

CHAPTER 2:

EXISTING CONDITIONS

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Since the development of the previous Comprehensive Plan, Campbell County, Kentucky has experienced a range of demographic, economic, and planning-related changes. These types of changes necessitate a major update to the plan to better align these new conditions with the County's vision and goals. This section of the plan highlights those changes and provides a summary of key plan elements.

Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) 100.187 defines the contents of comprehensive plan in the Commonwealth. Per the statute, all plans must include a transportation plan element and a community facilities plan element. Other elements are optional and to be added at the judgment of the planning commission. This section includes required and optional elements to address the unique characteristics, challenges, and opportunities of the County. The information gained from reviewing these elements provided guidance for the plan's goals and policies in Section 3.



DEMOGRAPHICS

A comprehensive overview of the demographic profile of Campbell County, including population estimates, trends, and projections was completed.

Population and Race

Campbell County's population has grown modestly over the last 10 years. As of July 1, 2023, the population of Campbell County was estimated at 93,702 residents, with a breakdown by age demographic showing 5.4% under 5 years, 20.3% under 18 years, and 17.7% 65 years and over 1 year of age. This population represented a 3.7% increase since 2010, with a relatively stable annual growth rate of around 0.2%. The County is considered to have a balanced age distribution. The population density has increased from 597.0 per square mile in 2010 to 615.0 in 2020 ². The County saw a significant increase in non-white populations over the past decade with 93.6% identifying as white alone.

Housing and Income

As of 2022, there were 41,465 housing units, with 93.3% occupied and 6.7% vacant. The median value of these units was \$214,400, and the median monthly

owner costs with a mortgage were \$1,516 ⁵. Income statistics reveal that the median household income in Campbell County was \$71,979, slightly below the national average of \$75,149 ⁶. The per capita income was \$44,971, higher than the national average of \$41,804 ⁶. Campbell County has a lower poverty rate at 8.6%, compared to the national average of 12.6%.

Workforce and Education

The labor force participation rate for the population over 16 years of age was 65.1%, with 61.0% of the female population in this age range in the labor force. Educational attainment levels are good in the County, with 93.3% of the population over 25 years old having at least a high school education and 39.3% having at least a bachelor's degree.

Wellbeing

Health statistics indicate that the County has an infant mortality rate of 3.6 per 1,000 births and a life expectancy of 77 years, which is higher than the Kentucky average.



Demographics at a Glance

POPULATION

93,702
Population of
Campbell County
July 1, 2023

↑3.7%
Since 2010

0.2%
Annual Growth Rate

POPULATION BREAKDOWN

<5 YEARS 5.4%

<18 YEARS 20.3%

65+ YEARS 17.7%

POPULATION DENSITY

597
per
square
mile

2010

615
per
square
mile

2020

HOUSING & INCOME



41,465
Housing Units
July 1, 2023

93%
Occupied

6.7%
Vacant



\$214,400
Median Value



\$1,516
Median Monthly Owner Costs With a Mortgage

INCOME

\$71,979
Median Household Income

\$75,149
Median National Household Income

\$44,971
Per Capita Income

\$41,804
National Per Capita Income

8.6%
Poverty Rate

12.6%
National Poverty Rate

WORKFORCE & EDUCATION

65.1%
Labor Force
Participation Rate
over 16 years of age

61%
Female Labor Force
Participation Rate
over 16 years of age



93.3%

Over 25 Years Old Having at Least a High School Education



39.3%

Having at Least a Bachelor's Degree

WELLBEING



3.6/1,000*
Infant Mortality Rate

77 Years*
Life Expectancy

**Higher than Kentucky Average*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYMENT, AND EDUCATION

Campbell County as a community has strong economic development potential, a diverse employment landscape, higher income levels than other parts of the state, and significant investments in both business and residential projects. The County's commitment to balancing work and family responsibilities, along with its robust public education system, further enhances its appeal as a place to live and work.

Labor Force

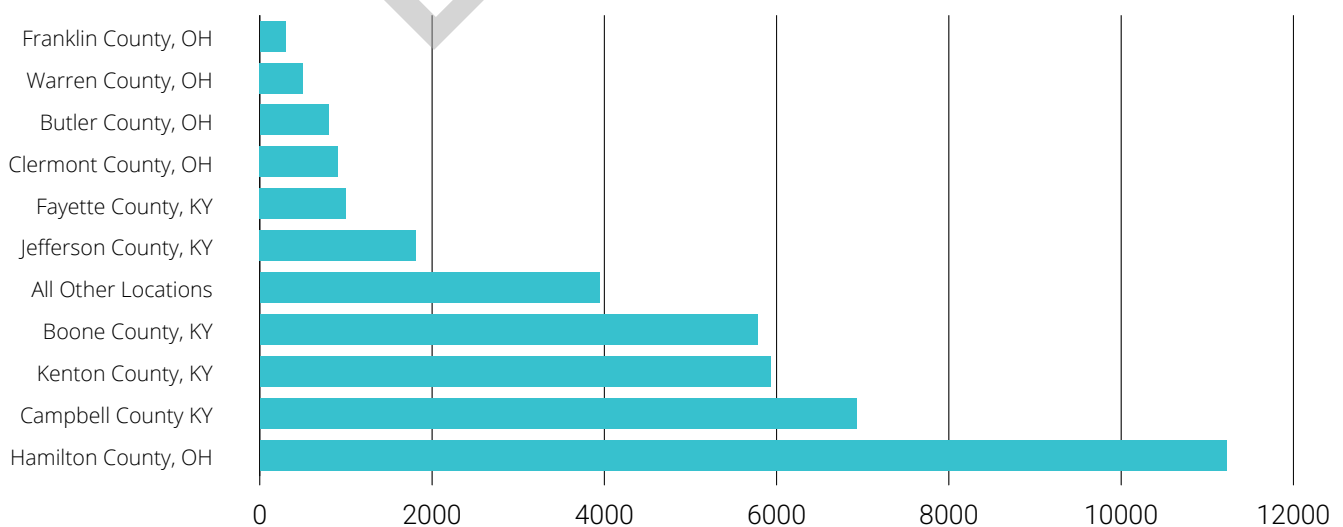
Campbell County has maintained a strong labor force relative to state and national averages. The labor force data reveals that the County's labor force participation rate (65.9%) is strong compared to the state average (59.6%), and it experiences a lower unemployment rate (3.7%) compared to the state average (4.8%). A high percentage of parents with children under 6 (76.5%) and those with children aged 6–17 (74.9%) are active in the workforce. Campbell County consistently ranks among the top counties in the Cincinnati area for labor force participation. Over 13,000 Campbell County residents work in Ohio as compared to nearly 7,000 who work in Campbell County.

The employment characteristics of Campbell County residents show a significant portion of the workforce engaged in management, business, science, and arts occupations, which is higher than the state average. There is a diverse employment landscape in the County, with the largest sectors being educational services, health care, and social assistance. The class of worker data indicates a higher percentage of private wage and salary workers in Campbell County compared to the state average.

Income

The median household income in the County is significantly higher than the state average. The income distribution shows a lower percentage of households earning less than \$10,000 and a higher proportion of households earning \$100,000 or more compared to the state. This suggests a relatively affluent community with a substantial portion of its population enjoying higher income levels.

2022 Employment Locations for Campbell County Residents





Businesses and Industries

Major businesses and industry expansion in the County, along with recent capital investments, have contributed to the County's economic growth. Notable projects include expansions by Tyson Foods and Thermo Fisher Scientific, as well as various residential and mixed-use developments.

Education

The Campbell County School District supports eight schools and serves nearly 5,000 students from preschool through 12th grade. Building renovation

is completed on a continual basis, ensuring well-maintained and quality facilities throughout the entire district.

Northern Kentucky University (NKU), the only university in Campbell County, has an enrollment of more than 14,000 students. In fall of 2024 there were 10,327 undergraduates and 5,043 graduate students enrolled, and the schools has a 54.1% graduation rate for those who attend this 4-year accredited college.

The County also has smaller technical schools that provide training in a variety of programs.

HOUSING AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Like other counties in Northern Kentucky Campbell County's workforce job creation is outpacing workforce housing. There is a monoculture of single-family homes not aligned with household income and size, and therefore a need for 'missing middle' houses and affordability strategies to continue economic growth.

The recent NKADD Housing Study recommended the following to address these challenges:

- Explore expanded HUD HOME funding, using Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), property tax abatements.
- Dedicate publicly owned land for affordable housing.
- Create a housing bond fund.
- Utilize the State's Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for mixed-use redevelopment projects.

- Make regulatory changes such as allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) zoning by right, using inclusionary zoning, reducing regulatory burdens, and updating building codes.

The Kentucky Housing Corporation (KYHC) Statewide Housing Gap Analysis projects a significant housing gap in Campbell County, with a need for 4,194 units in 2024, growing to 8,334 units by 2029. This includes both rental and for-sale units, with a specific need for 3,539 rental units and 4,795 for-sale units by 2029. This analysis emphasizes the importance of income-aligned rental and for-sale housing, mixed-income and mixed-use developments, workforce housing, and senior housing.



PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

Fire Service

Fire protection services in the County are provided by various agencies including full-time, part-time, and volunteer organizations. Each fire district is equipped for fire suppression and emergency medical services, and they assist each other as needed.

Police Service

The Campbell County Police Department (CCPD) is a full-service law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over unincorporated areas of the county, Crestview, Silver Grove, the Licking River, and the Kentucky side of the Ohio River. The CCPD has specialized investigative units and maintains various teams and programs such as the Honor Guard Team, Crisis Assistance Response Effort (C.A.R.E.) Team, Drone Program, and Bike Patrol Unit.

Emergency Management

The Campbell County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is responsible for disaster and emergency mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. It coordinates disaster and emergency response among county agencies and political subdivisions, liaises with state and federal agencies,

and manages recovery operations following disasters. The OEM also administers and enforces the Campbell County Hazardous Materials Control Ordinance and maintains a comprehensive disaster and emergency response.

Health Department

The Northern Kentucky Health Department (NKY Health) offers harm reduction resources such as naloxone training and syringe exchange sites to reduce the transmission of infectious diseases. NKY Health also operates a mobile unit for outreach events and health services in the region.

Campbell County Cooperative Extension

The County Cooperative Extension provides technical resources and educational opportunities on topics like agriculture, natural resources management, horticulture, public health, and household management. The Cooperative Extension also oversees the County's 4-H Youth Development program and operates Lakeside Commons, an educational garden for interactive learning experiences.

CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Campbell County has a good amount of green space and parks, which serve as central hubs of activity. Public facilities for culture and recreation are essential for a healthy community, especially in rural and dispersed areas.

The County has many beautiful public spaces and parks, including AJ Jolly Park, Pendery Park, and Lakeside Commons as well as various trails in 10 parks. Boat access to the Ohio River, while desired by the residents, is limited due to the topography of the area.

The County also has community centers, senior centers, public libraries, and events/festivals which foster community engagement and lifelong learning. The Campbell County Public Library system has branches in Alexandria, Cold Springs, Fort Thomas, and Newport, offering extensive resources and programming.



PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

Transportation

Developing and preserving a safe and efficient transportation system in Campbell County are key to its future success. The county's economic growth and development are directly linked to its well-connected transportation network, which includes roads, rail lines, airports, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and public transportation. This network enhances the quality of life for Campbell County residents. The County has good access to interstates, principal arterials, minor arterials, and collectors but lacks an east-west connector in the southern portion of the County and there is consistent request for more walking trails and bike facilities.

Public transportation in Campbell County is provided by the Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK), which completed a system redesign in 2020 to create more frequent and efficient networks. TANK offers local routes, express routes, shuttles, and Park-and-Ride locations. In addition, the TANK Plus pilot program offers flexible micro-transit within the County.

While currently minimal, bike infrastructure projects are underway, such as the Kentucky Route 8 River Path, which aims to create a shared-use trail along the Ohio River. The terrain of the County makes bike lanes difficult to construct in along existing roads.

Utilities

The County has a reliable network of utilities including water, sanitary sewers, , stormwater management, electricity, and internet access. Planned improvements for sanitary sewer, stormwater management utilities and services are needed to keep up with development as well as to mitigate aging infrastructure in some locations in the County, particularly aging septic systems built in subdivisions decades ago which are now at capacity and failing. By Spring of 2026 public water access is expected to be up to 98%. A small portion of residents get their water from private cisterns and local water hauling stations, and plans are underway to improve one of the hauling stations. Internet access is very good in the County with the Fiscal Court passing a resolution during the COVID pandemic to expand Broadband, fiber internet access to every home in Campbell County by 2024.



AGRICULTURE AND CONSERVATION

Campbell County is rich in environmental features such as the Ohio River, Licking River, floodplains, and wetlands. Flooding concerns and development within flood-prone areas, as well as agricultural conditions, are concerns for the community,

Water Resources

Water resources in the County include rivers, lakes, and groundwater, each playing a crucial role in the region's ecosystem and water supply. The Ohio River forms the northern boundary of the county and supports both ecological diversity and human activities. The Licking River also contributes to the local water supply and offers recreational opportunities. Additionally, the county has several lakes, such as AJ Jolly Lake, which is popular for fishing and boating.

Groundwater

Groundwater is a significant source of water supply in Campbell County, with wells and springs providing approximately one-third of the public domestic water supply across the state. The Ohio River Alluvial Aquifer serves as a major source of groundwater supply for the county.

Forests

The County has seen a change in forest coverage between 2000 and 2020, with a decline in deciduous, mixed, and evergreen forests.

Farmlands and Agricultural Districts

The Soil Conservation Service has mapped approximately 16,400 acres of "important farmlands" in the County. Farmland has declined between 2017 and 2022, with the percentage of total land designated as farmland decreasing from 48% to 40%. Most farms are small, family-owned, and run on thin margins.

Various initiatives, such as agri-tourism, are being considered to allow farmers to gain additional income and continue farm operations for future generations. Energy crops are another initiative, with fast-growing crops being grown for the specific purpose of producing energy. The Campbell County Farmland Work Group was established to address the significant decrease in farmland over the past 84 years.

Conservation Lands and Districts

Conservation lands and districts such as Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area and St. Anne's Woods and Wetlands are being managed for preservation and restoration. Residents have expressed the importance of maintaining and protecting wetlands and other conservation areas. Hydrologic issues, flood hazards, and soil types, must be considered for careful planning and development to mitigate flood risks.



LAND USE AND ZONING

The Planning and Development services of Kenton County break down the existing land use data for Campbell County into nine classifications: Agriculture, Commercial, Industrial, Institutional, Mining, Recreation/Open Space, Residential, Vacant, and Water. This classification provides a comprehensive overview of the various land uses within the county.

Each incorporated municipality in the County has its own zoning code, while a separate code applies to all unincorporated lands in the County. The zoning codes include distinct districts, requirements, standards, and administrative processes. The unincorporated areas of Campbell County have a total of 21 different zoning districts, including Agricultural, Highway Commercial, Industrial Heavy, Industrial Light, Industrial Mining, Industrial River Zone, Institutional, Neighborhood Commercial, and various residential districts.

The most prevalent zoning district is the Agricultural district, which covers 72.5% of the unincorporated area. This is largely driven by the fact that the unincorporated areas of Campbell County exist mostly outside of the SD-1 Urban Services Boundary, meaning they do not typically have access to public water or sewers that would facilitate development. The Residential Rural Estates zoning district is the second largest, covering 19% of the unincorporated area.

The Core Communities (Crestview, Melbourne, Silver Grove, Southgate, and Woodlawn) have their own zoning district intended to direct growth and development within their respective boundaries. These communities are located within the SD-1 Urban Services Boundary, providing them with greater potential for growth due to access to public utilities.

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