

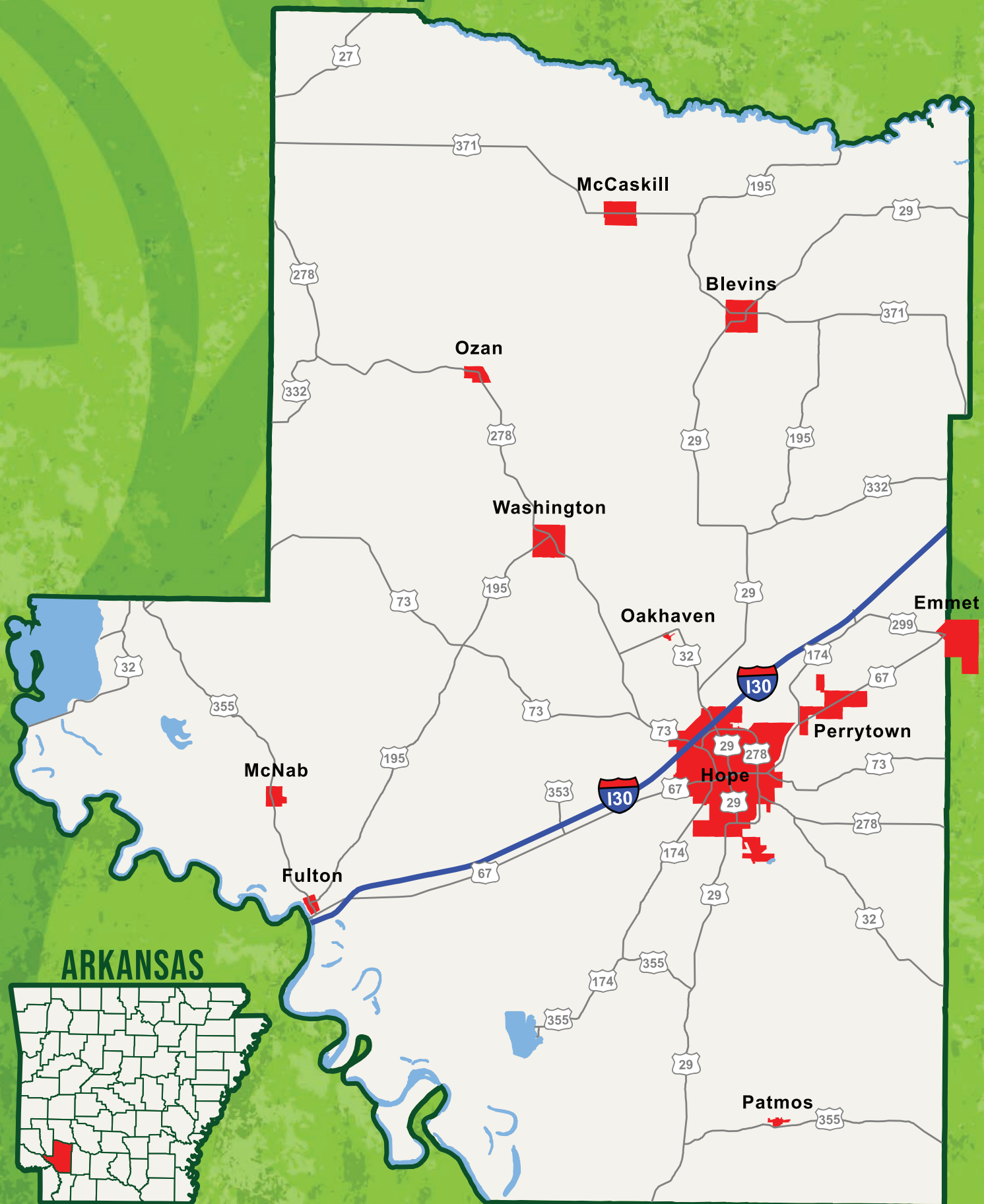


Thrive Hempstead Co.

## **FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2020**

# Hempstead Co.







## City of Hope

P.O. Box 667, Hope, Arkansas 71802-0667  
hopearkansas.net | P 870-777-6701

*Greetings:*

***Thrive Hempstead*** is a five-year strategic plan put together by volunteers in Hope and Hempstead County. I want to extend my heartfelt thank you to over 100 people that participated in this intensive effort. Their hard work and buy-in of the process has brought the voice of all citizens to the table for the future of Hope and Hempstead County. Each volunteer, committee chair, co-chair and steering committee member is appreciated for their dedication and love for our community.

This plan focuses on Education, Quality of Life, Tourism, Public Projects and Economic Development. Recommendations for each topic area focuses on the immediate and the long term, providing a plan for the future for our youth. Input for the recommendations came from a wide variety of resources including a comprehensive survey and open town hall meetings, allowing for diverse voices throughout the plan.

We have a unique vision for this plan. It can and should be reviewed periodically to make sure that it agrees with the direction our citizens believe best serves the needs of the community in the future. This plan will ensure a blueprint for our community to follow.

I hope you will join me in supporting *Thrive Hempstead* and continue working to make Hope and Hempstead County a truly 'thriving' community. Remember *"together we grow."*

*Sincerely,*

**Steve Montgomery**  
Mayor of Hope



## *Hempstead County* Economic Development

108 W 3rd St, Hope, AR 71801  
hopeusa.com | Phone: (870) 777-8485

*To the Residents of Hempstead County:*

I want to thank all the residents of Hope and Hempstead County that participated in the development of the *Thrive Hempstead Five-Year Strategic Plan*. The plan is a good road map for improving and making Hempstead County a welcoming community and a wonderful place to live, work and play.

*Thrive Hempstead* is comprehensive and contains both long and short-term goals. We will soon enter the critical implementation phase where we focus on the more immediate and easily achievable tasks and begin the planning necessary to achieve our more ambitious priorities.

It will require all of us to pitch in and work together to make our plan a reality. I look forward to working with everyone in the community interested in making Hempstead County thrive.

*Sincerely,*

Steve Harris  
President





*To the Residents of Hempstead County:*

Change is best made with intent. Instead of living day to day, things carrying on as they are, why not be proactive and set the direction of the change? This five-year strategic plan does just that. Under the leadership and direction of the Arkansas Economic Development Institute (AEDI), our community rose to the challenge and formed five task force focus areas: Education, Tourism, Public Priorities, Economic Development, and Quality of Life.

Members of the community stepped up to ensure that a vision and working collaboratively were put first when constructing the plan. After months of meetings, committee work, conversations, *"leaning in"* and learning, our community stands ready to put the plan into action. The success of the planning process bodes well for the successful implementation of *"Thrive Hempstead."* The strength of this plan is rooted in action. This is a plan of accountability. We must continue being inspired by our vision for Hope and Hempstead County.

Many thanks must be given to all who made the journey. From the public information sessions to the completion of the final committee work, volunteers from all walks of life made a difference. Congratulations on being true visionaries on this journey! We applaud the leadership of Mayor Steve Montgomery and Steve Harris, the leader of our Economic Development efforts.

As we move forward with implementation plans, let us not forget we have a mighty purpose! We have a story to tell and a renewed confidence in the future! Our community will not just survive, we will **THRIVE! THRIVE HEMPSTEAD COUNTY!** As Helen Keller once said, *"Alone we can do so much but TOGETHER we can do so MUCH MORE."*

*Your Thrive Hempstead Co-Chairs:*

Lorena Jenkins  
Thrive Hempstead Co.

Jacob Jones  
Farmers Bank and Trust

Beckie Moore  
Hope-Hempstead County  
Chamber of Commerce

Christopher Smith  
University of Arkansas  
Hope-Texarkana





# Contents

Introduction	1
Purpose	2
Case Statement	2
Process	3
Vision Statement	4
County Data	5
Youth Forums	18
Recommendations	21
Tourism	22
Public Priorities	26
Economic Development	34
Quality of Life	39
Education	50
Recommendation Tiers	56
Conclusion	57
Acknowledgements	58



Thrive Hempstead Co.

*The following pages express the vision for the future of Hempstead County.*

*The Arkansas Economic Development Institute was employed to facilitate the work accomplished by the dedicated residents of the county, however, the Thrive Hempstead Five-Year Strategic Plan is the product of Hempstead County residents, not professionals from outside the area.*





## Introduction

*Thrive Hempstead* represents the collective opinion on how to revitalize the community to meet the inevitable economic and social changes that come with an uncertain future. Based on a comprehensive survey of residents, input from experts and leaders from other communities, data collection and analysis; and months of public meetings, the plan is the product of an inclusive and carefully thought out process. Yet, no plan should be set in stone. Changes and adjustments will be necessary as the community seeks to put the plan into action.

The process for naming the plan reflects the inclusiveness at the heart of this effort. Four different names and logos

were submitted to county residents who chose the name *Thrive Hempstead* and selected a logo that depicts a seedling pushing through the soil. *Thrive Hempstead* is organized into five sections: Education, Economic Development, Quality of Life, Tourism, and Public Priorities. While Public Priorities and Economic Development may contain the most pressing challenges, each section has a set of recommendations designed to put Hempstead County on a sustainable path to the future. It will take considerable work in all areas to bring this plan to fruition. The timeline for implementation and the mechanism for meeting the plan's ambitious goals remain somewhat fluid and will become clearer

as the plan is implemented. Whether the funding requirements are achieved through ballot measures, grants, donations, business investment, public/private partnerships or a combination of all five, continued public support is crucial for any large or small-scale improvements to occur.

Thank you to all the volunteers who took time away from their jobs and families to make *Thrive Hempstead* a reality. Their optimism and enthusiasm made this initial stage of transforming our community such a success. Now it's up to us to fulfill the promise of *Thrive Hempstead* and make Hempstead County an even more wonderful place to live, work and grow.







## Purpose

*Thrive Hempstead* is a conclusive blueprint to address the challenges facing Hempstead County. This year-long effort involved a broad cross-section of residents from all areas of the county.

Implementing the recommendations found in this report address a number of Hempstead County's greatest challenges and will "*move the needle*" by injecting new energy into community efforts and ensuring its future prosperity.

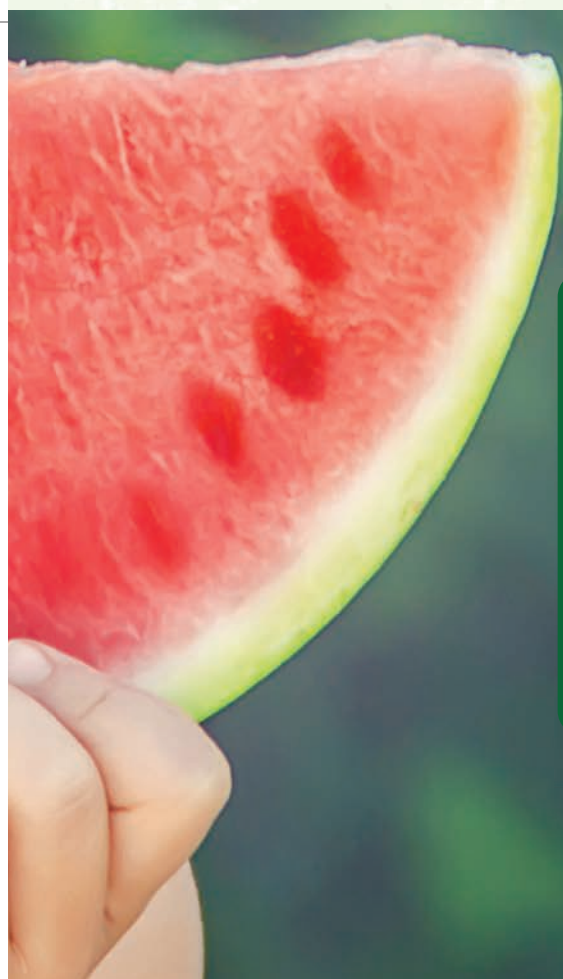
## Case Statement

While no one in Arkansas would argue the fact that Hempstead County has much to offer residents and visitors alike, there are recent and long-standing developments that should concern every resident of the county.

- The population of Hempstead County has dropped 3.3% since 2010, a trend that began in 2000 when the number of residents in the county dropped by 4.1%. This trend shows every sign of continuing at least through the 2020 census.
- Education is on the forefront for Hempstead County. With three public school districts, one private school, a thriving home school community and a two year college all located in the county; it is more important than ever that school administrators, teachers, parents, businesses, local government, citizens and other leaders take an "*all-in*" approach to ensure the future economic prosperity of the community.
- Tourism, always a mainstay of the county economy, has been relatively flat since 2015 generating roughly the same amount of revenue and jobs.
- Notwithstanding many opportunities and a jump in job growth, many younger residents feel the community lacks economic and entertainment opportunities.
- Progress on significant projects that address infrastructural, social and recreational challenges for the community have stalled.







# HOPE ARKANSAS

a slice of the good life

## Process

Steve Montgomery, Mayor of Hope, Arkansas, approached AEDI after attending a community meeting the Institute conducted in Sevier County on July 12, 2018. He expressed interest in AEDI working with Hempstead County to develop a Five-Year Strategic Plan. After a series of preliminary meetings with the Mayor and Steve Harris, President of the Hempstead County Economic Development Corporation, a Steering Committee was selected and four co-chairs, Beckie Moore, Lorena Jenkins, Christopher Smith and Jacob Jones were appointed to oversee the process.

The next step was an application process, where county residents were selected to participate

in the months long planning process. Selected applicants were then assigned to one of five committees that aligned with their area of interest e.g. Tourism, Public Priorities, Economic Development, Quality of Life, and Education. An additional area, Community, was merged into the other categories.

The project was kicked off at a community meeting in Hempstead Hall on May 16, 2019. Selected applicants reviewed demographic and economic data from AEDI and discussed the positive and negative aspects of life in Hempstead County. Participants then reported to their assigned task force, one for each focus area. Each task force, charged

with researching their focus area and developing effective and achievable recommendations, submitted their goals and action plans to the Steering Committee at a special November meeting. This plan is a direct outcome of the commitment and hard work of the task forces.

### DID YOU KNOW?

15,000 to 20,000 people visit Hempstead County during the area's three day Watermelon Festival.







## Vision Statement

- ☛ To become an economic and cultural leader in Southwest Arkansas.*
- ☛ To create a unified and thriving community that offers opportunities, services and activities that engage all residents.*
- ☛ To create a strategic plan that enlists the active participation of all residents in reimagining the county as a regional center and point of destination for cultural activities, top quality entertainment, educational opportunities, historical tourism and an attractive quality of life supported by robust and sustainable economic growth and a revitalized and expanded infrastructure.*
- ☛ To make the county strive and thrive, Thrive Hempstead will focus on:*
  - *Stimulating economic development through key infrastructure improvements, revitalizing downtown Hope, modernizing and improving tourism, streamlining business information and encouraging entrepreneurship.*
  - *Improving quality of life by offering new spaces and venues for cultural and recreational activities, increasing public safety and improving housing.*
  - *Increasing community support for education and creating more career opportunities for students.*







Thrive Hempstead Co.

**COUNTY DATA**



# Hempstead County, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	\$76,200
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1.3
Rental Vacancy Rate	16.4
Occupied Housing Units	75.6%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	8.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$38,701
Individuals Below Poverty Level	25.3%
Families Below Poverty Level	18.2%
Per Capita Personal Income	\$31,407
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	14.5%
Unemployment Rate	6.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	19.9
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	82.1%
Carpooled	12.2%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.2%
Walked	1.3%
Other Means	1.1%
Worked at Home	3.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	80.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	13.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

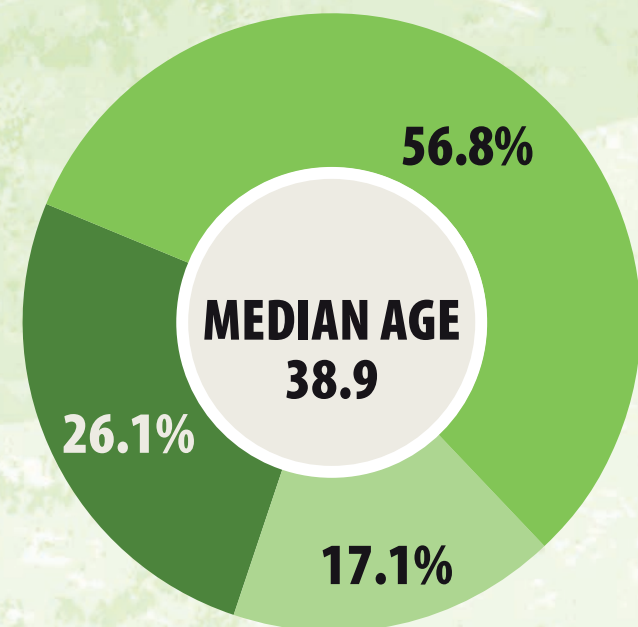
2010 Census	22,609
2017 Estimate	21,861
2010–2017 Change	-3.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	53.1%
Male	46.9%
White Non-Hispanic	55.2%
African American	29.6%
Hispanic	12.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



Under 18.....	26.1%
18–64.....	56.8%
65+.....	17.1%





# City of Blevins, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	\$50,000
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.0
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.0
Occupied Housing Units	78.0%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	1.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$42,083
Individuals Below Poverty Level	23.6%
Families Below Poverty Level	18.1%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	12.6%
Unemployment Rate	11.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	30.9
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	82.3%
Carpooled	16.7%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Other Means	0.0%
Worked at Home	1.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	87.9%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	23.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

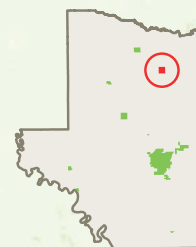
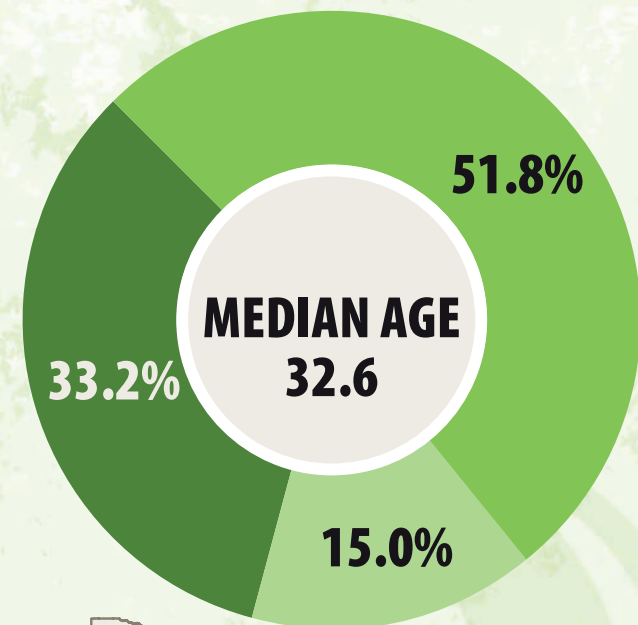
2010 Census	315
2017 Estimate	306
2010–2017 Change	-2.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	52.2%
Male	47.8%
White Non-Hispanic	62.5%
African American	8.6%
Hispanic	28.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



- Under 18..... 33.2%
- 18–64..... 51.8%
- 65+..... 15.0%
- Blevins





# City of Emmet, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	\$48,000
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	3.2
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.0
Occupied Housing Units	75.6%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	8.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$42,188
Individuals Below Poverty Level	23.7%
Families Below Poverty Level	22.9%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	29.3%
Unemployment Rate	5.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	22.5
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	77.6%
Carpooled	22.4%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Other Means	0.0%
Worked at Home	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	78.6%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	12.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

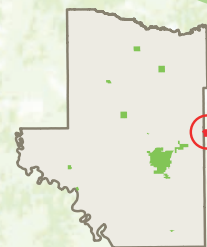
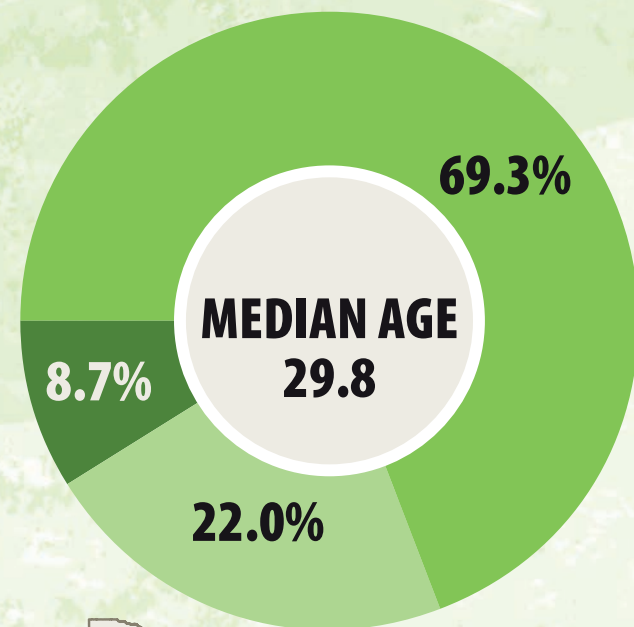
2010 Census	518
2017 Estimate	460
2010–2017 Change	-11.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	53.3%
Male	46.7%
White Non-Hispanic	64.8%
African American	29.4%
Hispanic	0.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



- Under 18.....8.7%
- 18–64.....69.3%
- 65+.....22.0%
- Emmet





# City of Fulton, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	\$57,000
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	9.8
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.0
Occupied Housing Units	61.1%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	16.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$23,125
Individuals Below Poverty Level	10.3%
Families Below Poverty Level	6.9%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	18.2%
Unemployment Rate	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	26.1
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	80.0%
Carpooled	14.3%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Other Means	0.0%
Worked at Home	5.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	72.0%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	3.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

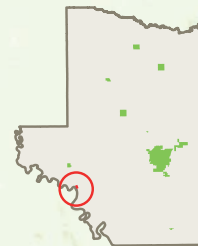
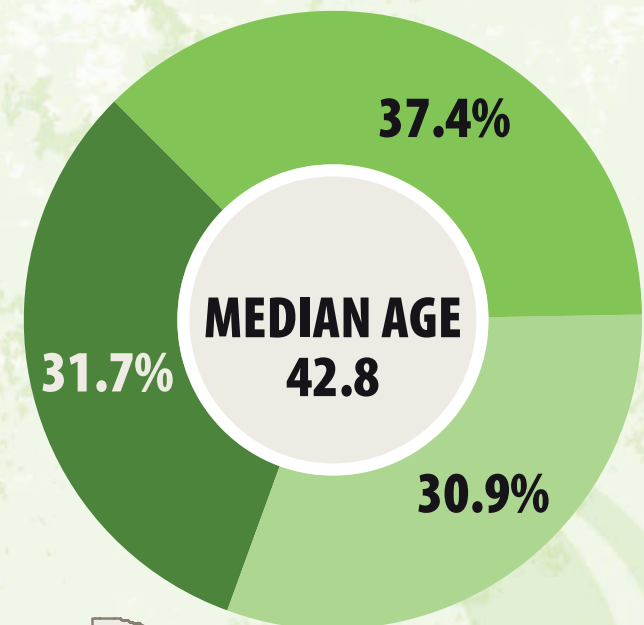
2010 Census	201
2017 Estimate	195
2010–2017 Change	-3.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	54.0%
Male	46.0%
White Non-Hispanic	42.4%
African American	51.1%
Hispanic	5.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



- Under 18..... 31.7%
- 18–64..... 37.4%
- 65+..... 30.9%
- Fulton**





# City of Hope, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	\$76,400
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	1.1
Rental Vacancy Rate	20.2
Occupied Housing Units	74.9%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	13.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$32,609
Individuals Below Poverty Level	28.9%
Families Below Poverty Level	22.9%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	17.8%
Unemployment Rate	8.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	15.4
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	78.7%
Carpooled	16.7%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.4%
Walked	0.9%
Other Means	1.8%
Worked at Home	1.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	69.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	9.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## POPULATION

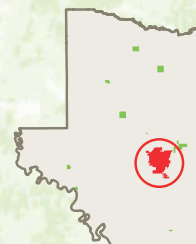
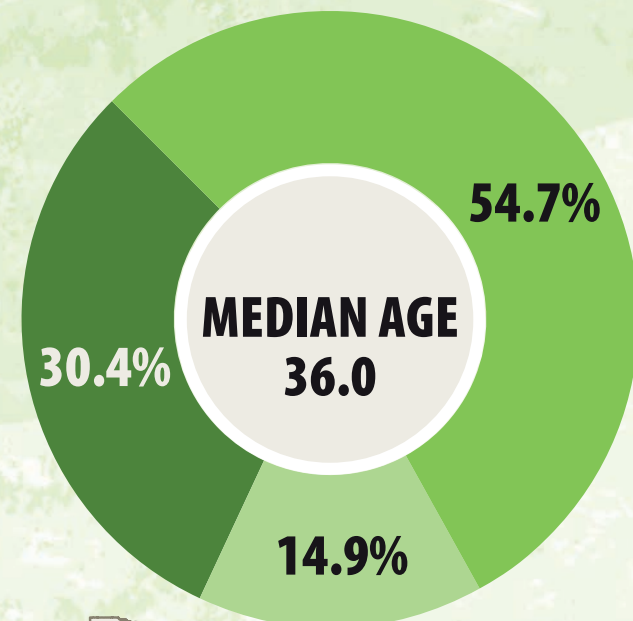
2010 Census	10,095
2017 Estimate	9,790
2010–2017 Change	-3.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	57.5%
Male	42.5%
White Non-Hispanic	34.9%
African American	42.8%
Hispanic	20.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



- Under 18..... 30.4%
- 18–64..... 54.7%
- 65+..... 14.9%
- Hope





# City of McCaskill, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	NA
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.0
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.0
Occupied Housing Units	56.3%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	5.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$28,750
Individuals Below Poverty Level	52.5%
Families Below Poverty Level	42.9%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	16.7%
Unemployment Rate	45.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	25.5
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	68.2%
Carpooled	9.1%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Other Means	22.7%
Worked at Home	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	72.7%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

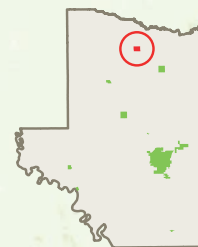
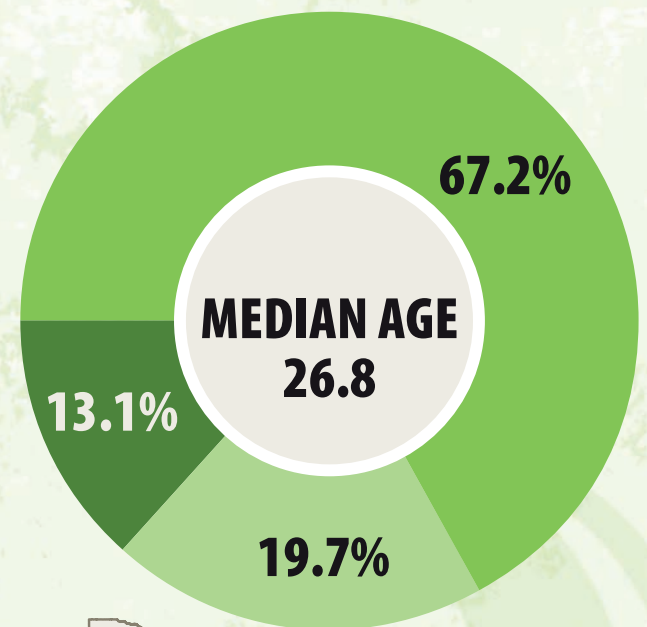
2010 Census	96
2017 Estimate	92
2010–2017 Change	-4.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	32.8%
Male	67.2%
White Non-Hispanic	31.1%
African American	3.3%
Hispanic	62.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



- Under 18..... 13.1%
- 18–64..... 67.2%
- 65+..... 19.7%
- McCaskill



# City of McNab, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	NA
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.0
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.0
Occupied Housing Units	66.7%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	7.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$43,750
Individuals Below Poverty Level	9.8%
Families Below Poverty Level	8.3%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	7.7%
Unemployment Rate	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	32.0
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	92.0%
Carpooled	8.0%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Other Means	0.0%
Worked at Home	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	96.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

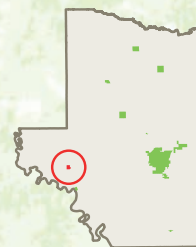
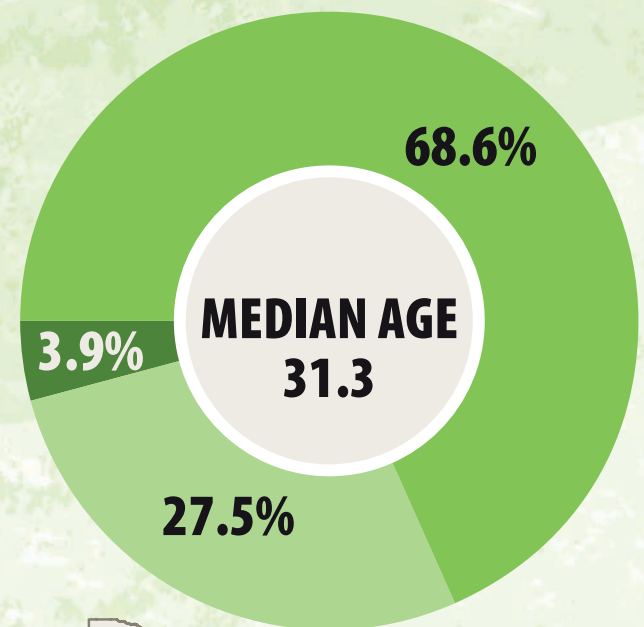
2010 Census	68
2017 Estimate	65
2010–2017 Change	-4.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	54.9%
Male	45.1%
White Non-Hispanic	31.4%
African American	68.6%
Hispanic	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



- Under 18.....3.9%
- 18–64.....68.6%
- 65+.....27.5%
- McNab





# City of Oakhaven, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	\$87,100
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.0
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.0
Occupied Housing Units	100.0%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$57,500
Individuals Below Poverty Level	0.0%
Families Below Poverty Level	0.0%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	0.0%
Unemployment Rate	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	23.9
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	69.6%
Carpooled	30.4%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Other Means	0.0%
Worked at Home	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	96.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	32.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

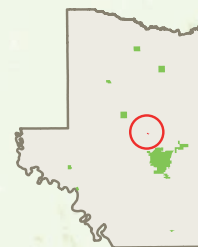
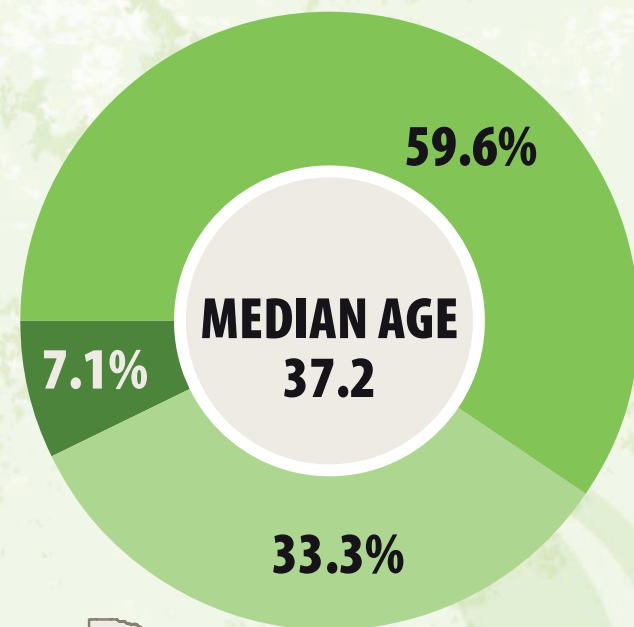
2010 Census	63
2017 Estimate	60
2010–2017 Change	-4.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	64.3%
Male	35.7%
White Non-Hispanic	81.0%
African American	2.4%
Hispanic	14.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



- Under 18.....7.1%
- 18–64.....59.6%
- 65+.....33.3%
- Oakhaven



# City of Ozan, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	\$46,300
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.0
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.0
Occupied Housing Units	78.9%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$35,417
Individuals Below Poverty Level	6.6%
Families Below Poverty Level	0.0%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	4.4%
Unemployment Rate	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	38.0
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	96.6%
Carpooled	0.0%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Other Means	0.0%
Worked at Home	3.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	95.8%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	7.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

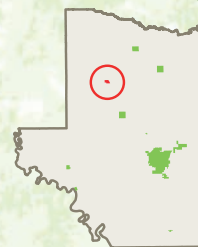
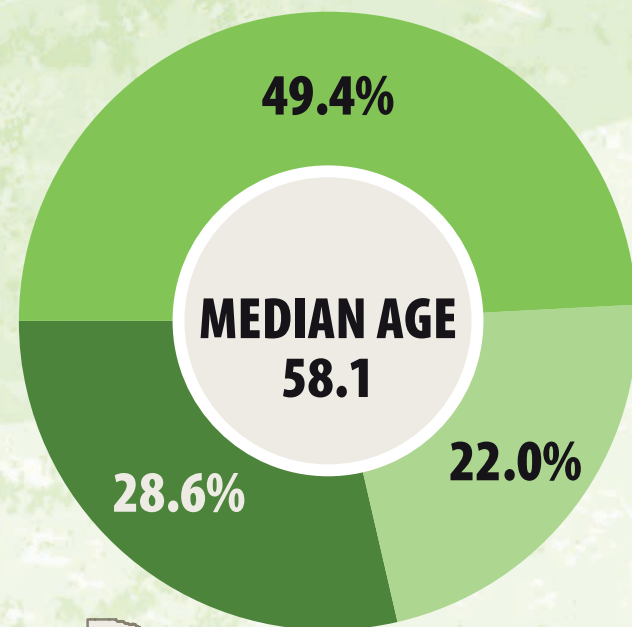
2010 Census	85
2017 Estimate	81
2010–2017 Change	-4.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	58.2%
Male	41.8%
White Non-Hispanic	49.5%
African American	50.5%
Hispanic	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



- Under 18..... 28.6%
- 18–64..... 49.4%
- 65+..... 22.0%
- Ozan





# City of Patmos, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	\$68,300
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.0
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.0
Occupied Housing Units	78.6%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$46,875
Individuals Below Poverty Level	26.1%
Families Below Poverty Level	16.0%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	0.0%
Unemployment Rate	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	28.3
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	100.0%
Carpooled	0.0%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Other Means	0.0%
Worked at Home	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	93.2%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	16.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

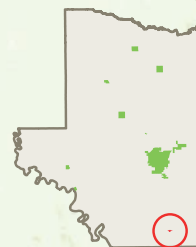
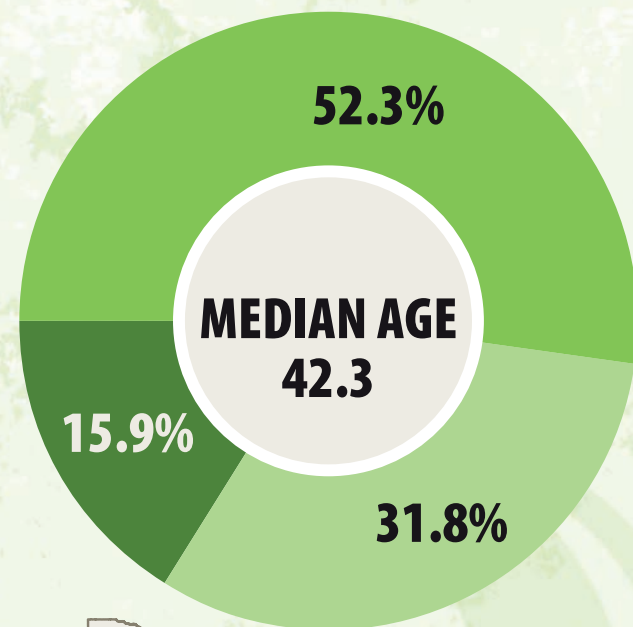
2010 Census	64
2017 Estimate	63
2010–2017 Change	-1.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	48.9%
Male	51.1%
White Non-Hispanic	76.1%
African American	0.0%
Hispanic	6.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



- Under 18..... 15.9%
- 18–64..... 52.3%
- 65+..... 31.8%
- Patmos



# City of Perrytown, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	\$92,500
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.0
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.0
Occupied Housing Units	92.7%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	4.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$31,750
Individuals Below Poverty Level	21.8%
Families Below Poverty Level	22.2%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	14.9%
Unemployment Rate	12.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	14.9
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	87.8%
Carpooled	8.7%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Taxicab, motorcycle, or Other Means	1.7%
Worked at Home	1.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	78.0%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	8.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

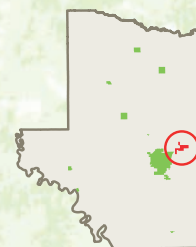
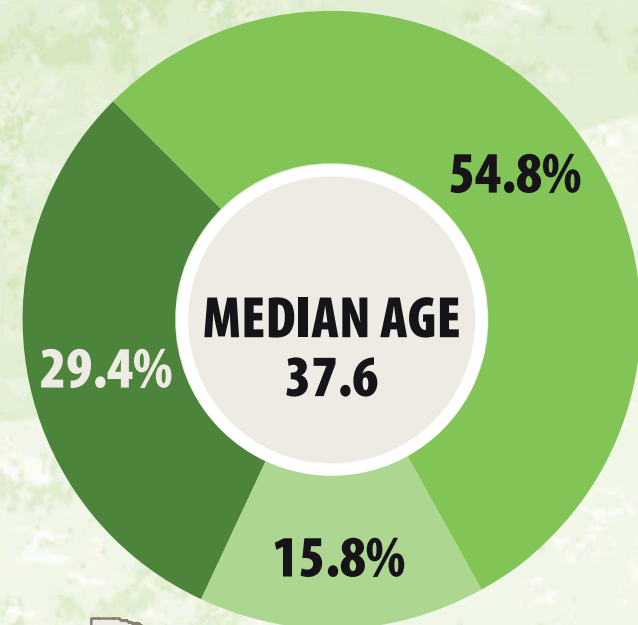
2010 Census	272
2017 Estimate	252
2010–2017 Change	-7.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	57.8%
Male	42.2%
White Non-Hispanic	64.7%
African American	26.4%
Hispanic	5.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



- Under 18..... 29.4%
- 18–64..... 54.8%
- 65+..... 15.8%
- Perrytown





# City of Washington, AR

## HOUSING

Median Value	\$67,500
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	0.0
Rental Vacancy Rate	0.0
Occupied Housing Units	68.9%
Occupied Housing Units with No Vehicle Available	3.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## ECONOMY

Median Household Income	\$36,563
Individuals Below Poverty Level	41.7%
Families Below Poverty Level	31.7%
Per Capita Personal Income	NA
Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP	24.2%
Unemployment Rate	5.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

Per Capita Personal Income Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, released November 16, 2018

## TRANSPORTATION

Average Commute Time (Minutes)	22.5
Means of Transportation to Work	
Drove Alone	96.9%
Carpooled	0.0%
Public Transportation (Excluding Taxicab)	0.0%
Walked	0.0%
Other Means	1.6%
Worked at Home	1.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## EDUCATION

High School Graduate or Higher	86.9%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	13.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates

## POPULATION

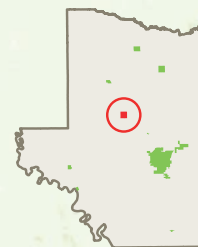
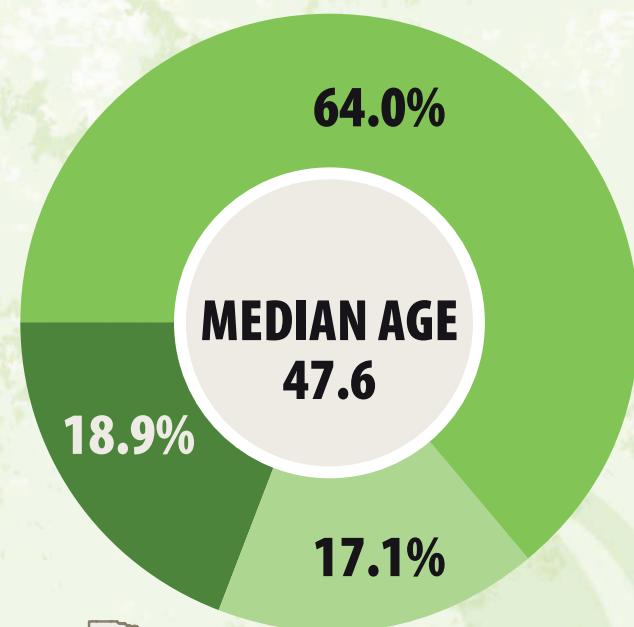
2010 Census	180
2017 Estimate	170
2010–2017 Change	-5.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Vintage 2017 Population Estimates

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Female	51.4%
Male	48.6%
White Non-Hispanic	40.6%
African American	58.3%
Hispanic	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013–2017 American Community Survey 5–Year Estimates



- Under 18..... 18.9%
- 18–64..... 64.0%
- 65+..... 17.1%
- 📍 Washington





Thrive Hempstead Co.

## YOUTH FORUMS





## Introduction

Young people are often an overlooked demographic when seeking input from communities in strategic planning. Actually, their input is critical to the success of any plan designed to grow and sustain a vibrant and thriving community. To insure their voices were heard, two youth forums were facilitated in the Spring Hill School District and the Hope School District. Approximately 50 students were involved in the Spring Hill Schools forum, and 85 gave input in the Hope Schools forum.

The students in attendance focused on the community, economic and quality of life

issues most relevant to their experience and plans for the future. Most students were interested in the process, eager to share their point of view; and wanted to become involved and take greater ownership of their community.

Participants agreed on the need for cleaner streets, better maintained buildings, more parks and open spaces for sports and other outdoor activities. Several felt that more funding and a stronger focus on career education would improve their schools. The most strongly voiced concern was the general lack of entertainment options for young people.

### **Recommendation**

One solid recommendation that emerged from the two forums was to create a City Youth Council that would attend City Council meetings and give students an opportunity to provide input and experience the realities of running a city first hand. This approach will provide an ongoing and systematic way to insure that young people in Hempstead County have a permanent voice at the table.







## Issues That Concern Young People

- Few jobs and social opportunities
- Limited entertainment options
- Unattractive downtown area
- Trash visible on roads and streets
- Unsightly abandoned buildings
- A need for more school funding
- Too much emphasis on online instruction and not enough direct instruction
- Not enough focus on career education in schools
- Too few opportunities for ASVAB testing
- Lack of non-sports activities in the schools
- Need for better maintained buildings on campuses
- Not enough smoke-free, alcohol free environments
- Lack of accessible information/classes on how to start a business
- Too few engaged teachers and challenging classes
- No places to safely ride bikes without fear of being hit by vehicles

## Suggested Improvements

- More educational opportunities
- Systematize computer science requirements
- Revitalization of abandoned downtown properties
- Bowling alley
- Movie theater
- Increase opportunities for family oriented activities
- More restaurant choices
- Laser tag and paint ball
- More affordable housing (rental)
- Bowling
- Water park
- Trampoline Park
- Boys and Girls Club
- Sporting goods store (emphasis on clothing)
- More spaces for music and art (studio space)
- More retail options and places to shop
- More organized sports
- More city parks or safe outdoor places to hang out
- Re-purposing of vacant properties into some sort of youth focused activity centers







Thrive Hempstead Co.

## RECOMMENDATIONS





## THRIVE HEMPSTEAD CO. TASK FORCE

# Tourism

Task Force Chair: Sharon Caldwell  
AEDI Facilitator: Mike Collins

*The members of the Tourism Task Force, many directly involved in the tourism or hospitality industry, agreed on the goal of increasing Hempstead County's tax base through tourism. Next was defining the county's greatest tourism need.*

Although the community offered many excellent things to see and do, the Task Force determined that poorly designed or non-existent signage on I-30 and in town discouraged many tourists from enjoying the community's many attractions. From that initial effort came

the idea for a tourism website and various types of location maps and guides made available through kiosks, hotels, restaurants, and private clubs.

Finally, the Task Force, concerned with increasing the tax base, researched the question of converting from dry

to wet and concluded that the benefits outweigh the risks. In the end, the Tourism Task Force decided on improved signage, creating a website and locally available map guides, and transitioning Hempstead County from a dry to a prosperous and inviting wet county.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The 101-acre Washington Historic State Park opened in 1973 and offers walking tours of more than a dozen historic structures.



The Hempstead County Courthouse in Washington, built in 1836, is the first building in Arkansas to be restored using state funds.



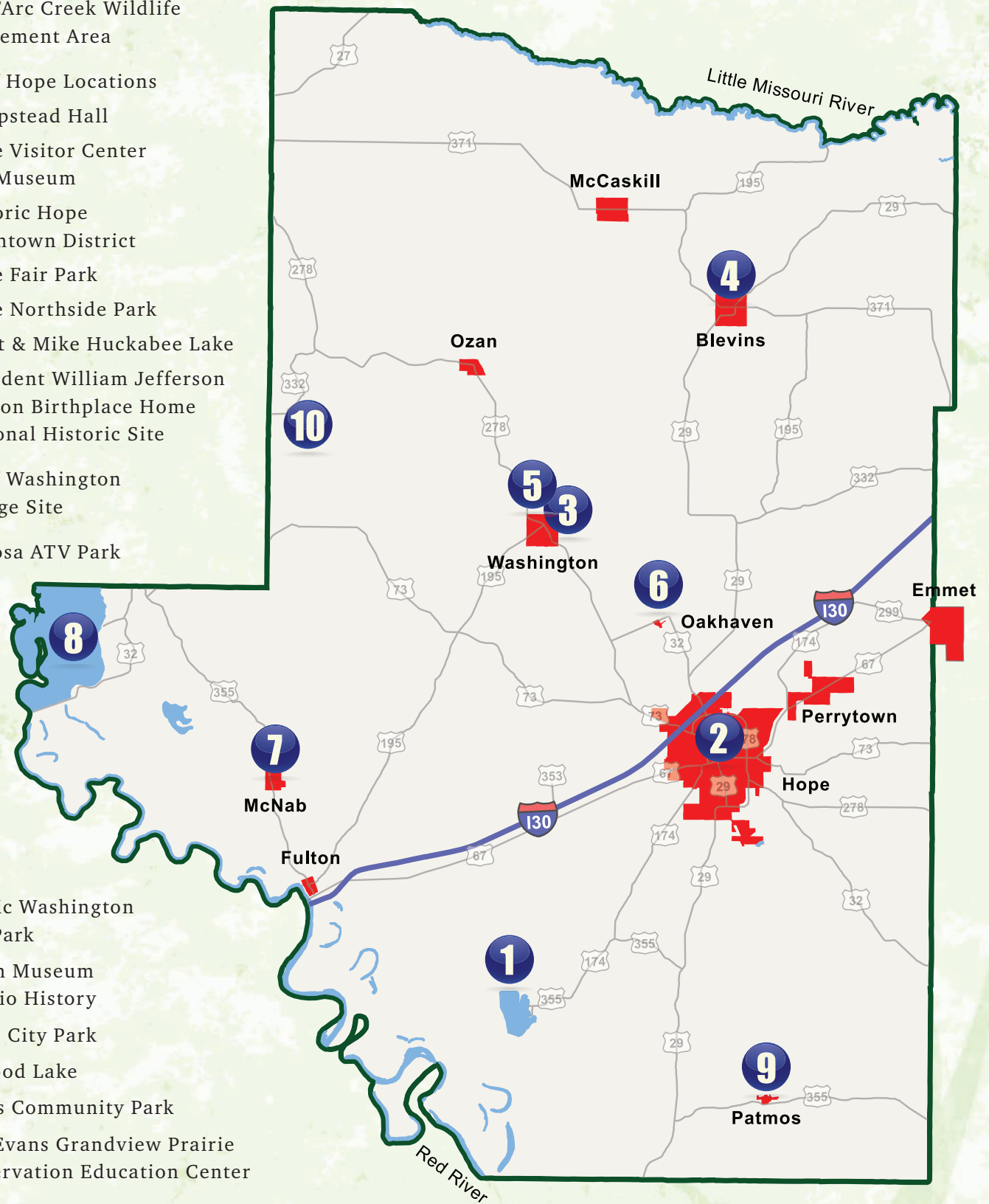


## TOURISM

# Places of Interest

1. Bois D'Arc Creek Wildlife Management Area
2. City of Hope Locations
  - Hempstead Hall
  - Hope Visitor Center and Museum
  - Historic Hope Downtown District
  - Hope Fair Park
  - Hope Northside Park
  - Janet & Mike Huckabee Lake
  - President William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace Home National Historic Site
3. City of Washington Heritage Site
4. Hillarosa ATV Park

5. Historic Washington State Park
6. Klipsch Museum of Audio History
7. McNab City Park
8. Millwood Lake
9. Patmos Community Park
10. Rick Evans Grandview Prairie Conservation Education Center





## TOURISM

# Increase Awareness

### **Goal**

Raise awareness of tourism in Hempstead County.

### **Strategy**

Collect data, create a logo contest and develop marketing materials.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Increase local tax revenue.

### **Action Steps**

- Develop list of Hempstead County attractions.
- Involve area school students in development of tourism logo.
- Develop digital list of attractions for dissemination to businesses.
- Hold slogan contests.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Thrive Hempstead Co. and Hope tourism committees
- Community volunteers
- Students

### **Resources Needed**

- Grants related to tourism promotion
- Participation (legwork) by all the involved parties

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Research and development of attractions – February 2020
- Determine Hempstead County tourism logo – April 2020
- Produce final list of locations and events to promote – May 2020

## TOURISM

# Visitors Guide

### **Goal**

Develop visitor guide.

### **Strategy**

Research other location guides and solicit local input.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Expand public awareness of tourism options and promote tourism in Hempstead County.

### **Action Steps**

- Collect variety of location guides and maps.
- Determine categories and subjects to include.
- Work with graphic artists and print designers on contract terms.
- Obtain examples of previous work and delivery dates.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Thrive Tourism Committee
- Tourism and festival committee members
- Chamber members and local business owners

### **Resources Needed**

- City and county funds
- Grant monies for related projects

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Research style of guides and maps – April 2020
- Confirm design and funding sources – June 2020
- Print and distribute guides – fall of 2020





## TOURISM

# Making Hempstead County Wet

### Goal

Turn Hempstead County from dry to wet.

### Strategy

Create a successful community based effort to make Hempstead County wet.

### Benefit to the Community

Improve tax revenue, increase public safety, and expand tourism.

### Action Steps

- Work with county officials on petition and legal requirements.
- Use fact based research to gain public approval.
- Use logo and list of attractions to promote benefits to residents.
- Get on the ballot, get out the vote, and win.

### Responsible Parties

- Hempstead County Quorum Court
- City attorney
- Hempstead wet committee

### Resources Needed

- Money for workers and promotion
- Canvassers for gathering signatures
- Campaign director of operations
- Get out the vote plan

### Estimated Completion Date(s)

- Form wet committee – pre-election 2021
- Determine process and confirm budget – February 2021
- Gather signatures and begin promotion – based on state statutory requirements 2022
- Pass – November 2022







## THRIVE HEMPSTEAD CO. TASK FORCE

# Public Priorities

Task Force Chair: JR Wilson

AEDI Facilitators: Jim Youngquist and April Campbell

*The members of Public Priorities Task Force reflected a mix of public and private individuals from throughout Hempstead County. The Task Force began its deliberations in the spring of 2019 by reviewing the public survey results that identified possible public infrastructure/programmatic needs. To these identified needs were added concerns Task Force members believed should be addressed to enhance the health, vitality, and competitiveness of Hempstead County.*

To address these needs the Task Force devoted three work sessions to extensive research and discussion on community activity centers, housing, and water and wastewater treatment options. Also examined were building code enforcement, downtown Hope revitalization and development and the creation of a local/regional juvenile behavioral center. Members heard expert presentations on water and wastewater, housing, and community economic development and revitalization.

After carefully sifting through the data and the presentations, the Task Force developed a series of recommendations to meet some of the most serious development, social and infrastructural challenges facing the county.





## PUBLIC PRIORITIES

# Activity Center

### **Goal**

Establish a Hempstead County activity center.

### **Strategy**

Obtain public input, study similar community spaces, select a location(s), and secure funding.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Promotes community pride, public interaction, stronger ties between businesses and the community and a sense of harmony among ALL residents.

### **Action Steps**

- Create a planning process for the center that includes all communities and social and ethnic groups through the use of survey(s), public meetings and other methods.
- Involve multiple public entities in the planning including schools, churches, governing bodies, utilities, the private business community, etc.
- Enlist elected officials (city, county, regional) to assist with funding and overseeing the creation and upkeep of the center.
- Solicit public and private social organizations to assist with promoting attendance at public input meetings.
- Use marketing services to encourage public input in planning and promoting the center.
- Research and study similar community activity facilities (e.g. Fordyce, Lonokey, White Hall, Batesville, and others).
- Identify potential facility sites using existing structures wherever possible.
- Identify and pursue funding grants to support building, promoting, and maintaining the center.
- Determine the feasibility of establishing a tax or fee structure to fund the center.
- Determine the feasibility of providing transportation to the center for young people and the elderly.
- Tailor the services of existing facilities to meet community needs.

### **Responsible Parties**

- The citizens of Hempstead County
- Elected officials (city, county, regional)
- Public & private social organizations.

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Funding grants
- Local taxes/fees
- Marketing services
- Transportation services

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Research and public input – through fall 2020
- Secure funding – through fall of 2020
- Site selection – end of 2020
- Begin building – January 2021
- Open to the public – summer 2021





## PUBLIC PRIORITIES

# Code Enforcement

### **Goal**

Create a code enforcement program for Hempstead County.

### **Strategy**

Adopt and promote code enforcement regulations that ensure enhanced property standards for all of municipalities and unincorporated areas in Hempstead County.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Increases general property values and makes the county more attractive for economic development.

### **Action Steps**

- Review model countywide code enforcement programs used in Oklahoma and Washington and begin developing a program for Hempstead County that will benefit its municipalities and unincorporated areas.
- Develop, prioritize and enforce standards that will guide but not impede positive development.
- Identify and establish methods of enforcement.
- Develop an education program that stresses the benefits of countywide code enforcement and convinces residents that responsible code enforcement is not detrimental or unreasonable and burdensome.
- Provide on-going training for city and county staff responsible for code enforcement.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Hempstead County Judge
- Hempstead County Quorum Court
- Town and city mayors
- City councils plus professional code enforcement and city management
- Local government administrators

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Enforceable standards for the municipalities and unincorporated areas
- Adequately trained personnel
- Real estate and infrastructure fees

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Development of codes – Early 2020
- Begin education program that explains the positive aspects of code enforcement to the citizens of Hempstead County – Mid 2020
- Begin training personnel – Late 2020
- Begin the Code Enforcement program – Early 2021





## PUBLIC PRIORITIES

# Countywide Water Provision

### **Goal**

Assess the provision of water throughout Hempstead County.

### **Strategy**

Prepare an assessment report that determines the current state of water infrastructure, identifies areas of the infrastructure that need to be replaced and determines the feasibility of providing water in areas of the county without service.

### **Benefit to the Community**

An up-to-date safe, reliable, water system with modern lines and meters is an asset to residents and a strong economic advantage.

### **Action Steps**

- Secure funding assistance from Water Wastewater Advisory Committee, United States Department of Agriculture, Arkansas Economic Development Commission, and Arkansas National Resources Commission.
- Conduct a composite assessment of existing water systems throughout the county by reaching out to the various water provision entities (city and rural systems).
- Employ Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District and Hope Geographic Information Systems to assist with data collection and mapping.
- Prepare a composite asset map of the systems.
- Identify current gaps of service in Hempstead County and feasibility of supplying those areas with water.
- Identify current infrastructure that needs replacement.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Rural water associations
- Hope Water and Light
- Engineers that assist the associations and Hope Water and Light
- City of Hope Geographic Information Systems
- Engineer Glen Spears
- Water provision entities
- Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District and Hope Geographic Information Systems

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Federal and state funding sources
- Local government and water provider assessments
- Water Wastewater Advisory Committee
- United States Department of Agriculture
- Arkansas Economic Development Commission
- Arkansas National Resources Commission

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Begin assessment of current and needed water system inventory – January 2020
- Assessment completed – January 2021
- Begin implementation of systems update and expansion – Spring 2021





## PUBLIC PRIORITIES

# Water Treatment and Sewer Facilities

### Goal

Improve water treatment and sewer facilities.

### Strategy

Work with the community and local and state entities to ensure that Hempstead County has clean water and proper working sewer treatment systems and the capacity to expand those systems to accommodate business and industry.

### Benefit to the Community

Up-to-date water treatment and sewer facilities ensure good health, improve the value and functionality of property, and help attract and retain business and industry.

### Action Steps

- Develop strategies to reduce septic tank infrastructure throughout the county and replace, where feasible, with water treatment and sewer facilities.
- Meet with Arkansas Department of Health to understand the requirements and regulations for addressing concerns with septic systems.
- Meet with the appropriate legislative representatives to garner support for improving and expanding water treatment and sewer facilities.
- Hold community meetings in smaller rural communities to discuss possible transition to improved water treatment processes & facilities.
- Pursue grants and low-interest loans that assist with funding the expansion and enhancement of water treatment and sewer facilities.

### Responsible Parties

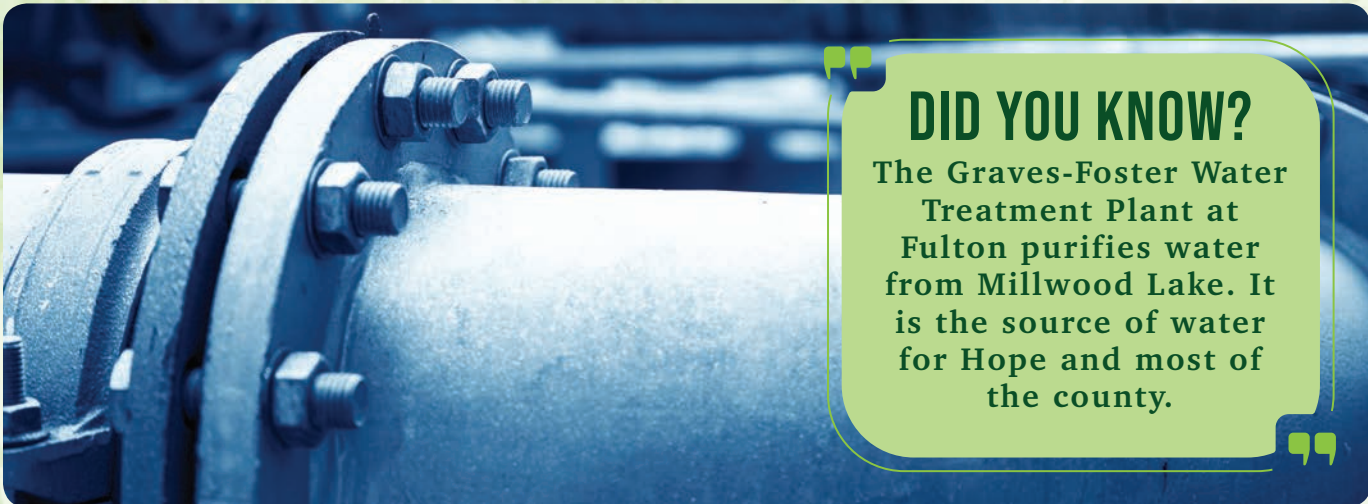
- Hempstead County Judge
- Legislative representatives
- Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District
- Department of Health officials

### Resources Needed (Financial & Other)

- Grants and low-interest loans
- Rural community cooperation and support
- County and state government support

### Estimated Completion Date(s)

- A time schedule will depend on identification of insufficient septic systems, and the feasibility of developing water treatment and sewer facilities in the unincorporated areas
- The assessment process should begin in 2020



### DID YOU KNOW?

The Graves-Foster Water Treatment Plant at Fulton purifies water from Millwood Lake. It is the source of water for Hope and most of the county.





## PUBLIC PRIORITIES

# Community Revitalization

### **Goal**

Increase the availability of single and multi-family housing.

### **Strategy**

Develop a housing plan that encourages a wide range of single and multifamily housing options that appeal to multiple income levels.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Affordable and available housing helps eliminate blight and makes the community more attractive to current and potential residents.

### **Action Steps**

- Conduct an inventory of Hempstead County's current housing properties.
- Conduct a study to determine the various housing needs for the county related to job creation, relocation, and college students.
- Identify various housing programs and private investors focused on providing housing.
- Sponsor forums to educate citizens about the advantages of owning and renting housing.
- Draft a comprehensive housing plan for Hempstead County.

### **Responsible Parties**

- United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development
- United States Housing and Urban Development
- Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration
- Local banks and lenders

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Funding for study, inventory, and forums
- Volunteers and organizations to hold and sponsor public forums
- Local real estate development companies

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Inventory and study effort begins June 30, 2020
- The community forums and education efforts on housing in Hempstead Council immediately follow the release of the inventory and study
- A comprehensive housing plan for Hempstead County, based on the study and forums, is completed by January 2021





## PUBLIC PRIORITIES

# Juvenile Behavioral Center

### **Goal**

Establish a juvenile behavioral center.

### **Strategy**

Identify and secure supplemental funding and partnerships to open a local juvenile behavioral center in Hempstead County that services Southwest Arkansas.

### **Benefit to the Community**

An easily accessible center in Hempstead County at half the cost of funds currently expended to house local juveniles in Batesville.

### **Action Steps**

- Develop a partnership and commitments from surrounding counties through an inter-local government agreement to open a center to serve juvenile behavioral needs in Hempstead and the surrounding southwest Arkansas region.
- Form a planning committee that includes the Hempstead County Sheriff, Hempstead County Judge, and surrounding county sheriffs.
- Create a plan and budget for opening a Juvenile Behavioral Center in Hempstead County.
- Secure financial aid and agreements from appropriate local and state sources.
- Determine the feasibility of establishing a sunset tax to get the center up and running.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Hempstead County Sheriff
- Hempstead County Judge
- Surrounding county sheriffs and judges

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Financial assistance and agreements from local officials, the Governor's office and region's legislative delegation
- Sunset tax
- Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Estimated completion dates will depend on the appropriate local and state officials working out agreements necessary to develop and open the facility





## PUBLIC PRIORITIES

# Downtown Revitalization

### **Goal**

Revitalize downtown Hope.

### **Strategy**

Develop an innovative mixed-use downtown revitalization plan for Hope.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Viable and vibrant downtowns beautify the city, increase the tax base, attract tourism, and retain the existing population.

### **Action Steps**

- Conduct a retail study/market research analysis for Hope with a focus on the downtown area.
- Develop a community design plan with the Chamber of Commerce and Hope Downtown Network that identifies the best options for redeveloping downtown Hope.
- Enhance and expand the “shop local” campaign.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Chamber of Commerce
- Hope Downtown Network

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Arkansas Main Street funds
- State and federal community and economic development funds
- Private funding sources

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Revitalization and community design development planning – 2020
- Analysis of funding options and start of development activities – 2021



### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Hope Historic Commercial District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1995. Built between 1880 and 1945, the area consists for the most part of commercial brick buildings.





## THRIVE HEMPSTEAD CO. TASK FORCE

# Economic Development

Task Force Chair: Glen Woodruff  
AEDI Facilitator: Mike Gerfen

*The hardworking and committed members on the Economic Development Task Force of the Thrive Hempstead County Initiative represented an excellent cross section of individuals and groups concerned with economic progress. After educating themselves on the fundamentals of economic development, members agreed that any measures recommended should include:*

- Organizational development that creates a recognized and legitimate forum for exchanging ideas and addressing the needs of the community.
- Product development that includes investments that are maintained, upgraded, or developed by labor and capital.
- Market development that focuses activities on recruiting individuals to enhance the economy and enlarge market areas for products and services.
- Business development that focuses on programs that nurture business growth and investment.
- Workforce development policies and programs that build local workforce skills.

***In addition the group decided that each recommendation must:***

- Offer an activity or service in need of significant improvement or not currently provided.
- Address an issue significant to the economic viability of Hempstead County.
- Be achievable with available resources.
- Be sustainable and work within the existing legal and political framework.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Hempstead County gained 92 jobs since 2014 and is expected to generate an additional 400 jobs over the next five years.

HELP  
WANTED





## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Business Incubator/Development Center

### **Goal**

Establish a business incubator/business development center in Southwest Arkansas.

### **Strategy**

Develop a business plan to create and fund an institution that can offer:

- Business basics
- Marketing and research assistance
- High speed internet access
- Accounting & management for businesses
- Networking
- Bank loans, grants, guarantees (Small Business Administration)

### **Benefit to the Community**

An enhanced link between the University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana, Main Street program, and local businesses in Southwest Arkansas.

### **Action Steps**

- Plan and write a business plan for the incubator.
- Determine responsible partners (Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce has committed to manage facility).
- Seek funding and location for incubator.
- Establish Development Center and open for business.

### **Responsible Parties**

- University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana
- Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce
- Southwest Arkansas Arts Council
- Hope-Hempstead County Economic Development Corporation
- Hope City Council
- Hempstead County Quorum Court
- Community leaders and stakeholders

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Participating businesses
- Expertise from other incubators
- Business partners
- Financial support from the city, local business and industry
- Applicable grants
- Housing (building has been sourced)
- Facility management (provided by Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce)
- Executive director

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Preliminary planning/research – December 31, 2019
- Locating partners/businesses for Incubator – May 31, 2020
- Incubator up and running – January 1, 2021





## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Employability Training

### Goal

Develop employability (soft) skills in Hempstead County.

### Strategy

Establish a training program that provides employability skills for new and existing employees.

### Benefit to the Community

Stabilize and increase local employment and improve investment from local businesses.

### Action Steps

- Establish a board of directors to oversee the development and implementation of the program.
- Source an interactive curriculum that instills an understanding of the common expectations employers have for their employees and awards certificates to participants who complete the training requirements.
- Develop a “train the trainer” program to train those who will be presenting curriculum.
- Design and execute a short-term curriculum trial with a sample audience representative of the demographics of the Hempstead County labor force.
- Identify venues where training can be held.
- Solicit support and participation from local business and industry.
- Apply for grants to financially support the program.

### Responsible Parties


- Board of directors
- Workforce training committee
- Career and technical training functions in local school districts
- University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana
- State workforce centers
- Participating employers
- Faith-based organizations (i.e. youth pastors)

### Resources Needed (Financial & Other)

- Curriculum (numerous open-sourced products are available and can be modified to meet the needs of the county)
- Training staff
- Training locations
- Grant funds to pay trainers

### Estimated Completion Date(s)

- Select a curriculum – December 31, 2019.
- Identify sources for training staff across the county – June 30, 2020
- Develop a train-the-trainer program – June 30, 2020
- Conduct teacher training classes across the county – December 31, 2020
- Begin presenting classes – January 1, 2021



**DID YOU KNOW?**

The University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana provides two years of undergraduate as well as baccalaureate and master's degrees through off-campus programs.





## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Retail Development

### **Goal**

Maintain and increase retail revenue in Hempstead County.

### **Strategy**

Support current retailers, reduce overall retail leakage and attract new retailers by developing customer service training for retail businesses and expanding “shop local” programs.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Keeping and increasing retail dollars will increase sales tax revenue, secure current jobs, and improve the retail climate.

### **Action Steps**

- Survey existing businesses in Hempstead County about strengths and weaknesses in their retail environment.
- Compile data and analyze.
- Share results of survey and analysis with retailers.
- Develop plan to support strengths and overcome weaknesses.
- Develop or source a customer service training curriculum that addresses the strengths and weaknesses identified in the plan.
- Solicit volunteers to present curriculum.
- Collect ZIP code data from retailers and create a trade area graphic depicting where local shoppers come from.
- Present graphic trade area to retailers and provide conclusions and potential action steps.
- Continue and improve “shop local” programs.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce
- Retail association
- Economic development task force

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Local retail association
- Funds to support development of trade area mapping, customer service curriculum, and project branding and marketing

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Collect and analyze survey data – November 15, 2019
- Share survey results with retailers – January 15, 2020
- Develop plan to support strengths and overcome weaknesses – March 2020
- Select customer service curriculum – April 2020
- Identify and train volunteer instructors to present curriculum – April 2020
- Collect and analyze ZIP code data from retailers – June 2020
- Present graphic trade area to retailers and provide conclusions and potential action steps – June 2020





## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

# Economic Development Website

### Goal

Present Hope and Hempstead County as a business-friendly environment.

### Strategy

Build an economic development website that makes easily accessible all the data commonly requested by site selection consultants.

### Benefit to the Community

Increase job opportunities, attract businesses, and improve the existing tax base.

### Action Steps

- Create a committee to oversee the creation and funding of a website.
- Identify important content elements for the website.
- Secure offers from three webpage design companies.
- Meet with the Hope-Hempstead County Economic Development Corporation President to determine staff capabilities.
- Develop a presentation for the Economic Development Board.

### Responsible Parties

- Website committee
- Hope-Hempstead County Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors

### Resources Needed (Financial & Other)

- \$30,000 from the Hope-Hempstead County Economic Development Corporation for development and hosting

### Estimated Completion Date(s)

- Content elements for the website – March 2020
- Secure offers from three website development companies – December 2019
- Select website design firm – January 2020
- Determine who will maintain and update website – January 2020
- Develop presentation for Economic Development Board – March 2020
- Website goes live – June 2020

## DID YOU KNOW?

Manufacturing provides the largest number of jobs and job growth rate in Hempstead County. Government is the second largest employer in the county.







## THRIVE HEMPSTEAD CO. TASK FORCE

# Quality of Life

Task Force Chair: Lindsey Townsend and Dolly Henley  
AEDI Facilitator: Randy Wright

*One of the key components in economic development is insuring a community has a high standard of quality of life. Quality of life consists of the expectations citizens, businesses, visitors and tourists associate with a good life or a sense of well-being.*

Providing a high quality of life or well-being for individuals and societies often require that communities possess sufficient **social offerings** (“things to do” and opportunities for social interaction) **openness** (welcoming community) and **aesthetics** (physical beauty and green spaces). Education, entertainment, environment,

health, diversity and employment are also factors.

With these elements as a foundation, the Quality of Life Task Force confronted issues that would increase the social activities of the county, provide for access to arts, entertainment and cultural activities, and increase the safety of the community.

The members of the Quality of Life Task Force made a commitment that each goal should reflect these central components to insure that every recommendation makes Hempstead County and Hope, Arkansas more desirable places to live and promotes economic and social prosperity.

### DID YOU KNOW?

County events include the Historic Washington Jonquil Festival held in March, the Twin Rivers Festival at McNab in April, the Hope Watermelon Festival in August, Frontier Days at Washington in August, the Civil War Weekend at Washington in October, and Christmas in Candlelight at Washington.





## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Downtown Art District

### **Goal**

Establish a defined Downtown Arts District (Hope Arts).

### **Strategy**

Select and market a retail venue in the Hope business district that showcases local art.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Provide an outlet for art appreciation and create a new retail market in the city.

### **Action Steps**

- Select and define an appropriate area in downtown town.
- Broadcast establishment of district to attract artists from around the county and region.
- Encourage city to begin projects (e.g. mural paintings, sculptures and other outlets) for displaying local and regional talent and beautifying downtown.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Southwest Arkansas Arts Council
- Downtown network
- Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce
- City of Hope
- Local media

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- City of Hope
- Southwest Arkansas Arts Council
- Local business and industry
- Downtown network
- Grants
- Craftspeople, painters, etc.

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- October 2020

## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Community Theater Group/Club

### **Goal**

Create a successful community theater for Hempstead County.

### **Strategy**

Recruit a volunteer group to create, manage and promote a countywide theater club open to all persons in Hempstead County.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Provides an outlet in Hope for live entertainment and encourages creative residents to practice their talent locally.

### **Action Steps**

- Establish a leadership group to oversee the creation of the theater club and develop a plan to promote and sustain its operation.
- Advertise/market theater club to community.
- Present club to area schools as an opportunity for interested students to gain theater skills and credit.
- Find and secure location for performances.

### **Responsible Parties**

- School officials, students and parents
- Local media

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Hempstead Hall or similar venue
- Community gathering and meeting areas
- Craftspeople, painters, etc. to set up staging area

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- October 2020





## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Historic Bike Trail (Happy Trails)

### **Goal**

Develop a Bike/Walking trail system for Hempstead County.

### **Strategy**

Increase the number of walking and bike trails in Hempstead County, and include a trail(s) that feature(s) historic sites.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Promotes health and wellness, creates a new tourist audience (walkers and bikers) and raises awareness of the history and importance of Hempstead County.

### **Action Steps**

- Establish a Hempstead County trails committee to develop a comprehensive plan that determines the location of the trails and manages the costs associated with the construction and maintenance of the trail system.
- Seek funding through appropriate grants, advertisements, donations and other funding mechanisms.
- Create trail maps outlining historic or important sites in Hempstead County.
- Create signage or other helpful directional methods for walkers and bikers.
- Research bike rental companies (such as Zagster or Joyride), liability insurance and rental costs.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Hempstead County trails committee
- City parks department
- Arkansas Department of Parks, Tourism and Heritage
- State and national parks services.

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Grants and donations
- Land use for trails and signage.
- Central location for trailheads and map displays
- Safety course for bike riders that promotes healthy activity
- Advertising to offset trail maintenance costs

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- October 2020





## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Community Gardens Program

### **Goal**

Establish a Community Gardens Program.

### **Strategy**

Work with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service and the churches and schools in Hempstead County to establish and maintain a Community Gardens Program.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Creates prettier, safer and more welcoming neighborhoods that increase community pride.

### **Action Steps**

- Contact University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service to determine their interest in the project.
- Gather information and research concerning administrative plans, budgets, training and funding options.
- Contact ministerial alliance and school districts.
- Secure the services of Master Gardeners.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Church partners
- University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service
- Master Gardeners
- Youth and community groups
- Schools/teachers/parents
- Mental health facility
- Hope City Council
- Hempstead County Quorum Court

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service
- Farm Bureau
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Schools and parent teacher organizations
- Master Gardener

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- One community garden and one school garden – TBD





## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Multicultural Festival

### **Goal**

Establish an annual Multicultural Festival.

### **Strategy**

Establish a committee to establish, maintain and market an annual festival designed to connect promote unity and openness in a diverse community.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Promotes community pride and public interaction and engagement.

### **Action Steps**

- Create a multicultural leaders committee.
- Select appropriate location.
- Encourage multiple local entities to support and sponsor the festival (i.e. churches, community groups, civic leaders, business community, etc.).
- Organize multicultural entertainment activities, food, and refreshments.
- Market to all community, social and ethnic groups.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Multicultural leaders committee
- Citizens of Hempstead County
- Downtown network
- Southwest Arkansas Arts Council
- Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce
- Hope City Council

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Funding
- Hope Tourism Commission
- Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism
- National Park Service aid

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- June 2020





## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Making Space

### Goal

Create cheap/free workspaces for artists and artisans in Hempstead County.

### Strategy

Transform unused, dilapidated and abandoned buildings into workspaces for multiple purposes including:

- Art studios and retail
- Meetings and classrooms
- Poetry and other readings
- Woodwork
- Video production
- Receptions and exhibits
- Artist colonies

### Benefit to the Community

Repurposes unused and derelict buildings into useful workplaces for artists to make and display their work while promoting economic development and social improvement.

### Action Steps

- Contact city officials about available abandoned buildings as viable locations (e.g. Massanelli Warehouse and old Stephens Warehouse).
- Solicit interest among artists and artisans in Hempstead County and surrounding areas.
- Contact Artspace Projects, Inc. and the city of Paducah, KY. for information and guidance.

### Responsible Parties

- Hope City Council
- Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce
- Southwest Arkansas Arts Council

### Resources Needed (Financial & Other)

- Artist grants, e.g. Pollock-Krasner Foundation grant
- Ford Foundation

### Estimated Completion Date(s)

- October 2020

## DID YOU KNOW?

Renowned artist and Hempstead county native Jenny Eakin Deloney Rice, was one of the first women admitted to the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris and went on to found the art department at the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.



Jenny Eakin Deloney Rice, self-portrait, oil on canvas; circa 1900





## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Community Safety Program

### **Goal**

Increase public safety in Hempstead County.

### **Strategy**

Sponsor programs and presentations that raise awareness of criminal activity in the county.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Safety conscious public and a better neighborhood/living environment.

### **Action Steps**

- Expand D.A.R.E. program throughout Hempstead County.
- Present monthly, quarterly or biannually “scam awareness” seminars for senior citizens.
- Have appropriate law enforcement officials schedule and conduct regular public forums for the community.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Law enforcement officials from Hempstead County and Hope
- State Police assigned to Hempstead County
- Arkansas Health Department (including representatives from mental health)
- Attorney General’s office

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Hempstead Hall and other community gathering and meeting areas
- Materials for presentations and demonstrations

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- D.A.R.E. Program – October 2020
- Senior’s Program – October 2020

## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Splash Pad/Water Park

### **Goal**

Provide a Splash Pad for Hempstead County.

### **Strategy**

Hempstead county is in need of fun parks and a splash pad or similar amusement facility designed around water and could be a natural fit for the community.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Promotes community development and provides needed outdoor activity for young people.

### **Action Steps**

- Research splash pads and similar water-type activities.
- Search for ideal location.
- Talk to other towns in Arkansas that have built splash pads and other recreational water facilities.
- Seek grant funding.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Hope City Council
- Hempstead County Quorum Court
- Parks department and city employees
- Parents and community representatives

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Grants
- Funding for maintenance and other expenses

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- August 2020





## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Public Transportation

### **Goal**

Provide affordable public transportation for Hempstead County.

### **Strategy**

Obtain buses with routes that provide easy access to tourist sites and designated stops for senior citizens, children and low-income families.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Makes inexpensive transportation to shopping, schools, churches, tourist sites and other venues available to residents and visitors.

### **Action Steps**

- Contact city officials about infrastructure, rates, etc.
- Contact Bobby Hart, Hope Public Schools, about donating a bus.
- Research how public transportation is used in similarly sized cities.
- Select public stops that will be of interest to the target riding audience.
- Develop a collaborative effort with Amtrak, the industrial park, Hope Fair Park, University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana, Walmart, downtown Hope, hotels, hospital, and schools.
- Create printed and digital maps.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Hope City Council
- Hempstead County Quorum Court
- Arkansas Transit Association
- Downtown Hope
- University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana
- Hope Fair Park
- Local hospitals
- Local business and retailers
- Amtrak
- Hempstead County school districts

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Transportation grants
- Funding for maintenance, drivers, and other expenses
- Buses – two would be ideal
- Advertisers and promoters

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- October 2020





## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Concerts and Events

### **Goal**

Bring large entertainment events (e.g. concerts) to Hempstead County on a quarterly basis.

### **Strategy**

Make profitable use of Hempstead Hall and other venues by booking larger events that can be anticipated, scheduled, and marketed.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Increased tax base for restaurants, hotels and small businesses in the county.

### **Action Steps**

- Create an oversight committee to plan events and coordinate meetings with those entities involved in entertainment and holding large events in the county.
- Gather information about events and entertainment that have successfully brought large crowds into the county.
- Identify potential entertainment options with large scale appeal.
- Encourage Hope and the county to market large concerts and events along with other art forms like music (all genres), mural painting and sculpture, that encourages people to visit downtown and other locations.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Hempstead County
- City of Hope
- Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce
- University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana
- Southwest Arkansas Arts Council

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Hempstead Hall or similar venue
- Community gathering and meeting areas

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- December 2020





## QUALITY OF LIFE

# One-Stop Communication Website

### **Goal**

Develop a comprehensive web presence that is engaging and informative.

### **Strategy**

Build and maintain a resourceful, engaging and informative one-stop website for Hempstead County.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Attract tourism dollars, increase local activities, eliminate scheduling conflicts, and act as a one-stop information shop for existing and potential visitors and residents.

### **Action Steps**

- Secure funding.
- Assign a site coordinator.
- Make a list of resources to include on the website.
- Select and meet with a web designer.
- Sell the idea to other entities involved in tourism.
- Establish process for submission of items.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Hope City Council
- Hempstead County Quorum Court
- Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce
- Hope-Hempstead County Economic Development Corporation
- Representatives from schools, nonprofits, and organizations and planning committees that host public events for the community

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Funding for website
- Site coordinator
- Website designer

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Website development – TBD
- Go-Live date – TBD





## QUALITY OF LIFE

# Workforce Housing

### Goal

Provide affordable quality single family and rental housing for Hempstead County residents.

### Strategy

Work with public and private entities to develop an approach to housing that increases the quality and amount of housing stock available to new and existing residents.

### Benefit to the Community

Improved housing, safer neighborhoods, and improved opportunities for community and economic development.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The median household income in Hempstead County is \$38,000 compared to \$45,869 for Arkansas and \$59,039 for the U.S.



### Action Steps

- Build a cooperative effort between Hope, Hempstead County and public and private parties involved in housing development to increase the amount and quality of available housing.
- Research the statistical support for “workforce housing”.
- Research ‘best practices’ of communities addressing housing loss as their population ages and retires.
- Evaluate the costs/benefits of various housing tools.
- Enforce current building codes with a focus on maintaining older housing.
- Obtain funding to support community development districts for workforce housing.
- Work with realtors, developers and lenders to view “essential workers” in the county as a desirable customer base.
- Establish an achievable goal premised on a percentage of the area workforce living in the local area by 2022.

### Responsible Parties

- Realtors, developers and lenders in Hope and Hempstead County
- Hope City Council
- Hempstead County Quorum Court
- Employers in the area

### Resources Needed (Financial & Other)

- Funding through grants

### Estimated Completion Date(s)

- December – 2022







## THRIVE HEMPSTEAD CO. TASK FORCE

# Education

Task Force Chair: Robin Townsend

AEDI Facilitator: Grainger Ledbetter

*Tasked with improving education in Hempstead County, the members of the Education Task Force, a representative cross section of parents, teachers and administrators, spent many hours of study and research. Relying primarily on data available from the Arkansas State Department of Education, the Task Force reviewed approaches to parent engagement, student learning, and teacher support from other districts and communities.*

After several meetings the Task Force narrowed its focus to determining the most effective ways to use its limited resources to promote community support for education.

***The most promising areas for developing and encouraging public support that emerged were:***

- Promoting parental involvement and engagement with the schools, public and private, in Hempstead County; and
- Determining what could be done to support teachers and improve the quality of instruction for the students that attend school in Hempstead County.

To develop recommendations that align with these two objectives, the task force established three sub-committees charged with developing and implementing specific goals and action plans.

- Learning for all students
- Support for teachers
- Parental involvement

The subcommittees sifted through an enormous amount of data, examined and discussed best practices from other districts and communities and utilized the collective wisdom of the Education Task Force which included parent activists, teachers, public and private school principals, and two superintendents.

Acknowledging the limitations on the ability of the group to directly affect major educational issues under the control of the state and local entities, members chose six realistic goals that can be achieved with the assistance of school officials and local and county stakeholders.

### DID YOU KNOW?

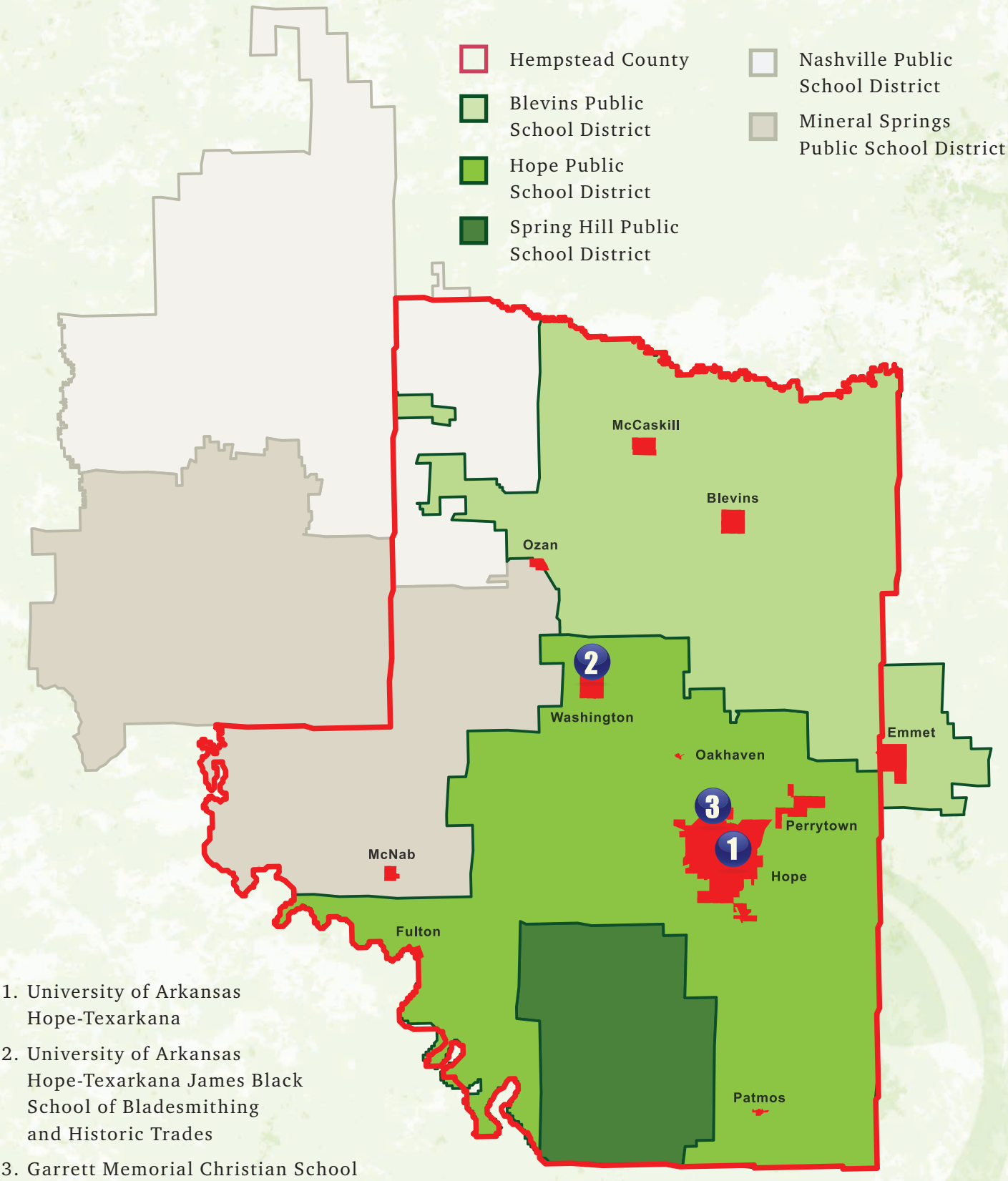
**10.6% of Hempstead County, AR residents possess a bachelor degree (8.2% below the national average), and 6.5% hold an associate degree.**





EDUCATION

Universities and School Districts





## EDUCATION

# School Events Calendar

### Goal

Create a county wide school events calendar.

### Strategy

Form a committee to create and implement a county wide school events calendar.

### Benefit to the Community

Increased attendance at school events and better parental involvement and student engagement.

### Action Steps

- Establish calendar committee responsible for layout and printing of annual calendar and recruit committee volunteers willing to serve two year terms.
- Seek approval of private schools and school districts in Hempstead County (Garrett Memorial Christian School and Hope, Blevins, and Spring Hill School Districts).
- Secure funding by selling pages to local businesses.
- Confirm willingness of Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative to undertake printing the calendar.
- Acquire information for entries from participating schools and districts and the county and city (e.g. sports schedules, academic deadlines and events, library programs, local fairs etc.) no later than the last day of the current school year.
- Process information, complete layout and print calendar for distribution by the start of the upcoming school year.

### Responsible Parties

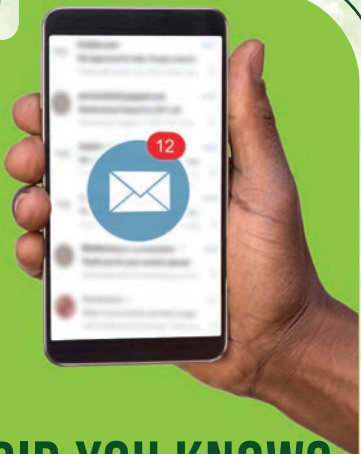
- Calendar committee
- School superintendents
- Southwest Arkansas Educational Cooperative

### Resources Needed (Financial & Other)

- Local business sponsors
- Southwest Arkansas Education Cooperative
- Hempstead County School Districts
- Hempstead County Quorum Court

### Estimated Completion Date(s)

- August 2020 (beginning of School Year 2020–2021)



**DID YOU KNOW?**

The Blevins School District's SwiftK12 system allows schools to send messages to parents using phone, e-mail or text.





## EDUCATION

# Job Training Academy

### Goal

Establish a job training academy.

### Strategy

Identify job and industry skill needs in the region and provide certified training courses to orient students to potential career fields.

### Benefit to the Community

Students will receive access to job certifications, learned skills and market exposure. Nontraditional students will receive training to upgrade existing skills or retrain to reflect changes or acquire new skills. Industry will have a deepening pool of potential workers and the ability to influence training for increased productivity and performance.

### Action Steps

- Career Fair at the University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana
- Identify current resources.
- Assess existing programs (Prescott and Liberty, Texas).
- Transportation plan, building development.
- Identify leadership.

### Responsible Parties

- Education Task Force
- University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana
- Local businesses and industry
- Arkansas Department of Education

### Resources Needed (Financial & Other)

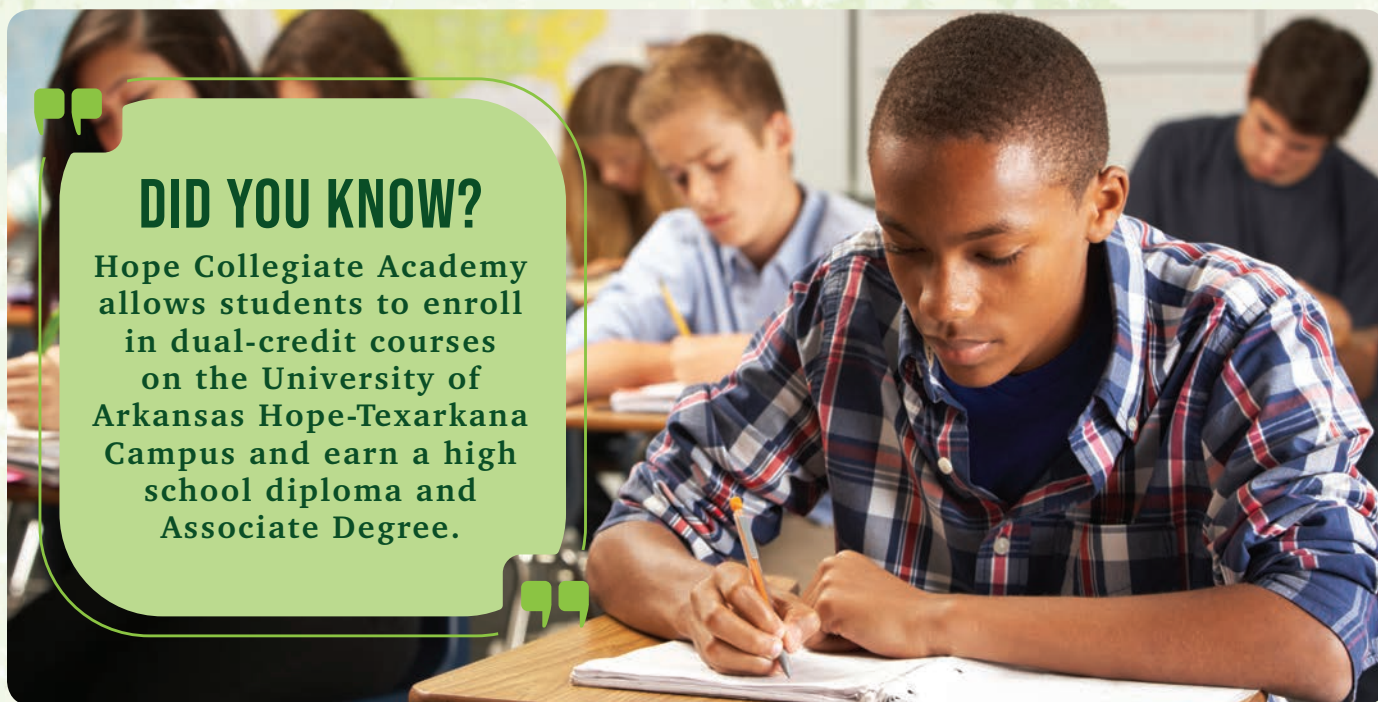
- Southwest Arkansas Educational Cooperative
- Carl Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act
- Workforce training funds
- Industry input

### Estimated Completion Date(s)

- Career Fair – Spring 2020
- Resource Assessment – 2020
- Assessing Current Programs – 2020
- Build it and Bus'em plan – Spring 2021

### DID YOU KNOW?

Hope Collegiate Academy allows students to enroll in dual-credit courses on the University of Arkansas Hope-Texarkana Campus and earn a high school diploma and Associate Degree.





## EDUCATION TASK FORCE

# Parent Involvement Survey

### **GOAL**

Create a parent involvement survey.

### **Strategy**

Work with school officials and parents to create an easily accessible, widely distributed, and easily compiled survey that focuses on what parents believe is effective parent involvement.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Developing a consensus on effective parental/school opportunities.

### **Action Steps**

- Get sample survey questionnaires from Arkansas Economic Development Institute.
- Work with teachers, parent center coordinators, and parent volunteers to develop an effective questionnaire.
- Meet with appropriate school officials and parent center coordinators to approve survey and determine an effective approach to distribution.
- Compile survey results.
- Publish results for interested parties including parent teacher organizations, parent center coordinators, school officials and others.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Education Task Force
- Arkansas Economic Development Institute
- School officials

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Costs associated with printing and distributing survey instrument and results

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Spring 2020

## EDUCATION

# Parent Involvement Programs

### **Goal**

Provide Hempstead County school districts and private schools with a 'best practices' pool of successful parental outreach programs.

### **Strategy**

Review successful components of parent involvement programs in similar sized school districts serving comparable communities.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Successful parental outreach programs increase community involvement in local schools.

### **Action Steps**

- Research successful programs in school districts with similar demographic and geographic characteristics.
- Assemble a list of salient approaches to involving parents that could resonate in Hempstead County.
- Publish a brief report emphasizing those approaches and recommending ways they could be incorporated into school approaches to parent involvement.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Education Task Force

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Arkansas Economic Development Institute
- Costs associated with printing and distributing report

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Beginning of 2020–2021 School Year





## EDUCATION

# Parent Centers

### **Goal**

Extend hours for parent centers.

### **Strategy**

Work with appropriate school officials to determine the feasibility of and potential impact of extending hours at the county's parent centers.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Allows educators more contact with parents to help address instructional weaknesses and increase children's overall learning potential.

### **Action Steps**

- Speak with each parent center coordinator to determine whether extended hours would facilitate parent attendance and have educational benefits.
- Work with coordinators to determine if an assessment tool (survey) could be used to assess parental interest in extending hours of parent centers.
- Meet with appropriate school officials to determine potential costs and expenses associated with extending hours at county parent centers.

### **Responsible Parties**

- Education Task Force
- Parent center coordinators
- School officials

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Parent survey or assessment instrument
- Funding source (participating school districts, private funders, and state department of education)

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Beginning of 2021–2022 School Year

## EDUCATION

# Lead Teacher Program

### **Goal**

Develop a Lead Teacher Program.

### **Strategy**

Employ active teachers to act as mentors to new and struggling teachers.

### **Benefit to the Community**

Improve overall instruction by keeping certified teachers in the classroom instead of removing them to coach.

### **Action Steps**

- Explore the Arkansas Department of Education lead teacher program.
- Create committee to determine transition.
- Let principals determine extent and scope of the program.
- Establish a teacher rep committee that represents all levels of teaching experience.

### **Responsible Parties**

- County superintendents and principals

### **Resources Needed (Financial & Other)**

- Salary schedule structure
- Funding
- Lead teacher training

### **Estimated Completion Date(s)**

- Beginning of 2021–2022 School Year







# THRIVE HEMPSTEAD CO. TASK FORCE

## Recommendation Tiers

**TIER 1** – Immediate goals that can be quickly accomplished with existing resources and personnel.

**TIER 2** – Short term goals that require some time, involve reaching out to other entities, and securing commitments and/or funding from public/private resources.

**TIER 3** – Long term goals that require a large scale effort over an extended time period, substantial funding, and significant public and private resources beyond what is locally available.

### **Public Priorities Tiers**

Code Enforcement	Tier 1
Community Revitalization	Tier 2
Downtown Revitalization	Tier 3
Activity Center	Tier 3
Countywide Water Provision	Tier 3
Water Treatment and Sewer Facilities	Tier 3
Juvenile Behavioral Center	Tier 3

### **Education Task Force Goals: Tiers**

School Events Calendar	Tier 1
Parent Centers	Tier 1
Parent Involvement Survey	Tier 2
Parent Involvement Programs	Tier 2
Job Training Academy	Tier 3
Lead Teacher Program	Tier 3

### **Economic Development**

Economic Development Website	Tier 1
Retail Development	Tier 2
Employability Training	Tier 2
Business Incubator/Development Center	Tier 3

### **Tourism**

Increase Awareness	Tier 1
Visitors Guide	Tier 2
Making Hempstead County Wet	Tier 3

### **Quality of Life**

Community Gardens Program	Tier 1
Downtown Art District	Tier 1
Community Safety Program	Tier 1
Community Theater Group/Club	Tier 1
Splash Pad/Water Park	Tier 2
Public Transportation	Tier 2
One-Stop Communication Web Site	Tier 2
Multicultural Festival	Tier 2
Concerts and Events	Tier 2
Making Space	Tier 3
Historic Bike Trail (Happy Trails)	Tier 3
Workforce Housing	Tier 3







## THRIVE HEMPSTEAD CO. TASK FORCE

# Conclusion

*Completing and approving a strategic plan, despite the enormous effort and community commitment it takes is only the first step in building an effective and sustainable development effort. Turning that plan into reality will prove the ultimate test of the community's commitment and resolve.*

## Implementing Thrive Hempstead

Given the complexity of the recommendations set forth, participant input, and discussion of the importance of this plan not “*just sitting on a shelf*,” the *Thrive Hempstead Co.* steering committee has proposed that a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization be established to administrate the *Thrive Hempstead* plan. A director will be hired through the steering committee's efforts to raise public and private funds.

Places using a community-based process to create economic development strategies can face detrimental challenges implementing complex

multi-year plans. Such plans usually involve a wide variety of organizations, private interests, local and state governments, and other services that can be difficult to coordinate and manage.

Rather than leave the sole responsibility for implementing the plan to the various groups and entities involved, an independent point person will be responsible for overseeing, coordinating and implementing the community's development strategies. Relying on a single organization for oversight makes a plan like *Thrive Hempstead Co.* easier to administrate and improves communication

and accountability among the various groups and stakeholders involved.







# THRIVE HEMPSTEAD CO. Acknowledgements

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### **Joy Barlogie**

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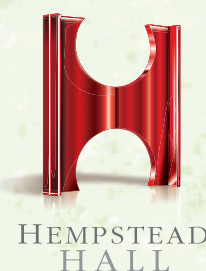
### **Erin Stanger**

Innovation Hub,  
North Little Rock

### **Dr. Ryan Watley**

CEO  
Go Forward Pine Bluff

## Special Thanks To:



**Steve Montgomery,  
Mayor**

- **Hope-Hempstead County Chamber of Commerce**
- **Hope Public Schools**
- **Our Lady of Good Hope Catholic Church**
- **Southwest Arkansas Planning and Development District**
- **Spring Hill Public Schools**
- **Photos courtesy of Nancy Bailey, Rodney Steele Studio, and the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism**







THRIVE HEMPSTEAD CO.

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THRIVE HEMPSTEAD CO.

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