NWAEDD Staff.

TIME FRAME:

Immediate and ongoing.



Workforce Development, Retention, and Education

FOCUS AREA:

K-12 College and Career Readiness

STRATEGY:

Adopt and promote programming to prepare K-12 students to be college and career ready.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:

Students will exit high school on pathways that lead them to economic prosperity.

ISSUE:

The next generation of workers must be equipped with advanced skills and education to operate in jobs of the future.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Strengthen and continue partnerships providing experiential learning opportunities to students to increase participation of youth in skilled jobs and post-secondary degrees.
- Share success stories from career and technical education programs.
- Expand career exploration tools to help students consider their skills and interests in selecting career pathways.
- Convene school superintendents throughout the area to explore ways to replicate successful workforce training partnerships in school districts across the region.
- Incorporate employability skills such as soft, cognitive, and digital skills in the education curriculum.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, School Superintendents, Higher Education Institutions, Workforce Training Representatives, Industry Representatives, County and Local Government Officials.

RESOURCES NEEDED:

NWAEDD Staff, meeting locations.

TIME FRAME:

As soon as possible.



Workforce Development, Retention, and Education

FOCUS AREA:

Addressing Workforce Training Needs & Assets

STRATEGY:

Understand workforce training needs and assets.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:

Regional efforts to develop an educated, highly-skilled and diverse workforce will attract new businesses and retain existing businesses.

ISSUE:

The development of innovative training initiatives is critical to meet the demands of regional employers.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Inventory workforce training programs and career and technical education programs throughout the area.
- Annually survey local businesses to understand current and future workforce and training needs.
- Partner to annually survey the local workforce to understand their skill sets and any skills gaps that exist.
- Incorporate employability skills such as soft, cognitive and digital skills in workforce training programs.
- Explore the feasibility of developing or repurposing existing facilities into workforce training centers to upskill workers for current and future employers.
- Build a strong regional workforce system that identifies and reduces barriers to employment and provides wrap-around support services.
- Regularly convene education, industry, workforce, and community leaders to understand and develop strategies to align the skills possessed by available workers and those sought by employers.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, School Superintendents, Higher Education Institutions, Workforce Training Representatives, Business and Industry Representatives, Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce.

RESOURCES NEEDED:

NWAEDD staff, meeting locations.

TIME FRAME:

As soon as possible.



Workforce Development, Retention, and Education

FOCUS AREA:

Addressing Brain Drain

STRATEGY:

Build innovative programs to address brain drain in the region.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:

Addressing the brain drain in rural Northwest Arkansas through providing high quality jobs and amenities are key to retaining and attracting individuals and families.

ISSUE:

Rural communities in the region haven't experienced similar population and economic growth as urban communities.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Develop programming to retain and attract diverse businesses which offer high paying jobs and fit the communities.
- Identify and update policies, codes and practices considered barriers to economic development and resiliency.
- Work with rural communities to design and implement marketing plans to promote their communities as business-ready locations.
- Pursue efforts to develop and expand amenities, cultural activities, entertainment and gathering spaces that local residents of all ages can enjoy.
- Identify and implement best practices to start a community leadership program to get younger generations interested in community leadership and volunteerism.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Higher Education Institutions, County and Local Government Officials, Community Organizations, Chambers of Commerce, and Economic Developers.

RESOURCES NEEDED:

NWAEDD staff.

TIME FRAME:

Immediate.



Workforce Development, Retention, and Education

FOCUS AREA:

Entrepreneurship and Business Collaboration

STRATEGY:

Through collaborative efforts, build an inclusive environment that promotes entrepreneurship, innovation and small business development.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:

Entrepreneurs and business owners that are tied to their local community are more likely to remain in the community long-term.

ISSUE:

Resources to benefit entrepreneurs and small business owners are scarce in some parts of the region which lead to an outmigration of talent and innovative ideas.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Ensure small business continuity in the area by connecting near-retirement business owners with local entrepreneurs.
- Cultivate an inclusive ecosystem that supports entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- Coordinate with the regional small business support agencies to offer in-person or virtual small business training, technical support, and mentorship.
- Increase awareness of funding available through local, state and federal sources.
- Promote digital literacy in small businesses by leveraging existing training models.
- Explore the development of co-working or incubator spaces throughout the region to benefit entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- Build entrepreneurial talent by educating students on the pathways to and benefits of entrepreneurship.
- Encourage corporate involvement in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- Promote resources and programming that support entrepreneurs and small businesses as they grow and scale their businesses.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Small Business Support Agencies, County and Local Government Officials, Economic Developers, Funding Agencies, Financial Institutions, Entrepreneurs, and Entrepreneur Training Providers.

RESOURCES NEEDED:

NWAEDD Staff, Funding, Meeting Locations.

TIME FRAME:

As soon as possible.



Workforce Development, Retention, and Education

FOCUS AREA:

Tourism Industry Accessibility

STRATEGY:

Inventory and survey tourist attractions and natural assets in the region to understand needs and develop viable strategies for improving tourist accessibility to attractions while also improving residents' and workers' quality of life and experiences with the area's natural assets.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:

Tourism destinations and natural assets such as state parks, hiking, and biking trails, parks, and other recreation sites can be valuable job creation tools, support local businesses and bring income to the region. They also serve the community as places for locals to enjoy recreation and relaxation.

ISSUE:

There are no region wide advertisement efforts or uniform amenities provided to support local tourism.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Research existing tourism promotion efforts in the region.
- Survey existing tourism councils, park representatives, and local government officials to determine infrastructural and promotional needs in their local areas.
- Meet with existing local tourism councils, park representatives, and local government officials to enable cooperation.
- Determine viability of cooperative promotion efforts funding for tourist amenities.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Arkansas Parks and Tourism, and Local Government Officials.

RESOURCES NEEDED:

NWAEDD Staff, Local Funding, and Meeting Locations.

TIME FRAME:

Immediate.



Healthcare, Law Enforcement, and Human Infrastructure

FOCUS AREA:

Employable Skills and the Drug Crisis

STRATEGY:

Implement treatment, education, and employable skill building programs for persons with histories of substance abuse, prior justice system involvement, and/or experiences with homelessness.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:

Providing employable skills and treatment options for persons with employment needs is an essential step in decreasing the impacts of addiction on their lives and increasing societal growth and stability in the area.

ISSUE:

Histories of substance abuse, prior justice system involvement, and homelessness in conjunction with a lack of employable skills are often the cause of vicious cycles of unemployment and underemployment which can spread through generations.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Meet with county and local government officials, justice system officials, representatives of healthcare facilities and interested charitable/non-profit organizations to garner support.
- Create and/or expand the region's job training facilities, jails/prisons, and drug treatment centers to include training in employable skills.
- Work with regional K-12 educators to determine a best practices curriculum which educates students on drug addiction, enables treatment, and puts an emphasis on employable skills.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, County and Local Governments, Community Non-Profits and Charities, K-12 Educators, Healthcare Officials, and Justice System Officials.

RESOURCES NEEDED:

NWAEDD Staff, K-12 Staff, Justice System Staff, State and Federal Grant Resources.

TIME FRAME:

Immediate and ongoing.



Regional Infrastructure Improvement

FOCUS AREA:

Ensure Complete Broadband Accessibility

STRATEGY:

Continue pursuing state and federal grant funding and seek out public private partnerships with telecommunication companies and rural electric co-ops in Northwest Arkansas for the continued completion of full broadband access in the region.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:

Increasing access to high-speed internet service is essential to enhancing and sustaining economic development and job creation opportunities.

ISSUE:

Broadband internet access varies widely throughout the NWAEDD region. Broadband has become a necessary public resource for communication, information, and commerce causing unserved and underserved areas to lose out on businesses and development opportunities.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Meet with local officials and the public to discuss the area's broadband coverage, determine needs, and set coverage goals.
- Meet with Northwest Arkansas's telecommunication providers to discuss the region's broadband coverage and explore partnerships in extending and funding coverage areas with broadband needs.
- Continue researching and working with state and federal grant programs.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Telecommunication Companies, Rural Electric Co-ops, and County and Local Government Officials.

RESOURCES NEEDED:

NWAEDD Staff, continually updated BSLs Maps, State and Federal Grant Resources.

TIME FRAME:

Immediate and ongoing.



Regional Infrastructure Improvement

FOCUS AREA:

Infrastructure Expansion

STRATEGY:

Create valuable partnerships between rural electric co-ops, telecommunication companies, water and sewer providers, and transportation departments to enable cooperation and complete infrastructure improvements in tandem throughout Northwest Arkansas.

BENEFIT TO COMMUNITY:

Ensuring the cooperation of all infrastructure providers within the area will increase the effectiveness of tax dollars and increase regional competitiveness for economic development.

ISSUE:

Lacking cooperation between infrastructure providers results in longer times to receive necessary repairs and updates, longer construction periods, and costlier infrastructure improvements and developments.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Inventory regional needs for broadband, water and sewer, electricity, road access, and any other specialized infrastructure needs.
- Regularly convene Northwest Arkansas's providers of each infrastructure need, local developers, and county and local government officials to enable cooperation in planned maintenance and development projects.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Telecommunication Companies, Rural Electric Co-ops, County and Local Utility Providers, Road Departments, and County and Local Government Officials.

RESOURCES NEEDED:

NWAEDD Staff, and State And Federal Grant Resources.

TIME FRAME:

Immediate and ongoing.

CEDS Evaluation Framework

FOCUS: Workforce Housing

- Identify and convene stakeholders to build consensus on prioritizing workforce housing needs and options across the region.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD and Local Governments

B. TIME FRAME:
1 YEAR

- Identify and inventory available land for the development of workforce housing.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
Local Governments

B. TIME FRAME:
1–2 YEARS

- Continue the workforce housing efforts of the Northwest Arkansas Council.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
Local Governments, Developers, and Financial Institutions

B. TIME FRAME:
5 YEARS

- Expand the housing research efforts of the Northwest Arkansas Council to include remaining counties in the NWAEDD territory.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD and Local Governments

B. TIME FRAME:
1–2 YEARS

- Leverage local, state, and federal resources for affordable workforce housing efforts.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD, Local Governments, and Developers

B. TIME FRAME:
5 YEARS

- Sustain a range of housing opportunities and choices that meet the needs of a diverse population.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
Local Governments and Developers

B. TIME FRAME:
5 YEARS

FOCUS: Workforce Development, Retention, and Education

- Strengthen and continue partnerships providing experiential learning opportunities to students to increase participation of youth in skilled jobs and post-secondary degrees.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, K-12 Schools, Higher Education Institutions, Workforce Training Representatives, and Industry Representative

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Share success stories from career and technical education programs.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Workforce Training Representatives, and Industry Representatives

B. TIME FRAME:

1 Year

- Expand career exploration tools to help students consider their skills and interests in selecting career pathways.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

K-12 Schools and Higher Education Institutions

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Convene school superintendents throughout the area to explore ways to replicate successful workforce training partnerships in school districts across the region.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, K-12 Schools, Workforce Training Representatives, and Industry Representatives

B. TIME FRAME:

1 Year

- Incorporate employability skills such as soft, cognitive, and digital skills in the education curriculum.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

K-12 Schools

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Inventory workforce training programs and career and technical education programs throughout the region.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, K-12 Schools, and Higher Education Institutions

B. TIME FRAME:

1 Year

- Annually survey local businesses to understand current and future workforce and training needs.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Business and Industry Representatives, and Chambers of Commerce

B. TIME FRAME:

Ongoing

- Partner to annually survey the local workforce to understand their skill sets and any skills gaps that exist.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Business and Industry Representatives, and Chambers of Commerce

B. TIME FRAME:

Ongoing

- Incorporate employability skills such as soft, cognitive and digital skills in workforce training programs.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

Workforce Training Representatives

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Explore the feasibility of developing or repurposing existing facilities into workforce training centers to upskill workers for current and future employers.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD and Workforce Training Representatives

B. TIME FRAME:

5 Years

FOCUS: Workforce Development, Retention, and Education (continued)

- Build a strong regional workforce system that identifies and reduces barriers to employment and provides wrap-around support services.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Workforce Training Representatives, and Chambers of Commerce

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Regularly convene education, industry, workforce, and community leaders to understand and develop strategies to align the skills possessed by available workers and those sought by employers.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, K-12 Representatives, and Workforce Training Representatives

B. TIME FRAME:

Ongoing

- Develop programming to retain and attract diverse businesses which offer high paying jobs and fit the communities in the region.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Chambers Of Commerce, and Economic Developers

B. TIME FRAME:

1–2 Years

- Identify and update policies, codes and practices considered barriers to economic development and resiliency.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, County and Local Governments, Chambers of Commerce, and Economic Developers

B. TIME FRAME:

1–3 Years

- Work with rural communities to design and implement marketing plans to promote their communities as business-ready locations.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, County and Local Governments, Chambers of Commerce, and Economic Developers

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Pursue efforts to develop and expand amenities, cultural activities, entertainment and gathering spaces that local residents of all ages can enjoy.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, County and Local Governments, and Community Organizations

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Identify and implement best practices to start a community leadership program to get younger generations interested in community leadership and volunteerism.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, County and Local Governments, and Community Organizations

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Ensure small business continuity in the region by connecting near-retirement business owners with local entrepreneurs.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

Chambers of Commerce, Economic Developers, and Entrepreneur Training Providers

B. TIME FRAME:

Ongoing

- Cultivate an inclusive ecosystem that supports entrepreneurs and small businesses.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Chambers of Commerce, and County and Local Governments

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Coordinate with the regional small business support agencies to offer in-person or virtual small business training, technical support, and mentorship.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Small Business Support Agencies, and Entrepreneur Training Providers

B. TIME FRAME:

1–3 Years

FOCUS: Workforce Development, Retention, and Education (continued)

- Increase awareness of funding available through local, state and federal sources.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD, Chambers of Commerce, and County and Local Governments

B. TIME FRAME:
1 Year

- Promote digital literacy in small businesses by leveraging existing training models.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD, Small Business Support Agencies, and Chambers of Commerce

B. TIME FRAME:
1 Year

- Explore the development of co-working or incubator spaces throughout the region to benefit entrepreneurs and small businesses.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD, Small Business Support Agencies, and Chambers of Commerce

B. TIME FRAME:
1–2 Years

- Build entrepreneurial talent by educating students on the pathways to and benefits of entrepreneurship.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
K-12 Representatives and Higher Education Representatives

B. TIME FRAME:
1–5 Years

- Encourage corporate involvement in the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD, Chambers of Commerce, Financial Institutions, and Regional Business Leaders

B. TIME FRAME:
1–2 Years

- Promote resources and programming that support entrepreneurs and small businesses as they grow and scale their businesses.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD, Small Business Support Agencies, and Chambers of Commerce

B. TIME FRAME:
1–2 Years

- Research existing tourism promotion efforts in the region.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD and Park Representatives

B. TIME FRAME:
1 Year

- Survey existing tourism councils, park representatives, and local government officials to determine infrastructural and promotional needs in their local areas.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD and Park Representatives

B. TIME FRAME:
1 Year

- Meet with existing local tourism councils, park representatives, and local government officials to enable cooperation.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD, Park Representatives, and Local Government Officials

B. TIME FRAME:
1–2 Years

- Determine viability of cooperative promotion efforts funding for tourist amenities.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:
NWAEDD and Park Representatives

B. TIME FRAME:
1–3 Years

FOCUS: Healthcare, Law Enforcement, and Human Infrastructure

- Meet with county and local government officials, justice system officials, representatives of healthcare facilities, and interested charitable/non-profit organizations to garner support.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Local Government Officials, Community Organizations, Healthcare Providers, and Justice System Officials

B. TIME FRAME:

1 Year

- Create and/or expand the region's job training facilities, jails/prisons, and drug treatment centers to include training in employable skills.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Community Organizations, Healthcare Providers, and Justice System Officials

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Work with regional K-12 educators to determine a best practices curriculum which educates students on drug addiction, enables treatment, and puts an emphasis on employable skills.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD and K-12 Representatives

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

FOCUS: Regional Infrastructure Improvement

- Meet with local officials and the public to discuss the region's broadband coverage, determine needs, and set coverage goals.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD and Local Government Officials

B. TIME FRAME:

1 Year

- Meet with Northwest Arkansas's telecommunication providers to discuss the region's broadband coverage and explore partnerships in extending and funding coverage areas with broadband need.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Telecommunications Companies, Rural Electric Co-ops, and Local Government Officials

B. TIME FRAME:

1 Year

- Continue researching and working with state and federal grant programs.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD and Local Government Officials

B. TIME FRAME:

1–5 Years

- Inventory regional needs for broadband, water and sewer, electricity, road access, and any other specialized infrastructure needs.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Local Government Officials, and Infrastructure Providers

B. TIME FRAME:

1–2 Years

- Regularly convene Northwest Arkansas's providers of each infrastructure need, local developers, and county and local government officials to enable cooperation in planned maintenance and development projects.

A. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES:

NWAEDD, Telecommunication Companies, Rural Electric Co-ops, County and Local Utility Providers, Road Departments, and County And Local Government Officials

B. TIME FRAME:

Ongoing

CEDS Sources

- Arkansas Economic Development Institute
- Bureau of Economic Analysis
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- ESRI Business Analyst
- ESRI Geoenrichment Service
- FCC, Fixed Broadband Deployment Data
- JobsEQ® Data, 2022Q4
- National Center for Education Statistics, College Navigator
- U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2017–2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
- U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census
- U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Photos courtesy of Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism.



Northwest Arkansas Economic Development District

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