



## 6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The General Plan's Economic Development Element examines economic trends and forecasts for the city and in adjacent areas and establishes policies intended to help accomplish local objectives related to business and community development. This section also sets out an Action Program designed to enhance and promote the economic climate in Cottonwood. Related goals and objectives also act as guidelines for City Staff, the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council when considering decisions that effect economic development within the City.

### A. VISION AND FOCUS

Economic development is defined by the General Plan as the process of creating new wealth through human, capital, and natural resources to generate marketable goods and services aligned with Cottonwood's vision, values, and quality of life. The General Plan's Vision Statement provides a broad description of how Cottonwood views itself in the future. It is an ideal and unique image that may be different than what it is today. The plan's Vision Statement follows:

*Cottonwood, the Heart of the Verde Valley, is a progressive community with unique natural and historical surroundings that offers a quality lifestyle with many of the amenities of metropolitan areas yet is a quiet, safe, and prosperous place to live and visit.*

Clearly defining economic development and communicating that definition are difficult tasks for a community. The General Plan seeks to ensure that Cottonwood can provide adequate public services and facilities; promote economic diversity and community prosperity; a quality lifestyle, better jobs and wages that enable individuals to earn enough income to support their families and households. Public input received in the development of the General Plan also showed strong support for shopping and recreational opportunities and community events. The plan can help with providing the necessary community infrastructure, by suggesting ways to make the

best use of community assets and amenities and by encouraging economic development that is in tune with local values.

Cottonwood recognizes that what happens within the region and in surrounding communities impacts the City. Therefore, a "Guiding Principle" that underpins everything that Cottonwood does is regional collaboration. Through cooperation, collaboration, and partnerships Cottonwood can achieve so much more than if it attempted to go it alone. However, without a regional economic development program, Cottonwood's Strategic Economic Development Plan (Focused Future II) must address the needs and desires of Cottonwood. The City continues to participate in discussions about re-establishing the Verde Valley Regional Economic Development Council and is supportive of regional cooperation. One of the fundamental beliefs of the City of Cottonwood is that the community cannot operate in a vacuum.

### B. RELATED LEGISLATION AND STUDIES

The State of Arizona does not require that Cottonwood provide a special element devoted to economic development as part of its general plan. However, due to the local demand for housing and services, the City has developed a

Strategy for Economic Development, with the help of the APS Focused Future Program. Cottonwood City Council first adopted a strategy in 1995; then formally adopted the



revised Focused Future II Strategic Plan for Economic Development in October 2001.



## FOCUSED FUTURE II STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In October 1995, the City of Cottonwood adopted the Focused Future Strategic Plan for Economic Development. The document served as a blueprint for economic development in the community. It represented a cooperative effort between the City of Cottonwood, Chamber of Commerce, Foundation for Economic Development (FED), and Yavapai College. It ushered in a new era of collaborative and focused economic development in the community.

Due to the tremendous success Cottonwood experienced in implementing its plan, the community was selected to participate in a new program called "Focused Future II." Cottonwood and Goodyear were selected as model communities to assist APS in the development of the program. Elements of Focused Future II include an examination of successes and challenges, issue identification, and trend analysis. Included in the process is the design of a new model of non-traditional economic and quality of life measures developed to monitor successes as defined by the community. The product of the Focused Future II process is the update of the Cottonwood Strategic Plan for Economic Development that is tied to measurable community indicators and is the result of widespread community input.

At the heart of the process was an active, broad-based citizen and stakeholder committee called the Action Team. Originally, there was a small Steering Committee and a larger Action Team that were combined into one Action Team. The purpose of the Action Team was to work closely with APS and their consultants in completing the project. The Action Team met more than ten times during the process.

Unique to Focused Future II (compared to Focused Future) is the inclusion of the citizenry in the development of community indicators

and reaching consensus on a final strategy. Numerous opportunities were provided during the process to solicit broad input. On March 30, 2000, three focus groups were conducted with approximately 30 people participating. The groups focused on Job Training/Workforce Development, Changing Social Environment, and Telecommunications. Reports were developed and the Action Team discussed the results.

On June 16, 2000, a half-day Mini-Summit was held that brought together experts to discuss various topics related to economic development including workforce development, economic development, and new economy perspectives. Approximately 50 people attended the summit.

On August 31, 2000, approximately 100 interested citizens participated in a full-day event called the *Cottonwood Futures Conference*. The purpose of the event was to discuss, debate, and reach consensus on the future direction of the community. The participants identified appropriate focus areas, goals, and community indicators. The group also discussed how to improve citizen participation in collectively addressing community issues.

On May 10, 2001, over 75 residents participated in the Public Forum to review the draft Strategic Plan for Economic Development.

## C. REGIONAL SETTING

The City of Cottonwood functions as the market center of the Verde Valley, a region of about 65,000 residents. The City boundary includes about 10,000 residents, located within a larger urban area of about 35,000 residents. Recent population growth occurs at about 3% annually. About 35% of the region's manufacturing base is located in Cottonwood, together with 1/3 of total services and about 1/4 of the valley's retail activity. Cottonwood also collects about 1/3 of the region's sales tax revenues.



## D. LOCAL OVERVIEW

**Population:** Cottonwood's population has grown fairly dramatically, especially in the last two years. The City grew 55 percent in the 1990's. The population over age 64 has remained fairly constant. The population under 19 is slightly below state average. Public school enrollment has increased at close to the statewide average rate.

**Labor Force:** Cottonwood's labor force grew by 6 percent from 1995 to 1999, but there were slight declines in 1996 to 1997. The unemployment rate in Cottonwood was about 1 percent higher than the State average in 1995, but was currently the same as the state level of 4.4 percent in 1999. The overall labor force participation ratio has declined from 64 percent to 50 percent from 1995 to 1999 indicating that not as many new residents are part of the labor force.

**Income:** Per capita income levels have increased by about 15 percent in Cottonwood from 1995 to 1999, which is comparable to the 18 percent increase at the state level. Increases in per capita income may be somewhat lower given the higher proportion of retirement age residents in Cottonwood who have lower current incomes and rely more on savings or pensions. Generally Cottonwood is about average in terms of income growth.

**Retail Sales:** The City has a healthy level of retail sales per capita, about 2.4 times greater than the statewide average. This difference may be partially due to the fact that Cottonwood serves

a regional market, as well as some tourist traffic. Sales tax collections from establishments other than retail and restaurants represent about 31 percent of retail sales in the city. Construction sales tax from new housing and other development now represents about 10 percent of total sales tax collections, compared to only 5 percent in 1995. While the City benefits in the short term, this revenue source will diminish over time as development activity slows.

**Development Activity:** The total number of building permits issued in Cottonwood increased steadily from 1995 to 1998 then decreased slightly in 1999. However, the number of residential permits has continued to increase since 1996. Total value of permits issued has decreased 20 percent since 1997 that represented the peak of the most recent construction cycle for Cottonwood. Residential permits represented about 40 percent of the total in terms of value over the five-year period.

**Property Values:** Total assessed value in Cottonwood has increased steadily, showing a 37 percent overall increase from 1995 to 1999. This is largely due to new housing development. Residential value in 1999 represented about 35 percent of the total. In addition to increases in total residential value, per capita residential value has increased about 18 percent with the addition of the new stock. The commercial and industrial assessed value per employee has increased by a healthy 21 percent, and has remained well above the statewide average.





## FOCUS AREAS

A series of five "Focus Areas" provide the framework for the Action Program. These Focus Areas are intended to be areas where Cottonwood must direct attention and resources that will result in movement toward implementation of the community's vision.

### **BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

#### ***Description of Focus Area:***

This focus area addresses the development of a vibrant local economy with a balance of basic and non-basic business. Recruitment of new businesses, retention of existing, and the expansion of businesses are all components of business development. Quality business development will lead to higher wages and allow Cottonwood to remain the commercial center of the Verde Valley.

#### ***Cottonwood's Current Position:***

Cottonwood has experienced strong business growth in recent years and continues to be the commercial hub of the Verde Valley. Much of the business growth has occurred in health care, services and retail trade. The number of establishments and total employment has risen steadily in recent years. Manufacturing employment, however, hasn't experienced similar growth in part due to difficulties in recruiting new or expanding current manufacturing businesses. Some of the issues that must be addressed include the high cost and limited availability of industrial property and the lack of necessary infrastructure, especially water supply and water pressure needed for manufacturing facilities. It is important to develop high quality basic (manufacturing) businesses in order to create a strong local economy that can lead to higher wage levels.

#### ***Target Areas:***

Senior Living and Tourism/Experience have been and will remain vital clusters as business development targets; however General Manufacturing and Retail Development are the new target areas identified to balance and grow a diversified and vibrant economy.

#### ***Community Indicators:***

Local trends show an increase in the prevalence of service establishments in Cottonwood mirroring the national increase of this economic sector. While retail trade is declining as a percentage of the total (due to faster increases in other sectors), it is still growing in the area. Manufacturing establishments (as a percentage of the total) have remained fairly steady from 1994 to 1997. Total area employment showed a strong (more than 5.5 percent per year) increase between 1994 and 1997.

### **YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

#### ***Description of the Focus Area:***

Cottonwood's success depends upon youth being well prepared with leadership and citizenship skills. A strong educational system is essential to making the community a good place for youth while attracting the best possible workforce to the area.

#### ***Cottonwood's Current Position:***

The perception is that young people leave the community for higher education and better job opportunities. There is a good variety and quantity of recreational activities for all age levels, but they are not fully utilized. Stanford 9 test scores for the year 2000 are below the County average.

#### ***Community Indicators:***

Though the time horizon is short for Stanford 9 scores, the trends are evident and interesting. Fifth grader's scores in reading and language have been increasing in Cottonwood as well as in the county overall. Conversely, the reading and language scores of 11<sup>th</sup> graders over the same period have been declining in Cottonwood (and relatively stagnant in the county).

A similar (though opposite) age dichotomy is apparent for Math scores. Math scores have been decreasing for 5<sup>th</sup> graders and increasing for 11<sup>th</sup> grade in Cottonwood as well as the county.



located near a sand and gravel operation on a dirt road should always be expected to indicate more particulates than a site located near a paved road in an urban area).

## **HEALTHY COMMUNITY**

### ***Description of Focus Area:***

This focus area works to strengthen the quality of life of the residents of Cottonwood. Quality of life relates to the attractiveness and desirability of the community as a place to live, raise a family, and conduct business. Improvements to public safety, health, well being, and environmental quality contribute to the community's quality of life.

### ***Cottonwood's Current Position:***

Quality of life is critically important to Cottonwood. Currently, there exists a coordinating group composed of social service and faith-based organizations that meet monthly to exchange information and resources. However, this group feels overwhelmed by the magnitude of the task. There are many health care entities, low crime and a decrease in domestic violence. The community continues to be driven by the need and opportunity to address quality of life issues.

### ***Community Indicators:***

Crime statistics indicate across the board decreases in criminal activity per 1,000 persons since 1995. A full definition of Part I and Part II crimes is contained in the methodological appendix, but generally Part I crimes are more serious, including murder and rape, while Part II crimes include DUI, check fraud, and the like.

Domestic violence calls and reports for prosecutions have also been decreasing since FY95, with reports generated for prosecutions falling more than 10 percent annually.

Other Healthy Community indicators could include clean air, pure water, open space, recreation and beauty.

Air quality is measured at three separate locations in the Verde Valley. Typically, a given site is measured against itself over time to understand improvements in air quality. It should be understood that the number of particulates in the air are largely a result of the nearby environment (i.e. while a monitoring station

## **LABOR FORCE DEVELOPMENT**

### ***Description of Focus Area:***

A community's human resources are the most important economic development assets to compete in the New Economy. A quality workforce must be available to meet the future needs of local business.

### ***Cottonwood's Current Position:***

The community is experiencing a shortage of skilled labor. A higher than average share of the employment base is in retail, which historically is low paying jobs. Many of the new residents are not part of the community's labor force. Local management practices are outdated. Youth leave the community for higher paying jobs. Voters have recently approved additional funding to establish the Northern Arizona Regional Skill Center at Yavapai College and the Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education at Verde Valley public high schools.

### ***Community Indicators:***

DES training (funded by the Job Training Partnership Act) and administered by NACOG in earlier years, but is now administered through the Workforce Investment Act that has been effective in Cottonwood; averaging about 43 job placements per year since FY95. While the actual number of people eligible for the program is not formally tracked (only the number of participants) it should be noted that a majority of all program participants were placed in jobs in 4 of the 6 fiscal years presented (including more than 80 percent in FY99 and FY00).

Life skills courses (defined by the Yavapai College to include child development and health instruction) have been in place since the 1998-99 school year with about 30 students in each of the past two school years participating.

Enrollment in business courses at Yavapai College peaked in 1998-99 (at nearly 500), but



remained strong at 427 in the 1999-00 school year. The number of courses has fluctuated, but was identical in 1995-96 and 1999-00 (at 53). The number of degrees awarded in the business program peaked in 1998-99 as well (at 13), but has averaged more than 8 per year since 1995-96.

Enrollment in nursing courses has been decreasing since the 1996-97 school year. Nursing courses numbered slightly fewer in 1999-00 when compared to 1995-96. The number of graduates has also been declining, from a high of 37 in 1996-97 to 14 in 1999-00. Tracking this steady flow of graduates should help to accomplish another of the goals of the plan, to ensure that quality health care is available.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

### ***Description of the Focus Area:***

In order for the economy to grow and thrive, basic public facilities such as water and wastewater systems, paved roads, electric power and natural gas must be available to vacant sites. This Focus Area also recognizes that telecommunications infrastructure is critical to proceed into the New Economy to support attraction and growth of business and industry.

### ***Cottonwood's Current Position:***

Basic infrastructure is improving: the sewer expansion project is complete increasing capacity to 1.5 mgpd; airport improvements are ongoing; and collector streets are programmed

for improvement. Poor water pressure hampers business expansion. Some industrial areas lack improved streets and utilities. Telecommunications infrastructure is poor.

### ***Community Indicators:***

Both total passengers and miles have decreased somewhat since FY96 for the Cottonwood Area Transit System (CATS).

CATS is an on demand system that serves Cottonwood and Clarkdale. At present the system has no regional connections to Sedona, Jerome, or Camp Verde. These areas do not have regional transit systems in place to connect to.

Internet Access is available at a number of places in the Cottonwood area; including the library, schools, and at the Department of Economic Security (DES) office.

The Verde Valley College Campus has been adding terminals with internet access steadily from FY97 to FY00 (an average of about 30 per year). Students FIRST legislation set a state standard of one computer for every eight students and further provided funding for the capital costs of achieving this standard; so one should not look at the overall data as indicative of a trend.

Accessing the internet is becoming more pervasive on a daily basis as a measure of the potential of a community to take advantage of the new economy.



## F. GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The following goals, objectives and action items were developed as the result of the Focused Future planning effort.

### GOAL ED-1 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- **OBJECTIVE 1.1**      **Remain the Commercial hub of the Verde Valley**
- **OBJECTIVE 1.2**      **Diversify local businesses**
- **OBJECTIVE 1.3**      **Provide Support and assistance to the existing businesses**
- **OBJECTIVE 1.4**      **Develop the foundations that are needed to support business development**
- **OBJECTIVE 1.5**      **Further develop the general manufacturing and retail development target areas**

1.0.A Formalize a business retention and expansion (BR&E) program in order to stabilize existing businesses and create new job growth. Open up communications with local business, understand the business needs and issues, and provide assistance. Research successful existing programs statewide (e.g. Casa Grande, Sierra Vista) to model.

1.0.B Establish a Manufacturers Roundtable that brings together local manufacturing firms to provide a forum to exchange information and ideas as well as an opportunity to discuss issues and concerns.

1.0.C Implement a business visitation program in order to gain an understanding of local business issues and concerns, visit four businesses per quarter, establish a database of issues/concerns, and follow-up with the businesses. Additionally, gain an understanding of business suppliers and vendors that could be attracted to the area.

1.0.D Develop a Cottonwood Market Study of the local economy and identify market niches. The goal of the market study is to better focus recruitment efforts and develop targeted marketing materials.

1.0.E Work to establish a business incubator that creates a climate for new business start-ups at the new Northern Arizona Regional Skill Center. The incubator program shall provide the technical assistance, staffing support, and other assistance in a single location where small businesses have support from initial start-up.

1.0.F Work to fully fund the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The SBDC provides tremendous technical assistance to new business start-ups and business expansions.

1.0.G Expand eco-tourism as part of the tourism development strategy (e.g., birding event) in the Verde Valley.

1.0.H Develop a recreation-based market study that will analyze our opportunities and identify recruitment strategy for recreational oriented businesses (e.g., mountain biking, ballooning).



- 1.0.I Identify and promote a source of available capital for local businesses.
- 1.0.J Support and assist agencies that are responsible for identifying and ensuring long-term water resources.
- 1.0.K Take advantage of regional transportation corridor locations for mixed use development to meet increasing demand for jobs, services and housing.
- 1.0.L Attract regional commercial users to maintain high retail sales tax capture rate.

## GOAL ED-2 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- **OBJECTIVE 2.1 Retain and attract young people to the community.**
- **OBJECTIVE 2.2 Ensure well-educated youth.**
- **OBJECTIVE 2.3 Provide a coordinated approach to youth activities.**
- **OBJECTIVE 2.4 Build youth leadership and citizenship skills.**

- 2.0.A Establish a youth recreation coordinating council to inventory programs, identify gaps and develop joint strategies.
- 2.0.B Working with various youth organizations and the local schools, develop a youth leadership and good citizenship program.
- 2.0.C Support education bonds and other advancements.
- 2.0.D Strengthen the tie between the education and business community, and advise on curriculum development for business needs.
- 2.0.E Establish a program to sponsor innovation in the classroom and support teacher excellence. This will include: teacher recognition, teacher appreciation and support for teacher salary increases.
- 2.0.F The City should develop work study and internship opportunities for high school and college students.



### **GOAL ED-3 HEALTHY COMMUNITY**

- **OBJECTIVE 3.1**      **Address social issues (e.g., dropout, poverty, crime, and teenage pregnancy).**
- **OBJECTIVE 3.2**      **Ensure everyone has access to housing and public transportation.**
- **OBJECTIVE 3.3**      **Ensure access to quality healthcare.**
- **OBJECTIVE 3.4**      **Provide cultural activities appealing to all community interests.**
- **OBJECTIVE 3.5**      **Preserve natural resources and ensure a quality environment.**

- 3.0.A Strengthen the link between the Verde Family Network Council, school system, law enforcement and economic development efforts by conducting an annual joint forum to share information and address common issues. The purpose is to strengthen partnerships between social service providers and economic development, create a dialogue, and identify resources for the area.
- 3.0.B Implement an Open Space Plan that provides policy direction and prioritizes open space for preservation and acquisition within Verde Valley.
- 3.0.C Establish a "Friends of the Forest Program" to work with the Forest Service to develop new trails, programs, recognition, facilitate clean up of sites and/or adopt sites.
- 3.0.D Identify the variety of cultural events occurring within the area and develop a directory.
- 3.0.E Complete and support the recommendations of the Housing Strategy Committee.
- 3.0.F Strengthen the partnerships with healthcare providers to ensure access to and availability of quality healthcare.
- 3.0.G Explore additional resources to expand the Cottonwood Area Transit System.

### **GOAL ED-4 LABOR FORCE DEVELOPMENT**

- **OBJECTIVE 4.1**      **Increase work and life skills to ensure that people are able to earn a living wage.**
  - **OBJECTIVE 4.2**      **Ensure that managers have the skills to develop and lead their labor force.**
- 4.0.A Establish a stronger partnership between business, education, and government to build a skilled workforce to meet the needs of businesses.
  - 4.0.B Develop vocational - technical job training opportunities. Identify skills needed in jobs we want here and ask Yavapai College to offer them.



- 4.0.C Study the regional labor force (i.e., skill level, size, market, and gaps).
- 4.0.D Encourage business leaders to mentor students. Celebrate successes.
- 4.0.D Identify solutions to address labor issues such as affordable childcare and public transportation.
- 4.0.E Encourage the senior population to utilize their skills, business acumen and capital to help build the local economy.
- 4.0.F Develop a work study and internship program for high school and college students.

## **GOAL ED-5 INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

- **OBJECTIVE 5.1**      **Ensure appropriate physical infrastructure is available to support business and community development.**
- **OBJECTIVE 5.2**      **Develop adequate telecommunications infrastructure to support businesses and residents.**

- 5.0.A Create a committee to study telecommunications options and prepare an action plan to ensure that Cottonwood has the best possible communications capabilities.
- 5.0.B Link the Cottonwood General Plan to the capital improvement plan that identifies and prioritizes needed community infrastructure.
- 5.0.C Conduct a quarterly meeting with the City, County, and public/private local utility providers to address common issues.
- 5.0.D Aggressively pursue funding options for infrastructure development and expansion.
- 5.0.E Work regionally to protect the community's long-term water resources and the Big Chino aquifer. Establish a public awareness and conservation program.
- 5.0.F Continue to improve regional transportation: the vehicular, transit, bicycle and pedestrian systems.
- 5.0.G Work with other area agencies to secure funding to complete a telecommunications assessment through the State of Arizona Government Information Technology Agency.

## **GOAL ED-6 ADMINISTRATION OF PLANNING**

- **OBJECTIVE 6.1**      **Provide for Coordination of planning and funding for the economic development strategy.**
- **OBJECTIVE 6.2**      **Monitor implementation of the economic development plan.**



- 6.0.A The City shall monitor the implementation of the Focused Future Strategy and coordinate the affected agencies.
- 6.0.B The City will provide support to the Chamber of Commerce, FED and the Old Town Association. The City Manager and Community Development Director serve on the FED Board of Directors.
- 6.0.C The City is encouraged to continue funding local economic development efforts, as well as the many other important non-profit organizations that work to improve the area's quality of life.
- 6.0.D The City of Cottonwood shall hire a professional, full-time economic development staff person and fund the staff person.
- 6.0.E The City of Cottonwood and Chamber of Commerce shall develop a work program to implement goals and strategies of the plan. The work programs should include 3-year strategies with specific timetables.
- 6.0.F Each of the entities shall develop one year budgets to fund and implement the work program
- 6.0.G The City Council, Economic Development Staff, Board of Directors and others shall meet mid-year to review performance and to make modifications to the work program if necessary.
- 6.0.H The City shall conduct an annual Economic Summit to discuss, modify and update the Strategic Plan for Economic Development.
- 6.0.I The economic development staff shall prepare a Summary Report and present the results at the Economic Summit.
- 6.0.J The City should publish a quarterly newsletter and review the City Guide.
- 6.0.K The City will continue to identify ways to bring citizens into the community's planning process.



## G. ACTION PLAN

The Cottonwood Focused Future effort requires a coordinated, focused effort to ensure implementation. The plan recognizes that in order for the community to be successful in economic development, community coordination and a strong public/private partnership must be established. This partnership is based on a clear understanding and acceptance of the various roles and responsibilities of the entities within the community and region. Additionally, good communication and effective coordination strengthen this relationship.

### ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

An understanding of the specific roles and responsibilities of the various entities involved in economic development is critical to the success of any economic development program. With shrinking budgets and closer public scrutiny, Cottonwood cannot afford to duplicate efforts. Financial and human resources are limited and must be put to effective use. In order for Cottonwood to be competitive in the economic development arena, critical organizational issues must be addressed. There are five key elements that must be addressed to ensure organizational effectiveness.

- **Capable leadership:** Qualified leadership is important to any economic development organization's success. Responsible, capable individuals who are knowledgeable of the community and action-oriented should be involved in all phases of the program.
- **Clearly defined purpose:** No organization can succeed without a clear understanding of its purpose and functions. It is important to define the exact role organizations and individuals play in economic development.
- **Adequate funding:** Funds must be provided to accomplish an organization's objectives. The level of competition in economic development today requires strong financial support.
- **Professional staff:** The need for professionalism in economic development has never been greater. Economic development professionals are found in all but the smallest communities.
- **Sound organizational structure:** The economic organization must be structured to meet local needs and to mobilize critically needed human and fiscal resources.

The *Cottonwood Focused Future Strategic Plan* is designed to address these critical organizational issues and outline appropriate implementation strategies for Cottonwood.

There are five entities that currently play an active role in Cottonwood economic development. They are: City of Cottonwood, Cottonwood/Verde Valley Chamber of Commerce, Cottonwood Foundation for Economic Development, The Old Town Association and the Yavapai College Small Business Development Center. Each of these five organizations has very distinct and important responsibilities. It is very critical that all of these organizations exist and be strong, well-run organizations. They all have important roles to play in economic development. If these entities are successful, the community as a whole will have a greater chance for success.

The following describes the current and potential roles and responsibilities that each of the organizations should perform. It is important to note that these roles may be different than the ones that have been played in the past. The reasons for any changes are to ensure that each group supports the others, operates more effectively, and eliminates any duplication of effort.



**TABLE 6.1: AFFECTED AGENCIES**

There are several entities that play a role in economic development. These entities either play primary or secondary roles in assisting Cottonwood in economic development. Following are the various entities and the role they play.

Primary Roles	Support Roles	New and Emerging Roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• City of Cottonwood</li> <li>• Foundation for Economic Development</li> <li>• Old Town Association</li> <li>• Yavapai College Small Business Development Center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arizona Public Service Co.</li> <li>• Arts Groups</li> <li>• Community Based Organizations</li> <li>• Verde Valley Medical Center</li> <li>• Northern Arizona Council of Governments</li> <li>• Verde Valley Regional Economic Development Council</li> <li>• State Agencies:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dept. of Commerce (REDI) and Main Street Programs</li> <li>• Greater Arizona Development Authority (GADA)</li> <li>• Office of Tourism</li> <li>• Department of Economic Security</li> <li>• Department of Transportation</li> <li>• State Parks</li> <li>• Government Information Technology Agency</li> <li>• Department of Education</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yavapai College and the Northern Arizona Regional Skill Center</li> <li>• The Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education and area high schools.</li> <li>• Central Basin Regional Council</li> <li>• Prescott and Coconino National Forest Service.</li> </ul>

## 1. CITY OF COTTONWOOD

The City of Cottonwood has played an active role in economic development for many years. The City has supported the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Association, and the Foundation for Economic Development. The City completed an economic development element as part of the adopted Cottonwood General Plan and is in the process of completing an update in accordance with Growing Smarter laws. The City of Cottonwood was an active participant in the Verde Valley Regional Economic Development Council when it was active.

City government gets involved in economic development at two levels: policy and staff. Political leadership that adopts strong policies is essential if the community is going to position itself for success economically. By setting policy, elected officials set the tone for development. The *Focused Future Strategic Plan* promotes quality growth aligned with the community's vision for the future. It is a plan that is based on the assumption that growth is inevitable and on the assertion that quality growth can only come from carefully crafted

policies put in place by strong and innovative political leaders.

It is critical that the City Council provides the support to staff to carry out the duties necessary to make the plan a reality. The City Council had representation on the Cottonwood Focused Future II Action Team and was active in the strategic planning process. The City Manager and Community Development Director were both actively involved in the process.

### ***Responsibilities:***

- a. **Policy.** The City is responsible for creating and adopting policies and regulations that encourage and support quality economic growth and development.
- b. **Funding.** The City Council contributes funds to FED and the Chamber of Commerce through three-year contracts that support pro-active economic development efforts. The City is encouraged to continue funding local economic development efforts, as well as the many other important non-profit



organizations that work to improve the area's quality of life. Additionally, the City is always looking for creative financing options, incentives, and maximizing existing financial resources to support quality projects.

- c. **Planning and Assistance.** The City initiates community and economic development planning efforts, as well as develops regulations to implement these efforts. City staff provides development assistance and is committed to continual improvement to ensure that the review process is streamlined and effective. The City is responsible for effective long term planning of the community that includes its financial future as well as its resource management.
- d. **Pro-Active Outreach.** The City is responsible for actively involving the public in the community's planning efforts and decision-making process. The City will continue to identify ways to bring citizens into the community's planning process.
- e. **Business Recruitment.** The City of Cottonwood is supportive of business recruitment efforts of the FED that takes the

lead in business recruitment for the community. The City Manager and Community Development Director serve on the FED Board of Directors.

- f. **Business Retention and Expansion.** The City of Cottonwood provides support to the Chamber of Commerce and FED in their efforts to strengthen existing businesses to ensure that they stay and grow in the community.
- g. **Foundation Development.** The City of Cottonwood plays the primary role in the development of the economic foundations, such as infrastructure (water, wastewater, public safety, recreation, and streets) within its jurisdiction. However, there are many community-based organizations that can assist the City in foundation development.
- h. **Support and Coordination.** The City of Cottonwood will support the efforts of and coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce, FED, and other local or regional organizations in their endeavors to improve the quality of life and economic health of Cottonwood.

## 2. COTTONWOOD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Chamber of Commerce is an active Chamber dedicated to promoting and sustaining a quality environment conducive to economic growth and development of existing and new commerce. It is a non-profit entity that is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors. A full-time, professional Executive Director, one paid assistant and volunteers carry out the day-to-day activities of the Chamber. The Chamber has been very active in promoting the area, participating in local events, and coordinating with other organizations. To support its activities, the Chamber of Commerce receives funding from a percentage of the bed tax, membership dues, special events, tourism product sales, and grants.

Business networking has always been an important role that the Chamber of Commerce plays within the community. Through the newsletter and Chamber sponsored functions, businesses within the community are kept abreast of information that impacts their business.

The Chamber has implemented programs to actively promote tourism in the

area. Cottonwood has at least three expectations for the Chamber of Commerce. They are to continue to promote the area as a good place to live and play, serve as facilitator for communication and coordination between the communities and other entities, and provide programs to support and strengthen existing businesses. The community to date has not adequately addressed a strong business



retention and expansion program. The Chamber should take the lead, working with the FED and City of Cottonwood, to develop a strong program.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. **Represent Business Interest.** The Chamber of Commerce is responsible for representing the interests of the local business community.
- b. **Business Network and Advocacy.** The Chamber is responsible for providing networking opportunities for businesses within the area. A strong local network is critical to establishing a cluster-driven economy.
- c. **Promotions.** The Chamber takes the lead in marketing Cottonwood as a good place to live, work, and play.
- d. **Information Source.** The Chamber serves as a source for information for new residents, tourists and others seeking information about the Verde Valley. Additionally, the Chamber facilitates internal communication, provides networking opportunities with other organizations, and is a resource for small businesses.
- e. **Retail Business Assistance.** The Chamber assists with retail/commercial relocations to the Cottonwood Area. This activity involves dissemination of demographic and

community information to possible small business relocates.

- f. **Tourism and Special Events Promotion.** The Chamber is responsible for tourism development and special event promotion for the area.
- g. **Business Recruitment.** The Chamber provides support to the Foundation on business recruitment efforts by playing an active role in the cluster and foundation development.
- h. **Business Retention and Expansion.** The Chamber, working closely with the FED and Yavapai College Small Business Development Center (SBDC), shall implement an active business retention and expansion program.
- i. **Business Training.** The Chamber, working with the SBDC, City of Cottonwood, and other entities, shall provide business training seminars geared to the needs of local businesses.
- j. **Film Promotion.** The Chamber serves as the local Film Commission and is actively involved in promoting the area for film and commercial production.
- k. **Support and Coordination.** The Chamber shall support the efforts and coordinate with the Foundation, City of Cottonwood and other organizations as they relate to economic development.

**3. COTTONWOOD FOUNDATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

The Cottonwood Foundation for Economic Development (FED) is a Division of the Cottonwood Chamber of Commerce. The FED is comprised of individuals and/or companies that contribute in the way of information, resources, funding, or any other form of help. Membership includes representation from banking, government, development, education, industry, Chamber, and the general population. The FED receives its funding from a portion of the City of Cottonwood's bed tax. The FED receives some private support primarily with in-kind services.

**Responsibilities:**

- a. **Business Recruitment.** FED is responsible for working with clients and following up on



business leads generated by Arizona Department of Commerce, APS, etc. This activity includes participating in trade shows within industry cluster targets.

**b. Business Retention and Expansion.** The FED, working with the City of Cottonwood and Chamber of Commerce, shall develop and implement a quality business retention and expansion program.

**c. Research and Data Collection.** The FED, working with the City and Chamber, will provide current and relevant economic data on the area to interested parties.

**d. Marketing.** The FED will market the community for business development and expansion. It is FED's responsibility to determine the most effective type(s) of marketing vehicles to utilize.

**e. Communication.** Effective, two-way communication is critical if economic development efforts are going to be successful. FED must communicate regularly with all entities involved in economic development in Cottonwood.

**f. Support.** The FED will support local economic development efforts being done by other organizations.

#### **4. THE OLD TOWN ASSOCIATION OF COTTONWOOD**

The Old Town Association of Cottonwood was organized in 1993 as a membership driven organization that focuses on organization, design, promotion, and economic restructuring of the Main Street District. The Old Town Association is affiliated with the Arizona Main Street Program that is based on the principals developed by the National Main Street Center. The National Program was established to assist communities in revitalization of downtown areas.

The Old Town Association has an annual budget of approximately \$20,000 and is funded by membership dues, grants, special events, and awards. The City of Cottonwood assists in funding the organization. The Old Town Association of Cottonwood has a part-time manager and an active board of directors that oversees the activities of the program. The Cottonwood downtown area is the heart of the community and an important asset for the community's economic development effort. The Old Town Association is a vital catalyst for downtown revitalization. Therefore, it is extremely important that the organization be well organized, funded, focused, and managed effectively.

##### ***Responsibilities:***

**a. Organization.** The Old Town Association will ensure an organized effort to downtown revitalization that brings downtown businesses together towards a common purpose.

**b. Planning.** The organization, working closely with the City, shall be responsible for conducting short and long range planning for Old Town.

**c. Promotion/Recruitment.** The Old Town Association program will promote the downtown area as a place to shop and do business through information dissemination, newsletter, special events, and other promotional tools. The organization will work with businesses looking to locate in the downtown area.

**d. Retail Development.** The organization, with the assistance from the Arizona Main Street Program, will work with local downtown retail businesses on merchandising, store displays, promotions, and advertising.

**e. Design.** With the assistance from the Arizona Main Street Program, the Old Town Association will work with local business owners to make improvements to building facades and interiors. The organization



promotes historic preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

**f. Economic Restructuring.** The Old Town Association will continually monitor the economic vitality of the downtown business climate and implement strategies to restructure the downtown economically. This will include identifying the types of businesses needed to complement the existing mix of businesses in downtown.

**g. Research and Data.** The Old Town Association shall be responsible for collecting, analyzing, and maintaining relevant data to support economic development efforts.

**h. Support.** The Old Town Association shall support the efforts of the other organizations as they relate to economic development by coordinating activities and communicating regularly.



## **5. YAVAPAI COLLEGE SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

The Verde Valley Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Yavapai College is a U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and State of Arizona partnership program for the purpose of supporting and developing small business. In Yavapai County, the program is sponsored and administered by Yavapai College. The Yavapai College SBDC has an office in Prescott and in Cottonwood to serve the Verde Valley area. The SBDC is also an economic resource center that links federal, state, county, city and private sectors. The SBDC exists to improve the profitability, productivity and quality of the small businesses in Cottonwood, Verde Valley, Arizona, and the entire United States. The specific programs, services, and activities that serve the City of Cottonwood are as follows:

- a. **General Small Business Counseling.** The SBDC provides a no-fee one-on-one business advisory service to assist small and micro businesses in developing business plans, economic feasibility studies, capital acquisition, resource allocation, workforce recruitment, selection, and retention, personnel policies, wage and salary administration, third-party conflict resolution, business financing, loan application assistance, and business opportunity and survival strategies in the New Economy.
- b. **Business Start-up, Expansion, Retention and Turnaround Counseling.** The SBDC provides one-on-one entrepreneurship guidance in starting a Verde Valley business, legal requirements for licensing and taxation, expanding a profitable business, retention of small business in the Verde Valley, and assisting financially troubled businesses to create new and workable turnaround strategies.
- c. **Management Training and Development.** The SBDC provides small business owner/manager leadership training, supervisory skills development, general management roles, functions and responsibilities, total quality management (TQM), supply chain management, and new management styles/attitudes for success in the New Economy.
- d. **Technical Assistance Seminars.** The SBDC provides low cost specialized seminars and course (three to fifteen hours) in sales and marketing, finance and accounting, personnel administration, legal aspects of business, recruitment and retention of employees, drug free program development, electronic commerce, and business taxation.
- e. **Product/Service Development.** The SBDC assists in new and innovative product and service development, the patent process, development cost and feasibility analysis, marketing feasibility, financing options, and product/service mechanisms.
- f. **Marketing Research and Development.** The SBDC maintains a library of sources for demographic research, consumer market potential, provides direct assistance in design and implementation of market research, determination and evaluation of target/niche markets, and methods of customer feedback, analysis and evaluation.
- g. **Community Economic Development.** The Verde Valley SBDC supports, advises, cooperates, and actively participates with the following organizations: Central Basin Regional Council (CBRC), the Cottonwood Chamber of Commerce, as an Action Team member in Cottonwood's Focus Future II planning activities, attends and actively participates in Verde Valley regional economic and educational boards and committees, and as a Yavapai College adjunct faculty member, advises, advocates, updates and/or initiates appropriate college courses to assure strong entrepreneurial and management education and workforce skills development opportunities to improve the quality of the Cottonwood business community.



**TABLE 6.2: COTTONWOOD FOCUSED FUTURE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Yavapai College SBDC	Chamber of Commerce	Foundation for Economic Development	City of Cottonwood	Old Town Association
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small Business Counseling</li> <li>• Business Start-up, Expansion, Retention and Turnaround Counseling</li> <li>• Management Training and Development</li> <li>• Technical Assistance Seminars</li> <li>• Product/Service Development</li> <li>• Marketing Research and Development</li> <li>• Community Economic Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism and Experience</li> <li>• Tourism Promotion</li> <li>• Information Dissemination</li> <li>• Support Business Retention and Expansion Efforts</li> <li>• Business Networking and Advocacy</li> <li>• Retail Business Assistance and Relocations</li> <li>• Business Training</li> <li>• Support and Coordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to be the Business Recruitment Response Team</li> <li>• More Specific Lead Qualifier</li> <li>• Follow Up on Leads</li> <li>• Information Disseminator</li> <li>• Business Retention and Expansion</li> <li>• Research and Data Collection</li> <li>• Support and Coordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundation Development</li> <li>• Policy Development</li> <li>• Community Planning</li> <li>• Support Business Recruitment Efforts</li> <li>• Support Business Retention and Expansion Efforts</li> <li>• Funding for Economic Development Activities</li> <li>• Support and Coordination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organize Old Town Revitalization Efforts</li> <li>• Planning for Old Town</li> <li>• Promotion and Recruitment of Old Town Businesses</li> <li>• Retail Development in Old Town</li> <li>• Design Assistance</li> <li>• Economic Restructuring</li> <li>• Research and Data Collection</li> <li>• Support and Coordination</li> </ul>

**NOTE:** All organizations should continue and be strengthened. Each has an important role to play. The goal is not to redistribute funds but increase funds for economic development overall.

## RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A proactive economic development effort is needed to succeed in implementing the Cottonwood economic strategy. The Chamber of Commerce has become very successful and the current staff is stretched thin focusing on their core mission. The FED Team operates in a part-time, volunteer capacity responding to leads. Therefore, it is time for the City of Cottonwood to invest in economic development as described in the Focused Future Strategic Plan for Economic Development. Following is the recommended organizational structure.

1. Hire a professional, full-time economic development staff person.
2. City of Cottonwood funds the staff person.
3. Chamber of Commerce will provide in-kind support through office space, materials, and demographic information.



- 4. FED Team continues to serve as the response team and act as the economic development advisory board.
- 5. Clarify the FED Team roles and responsibilities.
- 6. Clarify the FED by-laws.
- 7. FED (under the Chamber of Commerce umbrella) would be the clearinghouse for

private sector funding to support the economic development work program.

- 8. Estimated work program funding of approximately \$150,000. The work program funding will cover specific research, targeted recruitment package, marketing, and travel to targeted trade shows, networking, continuing education, and cooperative advertising.

## STRATEGIC PLAN EVALUATION AND UPDATE

The success of any plan or planning effort is measured by how it is implemented. The plan serves as the blueprint for Cottonwood's local economic development efforts. However, it is critical to monitor how the Strategic Plan is put into action. It is the primary responsibility of the City of Cottonwood to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Action Team discussed potential obstacles to implementation of the Focused Future Strategic Plan for Economic Development.

- ✓ Adequate funding to sustain the effort.
- ✓ Lack of adequate staff to support the activities of the SBDC.
- ✓ Spirit of cooperation to move forward.
- ✓ A proactive effort directed toward implementation.
- ✓ Lack of an effective organizational structure to implement.
- ✓ Lack of full-time professional economic development staff. Someone needs to be working to proactively identify needs and prospective clients.

- **Plan Distribution and Presentations.** There are many different organizations that can support and assist Cottonwood in implementation of the Strategic Plan. It is very important for Cottonwood to announce to these agencies (Yavapai County, APS, Arizona Department of Commerce, etc.) that Cottonwood has its plan in place. These groups must understand the community's vision for the future and how they can assist the community in meeting its goals.

- **Development of Work Plans based on the document.** Following plan adoption, the City of Cottonwood and Chamber of Commerce shall develop a work program to implement goals and strategies of the plan. The work programs should include three-year strategies with specific timetables, funding strategies, and performance measures. Identifying performance measures delivers two clear benefits: (1) Provides useful information for reporting back to community residents and leadership. (2) Allows assessment of what is or is not working. These work programs shall be exchanged to allow for coordination. The City of Cottonwood will use the work programs to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

### Plan Implementation Strategies:

- **Adoption.** All local entities involved in the strategic planning process shall adopt the Strategic Plan for Economic Development.
- **Community Communication.** The Cottonwood Focused Future II process involved a tremendous amount of public participation. Community communication about the plan and progress is critical. Upon adoption of the plan, the specific goals and strategies should be communicated to the public.



- **Policy Maker Meetings.** The City Council, Economic Development Staff, Boards of Directors, and others shall meet mid-year to review performance and to make modifications to the work program if necessary. Additionally, the purpose of these meetings is to ensure communication and accountability.
- **Community Indicators Evaluation.** Annually, Cottonwood should evaluate the progress it has achieved on each of the community indicators. Cottonwood will prepare a summary report and present the results at the Economic Summit.
- **Annual Economic Forum Update.** Annually, Cottonwood shall conduct an Economic Summit to discuss, modify, and update the Strategic Plan for Economic Development.

The Summit shall review accomplishments, changes in the local economy, and recommended changes to the plan. Changes made to the plan shall be adopted by the various entities adopting the original plan.

- **Work Program Funding.** Each of the entities shall develop one-year budgets to fund and implement the work program. Annual budget requests shall be based on the strategies to implement the Action Plan.

The community, as a result of the Arizona Public Service Company sponsored Focused Future II Program, has the necessary tools and expertise available to them to keep the Strategic Plan up-to-date. Additionally, the APS Community and Economic Development staff is available to assist the community in its on-going efforts.

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The Focused Future II offered an opportunity for increased civic participation through a number of venues including serving on the Steering/Action Team, participation on issue-specific Focus Groups, the Mini Summit, and the Cottonwood Futures Conference.

Sustaining any community or economic development process over time requires building a strong collaborative effort. It takes many people and stakeholders working together and moving forward toward a common vision. Today, people are being pulled in many different directions (i.e., family responsibilities, work, socially) and community participation is hurt due to lack of time and commitment. Therefore, creating civic participation requires consistent attention to building and maintaining relationships. The Focused Future II process built on Cottonwood's long history of soliciting public and stakeholder participation and local decision-making.

Cottonwood, like most communities throughout the United States, is becoming more diverse. With this diversity of backgrounds, cultures, and values, it becomes increasingly important to establish mechanisms and processes to bring people together to discuss, debate, and find common ground. Improving communications and engaging citizens in their

community builds trust, respect, and a sense of belonging.

However, the new model of citizen democracy, the evolution of community problem solving, is citizen collaboration between government, business, non-profits and citizens. Along with this model is the notion of safe or civic space, places where diverse perspectives are brought together, where leaders convene discussion, develop strategies and constructively address complex issues. The Focused Future II process provided such opportunities.

The Cottonwood Steering/Action Team outlined the following strategies to ensure that citizens and stakeholders are engaged in ensuring that Cottonwood remains a great place to live, work and play.

### Community Participation Strategies:

- Launch a communication program about the need to get involved. Describe ways to serve and volunteer. Use the churches and service clubs to help with this program.



- Build more community spirit and awareness.
- Create a formal Community Leadership Program. The goal of the program would be to ensure stable and dedicated leaders to direct Cottonwood's future. The Leadership Program is an excellent way to tap the knowledge (e.g., senior computer club) with the community for the betterment of Cottonwood.
- Sponsor a "Newcomers Fair" to connect people and provide information to new residents and businesses about Cottonwood.
- The City, Chamber, Board of Realtors and others should review the Cottonwood Guide and discuss how to engage new residents.
- City of Cottonwood should develop a quarterly newsletter to communicate with the residents.



## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT</b>			
	<b>DO-ITEM</b>	<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>TIMELINE</b>
<b>ED-1</b>	<b>BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Remain the Commercial hub of the Verde Valley</b>		
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Diversify local businesses</b>		
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Provide Support and assistance to the existing businesses</b>		
<b>1.4</b>	<b>Develop the foundations that are needed to support business development</b>		
<b>1.5</b>	<b>Further develop the general manufacturing and retail development target areas</b>		
1.0.A	Formalize a business retention and expansion (BR&E) program in order to stabilize existing businesses and create new job growth. Open up communications with local business, understand the business needs and issues, and provide assistance. Research successful existing programs statewide (e.g. Casa Grande, Sierra Vista) to model.	City of Cottonwood / Chamber of Commerce	ST
1.0.B	Establish a Manufacturers Roundtable that brings together local manufacturing firms to provide a forum to exchange information and ideas as well as an opportunity to discuss issues and concerns. (ST)	City of Cottonwood / Chamber of Commerce	ST
1.0.C	Implement a business visitation program in order to gain an understanding of local business issues and concerns, visit four businesses per quarter, establish a database of issues/concerns, and follow-up with the businesses. Additionally, gain an understanding of business suppliers and vendors that could be attracted to the area.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC	ST
1.0.D	Develop a Cottonwood Market Study of the local economy and identify market niches. The goal of the market study is to better focus recruitment efforts and develop targeted marketing materials.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	LT
1.0.E	Work to establish a business incubator that creates a climate for new business start-ups at the new Northern Arizona Regional Skill Center. The incubator program shall provide the technical assistance, staffing support, and other assistance in a single location where small businesses have support from initial start-up.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	LT
1.0.F	Work to fully fund the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). The SBDC provides tremendous technical assistance to new business start-ups and business expansions.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	ST
1.0.G	Expand eco-tourism as part of the tourism development strategy (e.g., birding event) in the Verde Valley.	Chamber	ST
1.0.H	Develop a recreation-based market study that will analyze our opportunities and identify recruitment strategy for recreational oriented businesses (e.g., mountain biking, ballooning).	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	LT
1.0.I	Identify and promote a source of available capital for local businesses.	City of Cottonwood	LT
1.0.J	Support and assist agencies that are responsible for identifying and ensuring long-term water resources.	City of Cottonwood	ST
1.0.K	Take advantage of regional transportation corridor locations for mixed use development to meet increasing demand for jobs, services and housing.	City of Cottonwood	LT
1.0.L	Attract regional commercial users to maintain high retail sales tax capture rate.	Chamber	LT
<b>ED-2</b>	<b>YOUTH DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Retain and attract young people to the community.</b>		
<b>2.2</b>	<b>Ensure well-educated youth.</b>		
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Provide a coordinated approach to youth activities.</b>		



<b>2.4 Build youth leadership and citizenship skills.</b>			
2.0.A	Establish a youth recreation coordinating council to inventory programs, identify gaps and develop joint strategies.	City of Cottonwood	ST
2.0.B	Working with various youth organizations and the local schools, develop a youth leadership and good citizenship program.	Chamber / City of Cottonwood	ST
2.0.C	Support education bonds and other advancements.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	ST
2.0.D	Strengthen the tie between the education and business community, and advise on curriculum development for business needs.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	ST
2.0.E	Establish a program to sponsor innovation in the classroom and support teacher excellence. This will include: teacher recognition, teacher appreciation and support for teacher salary increases.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	LT
2.0.F	The City should develop work study and internship opportunities for high school and college students.	City of Cottonwood	ST
<b>ED-3 HEALTHY COMMUNITY</b>			
<b>3.1 Address social issues (e.g., dropout, poverty, crime, and teenage pregnancy).</b>			
<b>3.2 Ensure access to quality healthcare.</b>			
<b>3.3 Provide cultural activities appealing to all community interests.</b>			
<b>3.4 Preserve natural resources and ensure a quality environment.</b>			
3.0.A	Strengthen the link between the Verde Family Network Council, school system, law enforcement and economic development efforts by conducting an annual joint forum to share information and address common issues. The purpose is to strengthen partnerships between social service providers and economic development, create a dialogue, and identify resources for the area.	City of Cottonwood	ST
3.0.B	Implement an Open Space Plan that provides policy direction and prioritizes open space for preservation and acquisition within Verde Valley.	City of Cottonwood	LT
3.0.C	Establish a "Friends of the Forest Program" to work with the Forest Service to develop new trails, programs, recognition, facilitate clean up of sites and/or adopt sites.	City of Cottonwood	ST
3.0.D	Identify the variety of cultural events occurring within the area and develop a directory.	Chamber	ST
3.0.E	Complete and support the recommendations of the Housing Strategy Committee.	City of Cottonwood	ST
3.0.F	Strengthen the partnerships with healthcare providers to ensure access to and availability of quality healthcare.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC	ST
<b>ED-4 LABOR FORCE DEVELOPMENT</b>			
<b>4.1 Increase work and life skills to ensure that people are able to earn a living wage.</b>			
<b>4.2 Ensure that managers have the skills to develop and lead their labor force.</b>			
4.0.A	Establish a stronger partnership between business, education, and government to build a skilled workforce to meet the needs of businesses.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	ST
4.0.B	Develop vocational - technical job training opportunities. Identify skills needed in jobs we want here and ask Yavapai College to offer them.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	ST
4.0.C	Study the regional labor force (i.e., skill level, size, market, and gaps).	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC	LT
4.0.D	Encourage business leaders to mentor students. Celebrate successes.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	ST



4.0.D	Identify solutions to address labor issues such as affordable childcare and public transportation. (LT) *	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood	LT
4.0.E	Encourage the senior population to utilize their skills, business acumen and capitol to help build the local economy.	Chamber / City of Cottonwood	ON-GOING
4.0.F	Develop a work study and internship program for high school and college students.	City of Cottonwood / Yavapai College / Mingus Union H.S.	ST
<b>ED-5</b>	<b>INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT</b>		
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Ensure appropriate physical infrastructure is available to support business and community development.</b>		
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Develop adequate telecommunications infrastructure to support businesses and residents.</b>		
5.0.A	Create a committee to study telecommunications options and prepare an action plan to ensure that Cottonwood has the best possible communications capabilities.	City of Cottonwood	ST
5.0.B	Link the Cottonwood General Plan to the capital improvement plan that identifies and prioritizes needed community infrastructure.	City of Cottonwood	ST
5.0.C	Conduct a quarterly meeting with the City, County, and public/private local utility providers to address common issues.	City of Cottonwood	ST
5.0.D	Aggressively pursue funding options for infrastructure development and expansion.	City of Cottonwood	ST
5.0.E	Work regionally to protect the community's long-term water resources and the Big Chino aquifer. Establish a public awareness and conservation program.	City of Cottonwood	ST
5.0.F	Continue to improve regional transportation: the vehicular, transit, bicycle and pedestrian systems.	City of Cottonwood	ST
5.0.G	Work with other area agencies to secure funding to complete a telecommunications assessment through the State of Arizona Government Information Technology Agency.	City of Cottonwood	ST
<b>ED-6</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATION OF PLANNING</b>		
<b>6.1</b>	<b>Provide for Coordination of planning and funding for the economic development strategy.</b>		
<b>6.2</b>	<b>Monitor implementation of the economic development plan.</b>		
6.0.A	The City shall monitor the implementation of the Focused Future Strategy and coordinate the affected agencies.	City of Cottonwood	ON-GOING
6.0.B	The City will provide support to the Chamber of Commerce, FED and the Old Town Association. The City Manager and Community Development Director serve on the FED Board of Directors.	City of Cottonwood	ON-GOING
6.0.C	The City is encouraged to continue funding local economic development efforts, as well as the many other important non-profit organizations that work to improve the area's quality of life.	City of Cottonwood	ON-GOING
6.0.D	The City of Cottonwood shall hire a professional, full-time economic development staff person and fund the staff person.	City of Cottonwood	ST
6.0.E	The City of Cottonwood and Chamber of Commerce shall develop a work program to implement goals and strategies of the plan. The work programs should include 3-year strategies with specific timetables.	Chamber / City of Cottonwood	ST
6.0.F	Each of the entities shall develop one year budgets to fund and implement the work program	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood / Old Town Assoc.	ST



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6.0.G	The City Council, Economic Development Staff, Board of Directors and others shall meet mid-year to review performance and to make modifications to the work program if necessary.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood / Old Town Assoc.	ON-GOING
6.0.H	The City shall conduct an annual Economic Summit to discuss, modify and update the Strategic Plan for Economic Development.	FED / Chamber / Yavapai College SBDC / City of Cottonwood / Old Town Assoc.	ONGOING
6.0.I	The economic development staff shall prepare a Summary Report and present the results at the Economic Summit.	City of Cottonwood	ON-GOING
6.0.J	The City should publish a quarterly newsletter and review the City Guide.	City of Cottonwood	ON-GOING
6.0.K	The City will continue to identify ways to bring citizens into the community's planning process.	City of Cottonwood	ON-GOING