

Payson, located at the “heart” of Arizona, is famous for its beauty and dynamic business environment. Payson is a vibrant recreation destination amidst the tall pines and cool waters of Arizona’s Rim Country. Renowned for its western heritage and friendly people, the area enjoys a mild four-season climate that attracts international visitors year around. Payson’s Rim Country represents the trade area, which has a population of nearly 25,000. This hub offers the atmosphere of rural America with the amenities of a metropolis. Payson was recognized by NerdWallet in as one of the top 10 places in Arizona to open a business.

Principal Economic Activities

The local economy serves as a trading center for a wide variety of retail establishments, professional services and manufacturing. Payson will complete a long range water project that will secure Payson’s water source for the future as the town projects growth. Banner Medical Center purchased Payson Regional Medical Center in 2015 and has committed an additional \$25 million for future expansions and improvements. The travel and tourism industry are also important to Payson’s economy.

Scenic Attractions

Payson rests at the base of the majestic Mogollon Rim, a 7,000 foot, 200 mile long escarpment in the world’s largest Ponderosa Pine forest. The 5,000-foot elevation gives Payson its pleasant climate and four mild seasons. Mountain lakes and trout streams, hiking trails and campsites are within minutes of the center of town. The area offers virtually limitless outdoor recreational activities including hiking, camping, fishing, hunting and biking. Payson gets a few dustings of snow annually. Cross-country skiing and snow-play areas are a short drive away. Local attractions include Tonto Natural Bridge State Park, Shoo-Fly Indian Archeological Site, Tonto Fish Hatchery, The Zane Grey cabin and Rim Country Museum.

Community Facilities

Payson offers a broad range of community facilities including a 16,000-square foot library, museum, state-of-the-art multiplex movie theater, public and private golf courses, lighted tennis courts, two pickleball courts and two softball fields for tournaments. Payson also has an auditorium for concerts, a theater that seats 1,000 and a 36-acre multi-event outdoor entertainment center. Eastern Arizona College in Thatcher supports Gila County Community College in Payson as a provisional district.

Payson has two large parks, Green Valley Park and Rumsey Park. Green Valley Park is a 45-acre park at the west end of Main Street that features three lakes and several decorative fountains. As part of the Arizona Game and Fish Department’s urban fishing program, the three lakes are stocked with rainbow trout from October to May. Picnic ramadas and a grassy amphitheater complete the park’s family atmosphere. A community swimming pool is located within Rumsey Park as well as a dog park and a small skate park for skating enthusiasts. The town hosts free outdoor concerts in the park during the summer and hosts several intramural sports such as baseball, softball, soccer, golf and football throughout the year. The Payson Area Trails System (PATS) is an in-progress, interconnecting trail system utilizing detached pathways, existing sidewalks and bike lanes in Payson to form an interior trail network. These interior trails will connect to specific Forest Service roads and trails on Payson’s periphery providing a more rustic trail-user experience.



BASIC INFORMATION

Founded:	1884	Incorporated:	1973
Elevation:	4,982 ft.	Location:	Gila County
Distance to major cities:			
Phoenix:	93 miles	San Diego:	442 miles
Tucson:	183 miles	Los Angeles:	459 miles
Las Vegas:	342 miles		

POPULATION

	2000	2010	2016 (est.)
Payson	13,620	15,270	15,706
Gila County	51,335	53,565	54,333
State of Arizona	5,130,632	6,401,569	6,835,518

Office of Economic Opportunity

PROPERTY TAX

	2000	2010	2016
Elementary / High School	5.62	3.47	6.02
City / Fire District	0.40	0.32	0.38
Gila County	5.37	5.44	5.91
Totals (Gila County)	11.39	9.23	12.31

Arizona Dept. of Revenue & Arizona Tax Research Foundation

SALES TAX / TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE TAX

Payson	3.12%
Gila County	6.60%
State	5.60%

Arizona Dept. of Revenue & Arizona Tax Research Foundation

LABOR FORCE

	2000	2010	2016
Civilian Labor Force	5,753	6,500	5,861
Unemployed	226	623	262
Unemployment Rate	3.9%	9.6%	4.5%

Office of Economic Opportunity

WORKFORCE EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

	Count	Share
Less than high school	1,442	11.7%
High school or equivalent, no college	3,459	28.1%
Some college or Associate degree	4,642	37.7%
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	2,781	22.6%

American Community Survey

INDUSTRY (RANKED BY EMPLOYMENT)

	Count	Share
Education, health care & social assistance	1,573	30.5%
Construction	617	11.9%
Arts, entertainment, food & recreation services	600	11.6%
Retail trade	511	9.9%
Professional, scientific, & administrative services	389	7.5%
Public administration	331	6.4%
Finance, insurance & real estate	290	5.6%
Manufacturing	277	5.4%
Other services, except public administration	189	3.7%
Transportation, warehousing, & utilities	178	3.4%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, & mining	136	2.6%
Wholesale trade	40	0.8%
Information	34	0.7%

American Community Survey

This profile was prepared by the Arizona Commerce Authority in cooperation with local sources. For further information, please contact:

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Gila County Community Development

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