

Bring On The Sun

Solar Starts Feeding CWL's Grid

Plus:

Chamber Leadership Change

Let's Get Branded!

Shooting Complex Progress

Finding Our Brand

JU Takes On Task of Branding Jonesboro

Jonesboro Unlimited (JU) has begun branding the city of Jonesboro.

As part of JU's five-year strategic plan, JU set out to position Jonesboro for further development with the addition of marketing tools that are unique to Jonesboro.

Craig Rickert, Director of Communications for Jonesboro Unlimited, and Mallory Black, Director of Marketing for the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce, lead a 10-person steering committee tasked with overseeing the process.

"For years, our community has thrived without the benefit of one true, unifying image, logo or tagline," Rickert said, "but now, we have officially begun that process to find that common thread that can sew together all the things that make Jonesboro special."

Ben Muldrow, with Arnett-Muldrow out of Greenville, South Carolina, has been hired by JU to help develop Jonesboro's brand identity. Arnett-Muldrow has branded hundreds of communities and organizations across the country.

"We are thrilled to have partnered with the amazing folks of Jonesboro to work on the Community Branding Initiative. As a regional hub, a University town, and home to many businesses and industries, Jonesboro has such a bright future and needs a versatile stage to tell its unique story."

The search for that stage started with over 600 people responding to an online survey. The survey gauged responses to an array of questions about Jonesboro. The steering committee reviewed the survey results in the final week of August. That week also included bringing together eight focus groups to discuss how to best brand our city.

Jonesboro will have a new look available for any organization or business when the finished product comes out.

"That's the key to this process, making sure it's implemented by as many people as possible," Mallory Black said, "There is such an overwhelming feeling of community here. It's exciting that we will have the branding to back it up."

"We already have people asking when they can get their hands on it," said Rickert.

Rickert says they couldn't take on this project without the support of key stakeholders. The City of Jonesboro, the Advertising and Promotion Commission, Chamber of Commerce, and the Downtown Jonesboro Alliance supported the plan before JU made the announcement official.

Arkansas State University Chancellor, Dr. Todd Shields, is backing the plan too. Shields says that the better branded Jonesboro is, the more it helps recruit future students to A-State.

Arnett-Muldrow's branding process typically takes 16 weeks to complete. With that timeline, Jonesboro should be able to start rolling out its new "look" before the end of the year.



Catching Some Rays

Solar Farm Goes Online

City Water and Light's (CWL) solar farm in the Craighead Technology Park came online just in time.

Slade Mitchell with CWL says the 100-acre park and its 33,000 solar energy soaking panels generated almost 8,000 megawatt-hours of electricity during the summer months of June, July, and August. Mitchell says the timing couldn't have been better.

"The good news is that the hours our solar plant was producing energy correlated closely to the hours of highest demand and highest market prices and therefore provided our customers a great value."

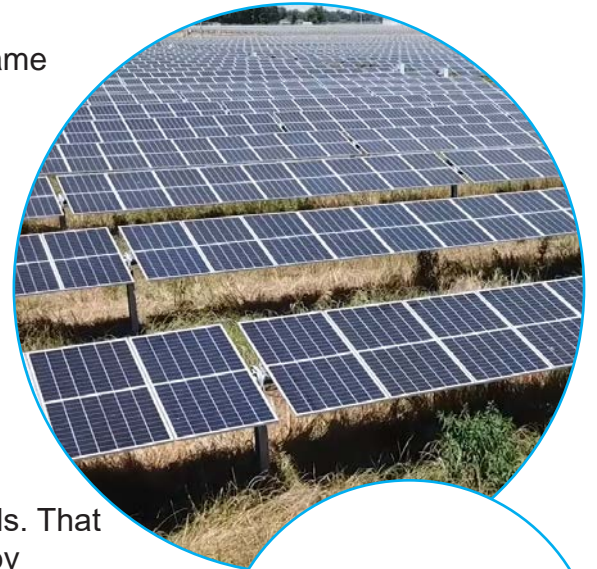
The park went online in June. Mitchell says the park uses bi-facial solar panels. That means the panels can absorb solar energy on the back side of the structure by picking up reflected light off the ground and other surfaces. The solar panels also move and turn to face the sun, ensuring the surfaces stay exposed to sunlight throughout the day.

"We have been very pleased with the plant's performance," Mitchell said, "In the hot summer months the plant generated approximately 2,633, 2,689, and 2,649 Megawatt hours, respectively."

Once the energy leaves the facility, it is put onto four different CWL distribution circuits in the Craighead Technology Park area. Mitchell says that it helps all industrial and residential customers.

"At this time, all CWL customers benefit from the hedge against high energy market prices that the solar energy has provided," Mitchell said.

The project was developed by TurningPoint Energy (TPE) and CWL. Once the park was complete, TPE turned the keys over to CWL. The solar farm will generate enough electricity each year to power roughly 1,600 Jonesboro homes.



Slater Joins Chamber

A-State Alum Replaces Cari White

The Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce is excited to share Cody Slater will join the team as the new Vice President of Chamber Programs.

Slater replaces Cari White, who retired after 22 years serving as the Executive Vice President at the Chamber.

Slater comes to Jonesboro with more than seven years of experience in chamber leadership and economic development. Since 2018, Slater has served as the President and CEO of the Wynne Economic Development Corporation and Cross County Chamber of Commerce. Prior to his work in Wynne, Slater served as a Regional Manager for Community and Economic Development at the Arkansas Economic Development Commission in Little Rock.

As the Vice President of Chamber Programs, Slater will coordinate various Chamber committees and provide guidance and oversight for the Chamber's three leadership programs.

"Cody will be a great asset to our Chamber team," Mark Young said, President and CEO of the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce. "He brings a passion for supporting our strong business community and will be vital in leading initiatives that support our mission."

He's a Red Wolf too. Slater earned a Bachelor of Science in Journalism with an emphasis in Public Relations from Arkansas State University.

"With more than 1,200 members, the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce proves to be a strong resource for Jonesboro," Slater said. "I'm excited to join such an awesome team. My family and I have deep ties to Jonesboro, and I look forward to building positive relationships that support the continued growth of the chamber and community."

Slater and his wife, Malory, have one daughter. He will officially join the Chamber team in mid-October.



Quality of Life

Upgrades For City Parks

Improvement projects continue at Jonesboro's biggest parks.

A new, handicap-accessible fishing dock is under construction at Craighead Forest Park. Located at Access 5, the \$65,000 pier is wider and longer than the one it's replacing, according to Danny Kapales, Director of Jonesboro's Parks and Recreation Department. Kapales says the Craighead County Road Department helped pay for the project.

Soccer and softball players are playing under newer and brighter lights. The new lighting system at Joe Mack Campbell Park covers five micro soccer and one full-sized soccer field. The cost of the \$205,000 project came from the city's capital budget.

Every field at the Southside Softball Complex now has new lights. Kapales says the Jonesboro A&P Commission contributed to the \$152,500 improvement.

Progress At Shooting Sports Complex

Construction continues at the Jonesboro Shooting Sports Complex.

Construction Network, Inc. (CNI) is putting up a new storage building. The permit filed with the city lists the project at \$1.4M. CNI says the cost includes the construction of the building and some additional parking spots for the new structure.

The 8,000 SF building is located on the west side of the complex, near the pistol range.



Healthcare

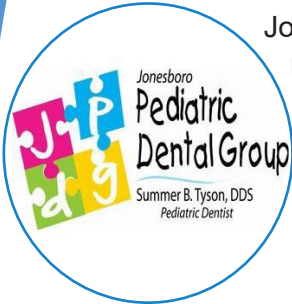
NYITCOM Introduces Newest Class

In August, one hundred twenty future Doctors donned their white coats at The NYIT College of Osteopathic Medicine at Arkansas State University.

The class of 2026, A-State's seventh, includes nine students that did their undergraduate studies at A-State. Casey Pearce from NYIT says Arkansas State is the most-represented university in the class of 2026.



Commercial Development



Jonesboro Pediatric Dental Group is moving into the former San Francisco Bread Company location on Windover Road. The new location will more than double their existing office space on SW Drive. No word yet on when they plan to move into the new space.



A new Tropical Smoothie is coming to a busy Jonesboro intersection. The former ERA Steve Doty office at Race and Caraway is the future home of the wraps and smoothie restaurant. Doty says construction should begin in the Spring and finish by Fall. The new Tropical Smoothie has the same ownership as the current location on Hilltop.



Cue up some more Que in Jonesboro. Blue Ember Smokehouse is under construction on Creek Drive behind Buffalo Wild Wings. The \$1.7M restaurant is scheduled to open in mid-December. Blue Ember is based in Fort Smith. The Jonesboro location is the the restaurant's second location.



Things are getting pretty formal on Nettleton Avenue. Emma and Kait's Bridal and Formal Boutique is remodeling the old Bingham Piano and Organ repair shop next door to Honey Baked Ham. The locally-owned store's website says they will open on November 1st.



The new year means a new look for Jonesboro's Sam's Club. Jetton General Contracting is scheduled to begin work on the store early next year. The work involves updating plumbing and concrete work but won't change the footprint of the store. Jetton says the project will take 14 weeks to complete.



Arvest Bank's newest branch is under construction in Greensborough Village. The 5,200 SF branch is a full-service location and the third in Jonesboro. Arvest has over 200 locations in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma. Look for the bank to open in the Spring of 2023.



KPOT, Korean BBQ and Hot Pot is the new occupant of the former O'Charley's on Parker Road. Haag-Brown made the announcement in early October. No official word on opening day. KPOT has 75 locations across the country. The Jonesboro location is the first in Arkansas.



If you're looking for something sweet to cap off a night downtown, you're in luck. Ice cream has found its way to downtown Jonesboro. Scoops is Jonesboro's only hand-scooped ice cream shop. The new shop opened in late September at 324 S. Main.

Sales Tax Revenue

Year-To-Date: City & County Combined (2.0%)

\$40M

9.3%

2022 / *jan
thru
sept*

○ Increase in collections over 2021. 27% increase over 2020

\$36.3M

13.8%

2021 / *jan
thru
sept*

○ Increase in collections over 2020.

\$31.9M

6%

2020 / *jan
thru
sept*

○ Increase in collections over 2019.

Commercial Construction

Year-To-Date 2022-2020



2022 / *jan
thru
sept*

Includes \$63M in permits (16)
for new construction



2021 / *jan
thru
sept*

Includes \$101M in permits (47)
for new construction



2020 / *jan
thru
sept*

Includes \$8.5M in permits (12)
for new construction

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

Residential Construction

Year-To-Date 2022-2020

2022 / *jan
thru
sept*

Includes 233 permits for new
home construction (\$42.8M)

429
Permits

\$51.8M

2021 / *jan
thru
sept*

Includes 270 permits for new
home construction (\$40.4M)

550
Permits

\$60.2M

2020 / *jan
thru
sept*

Includes 242 permits for new
home construction (\$30.7M)

585
Permits

\$57.1M

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

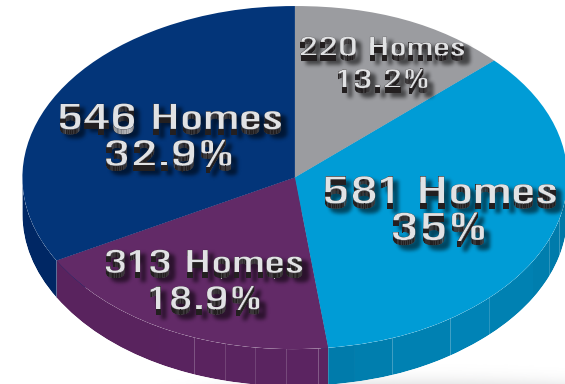
Home Sales*

January Through September 2021-2022

1,660
Homes
Sold

2022 / *jan
thru
sept*

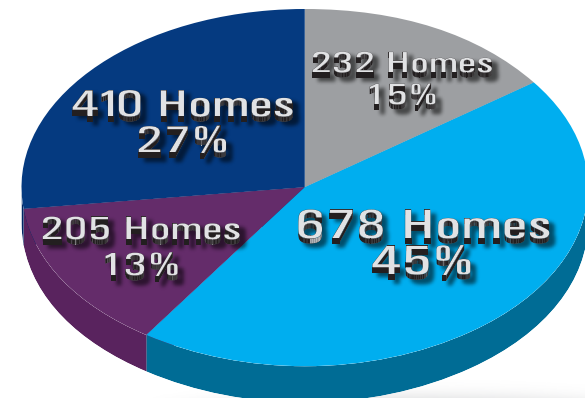
8.8% increase in total home
sales over 2021.



1,525
Homes
Sold

2021 / *jan
thru
sept*

Average home sales price
for 2021: \$212,000



*Total home sales reflect new construction and existing homes sold in Jonesboro MSA (Craighead and Poinsett Counties)