Central Arkansas Planning and Development District

2024–2028 CEDS

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

JULY 2024

Central Arkansas Planning and Development District

2024-2028 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

July 2024

CAPDD
902 N. Center Street,
Lonoke, AR 72086
(501) 676-2721 | **capdd.org**

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- **Barry Hyde**
  Pulaski County Judge
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  Mayor of Holland
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- **Doug Erwin**
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- **Johnnie Mass**
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- **Ken Kincade**
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  Mayor of Traskwood
- **Ladell Brown**
  Business Representative
- **Lawrence Holloway**
  Prairie County Judge
- **Marco Middleton**
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- **Michael Brown**
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- **Preston Scroggins**
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- **Ralph Jones**
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- **Ray Glover**
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- **Thelma Gray**
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- **Tom Farmer**
  Mayor of Benton
- **Travis Hackelton**
  Mayor of Roe
- **Wayne McGee**
  Mayor of Lonoke
- **Willie Stokes**
  Mayor of Holly Grove
- **V.O. "Butch" Callhoun**
  Business Representative

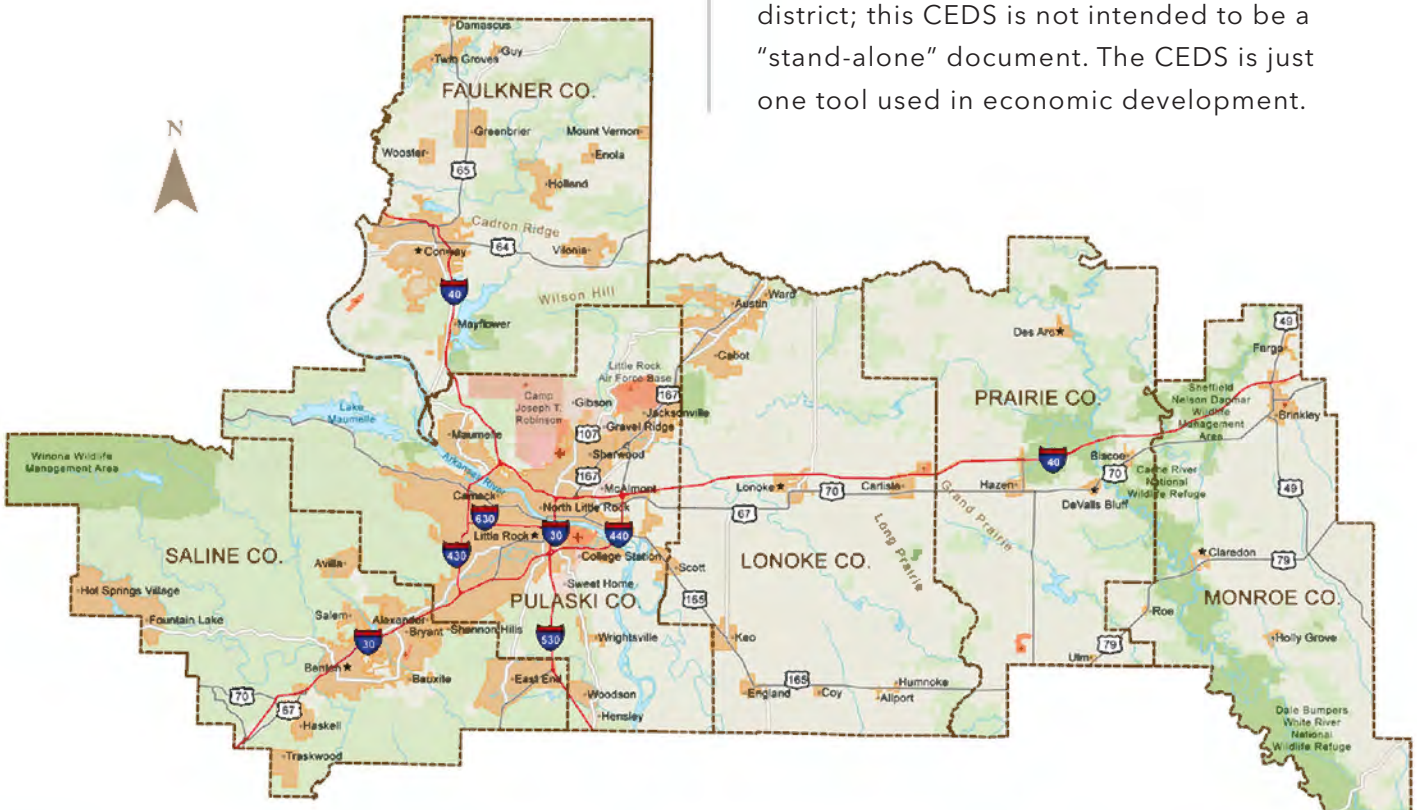
CEDS Subcommittee

- **Adriene Brown**
  District Director,
  Small Business Administration
- **Alicia Payseno**
  Director of Economic Development,
  City of Cabot
- **Amanda Jones**
  Grants Manager,
  City of Little Rock
- **Amy Williams**
  Community Development,
  AEDC
- **Bernadette Rhodes**
  Regional Planner,
  Metroplan
- **Casey Covington**
  Executive Director,
  Metroplan
- **Colleen Bailey**
  Director of Economic Development,
  City of North Little Rock
- **Conya Spencer**
  Director of Economic Development,
  CAPDD
- **Dan Scott**
  NLR Neighborhood Services,
  City of North Little Rock
- **Derrick M. Rainey**
  Small Business Administration Coordinator,
  City of Little Rock
- **Josh Fout**
  Grants Coordinator,
  City of Little Rock
- **Joshua Alexander**
  Director of Economic and
  Community Development,
  City of Sherwood
- **Kellen Davis**
  Director of Small Business,
  Little Rock Regional Chamber
- **Laura Fine**
  State Director,
  Arkansas Small Business and Technology
  Development Center
- **Leigh Pool**
  Director of Environmental Management,
  CAPDD
- **Marsha Guffey**
  Grants and Special Projects Manager,
  Port of Little Rock
- **Mattias Powers**
  Grants Analyst,
  City of Little Rock
- **Robbie Alberson**
  Grant Administrator,
  City of Conway
- **Robert Birch**
  Director of Economic Development,
  City of Jacksonville
- **Sydney Dozier**
  Public Engagement Planner,
  Metroplan
- **Tab Townsell**
  Public Works Director,
  Pulaski County Government
- **Tanya Childers**
  Community Services Specialist III,
  CAPDD
- **Timothy Riley**
  Director of Community Development,
  CAPDD

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 region's economic and social well-being and serves as a guide to establishing regional goals, strategies, investment priorities, and resources to benefit the region. A CEDS seeks to maximize the target region'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 Planning and Development Districts throughout the nation. CAPDD (CAPDD) and the CEDS Strategy Committee are to provide this document to reference economic conditions, development strategies, and projects throughout the 6-county district; this CEDS is not intended to be a "stand-alone" document. The CEDS is just one tool used in economic development.



Source: Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, County of Pulaski, AR, Arkansas GIS Office, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USFWS

The 6-County District

1. Faulkner County
2. Lonoke County
3. Monroe County
4. Prairie County
5. Pulaski County
6. Saline County

CEDS Timeline

NOVEMBER 2023
CAPDD partnered with Arkansas Economic Development Institute (AEDI) to assist with data collection and analysis, facilitation of meetings, and professional assistance in writing the Central Arkansas CEDS plan.

DECEMBER 2023
AEDI began data collection to complete regional data profiles, county profiles of each of the 6 counties in the region, and create an online dashboard complete with all available data down to city level. AEDI also developed a survey intended to form an understanding of the region's needs as determined by its community and business leaders.

FEBRUARY 2024
CAPDD formed the CEDS Committee to represent public and private interests in the region's economic and social well-being. The survey was introduced to CEDS Committee members and completed.

MARCH 2024
AEDI met with the CEDS Committee and CAPDD to present the collected data and survey results, complete a SWOT analysis, and establish focus areas for the CEDS plan.

APRIL 2024
AEDI completed an online dashboard to provide the region with easily accessible data to the incorporated place level.

MAY-JUNE 2024
CEDS plan is finalized and given final stakeholder approval of contents.

JULY 2024
CAPDD Board adopts CEDS plan and submits to EDA.

CEDS Regional Summary

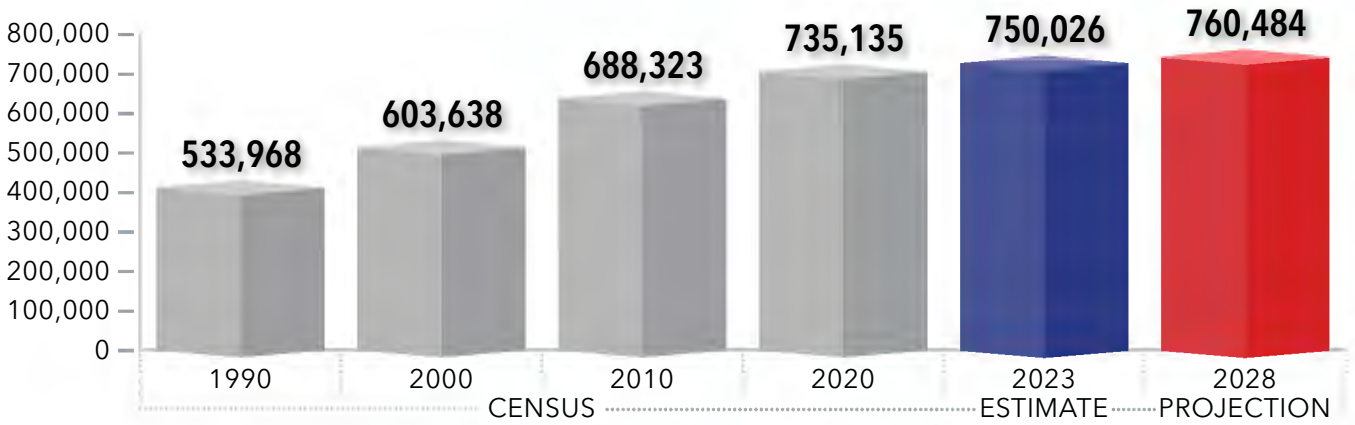
This section is a summary of the current economic and demographic conditions of the CAPDD Region broken down by county. This snapshot of the region highlights the statistical conditions which educated the focuses of the strategies outlined in the later portions of the document.

Population

From 2020 to 2023, CAPDD has maintained a population growth rate of 2.0%, from 735,135 persons in the 2020 census to 750,026 in the 2023 estimate. The fastest growing counties in the region are Faulkner County with a population growth rate of 5.2% and Saline County with a population growth rate of 5.0%. The largest county in the region is Pulaski County with a population of 400,009 and representing 53% of the total population in the Central Arkansas District. Combined, the population dense, urban counties of Faulkner, Pulaski, and Saline represent 88% of the region's population. Monroe and Prairie Counties experienced a population loss of 4.2% and 3.0% respectively over the same period. Monroe and Prairie Counties are also the least populated counties of the 6 CAPDD counties with 6,512 persons and 8,036 persons respectively.

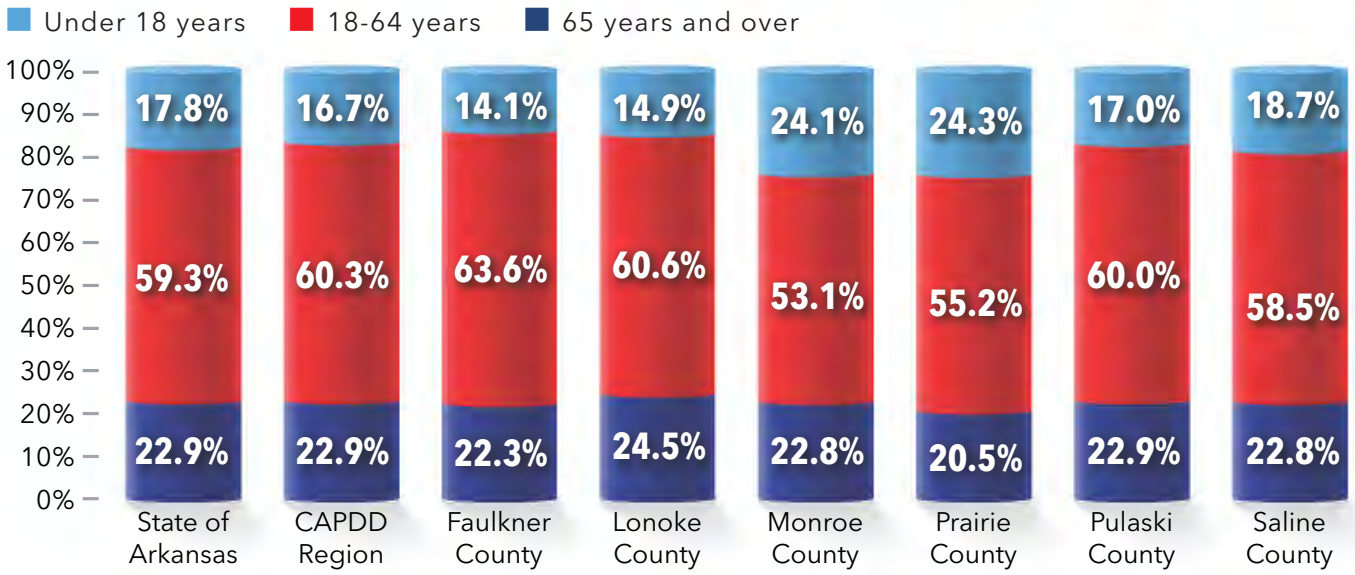
The region's age dependency ratio (the ratio between the population between 18 and 65 years of age and the population outside of that age bracket) is 65.7%, slightly lower than the State of Arkansas at 68.6%. The lowest age dependency ratio in the region is Faulkner County at 57.2%, while the largest ratio is 88.4% in Monroe County. Monroe and Prairie Counties have the largest elderly population representing 24.1% of Monroe County and 24.3% of Prairie County residents. The largest minor population is in Lonoke County representing 24.5% of the population. In the counties with a larger age dependent population, addressing the different needs of the elderly and minor populations are increasingly necessary. Elder populations require a greater investment into healthcare, affordable group housing, and alternative transportation options, while minor populations require a greater investment into schooling, childcare, and entertainment options.

FIGURE 1:
CAPDD Population



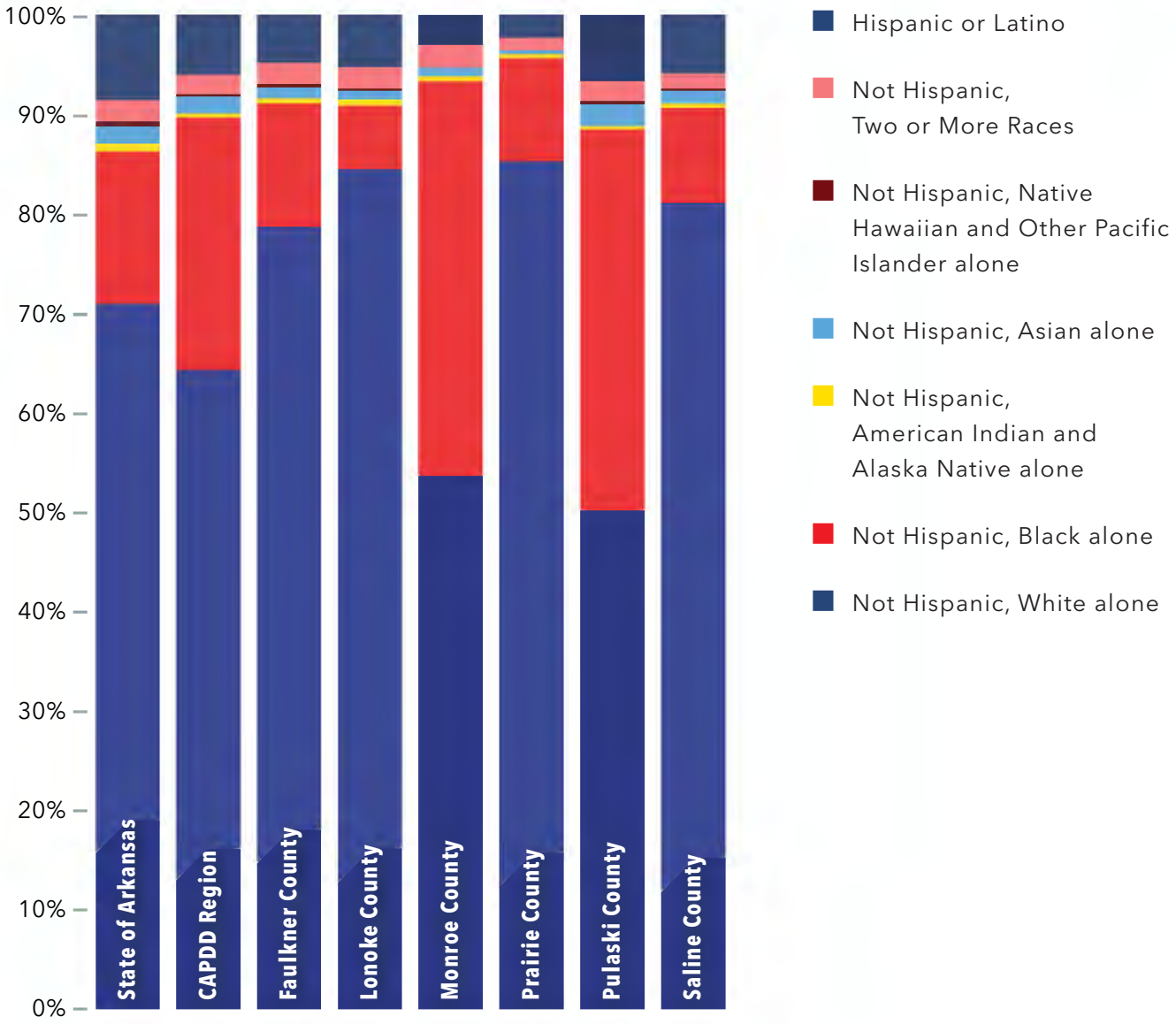
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2020 Census, Population Division; Esri Geoenrichment Service

FIGURE 2:
Population Age by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

FIGURE 3:
Population Race/Ethnicity



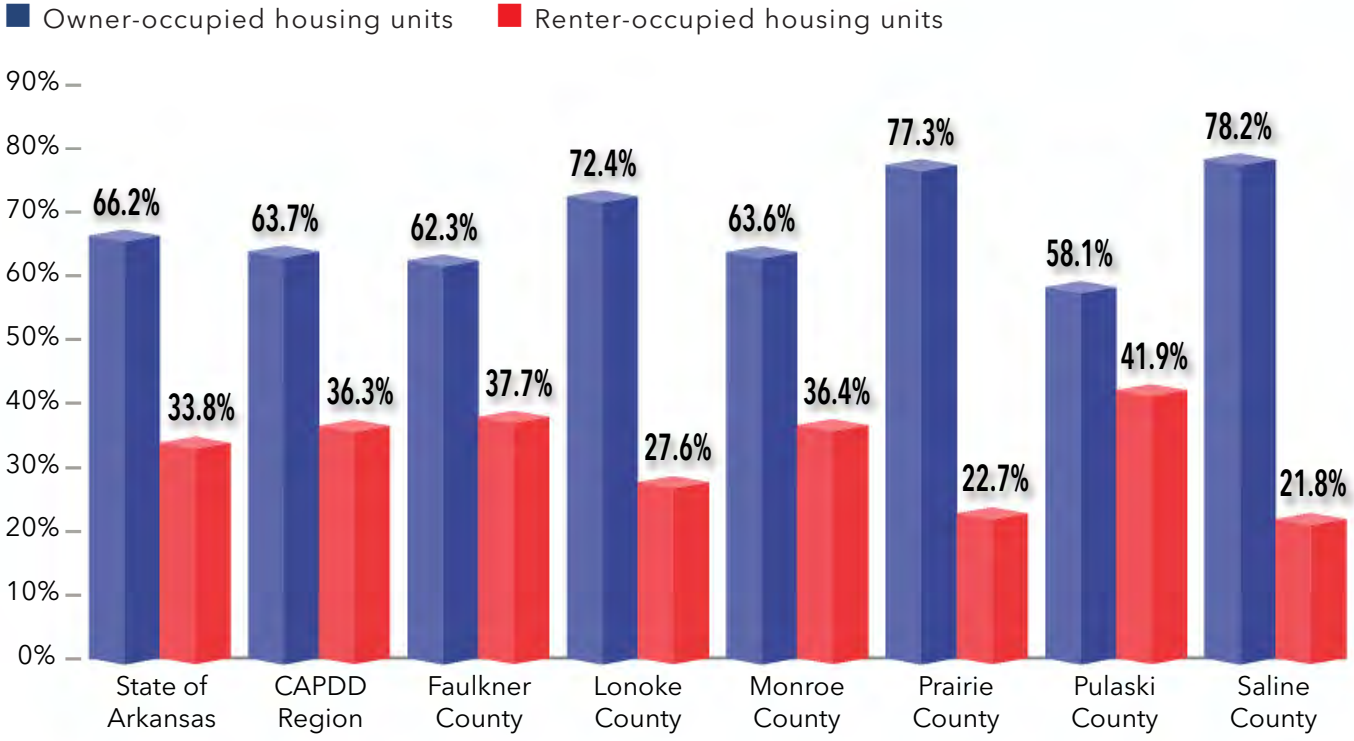
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Housing

According to 2022 American Community Survey estimates, 63.7% of occupied housing units in the CAPDD region are owner-occupied and 36.3% are renter-occupied compared to 66.2% owner and 33.8% renter-occupied in the state. Saline County has the highest rate of owner-occupied housing units at 78.2% while Pulaski County had the highest rate of renters at 41.9%.

FIGURE 4:

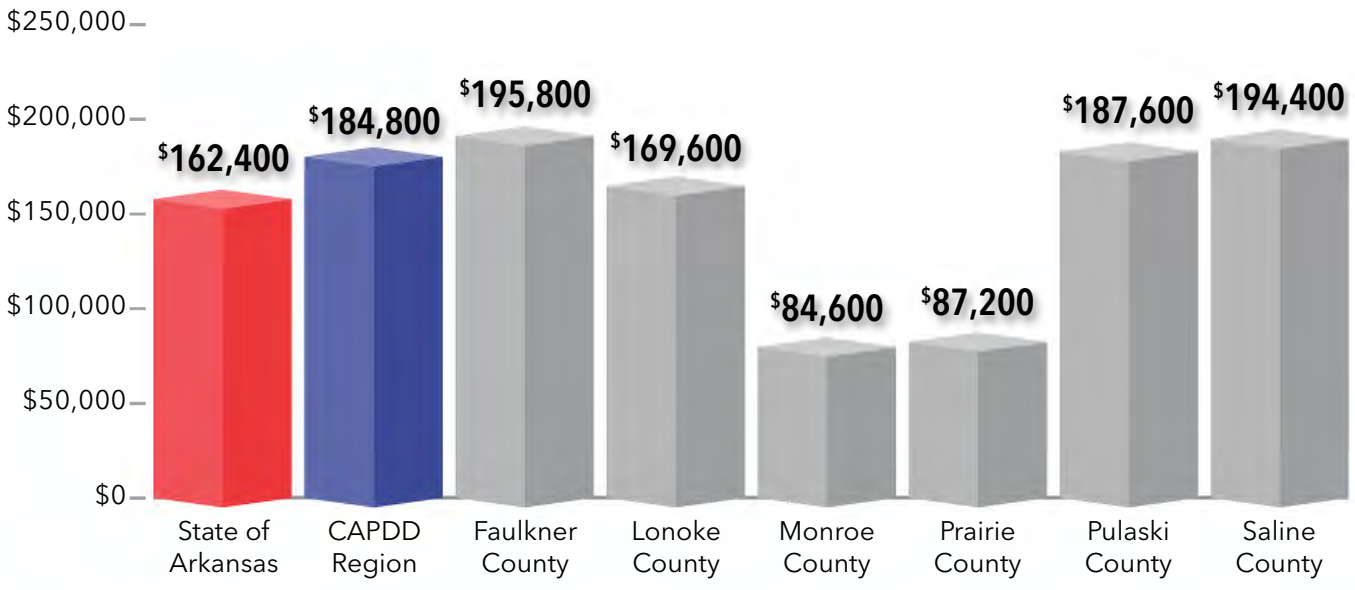
Homeowners vs. Renters



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

In 2022 CAPDD's median home value was $184,800, 14% more than the state at $162,400. Faulkner, Saline, and Pulaski Counties were the top three highest median home values at $195,800, $194,400, and $187,600 respectively while Monroe and Prairie Counties had the lowest at $84,600 and $87,200 respectively. Both the median rent and the monthly owner cost of housing in the CAPDD region were higher than the state average. The median homeowner paid $1,361 each month and renters paid $963 each month in the CAPDD region compared to $1,240 owner costs and $868 rent in the state. Pulaski County had the highest owner and renter costs at $1,400 and $985 respectively while Monroe had the lowest costs at $955 for owners and $543 for renters. Monroe County also has the highest rate of rent burdened households, meaning households spending more than 33% of their monthly income on housing costs, at 52.2% rent burdened households, 7.7% more than the state. Pulaski had the highest rate of mortgage burdened households at 22.9%, only 1% higher than the state at 21.9%.

FIGURE 5:
Median Home Value

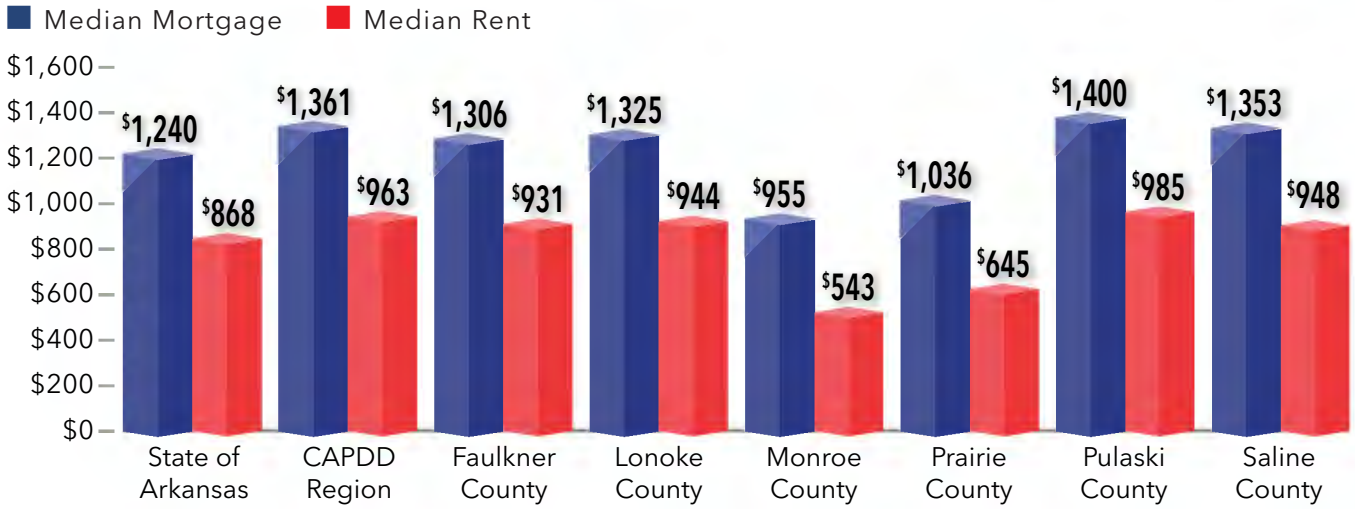


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

FIGURE 6:

Median Rent and Mortgage

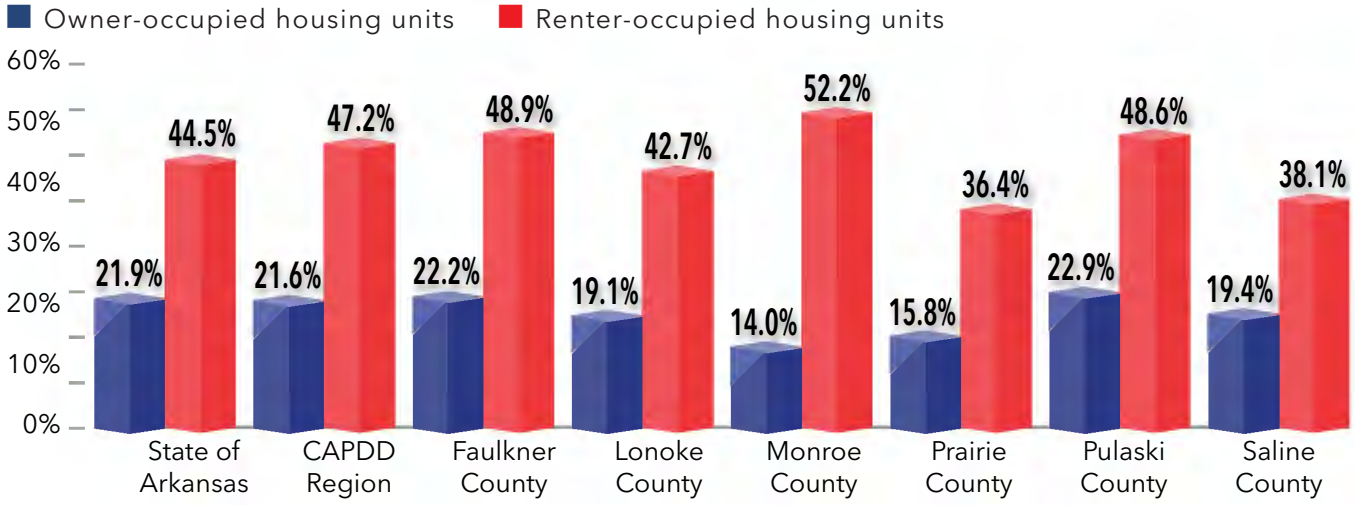
Note: Median Selected Monthly Owner Costs includes mortgage payments, real estate taxes, property insurance, utilities, and fuel.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

FIGURE 7:

Rent Burdened and Mortgage Burdened

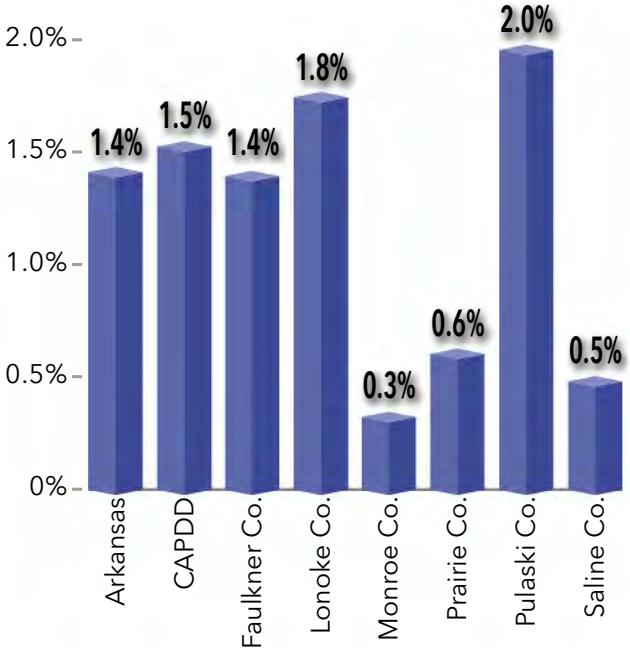


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Central Arkansas had 1.5% homeowner vacancies and 8.5% renter vacancy in 2022 compared to the state at 1.4% owner vacancy and 6.9% renter vacancy. The county with the highest homeowner vacancy rate is Pulaski County at 2.0% while the highest renter vacancy rate is Prairie County at 14.3%. Monroe County held the lowest vacancy rate for homeowners at 0.3% while Lonoke County had the lowest vacancy rate for renters at 5.0%.

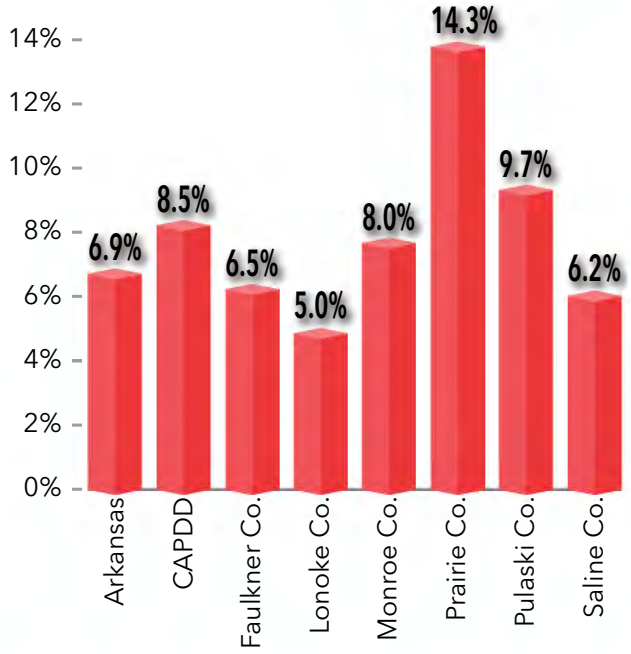
A diverse set of housing options creates a healthy community by offering a wider range of housing costs and living situations to appeal to a wider range of household needs. The low homeowner vacancy rates of Monroe, Prairie, and Saline Counties show a pressing need for more housing units while the high renter vacancy rate of Prairie County reveals an over representation of rental units and a lack of desirable housing options in the county.

FIGURE 8:
Homeowner Vacancy Rate



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018–2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

FIGURE 9:
Rental Vacancy Rate

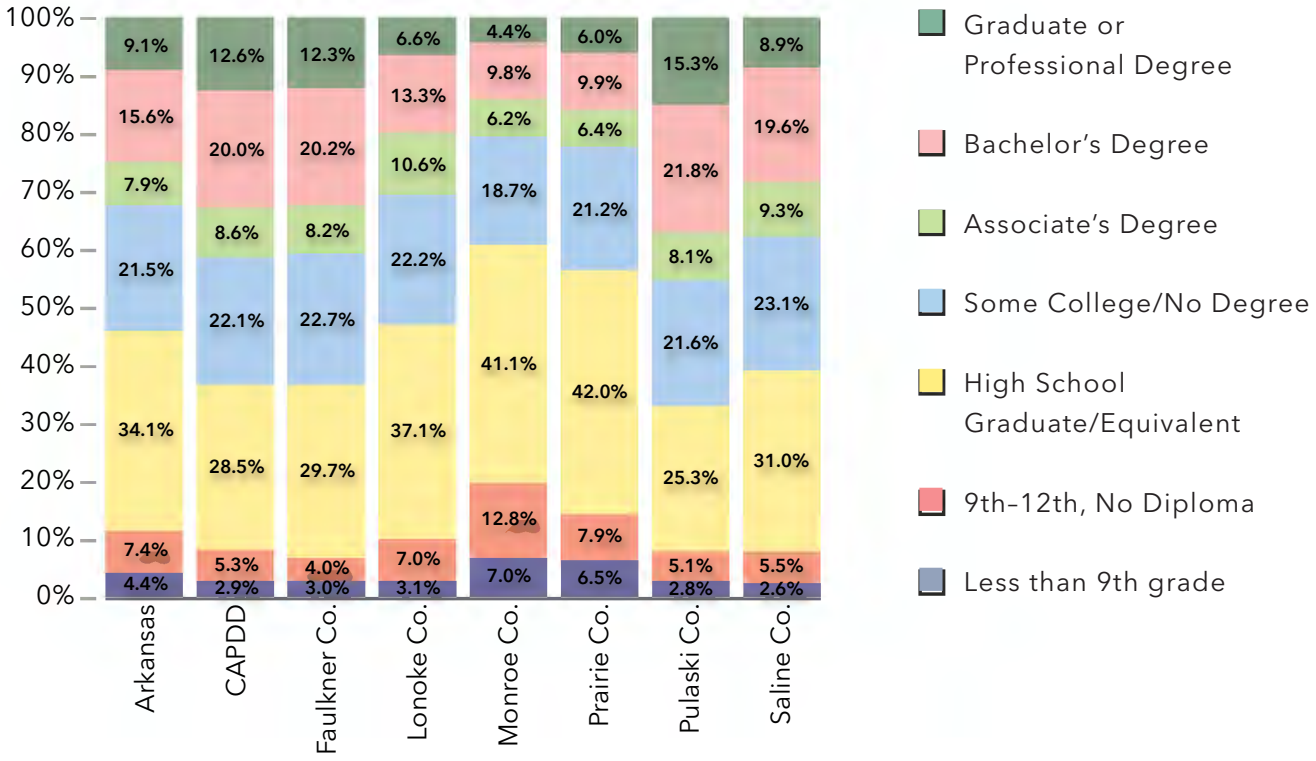


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018–2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Education

The CAPDD region outperforms the state on educational attainment with 41.2% of its population 25 years of age or older having an associate degree or higher compared to 32.6% in the state. Pulaski County has the largest percentage of college graduates at 45.2% while Monroe has the largest percentage of population lacking a college diploma at 19.8%. The largest bracket of educational attainment in each of the 6 counties is high school graduate or equivalent.

FIGURE 10:
Educational Attainment by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018–2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Economy

Pulaski County is the largest county in the region, houses the state capitol, and has the largest medical facilities in the state. Pulaski County's largest industry by employment is healthcare and social assistance, while its most focused industry by location quotient (LQ) is public administration. The fastest growing industry in Pulaski County is the transportation and warehousing industry. Faulkner County is the second most populated county in the region and home to multiple universities and educational institutions. Its largest industries by employment are health care and social assistance, retail trade, and accommodation and food services. Faulkner County's most focused industries by LQ are information, construction, and retail trade. Faulkner County experienced significant annual growth over the last 5 years in the information industry, growing by 30.4% each year. Saline County is the smallest of the urban counties in the region. Its largest industries by employment are health care and social assistance, retail trade, and accommodation and food services while the most focused industries by LQ are construction, retail trade, and accommodation and food services. Saline County experienced the largest growth in the professional, scientific, and technical services industry and the transportation and warehousing industry over the past five years.

Lonoke County is the largest of the region's rural counties and experienced the most overall growth of the rural counties, having increased in population by 2.6% and experiencing the highest industry growth in administrative support and waste management and remediation services. The largest industry by employment is retail trade while the most focused industry by LQ is agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting.

Monroe and Prairie Counties both experienced population loss over the last five years and significant declines in industry growth. Monroe County's largest industry by employment is health care and social assistance which has been decreasing by 3.1% each year over the past five years. Monroe County saw the greatest loss in the wholesale trade industry at -6.1% growth each year. Prairie County's largest industry of agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting decreased by 1.8% each year with its biggest decrease in the accommodation and food services industry at -3.8% each year. The disparity between urban and rural communities in this region has had the greatest impact on Monroe and Prairie Counties. The rural counties' lack of access to quality healthcare and housing, and lack of funding to update key infrastructure such as water, waste water,

electricity, and broadband has limited the potential these counties have for success. A major focus of efforts in this CEDS focus on the need to integrate a unified character across the Central Arkansas region and bridge the rural urban divide to help the rural counties benefit from the same level of success as the region's urban counties.

FIGURE 11:
Central Arkansas PDD, 2023Q4

NAICS	Industry	Empl	Average Annual Wages	LQ	5-Year History Annual %	5-Year Forecast Annual % Growth
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	74,465	$65,588	1.36	1.1%	0.6%
44	Retail Trade	39,805	$37,041	1.08	-0.2%	-0.4%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	31,951	$22,679	0.99	0.2%	0.1%
61	Educational Services	23,697	$48,399	0.79	0.7%	0.3%
23	Construction	23,189	$58,721	1.04	3.5%	0.2%
92	Public Administration	21,765	$62,737	1.26	-0.9%	-0.2%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	21,474	$41,499	0.92	-1.2%	0.1%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	21,376	$53,140	1.16	6.5%	0.5%
31	Manufacturing	19,120	$62,086	0.64	-0.9%	-0.2%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	18,311	$77,977	0.67	-1.2%	0.6%

Source: JobsEQ®. Data as of 2023Q4.

COUNTY DATA PROFILES

CAPDD REGION

ECONOMY[1, 2]

Median Household Income	Per Capita Personal Income	Unemployment Rate
$61,729	$55,977	3.0%

Families Below Poverty Level	10.5%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	9.8%

EDUCATION[1]

High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
91.8%	32.6%

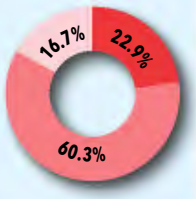
POPULATION[3]

2010 Census	688,323
2023 Estimate	744,025
2028 Projection	760,484
2010–2023 Change	9.0%
2023–2028 Change	1.4%
Minority	35.7%

Female 51.6% | Male 48.4%

AGE

Under 18	22.9%
18–64	60.3%
65+	16.7%
Median Age	37.8



HOUSING[1]

Median Value	$184,800
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1.7%
Rental Vacancy Rate	9.2%
Occupied Housing Units	297,351
Median Selected Monthly Owner Cost (with a mortgage)	$1,361
Median Gross Rent	$963
Mortgage-Burdened*	21.6%
Rent-Burdened*	47.2%

TRANSPORTATION[1]

Average Commute Time: 23.1 min.

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

Drove alone	80.9%	Walked	1.1%
Carpooled	8.8%	Bicycle	0.1%
Public Trans. (excl. taxi)	0.4%	Taxi, Motorcycle, or Other Means	1.1%
Worked From Home			7.6%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES[4]

INDUSTRY[5]	EMPL	5-YEAR HISTORY ANNUAL %	5-YEAR FORECAST ANNUAL % GROWTH	AVG ANN WAGES
Health Care and Social Assistance	74,465	1.1%	0.6%	$65,588
Retail Trade	39,805	-0.2%	-0.4%	$37,041
Accommodation and Food Services	31,951	0.2%	0.1%	$22,679
Educational Services	23,697	0.7%	0.3%	$48,399
Construction	23,189	3.5%	0.2%	$58,721
Public Administration	21,765	-0.9%	-0.2%	$62,737
Administrative & Support and Waste Management & Remediation Services	21,474	-1.2%	0.1%	$41,499
Transportation and Warehousing	21,376	6.5%	0.5%	$53,140
Manufacturing	19,120	-0.9%	-0.2%	$62,086
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	18,311	-1.2%	0.6%	$77,977

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
[2] 2022 Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; 2023 Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS.
[3] U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2028 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service
[4] JobsEQ®. Data as of 2023Q4.
[5] All data based upon a four-quarter moving average

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

COUNTY DATA PROFILES

FAULKNER COUNTY

ECONOMY[1, 2]

Median Household Income	Per Capita Personal Income	Unemployment Rate
$61,273	$48,161	2.9%

Families Below Poverty Level	10.1%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	8.4%

EDUCATION[1]

High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
93.0%	32.5%

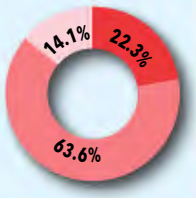
POPULATION[3]

2010 Census	113,237
2023 Estimate	127,665
2028 Projection	130,964
2010–2023 Change	14.8%
2023–2028 Change	0.8%
Minority	21.3%

Female	Male
51.5%	48.5%

AGE

Under 18	22.3%
18–64	63.6%
65+	14.1%
Median Age	34.0



HOUSING[1]

Median Value	$195,800
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1.6%
Rental Vacancy Rate	7.7%
Occupied Housing Units	47,396
Median Selected Monthly Owner Cost (with a mortgage)	$1,306
Median Gross Rent	$931
Mortgage-Burdened*	22.2%
Rent-Burdened*	48.9%

TRANSPORTATION[1]

Average Commute Time: 25.9 min.

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

Drove alone	83.4%	Walked	1.1%
Carpooled	7.9%	Bicycle	0.1%
Public Trans. (excl. taxi)	0.2%	Taxi, Motorcycle, or Other Means	0.7%
Worked From Home			6.5%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES[4]

INDUSTRY[5]	EMPL	5-YEAR HISTORY ANNUAL %	5-YEAR FORECAST ANNUAL % GROWTH	AVG ANN WAGES
Health Care and Social Assistance	9,047	2.9%	1.3%	$48,794
Retail Trade	6,546	0.2%	0.0%	$34,114
Accommodation and Food Services	5,525	2.7%	0.5%	$20,844
Educational Services	4,634	-1.0%	0.8%	$52,159
Construction	4,502	4.3%	0.5%	$54,669
Manufacturing	3,289	-0.2%	0.0%	$57,346
Administrative & Support and Waste Management & Remediation Services	2,750	3.5%	0.6%	$46,352
Other Services (except Public Administration)	2,503	1.7%	0.6%	$31,502
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,697	-9.6%	1.1%	$58,816
Information	1,679	30.4%	1.5%	$100,244

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
[2] 2022 Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; 2023 Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS.
[3] U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2028 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service
[4] JobsEQ®. Data as of 2023Q4.
[5] All data based upon a four-quarter moving average
*Definition: Spending more than 30% of household income on rent or mortgage.

COUNTY DATA PROFILES

LONOKE COUNTY

ECONOMY[1, 2]

Median Household Income	Per Capita Personal Income	Unemployment Rate
$68,078	$48,433	2.7%

Families Below Poverty Level	8.5%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	9.6%

EDUCATION[1]

High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
89.9%	19.9%

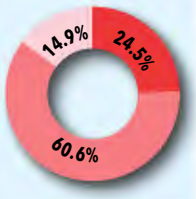
POPULATION[3]

2010 Census	68,356
2023 Estimate	75,225
2028 Projection	77,840
2010–2023 Change	11.1%
2023–2028 Change	2.5%
Minority	15.5%

Female	Male
50.4%	49.6%

AGE

Under 18	24.5%
18–64	60.6%
65+	14.9%
Median Age	37.5



HOUSING[1]

Median Value	$169,600
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	2.0%
Rental Vacancy Rate	4.5%
Occupied Housing Units	27,582
Median Selected Monthly Owner Cost (with a mortgage)	$1,325
Median Gross Rent	$944
Mortgage-Burdened*	19.1%
Rent-Burdened*	42.7%

TRANSPORTATION[1]

Average Commute Time: **29.2 min.**

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

Drove alone	83.6%	Walked	1.1%
Carpooled	8.9%	Bicycle	0.0%
Public Trans. (excl. taxi)	0.0%	Taxi, Motorcycle, or Other Means	1.0%
Worked From Home	5.4%		

LARGEST INDUSTRIES[4]

INDUSTRY[5]	EMPL	5-YEAR HISTORY ANNUAL %	5-YEAR FORECAST ANNUAL % GROWTH	AVG ANN WAGES
Retail Trade	2,578	3.4%	0.2%	$29,568
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,087	2.0%	1.2%	$39,556
Educational Services	2,035	0.7%	0.4%	$41,061
Accommodation and Food Services	2,010	1.2%	0.7%	$20,463
Manufacturing	1,600	-1.1%	0.3%	$60,945
Construction	1,555	2.0%	0.6%	$50,197
Public Administration	790	0.9%	0.6%	$36,603
Other Services (except Public Administration)	784	1.0%	0.7%	$25,203
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	781	-0.3%	0.4%	$58,422
Administrative & Support and Waste Management & Remediation Services	669	6.8%	0.8%	$29,637

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
[2] 2022 Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; 2023 Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS.
[3] U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2028 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service
[4] JobsEQ®. Data as of 2023Q4.
[5] All data based upon a four-quarter moving average

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

COUNTY DATA PROFILES

MONROE COUNTY

ECONOMY[1, 2]

Median Household Income	Per Capita Personal Income	Unemployment Rate
$41,786	$40,123	3.9%

Families Below Poverty Level	20.2%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	20.2%

EDUCATION[1]

High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
80.2%	14.2%

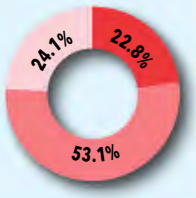
POPULATION[3]

2010 Census	8,149
2023 Estimate	6,564
2028 Projection	6,171
2010–2023 Change	-20.1%
2023–2028 Change	-5.2%
Minority	46.3%

Female	Male
52.4%	47.6%

AGE

Under 18	22.8%
18–64	53.1%
65+	24.1%
Median Age	45.4



HOUSING[1]

Median Value	$84,600
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.0%
Rental Vacancy Rate	8.2%
Occupied Housing Units	2,826
Median Selected Monthly Owner Cost (with a mortgage)	$955
Median Gross Rent	$543
Mortgage-Burdened*	14.0%
Rent-Burdened*	52.2%

TRANSPORTATION[1]

Average Commute Time: 25.9 min.

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

Drove alone	83.7%	Walked	2.0%
Carpooled	12.9%	Bicycle	0.0%
Public Trans. (excl. taxi)	0.0%	Taxi, Motorcycle, or Other Means	0.0%
Worked From Home			1.4%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES[4]

INDUSTRY[5]	EMPL	5-YEAR HISTORY ANNUAL %	5-YEAR FORECAST ANNUAL % GROWTH	AVG ANN WAGES
Health Care and Social Assistance	366	-3.1%	-0.4%	$44,182
Retail Trade	253	0.2%	-2.0%	$31,275
Accommodation and Food Services	243	0.7%	-1.4%	$19,393
Educational Services	188	-1.2%	-0.7%	$39,954
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	170	-3.8%	-1.8%	$98,362
Public Administration	159	0.5%	-1.5%	$33,674
Wholesale Trade	132	-6.1%	-2.1%	$78,602
Transportation and Warehousing	120	-3.0%	-0.9%	$57,187
Manufacturing	117	-4.7%	-1.7%	$37,660
Other Services (except Public Administration)	91	-3.6%	-1.2%	$25,735

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
[2] 2022 Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; 2023 Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS.
[3] U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2028 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service
[4] JobsEQ®. Data as of 2023Q4.
[5] All data based upon a four-quarter moving average

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

COUNTY DATA PROFILES

PRAIRIE COUNTY

ECONOMY[1, 2]

Median Household Income	Per Capita Personal Income	Unemployment Rate
$47,045	$43,530	3.1%

Families Below Poverty Level	5.2%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	11.3%

EDUCATION[1]

High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
85.6%	16.0%

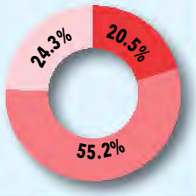
POPULATION[3]

2010 Census	8,715
2023 Estimate	8,069
2028 Projection	7,886
2010–2023 Change	-7.8%
2023–2028 Change	-1.9%
Minority	14.7%

Female	Male
49.2%	50.8%

AGE

Under 18	20.5%
18–64	55.2%
65+	24.3%
Median Age	45.8



HOUSING[1]

Median Value	$87,200
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.6%
Rental Vacancy Rate	13.0%
Occupied Housing Units	3,314
Median Selected Monthly Owner Cost (with a mortgage)	$1,036
Median Gross Rent	$645
Mortgage-Burdened*	15.8%
Rent-Burdened*	36.4%

TRANSPORTATION[1]

Average Commute Time: 26.9 min.

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

Drove alone	80.6%	Walked	1.8%
Carpooled	9.5%	Bicycle	0.0%
Public Trans. (excl. taxi)	0.0%	Taxi, Motorcycle, or Other Means	0.8%
Worked From Home			7.3%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES[4]

INDUSTRY[5]	EMPL	5-YEAR HISTORY ANNUAL %	5-YEAR FORECAST ANNUAL % GROWTH	AVG ANN WAGES
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	307	-1.8%	-1.1%	$75,565
Health Care and Social Assistance	295	2.1%	-0.5%	$38,250
Retail Trade	230	0.4%	-1.2%	$33,021
Educational Services	179	1.3%	-1.2%	$42,013
Public Administration	159	1.3%	-0.7%	$38,501
Other Services (except Public Administration)	111	0.7%	-0.7%	$24,875
Construction	109	-1.3%	-0.7%	$35,805
Wholesale Trade	85	-0.3%	-1.3%	$76,104
Transportation and Warehousing	77	-1.3%	-0.3%	$56,755
Accommodation and Food Services	74	-3.8%	-0.7%	$23,726

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
[2] 2022 Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; 2023 Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS.
[3] U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2028 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service
[4] JobsEQ®. Data as of 2023Q4.
[5] All data based upon a four-quarter moving average

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

COUNTY DATA PROFILES

PULASKI COUNTY

ECONOMY[1, 2]

Median Household Income	Per Capita Personal Income	Unemployment Rate
$58,326	$61,575	3.2%

Families Below Poverty Level	12.2%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	11.1%

EDUCATION[1]

High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
92.1%	37.0%

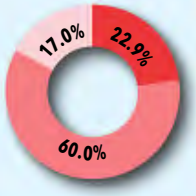
POPULATION[3]

2010 Census	382,748
2023 Estimate	399,145
2028 Projection	403,853
2010–2023 Change	4.5%
2023–2028 Change	1.0%
Minority	49.8%

Female	Male
52.2%	47.8%

AGE

Under 18	22.9%
18–64	60.0%
65+	17.0%
Median Age	37.9



HOUSING[1]

Median Value	$187,600
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	2.1%
Rental Vacancy Rate	10.4%
Occupied Housing Units	167,768
Median Selected Monthly Owner Cost (with a mortgage)	$1,400
Median Gross Rent	$985
Mortgage-Burdened*	22.9%
Rent-Burdened*	48.6%

TRANSPORTATION[1]

Average Commute Time: 20.3 min.

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

Drove alone	79.5%	Walked	1.2%
Carpooled	8.5%	Bicycle	0.1%
Public Trans. (excl. taxi)	0.7%	Taxi, Motorcycle, or Other Means	1.4%
Worked From Home			8.5%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES[4]

INDUSTRY[5]	EMPL	5-YEAR HISTORY ANNUAL %	5-YEAR FORECAST ANNUAL % GROWTH	AVG ANN WAGES
Health Care and Social Assistance	57,047	1.0%	0.4%	$71,182
Retail Trade	25,235	-0.9%	-0.7%	$38,702
Accommodation and Food Services	20,395	-0.8%	-0.2%	$23,790
Public Administration	18,666	-1.0%	-0.4%	$65,734
Transportation and Warehousing	18,135	7.3%	0.4%	$52,420
Administrative & Support and Waste Management & Remediation Services	16,465	-2.3%	-0.1%	$41,104
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	15,011	-0.4%	0.4%	$82,107
Educational Services	14,463	0.9%	0.1%	$48,568
Finance and Insurance	14,034	0.2%	0.1%	$93,473
Construction	13,327	3.4%	-0.2%	$62,295

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
[2] 2022 Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; 2023 Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS.
[3] U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2028 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service
[4] JobsEQ®. Data as of 2023Q4.
[5] All data based upon a four-quarter moving average

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

COUNTY DATA PROFILES

SALINE COUNTY

ECONOMY[1, 2]

Median Household Income	Per Capita Personal Income	Unemployment Rate
$73,236	$52,328	2.7%

Families Below Poverty Level	6.8%
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	6.4%

EDUCATION[1]

High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
91.9%	28.5%

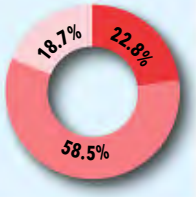
POPULATION[3]

2010 Census	107,118
2023 Estimate	127,357
2028 Projection	133,770
2010–2023 Change	21.0%
2023–2028 Change	3.2%
Minority	18.9%

Female	Male
51.0%	49.0%

AGE

Under 18	22.8%
18–64	58.5%
65+	18.7%
Median Age	40.4



HOUSING[1]

Median Value	$194,400
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.5%
Rental Vacancy Rate	6.8%
Occupied Housing Units	48,465
Median Selected Monthly Owner Cost (with a mortgage)	$1,353
Median Gross Rent	$948
Mortgage-Burdened*	19.4%
Rent-Burdened*	38.1%

TRANSPORTATION[1]

Average Commute Time: 25.2 min.

MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

Drove alone	81.2%	Walked	0.7%
Carpooled	10.3%	Bicycle	0.0%
Public Trans. (excl. taxi)	0.1%	Taxi, Motorcycle, or Other Means	0.7%
Worked From Home			6.9%

LARGEST INDUSTRIES[4]

INDUSTRY[5]	EMPL	5-YEAR HISTORY ANNUAL %	5-YEAR FORECAST ANNUAL % GROWTH	AVG ANN WAGES
Health Care and Social Assistance	5,623	-0.2%	1.6%	$48,343
Retail Trade	4,963	0.9%	0.6%	$36,823
Accommodation and Food Services	3,705	2.2%	1.0%	$20,696
Construction	3,622	3.7%	1.0%	$55,259
Educational Services	2,199	3.6%	0.9%	$47,389
Other Services (except Public Administration)	1,796	-0.8%	1.2%	$30,032
Manufacturing	1,549	1.2%	0.8%	$59,627
Administrative & Support and Waste Management & Remediation Services	1,478	1.0%	1.1%	$42,693
Transportation and Warehousing	1,150	5.4%	1.3%	$53,647
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,127	5.8%	1.4%	$66,379

[1] U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.
[2] 2022 Per Capita Personal Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis; 2023 Unemployment Rate: Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS.
[3] U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; 2028 Projection: Esri Geoenrichment Service
[4] JobsEQ®. Data as of 2023Q4.
[5] All data based upon a four-quarter moving average

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

SWOT Analysis

Through February and April of 2024, CAPDD conducted multiple CEDS committee meetings and completed a survey intended to develop an understanding of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the CAPDD region. Through these meetings and surveys, it was determined there was a divide between the experiences of the urban and rural parts of the region. The strengths and weaknesses are divided into categories (Urban and Rural, Urban Alone, and Rural Alone) to reflect this divide. Below is a summary of the findings.

STRENGTHS

- **Urban and Rural**
  - Central location
  - Land availability
  - Quality public schools
  - Housing affordability
- **Urban Alone**
  - Access to healthcare
  - Access to higher education
  - Natural beauty
  - Vibrant downtown spaces
  - Broadband access
  - Workforce development
  - Culture and recreation
  - Job growth and quality
  - Port, rail, and other intermodal assets
- **Rural Alone**
  - Collaborative environment among stakeholders

WEAKNESSES

- **Urban and Rural**
  - Lack of youth opportunities
  - Quality of public transportation assets
  - High poverty rates
  - Highway/interstate traffic
- **Urban Alone**
  - Housing quality
  - Lack of entrepreneurship opportunities
  - Pre-K and childcare availability and affordability
  - High incarceration and recidivism rates
- **Rural Alone**
  - Lack of growth and quality
  - Lack of vibrant downtown spaces
  - Poor industrial supply chains
  - Lack of floodplain management
  - Lack of available land
  - Lack of broadband access

OPPORTUNITIES

- Infill development
- Public transportation system improvements
- Job growth
- Education system improvements
- Better marketing of the region
- Creating recreation opportunities
- Infrastructure improvements to meet demands

THREATS

- Public perception of crime rates
- Low civic engagement
- Lacking entertainment options
- Lacking job training
- Transportation issues and traffic
- Aging utility infrastructure and high service fees
- Lacking cybersecurity protocols

CEDS Resilient Communities

The diverse and robust economy of Central Arkansas is intricately linked to the strength of local communities and the dynamic economic engine driven by the metropolitan areas in Pulaski, Faulkner, and Saline counties. The region's economic vitality and its distinctive quality of life serve as magnets for businesses seeking to expand, establish, or thrive here. This fosters a resilient economy crucial for sustained growth and financial security for families.

Resiliency is recovering from or adjusting easily to misfortune or change. CAPDD (CAPDD) recognizes that establishing economic resilience within a local or regional economy necessitates the integration of hazard mitigation plans (HMPs) and community economic development strategies (CEDs). It involves anticipating risks, assessing their impact on key economic assets, and building responsive capacities. CAPDD has long recognized the importance of alignment of hazard mitigation and economic development. As mentioned in previous CEDS, CAPDD continues to recognize and improve in this area.

Often, shocks or disruptions to the economic base of an area or region occur through various channels:

- Downturns or significant events in the national or international economy affecting demand for locally produced goods and consumer spending.
- Downturns in specific industries critical to the region's economic activity.
- Other external shocks include natural, human-caused, and technological disasters, the closure of military bases, the exit of major employers, or impacts of climate change.

The district can help the region respond to economic changes through Steady-state and Responsive initiatives. Steady-state initiatives are long-term efforts that bolster the community or region's ability to withstand or avoid a shock. Responsive initiatives provide economic development organizations with the capability to assist with recovery. CAPDD and CEDS have adopted this two-pronged approach to developing strategies and performance measures.

Steady-State Initiatives Include:

- Incorporating economic resiliency into existing planning efforts, such as hazard mitigation or transportation plans.
- Ensuring our workforce development and community/economic development teams work together to identify employment training or infrastructure investment opportunities when emerging sectors are identified.
- Continue working 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.
- Continue to promote strategic economic assessments at the community level to identify strengths and weaknesses.
- Informing elected officials about resiliency by scheduling speakers at CAPDD board meetings.

Responsive Initiatives Include:

- Strengthening coordination between the local Workforce Development Board and economic development entities within the region to address employer and employee needs more effectively during times of economic downturn.
- Inviting businesses and economic development types to meetings regarding workforce initiatives (i.e., the local partner's meetings coordinated by WIOA staff members.)
- Utilizing the local Workforce Development Board to communicate directly with businesses to understand the business community's needs.
- Economic resiliency should be considered when identifying projects to include in hazard mitigation plans.

CEDS Action Plan

The CAPDD CEDS identified five areas of focus through discussions between the planning committee meant to maximize the opportunities and minimize the threats facing CAPDD counties. A major focus was also placed onto expanding the strengths past the urban/rural divide to address key weaknesses. The regional focus areas developed through this process are as follows:

Regional Focus Areas

- Transportation and Infrastructure
- Housing Affordability and Quality
- Community Development
- Business and Workforce Development
- Public Perception and Engagement

Several actionable strategies were then developed to address each of these focus areas and bring the greatest benefit to the CAPDD community. These actionable strategies are as follows:

FOCUS AREA: Transportation and Infrastructure

Strategy:

Improve the public transportation system by improving coverage, cleanliness and timeliness, and garnering community buy in.

Benefit to the Community:

Public transportation is an important tool for increasing accessibility and mobility of residents, particularly of lower income. Keeping these systems up to date and keeping their coverage representative of the needs of the populations which use them most leads to a greater level of social inclusion, social mobility, and a reduced carbon footprint of the community by reducing the amount of cars which must be on the streets.

Action Steps:

- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the current transportation systems present in the CAPDD region to identify key areas of improvement.
- Establish partnerships with state and federal agencies, local businesses, and community organizations to secure additional funding.
- Negotiate with public transportation providers to lower fares and expand service hours.
- Develop and implement a rural infrastructure improvement plan focusing on flood management and utility upgrades.
- Launch community engagement initiatives to gather input and ensure public support for infrastructure projects.

Responsible Parties:

- Local governments
- CAPDD
- Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT)
- Local business leaders
- Chambers of commerce
- Community organizations

Resources Needed:

- Technical expertise with transportation planning and civil engineering
- Grants and funding resources
- CAPDD staff time

Estimated Completion Date:

- Long term (5–10 years)

FOCUS AREA: Transportation and Infrastructure

Strategy:

Promote infill development within existing transit service areas.

Benefit to the Community:

Developing residential and commercial land which already falls inside existing transit service areas aid the community by creating a larger market of use for the transit services already being funded and operated while also increasing the mobility of those residents and accessibility to those businesses which fall on transit lines.

Action Steps:

- Inventory existing transit coverage, sidewalk coverage, vacant or dilapidated properties, and zoning conditions in CAPDD communities.
- Adjusting zoning to increase residential density in areas close to bus stops and transit lines.
- Improve sidewalk connections between residential and commercial zones and transit lines.
- Investigate incentive structures to encourage new development and redevelopment of land near transit lines.

Responsible Parties:

- Local governments
- CAPDD
- Metroplan
- Chambers of commerce
- Rock Region METRO

Resources Needed:

- Grant funding
- Match funding from local governments
- Technical expertise with transportation planning and civil engineering
- Inventory of available land

Estimated Completion Date:

- Immediate (less than 1 year)
- Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Transportation and Infrastructure

Strategy:

Update master street plans to encourage maintenance and updating of existing roads and greater use of multimodal transportation.

Benefit to the Community:

Many communities in the CAPDD region lack or have out of date master street plans. These plans are necessary for preparing for future growth and development, coordinating efforts between communities, and enabling legislation to benefit communities in relation to roads.

Action Steps:

- Assist local communities in applying for grants for local roadway funding.
- Work with state officials to designate more funds for local roadway improvement projects.
- Focus efforts on maintaining and improving existing roads.
- Update master street plans and subdivision regulations to ensure quality construction of new road facilities.
- Build a multimodal transportation system that enables all modes to travel safely.

Responsible Parties:

- Local governments
- CAPDD
- Metroplan
- Chambers of commerce

Resources Needed:

- Grant funding
- Match funding from local governments
- Technical expertise with transportation planning and civil engineering

Estimated Completion Date:

- Short term (2–3 years)

FOCUS AREA: Transportation and Infrastructure

Strategy:

Improve access to broadband internet and infrastructure.

Benefit to the Community:

Broadband is a necessary infrastructure element for communities across the world. Paying bills, buying and selling goods and services, access to information and entertainment all require internet access and ensuring that it is accessible to community members in the CAPDD region improves those community members' quality of life.

Action Steps:

- Work with private and public providers to identify last mile broadband needs.
- Work with private and public providers to finance last mile broadband projects.
- Find and apply for broadband affordability grants.

Responsible Parties:

- Local governments
- CAPDD
- Chambers of commerce
- State and federal EDA

Resources Needed:

- Grant funding
- Match funding from local governments

Estimated Completion Date:

- Immediate (less than 1 year)
- Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Transportation and Infrastructure

Strategy:

Ensure accessibility and affordability of energy, water, and wastewater service.

Benefit to the Community:

Energy, water, and wastewater are integral services to the health and safety of communities.

Action Steps:

- Engage local, regional, and state providers on plans to expand, upgrade, and maintain their utility lines.
- Encourage use of solar and alternative energy sources by ensuring zoning regulations are representative.
- Investigate utility improvement grants for residential and public buildings and provide technical assistance to providers in maintaining and improving lines.
- Investigate incentive structures for encouraging energy efficient construction.

Responsible Parties:

- Local governments
- CAPDD
- Chambers of commerce
- State and federal governments
- Public and private utility providers

Resources Needed:

- Grant funding
- Match funding from local governments
- Technical assistance for plan writing

Estimated Completion Date:

- Short term (2–3 years)
- Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Transportation and Infrastructure

Strategy:

Improve floodplain management and drainage issues in rural areas.

Benefit to the Community:

Floodplain management is necessary for the personal and economic safety of communities.

Action Steps:

- Complete studies on drainage issues and floodplains in the region.
- Locate funding sources.
- Update floodplain maps.
- Update and upgrade drainage systems in local communities.

Responsible Parties:

- Local governments
- CAPDD
- State and federal governments

Resources Needed:

- Grant funding
- Match funding from local governments

Estimated Completion Date:

Short term (2–3 years)

FOCUS AREA: Housing Affordability and Quality

Strategy:

Adjust zoning guidelines in the CAPDD region to accommodate a wider variety of housing types.

Benefit to the Community:

A greater variety of housing types will create a housing environment which caters to a more diverse range of residents such as aging populations and young families. Additionally, the wider variety of housing types and new residents will allow for a greater variety of jobs in construction, cleaning and maintenance services, and elderly care, and childcare which cater to those populations.

Action Steps:

- Inventory vacant and abandoned properties.
- Open discussions with owners of vacant, undeveloped, or abandoned land encouraging them to reinvest, develop, or sell their properties.
- Fund and engage code enforcement on unkept, unsanitary, and dangerous properties.
- Condemn structures which are deemed non-liveable.
- Acquire grants for elderly and low-income housing developments.

Responsible Parties:

- Land owners
- Local governments
- CAPDD
- Housing authorities
- Private assisted living communities
- Local banks and loan providers

Resources Needed:

- Grants and grant writers
- Real estate investors
- CAPDD staff
- Lawyers to draft covenants and agreements

Estimated Completion Date:

- Immediate (less than 1 year)

FOCUS AREA: Housing Affordability and Quality

Strategy:

Increase affordability and number of housing options within the CAPDD region.

Benefit to the Community:

Affordable housing options boost the local and regional economy, support job growth, and retain skilled workers by enabling residential growth.

Action Steps:

- Research and compile funding opportunities which address housing affordability and accessibility.
- Identify areas for potential development or revitalization efforts.
- Advocate for increases in partnerships with housing nonprofits and organizations.
- Work with chambers of commerce in improving affordable housing developments.
- Look at building codes and zoning within municipalities to allow for an increase in affordable housing.
- Establish affordable housing trusts to finance the production and preservation of affordable housing units.

Responsible Parties:

- Local governments
- CAPDD
- State and federal governments
- Nonprofit organizations
- Housing authorities
- Chambers of commerce
- Financial institutions

Resources Needed:

- Grant funding
- Match funding from local governments
- Inventory of available land

Estimated Completion Date:

- Mid term (3–5 years)
- Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Community Development

Strategy:

Inventory existing entertainment opportunities and identify areas of need.

Benefit to the Community:

Having a better understanding of what the community has, wants, and needs will aid local entrepreneurs and prospective businesses in identifying CAPDD communities as their next place of business.

Action Steps:

- Identify recreation opportunities and individuals/entities to create the opportunities.
- Identify entertainment options that would improve overall entertainment and the individuals/entities to create the opportunities.
- Identify existing businesses with growth opportunities where the owner is motivated to grow; identify needs; refer to Arkansas Small Business and Technology Development Center (ASBTDC) for free, confidential business consulting to assist with growth strategies and action plans. (Examples include identifying new markets, marketing strategies, financing proposal preparation, etc.)

Responsible Parties:

- Local government
- CAPDD
- Business leaders
- Chambers of commerce
- Entrepreneurs/investors
- ASBTDC

Resources Needed:

- CAPDD staff
- Grant funding
- ASBTDC

Estimated Completion Date:

- Immediate (less than 1 year)

FOCUS AREA: Community Development

Strategy:

Create and improve public parks and greenspaces near both residential and commercial areas.

Benefit to the Community:

Clean and safe public parks and green spaces are integral to community health and happiness. Improvement of these spaces is a significant attraction to both potential businesses and residents.

Action Steps:

- Inventory sidewalks, walking trails, bike paths, parks, playgrounds, and sports centers in the region.
- Locate and apply for grant opportunities to upgrade and renovate parks and playgrounds.
- Repair and expand sidewalks, walking trails, and bike routes connecting residential and commercial areas to parks.

Responsible Parties:

- CAPDD
- Local governments

Resources Needed:

- CAPDD staff
- Grant funding

Estimated Completion Date:

- Mid term (3–5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Community Development

Strategy:

Reinvest in areas like Wards 3 and 4 of England, Arkansas.

Benefit to the Community:

Reinvestment dollars can be the catalyst and support that local communities need to make community revitalization a reality and not just a vision.

Action Steps:

- Partner with non-profits such as MELOSONG C.I.T.Y. and Gantrell Alumni Association in making incremental progress in bolstering county funding toward quality of life improvements for citizens.
- Provide community reinvestment dollars in areas like Wards 3 and 4 of England, Arkansas to catalyze more revitalization.
- Invest in making Elm Street Park more engaging with murals, multipurpose courts, shaded seating structures, outdoor fitness structures for adults and kids, and adding sidewalks to the park to make it more walk/bike friendly and safe for pedestrians.
- Invest in street lights, new street signage, and trails for pedestrians especially for aging seniors to navigate.

Responsible Parties:

- CAPDD
- Local governments
- MELOSONG C.I.T.Y.
- Gantrell Alumni Association

Resources Needed:

- CAPDD staff
- Grant funding

Estimated Completion Date:

- Mid term (3–5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Business and Workforce Development

Strategy:

Increase business partnerships and participation in secondary and postsecondary education.

Benefit to the Community:

An increase in collaboration among industry and education providers will result in a more qualified workforce with skills that better align with labor demands in CAPDD counties.

Action Steps:

- Improve reading level of students and improve overall graduation rates.
- Encourage students to create plans for post high school graduation.
- Open discussions between business owners, local schools, job training organizations, and AR Unemployment Division to create a common understanding of what skills are needed in the Central Arkansas region.
- Establish partnership agreements between industry leaders and schools.
- Find grant opportunities for workforce development.
- Expand and create trade training, business development, and office skills training programs in local schools and in existing job training programs to address the needs of CAPDD counties.
- Expand and create internship opportunities for high school and postsecondary students.

Responsible Parties:

- Local school districts
- Local and county governments
- Postsecondary institutions
- CAPDD
- Chambers of commerce
- Business leaders
- Workforce development organizations
- Arkansas Unemployment Division

Resources Needed:

- Teachers, professors, and job trainers
- Grants and scholarship funds
- Training locations inside and outside of local schools

Estimated Completion Date:

- Short term (2–3 years)
- Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Business and Workforce Development

Strategy:

Adjust zoning and incentive structure guidelines in CAPDD region to better attract new businesses.

Benefit to the Community:

New businesses create new jobs, provide needed products and services to the community, and create a snowball effect to attract more residents and further attract new businesses.

Action Steps:

- Review zoning and incentive structures in each community.
- Open dialogue with business leaders and prospective business owners to understand the barriers to entry and continued operations in CAPDD counties.
- Remove and reduce barriers to entry by reducing business license fees and providing clear understanding of permitting and taxation structures.
- Host new and promote existing business startup classes with ASBTDC.

Responsible Parties:

- Local governments
- CAPDD
- ASBTDC
- Business leaders
- Chambers of commerce

Resources Needed:

- ASBTDC staff
- CAPDD staff

Estimated Completion Date:

- Immediate (less than 1 year)

FOCUS AREA: Business and Workforce Development

Strategy:

Enhance and build new training facilities to support the training needs of industries in Central Arkansas.

Benefit to the Community:

Better quality training facilities will allow employers to upskill incumbent workers and bridge the workforce readiness gaps with new hires.

Action Steps:

- Audit existing training programs available in the region.
- Regularly convene HR leaders to assess training needs.
- Increase access to industry training on high school campuses as part of students' regular learning.
- Explore additional funding sources for training incentives for employers.
- Explore the feasibility of building new training centers.

Responsible Parties:

- CAPDD
- Local schools
- Chambers of commerce
- Local business leaders
- Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC)

Resources Needed:

- Teachers, professors, and job trainers
- Grants and scholarship funds
- Training locations inside and outside of local schools

Estimated Completion Date:

- Long term (5–10 years)

FOCUS AREA: Business and Workforce Development

Strategy:

Establish a clearinghouse website for workforce information and job placement strategies.

Benefit to the Community:

A central location for workforce information with a guarantee for validity and recency of information will aid candidates, employers, and educators in getting the best information for job placement.

Action Steps:

- Provide a comprehensive list of local job fair dates and times.
- Create a centralized online job posting board for jobs in CAPDD.
- Provide information on training grant opportunities for employers.
- Provide a comprehensive list of job training opportunities for job seekers who wish to improve their qualifications.

Responsible Parties:

- CAPDD
- Chambers of commerce
- Local business leaders
- AEDC

Resources Needed:

- Grants and scholarship funds
- Server locations

Estimated Completion Date:

- Immediate (less than 1 year)

FOCUS AREA: Business and Workforce Development

Strategy:

Educate employers about the resources available to support second-chance employment.

Benefit to the Community:

Encouraging employers to consider second-chance employment and providing them resources to implement second-chance hiring within their organizations will help increase the labor force participation rate of Central Arkansas, reduce recidivism, and reduce overall crime rates.

Action Steps:

- Identify all second-chance employment services and connect them with the clearinghouse website.
- Open discussions with local employers about second-chance employment benefits and drawbacks.
- Inform local employers about second-chance resources available to them.
- Connect employment candidates with employers.

Responsible Parties:

- CAPDD
- Applicable charitable organizations
- Arkansas corrections department
- County sheriff's office
- Probation and parole officers

Resources Needed:

- Staff time from CAPDD
- Staff time and funding from Arkansas corrections
- Staff time and funding from charitable organizations

Estimated Completion Date:

- Immediate (less than 1 year)
- Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Public Perception and Engagement

Strategy:

Improve civic engagement through better public forum planning and advertising.

Benefit to the Community:

Greater levels of civic engagement increase civic pride and sense of community.

Action Steps:

- Establish and expand public forums in CAPDD communities.
- Work with local businesses and community leaders to identify better times for public forums where more citizens may attend.
- Work with local news providers to promote public events and forums through more accessible channels.
- Expand online presence of local governments.
- Improve public awareness of the need for civic engagement in shaping a community worth living in.

Responsible Parties:

- Local government
- CAPDD
- Local business leaders
- Local community leaders
- Local news providers
- Advertisement agencies

Resources Needed:

- CAPDD staff
- Physical and online advertisement resources

Estimated Completion Date:

- Immediate (less than 1 year)
- Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Public Perception and Engagement

Strategy:

Improve sports tourism and regional identity.

Benefit to the Community:

A regional identity and regional sports tourism will break down silos and foster a more unified approach to regional goals and challenges.

Action Steps:

- Create a regional tourism board for event collaboration.
- Create a metro sporting event and championship exclusively for Central Arkansas high schools.
- Establish citizen led regional identity and branding.
- Create a Central Arkansas media campaign highlighting the region's offerings in tourism, commerce, and lifestyle.

Responsible Parties:

- CAPDD
- Local governments
- Chambers of commerce
- Tourism departments
- Local schools

Resources Needed:

- Sporting centers
- Staff time from chambers, tourism boards, and CAPDD
- Funding commitments

Estimated Completion Date:

- Short term (2–3 years)
- Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

Evaluation Framework

The Evaluation Framework is the schedule in which the CEDS plans to achieve the priorities that were set forth by the CEDS Committee. The responsible parties and resources were discussed in the Action Plan so therefore will not be discussed in this section.

FOCUS AREA: Transportation and Infrastructure

- Improve the public transportation system by improving coverage, cleanliness and timeliness, and garnering community buy in.
  - Long term (5–10 years)
- Promote infill development within existing transit service areas.
  - Immediate (less than 1 year)
  - Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)
- Update master street plans to encourage maintenance and updating of existing roads and greater use of multimodal transportation.
  - Short term (2–3 years)
- Improve access to broadband internet and infrastructure.
  - Immediate (less than 1 year)
  - Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)
- Ensure accessibility and affordability of energy, water, and wastewater service.
  - Short term (2–3 years)
  - Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)
- Improve floodplain management and drainage issues in rural areas.
  - Mid term (3–5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Housing Affordability and Quality

- Adjust zoning guidelines in the CAPDD region to accommodate a wider variety of housing types.
  - Immediate (less than 1 year)
- Increase affordability and number of housing options within the CAPDD region.
  - Mid term (3–5 years)
  - Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

FOCUS AREA: Community Development

- Inventory existing entertainment opportunities and identify areas of need.
  - Immediate (less than 1 year)
- Create and improve public parks and greenspaces near both residential and commercial areas.
  - Mid term (3–5 years)
- Reinvest in areas like Wards 3 and 4 of England, Arkansas.
  - Mid term (3–5 years)

FOCUS AREA:
Business and Workforce Development

- Increase business partnerships and participation in secondary and postsecondary education.
  - Short term (2–3 years)
  - Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)
- Adjust zoning and incentive structure guidelines in the CAPDD region to better attract new businesses.
  - Immediate (less than 1 year)
- Enhance and build new training facilities to support the training needs of industries in Central Arkansas.
  - Long term (5–10 years)
- Establish a clearinghouse website for workforce information and job placement strategies.
  - Immediate (less than 1 year)
- Educate employers about the resources available to support second-chance employment.
  - Immediate (less than 1 year)
  - Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

FOCUS AREA:
Public Perception and Engagement

- Improve civic engagement through better public forum planning and advertising.
  - Immediate (less than 1 year)
  - Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)
- Improve sports tourism and regional identity.
  - Short term (2–3 years)
  - Ongoing (re-evaluate after 5 years)

Sources

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Bureau of Labor Statistics, LAUS

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JobsEQ Data, 2023Q4

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Central Arkansas
Planning and
Development District

902 N. Center Street, Lonoke, AR 72086
(501) 676-2721 | capdd.org