

Benson serves as the western gateway to the scenic and historic attractions of Cochise County and has copyrighted the name “Home of Kartchner Caverns State Park.” Located in the historical San Pedro Valley, it offers proximity to both Tucson and Sierra Vista. Its rugged mountains, grassy valleys, moderate climate and proximity to many historical sites makes it a popular tourist attraction. The City of Benson was founded in 1880, when the Southern Pacific Railroad came through southern Arizona. Until 1910, Benson was the railroad hub of southern Arizona. It was named for Judge William B. Benson of California, a friend of Charles Crocker, then-president of the railroad.

Principal Economic Activities

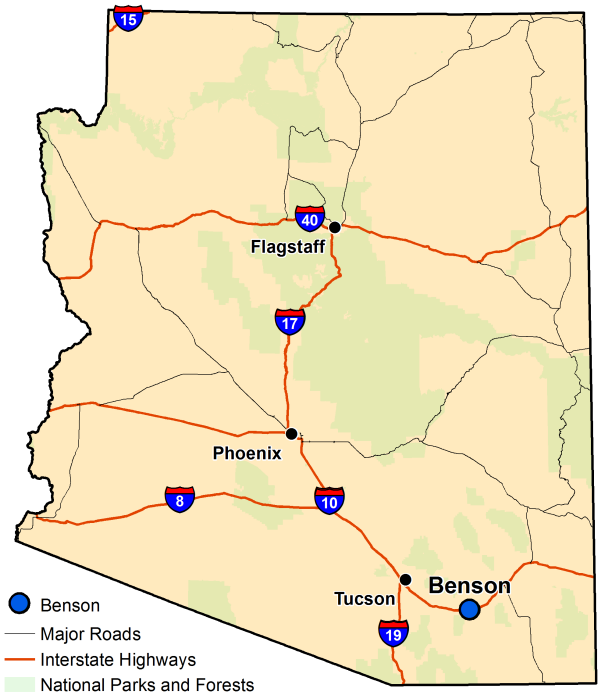
Benson is situated along several trade routes: Interstate 10, U.S. 80, State Highway 90 and the main line of the Union Pacific Railroad. AEPCO and Apache Nitrogen Products are major employers, while many residents work in Tucson or Sierra Vista. Both retail chain and specialty stores are available. The city supports a large retired population and is a winter refuge for people from colder climates. Its nearby historic and scenic sites are increasingly popular with tourists.

Scenic Attractions

Cochise County, land of the great Apache chiefs Cochise and Geronimo, was truly “the last frontier,” subject to raids by the Chiricahua Apaches until the late 1880s. Nearby are the world famous Kartchner Caverns State Park and Old Tucson's Mescal movie site. Other attractions include: Tombstone, 20 miles from Benson; Gammon's Gulch Movie Set & Museum; historic Fort Huachuca, with its 1880s buildings and an Indian war days museum; the Amerind Museum which features remnants of prehistoric Indian cultures; and the Holy Trinity Monastery along the San Pedro Riparian Area. In addition, there are numerous mountain ranges that provide rockhounding, photography, picnicking, hiking, camping, bird watching and hunting opportunities.

Community Facilities

Benson offers a broad range of community facilities including four parks, one golf course, a community pool, a skate park, a library, a community center and many baseball, football, track and soccer fields. There is also a museum/gallery.



Community Profile for Benson, Arizona



BASIC INFORMATION			
Founded:	1880		
Incorporated:	1924		
Elevation:	3,585 ft.		
Location:	Cochise		
Distance to major cities:			
Phoenix:	160 miles		
Tucson:	46 miles		
Las Vegas:	453 miles		
San Diego:	454 miles		
Los Angeles:	532 miles		
POPULATION			
	2000	2010	2023 (est.)
Benson	4,711	5,098	5,365
Office of Economic Opportunity			
SALES TAX / TRANSACTION PRIVILEGE TAX			
Benson	3.50%		
Cochise	0.50%		
State	5.60%		
Arizona Dept. of Revenue & Arizona Tax Research Foundation			

LABOR FORCE			
	2000	2010	2022
Civilian Labor Force	2,008	1,900	1,982
Unemployed	163	209	59
Unemployment Rate	8.1%	11.0%	3.0%
Office of Economic Opportunity			
WORKFORCE EDUCATION ATTAINMENT			
	Count	Share	
Less than high school	381	10.4%	
High school or equivalent, no college	1,120	30.6%	
Some college or Associate degree	1,209	33.1%	
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	946	25.9%	
American Community Survey			
INDUSTRY (RANKED BY EMPLOYMENT)			
	Count	Share	
Education, health care & social assistance	446	24.5%	
Retail trade	360	19.8%	
Transportation, warehousing, & utilities	298	16.4%	
Arts, entertainment, food & recreation services	196	10.8%	
Professional, scientific, & administrative services	126	6.9%	
Finance, insurance & real estate	126	6.9%	
Public administration	106	5.8%	
Manufacturing	85	4.7%	
Construction	41	2.3%	
Other services, except public administration	38	2.1%	
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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