



# ***MOMENTUM*** **2.0**

## JONESBORO

*JU Launches Five-Year Strategic Plan*

***Plus:***

***Colson Plant Nears Completion***

***Record Sales Tax Collections (Again)***

***Nice-Pak Completes Expansion***

# ***USING OUR MOMENTUM***

## ***Momentum Jonesboro 2.0 Sets Goals***

Jonesboro Unlimited (JU) rolled out its new, Five-Year Strategic Plan on August 3, 2021. The event, held at Arkansas State University's Fowler Center, highlighted four strategic initiatives of the new plan: Business Growth and Innovation, Talent and Workforce Development, Quality of Life and Infrastructure, and Branding and Marketing.

"There are so many aspects of our plan to get excited about," said Mark Young, President of Jonesboro Unlimited, "By building off the success of our first strategic plan, we are continuing to position Jonesboro as a community where business and investment can thrive. And with that comes jobs."

As part of its first Strategic Plan in 2017, JU announced the goal of creating 2,500 direct new jobs over five years in JU's target industries: healthcare, advanced manufacturing, professional services, logistics, and agriculture. It was a goal exceeded in only three years. With five months remaining in the plan, over 4,000 direct new jobs have been created.

"We were confident we could reach the goals we set in 2017," said Chris Barber, Chairman of Jonesboro Unlimited, "What we didn't expect was that would exceed them so thoroughly. It's a great indicator of Jonesboro's economic strength and something to be proud of."

In November 2020, Jonesboro Unlimited engaged Ernst & Young (EY) Economic Development Advisory Services to develop Jonesboro's new five-year economic development strategy. The strategy intends to build on the success of the previous plan, identifying new opportunities for growth and offering recommendations designed to enhance Jonesboro's competitiveness for attracting businesses and talent. A quantitative analysis and competitive assessment give a better understanding of Jonesboro's economic strengths in recent years.

Jonesboro has enjoyed strong job growth. Employment in the region rose by more than 12% between 2014 and 2019, outpacing the US average by approximately 50%. Jonesboro's ability to sustain significant employment growth is especially striking given its size and geographic location. Jonesboro ranked among the 100 leading metros in the US for job growth between 2014 and 2019. Only five regions smaller than Jonesboro regions made this list. Notably, these other smaller regions are often located alongside larger growth corridors.

In contrast, the Jonesboro region alone is driving growth in Northeast Arkansas. The previous economic development strategy and the subsequent actions taken by Jonesboro Unlimited can be credited with the resilience and continued growth of the city, county, and region even during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2021. Those successful initiatives that have contributed to Jonesboro's growth over the past several years will continue and complement the new strategic plan.



# USING OUR MOMENTUM

## (CONTINUED)

JU's new plan will focus on the following initiatives: Business Growth and Innovation, Talent and Workforce Development, Quality of Life and Infrastructure, and Branding and Marketing.

Amy Holloway of Ernst & Young helped craft JU's new plan and presented the specifics at the rollout.

"This plan truly builds off the successes Jonesboro has seen over the last five years," Holloway said, "We have taken all that momentum and focused it into a plan that will continue to enhance and develop Jonesboro as a city where companies can invest and grow while maintaining a great quality of life."

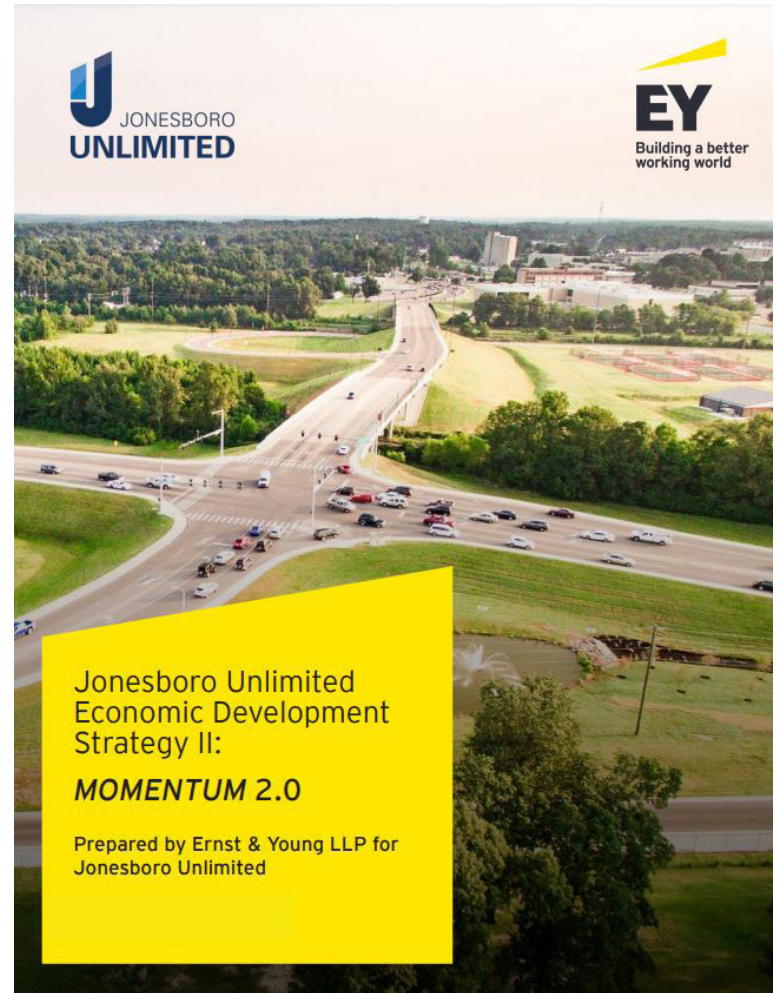
In addition to a competitive assessment, EY and JU held a series of stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and strategic advisory committee meetings with Jonesboro community leaders, professionals, and university students. The vast

majority of individuals who participated in input sessions have a favorable view of living,

working, and doing business in Jonesboro. Still, they also want to see it continue to grow and improve across several areas.

The work reflects the community-focused leadership that continues to enhance the economy.

"It goes to show you the great climate we have in this community,



 BUSINESS  
GROWTH &  
**INNOVATION**

 TALENT &  
WORKFORCE  
**DEVELOPMENT**

 QUALITY  
OF LIFE &  
**INFRASTRUCTURE**

 MARKETING &  
**BRANDING**



# ***Project Updates***

## ***Camfil Plant Pours It On***

Construction on Camfil APC's new facility in the Craighead Technology Park is well underway. According to John Williams, who is overseeing the project, crews are pouring foundations and footings. Williams says the schedule calls for completion of that phase of construction by November. The beginning of the installation of structural steel is scheduled for the middle of October.

The target date for completing the 254,000 SF factory is the 3rd quarter of 2022. Williams says they will then begin the transition from Camfil's current locations to the new plant. He estimates that the process will take six months.



## ***Colson Factory Nearing Completion***

The to-do list is getting shorter for Jonesboro's new Colson Group factory. Peter Backus, Manufacturing Strategy Manager for Colson, says they are on track for being substantially complete by November 10th.

The focus right now is on mechanical, plumbing, and electrical tasks, according to Backus. In late September, crews were working on the paving and pouring of parking areas. After that, Backus says, the final tasks are landscaping, paint striping, and signage.

Backus expects to begin moving production equipment by early December and complete the initial production phase by the end of the first quarter of 2022.



## ***Spirit Already Hiring***

Crews are hard at work on Spirit Fitness' new facility in the Craighead Technology Park. According to company officials, the current focus of the \$10M project is on concrete, plumbing, and electrical work.

The goal to complete the construction is late March or early April. After that, company officials say it will take about 30 days to move people and equipment into the new facility that will house the Technical Support Department and the Warranty Parts Department.

Hiring and training is already underway. They expect the expansion to create 40-50 new jobs.



## ***Nice-Pak Wraps Up Expansion***

Construction on Nice-Pak's \$50M expansion is complete.

Site Director Stanley Lichucki says production of pre-moistened wet wipes in the new manufacturing suite is underway.

He says they have hired over 40 new associates to keep up with demand in the last two months.



# ***Quality of Life***

## ***Taking Their Shots***

You can now fire at will five days a week. The new Jonesboro Shooting Sports Complex is now open to the public. Jonesboro Parks and Recreation Director Danny Kapales says shooting enthusiasts can now use the facility Wednesdays through Sundays. That includes the 200-yard rifle range, the 50-yard pistol range, three trap/skeet fields, a 70-yard archery range, and a 50-yard archery range.

The new complex has already hosted a shooting event. In late September, 18 teams competed in a fundraiser for Arkansas Baptist Children's Home.

## ***Union Street Park***

The new park at the corner of Union and Monroe in downtown Jonesboro will soon start taking shape. Jonesboro Parks and Recreation Director Danny Kapales says the project will get underway in late October.

On October 4th, the Jonesboro City Council approved a resolution to amend the 2021 budget to include grant funding from the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism and the city match to develop the new park. The grant totals \$200,000 and requires a 50% match from the city.

## ***Grant Application For New Park***

Plans for a new city park on the northeast side of Jonesboro are in motion. The city has applied for a Federal Outdoor Recreation Grant. Danny Kapales says it may be Spring of 2022 before grant winners are announced.

The grant provides matching funds to local governments for up to 50% of the acquisition and development of local parks and recreation areas.

The site under consideration is on Disciple Drive adjacent to Journey Church.



# Commercial Development

More retail is coming to the Hilltop area of Jonesboro. Dollar Tree is about to build a new, 10,000 SF store right next to Bill's Cost Plus. Developer Haag Brown says the store will be free standing. It will be the third Dollar Tree in Jonesboro.



Sanctuary Church is building at a new location. Bailey Contractors of Jonesboro is constructing the new 12,000 SF church at 3119 Rook Road. The new church will replace Sanctuary's current structure on Strawfloor Road.



Marco's Pizza is delivering another franchise to Jonesboro. The new, \$289,000 restaurant is going up on Southwest Drive next to Arvest Bank. This is Marco's second Jonesboro franchise. The first opened on Hilltop late last year.



Shadrachs keeps brewing. Construction has begun on a new location in Greensborough Village, its sixth in Jonesboro. The new Shadrachs will have a drive-thru and indoor seating. Owner Larry Billing says they will be serving coffee and treats by December.

Hik Creative has added to the Downtown Jonesboro landscape. Jonesboro native Bray Brooks opened his new photography and video studio at 528 W. Monroe. Hik shares the building with the West End Neighborhood Association and The Arkansas Real Estate Academy.



University Lofts at Greensborough Village is now under construction. Jetton General Contracting is building the \$8.3M project across the street from the new Malco Cinema. The project features 100 micro loft apartments with retail on the ground floor. Jetton is eyeing the fall of 2022 for completion.

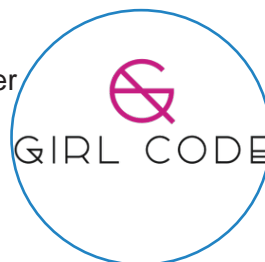


A national bakery franchise is coming to Jonesboro. Nothing Bundt Cakes is The Uptown's newest tenant. The new store joins Elite Eye Care in a 10,000 SF building in the parking lot of the new Gearhead Outfitters and Gamble Home Furnishing.



Ideal Option, which specializes in treatment for addiction to opioids, alcohol, and other substances, is opening a clinic in Jonesboro. This clinic, the fourth in Arkansas, is moving into an office on Hilltop. Ideal Option has over 70 out-patient clinics across 10 states.

A new retailer is open in Jonesboro. Girl Code is in The Highlands Shopping Center at the corner of Red Wolf and Highland. Girl Code describes itself as a trendy boutique offering fashionable, affordable, celebrity-inspired clothing.



A make-over is in the works for the Waffle House on Phillips Drive. The restaurant is getting a full interior renovation including upgrades to the kitchen and Customer areas. Work begins next summer.





# Healthcare

## ***Reserve at NEA Adds Another Clinic***

The foundation is being poured for the new NEA Baptist Pain Management Center at the Reserve at NEA, the lifestyle medical park located just north of NEA Baptist Hospital.

Ty Jones of NEA Baptist says this second building in the park will be completed in late spring or early summer of 2022.

Jones says the new pain center will offer pain management treatment in one “easy to access” location directly connected to the NEA Baptist campus.



## ***NYITCOM Students Helping Students***

10 NYITCOM faculty physicians are now practicing at the NYITCOM Arkansas State Medical Clinic, formerly the A-State Student Health Center.

Located right next to Centennial Bank Stadium, the clinic serves A-State students and faculty, and the general public. Casey Pearce of NYITCOM says the clinic provides several specialties, including Pediatrics, Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine, OB/GYN, Family Medicine, and Internal Medicine/Infectious Disease.

Pearce adds that third and fourth-year medical students are doing rotations at the clinic as well.



## ***St. Bernards To Operate Crisis Unit***

St. Bernards is now operating the Craighead County Regional Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU).

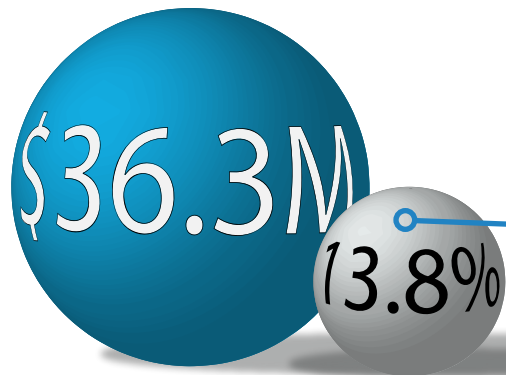
Effective October 1st, St. Bernards Behavioral Health (SBBH) plans to provide services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In addition, the CSU will receive access to SBBH psychiatry, nursing, licensed therapy, and discharge planning staff, according to a press release from St. Bernards.

The Craighead County Regional Crisis Stabilization Unit provides 16 inpatient beds for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Patients are admitted voluntarily or involuntarily. The goal is to stabilize a patient before releasing them back into the community.



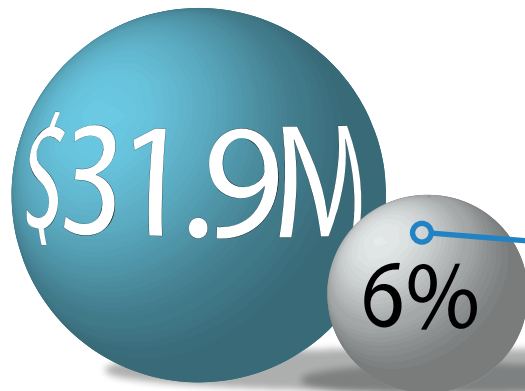
# ***Sales Tax Revenue***

*City & County Combined (2.0%)*



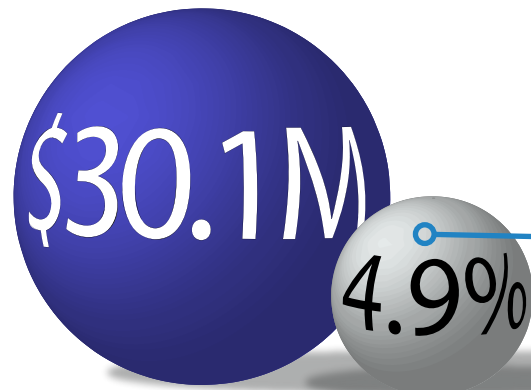
**2021** / *jan thru sept*

• Increase in collections over 2020. \$4.4M over 2020



**2020** / *jan thru sept*

• Increase in collections from first three quarters of 2019



**2019** / *jan thru sept*

• Increase in collections from first three quarters of 2018



# Commercial Construction

Year-To-Date 2019-2021



**2021** / *jan  
thru  
sept*

Includes \$101.3M in permits (47)  
for new construction



**2020** / *jan  
thru  
sept*

Includes \$17.8M in permits (22)  
for new construction



**2019** / *jan  
thru  
sept*

Total included 38 permits for  
new construction

*Permit totals include: new construction, apartments, additions, alterations, & signs*

# Residential Construction

Year-To-Date 2019-2021

**2021** / *jan  
thru  
sept*

Value of 382 permits for new  
single family homes



**2020** / *jan  
thru  
sept*

Includes 376 permits for new  
single family homes



**2019** / *jan  
thru  
sept*

Included 265 permits for new  
single family homes



*Permit totals include: new homes, additions, alterations, duplex, storage, & swimming pools*

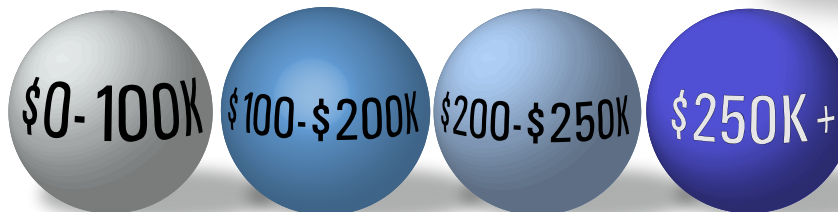
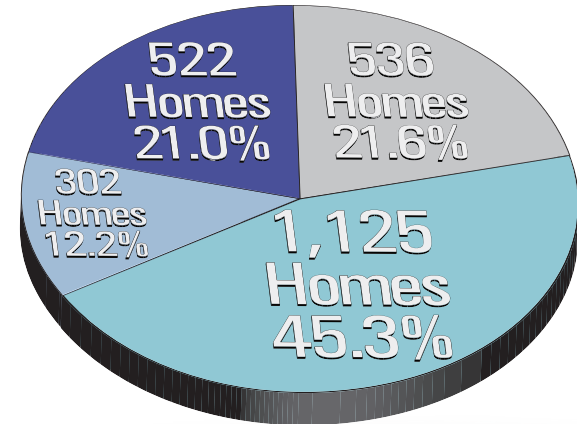
# Home Sales

Year-To-Date 2020-2021

2,485  
Homes  
Sold

2021/ *jan  
thru  
sept*

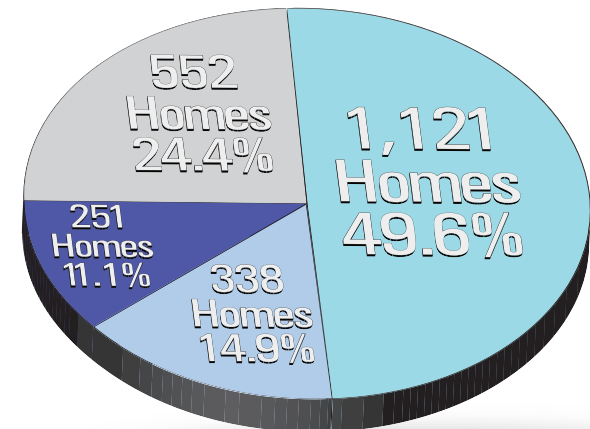
9.9% increase in total  
home sales over 2020



2,262  
Homes  
Sold

2020/ *jan  
thru  
sept*

13.4% increase in total  
home sales over 2019



The NEA Board of Realtors no longer provides separate data for new home sales and existing home sales