

# Economic Advancement QUARTERLY REPORT

Jonesboro, Arkansas

**Q2  
2025**



**Industrial Waterline Expansion**

**Sports Complex Groundbreaking**

**A-State's Economic Impact**

**Economic Data & More!**



[www.jonesborounlimited.com](http://www.jonesborounlimited.com)



## Breaking Ground on Progress: Industrial Water Expansion at Craighead Technology Park South

Jonesboro Unlimited held a ground-breaking ceremony on May 28, 2025 to celebrate the expansion of industrial water service to over 600 acres inside the Craighead Technology Park. Special guests at the event included Clint O'Neal, Executive Director of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC); Judge Marvin Day of Craighead County; Mayor Harold Copenhaver of Jonesboro; and Arkansas Representatives Jon Milligan and Jack Ladyman.

"We are grateful for the partnership among the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Craighead County, and Jonesboro City Water & Light to deliver the overbuilt water service our industrial park is known for to this 600-acre site," said Steven Lamm, Vice President of Economic Development for Jonesboro Unlimited. "This group coming together is a testament to the real

and significant potential this site represents for the next industrial client."

In December 2024, Jonesboro Unlimited was awarded \$2 million from the Arkansas Site Development Program to enhance industrial sites and increase their readiness for job-creating projects.

"Attracting new investment to Arkansas depends on having great, shovel-ready sites," said Clint O'Neal, Executive Director of AEDC. "Companies want to reduce risk, and it is critical to have sites that have infrastructure that is ready when they perform their site location analysis."

Construction is expected to begin summer 2025 and at conclusion will be able to provide industrial capacity water service to over 600 acres of industrial property adjacent to I-555.

"We thank the Quorum Court, Governor Sanders, and the AEDC for their support to make this happen," said Judge Marvin Day. "Craighead County has had a long history of supporting industrial growth, and this is a great project for the future of the community."



## Tapped for Growth





***"Each year, A-State generates significant economic activity, creating jobs, supporting local businesses, and attracting investments that energize our region."***

**-Chancellor Todd Shields**



## **A-State's Economic Footprint Tops \$2.5 Billion, Supporting 16,000+ Jobs**

In a recent study by Parker Strategy Group titled "A-State Powers Growth: Transforming the Economy and Inspiring Hearts and Minds," it was concluded that Arkansas State University creates an annual economic impact at a significant level.

The analysis found that A-State contributed \$2.5 billion during the 2022-23 fiscal year, with \$480 million stemming from the Jonesboro campus, student and visitor spending, and \$2 billion from alumni living and working across the state.

While the figures are substantial, the study's findings regarding the number of jobs supported may offer a more tangible perspective. A-State's impact supports and sustains an estimated 16,332 jobs throughout Arkansas, including 4,752 via direct employment on campus, and 11,580 via alumni statewide.

"Our commitment to excellence is not just measured in diplomas awarded, but in the far-reaching impact of our institution," said Chancellor Todd Shields in his preface to the report. "Each year, A-State generates significant economic activity, creating jobs, supporting local businesses, and attracting investments that energize our region."

For every dollar the State of Arkansas invests in A-State, \$7.10 is returned through the university's total economic impact, and \$2.52 is returned to the state through taxes generated by their operations and student and visitor spending. Contribution to state and local taxes was \$152.5 million.

After its opening in fall 2016, the New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine on the A-State campus has become a thriving economic

partner that generates an additional \$44.6 million in economic impact, supporting 263 jobs, and conducting operations that result in \$2.2 million in additional state and local taxes.

Also measured in the report was how students, faculty and staff provided more than 176,000 volunteer hours, valued at \$5.3 million, and that charitable giving from alumni and others totaled \$1.6 million in the fiscal year studied.

Economic impact studies illustrate the significant role universities like Arkansas State play in their communities and are widely used nationwide to quantify contributions and demonstrate return on investment.

**Read the Report:**  
[A-State Economic Impact Study 2025](#)

## Jonesboro Breaks Ground on \$74M Sportsplex, Set to Drive \$1B in Economic Impact

On April 11, Jonesboro took a major step toward becoming a premier regional hub for sports tourism with the groundbreaking of the Ridge Athletics Center (RAC), a 200,000 SF multisport complex at the confluence of Race Street and McClellan Drive.

The two-story facility will feature 12 basketball courts that can convert to 24 volleyball or 36 pickleball courts, along with a natatorium offering an Olympic-size 50-meter pool, a competitive diving pool, a warm-up pool, and seating for 1,245 spectators. An outdoor aquatic center will include a leisure pool, water slides, splash pad, and lazy river.

Beyond serving as a venue for tournaments, the RAC will offer swim lessons, low-impact fitness classes, and job opportunities.

"The Ridge Athletics Center is going to provide Jonesboro residents with

much-needed space for indoor recreation," said Craig Rickert, Executive Director of the Jonesboro Advertising and Promotion Commission. "And the travel sports industry is one that Jonesboro is perfectly positioned for. As the largest city in the area between Memphis, Little Rock, and St. Louis, the Ridge will become a destination for sports."

Mayor Harold Copenhaver emphasized the facility's long-term economic value, projecting a \$1 billion economic impact over its lifespan. Annually, it is expected to contribute \$43 million to the local economy and support around 950 jobs, both directly and indirectly.

Construction is estimated at \$74 million, with the City contributing \$3.2 million from American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the outdoor water park. The RAC is slated to open in early 2027.



**Take a Virtual Tour of the Ridge Athletics Center:**

<https://tinyurl.com/yvmdbxhb>



## Inspiring Future Talent: TekStarz Summer Manufacturing Camp

Twenty incoming 8th-grade students participated in Jonesboro Unlimited's TekStarz Summer Manufacturing Camp in June, introducing young learners to the world of manufacturing and technology to encourage their education and career options.

Students representing Nettleton, Brookland, Westside, Marion, and local homeschool programs spent the week engaging directly with tools, equipment, and professionals in the manufacturing industry. The immersive experience gave students a behind-the-scenes look at modern manufacturing processes and career opportunities through on-site tours and hands-on activities. Supporting the students during the camp was a counselor from the Math & Science Magnet School and a Career and Technical Education teacher from the Marion School District.

The program concluded with a family reception held at Hytrol Conveyor Company, where participants, families, and partners gathered to celebrate the campers' accomplishments. The event featured a highlight video of the week's activities and remarks from Shelle Randall, Director of Workforce Development and Existing Industry at Jonesboro Unlimited; Mark Young, President and CEO of Jonesboro Unlimited; and Christy Valentine, Hytrol's Manager of Academic and Philanthropic Programs. Each camper was presented with a certificate recognizing their successful completion of the program.

The success of TekStarz Summer Manufacturing Camp was made possible through the generous support of the following industry partners and organizations:

- Best Manufacturing, Inc.
- Frito-Lay
- Nice-Pak Products Inc.
- Chris West Plumbing, Inc.
- TrinityRail Maintenance Services
- Ritter Communications
- Jonesboro Police Department
- Hytrol Conveyor Company
- Be Pro Be Proud Arkansas

**Watch the TekStarz Highlight Video:**

<https://youtu.be/FpAeqiRycQs>



## Cyclists Converge on Jonesboro for The Skirmish: A New Delta Gravel Festival

Over 200 cyclists from 15 states descended on Jonesboro for the inaugural Skirmish Delta Gravel Festival from May 29—June 1, presented by the Jonesboro Advertising and Promotion Commission and All Sports Productions, Inc.

The festival name, The Skirmish, pays homage to the small 1862 Civil War engagement fought on the grounds of the Craighead County Courthouse. But the inspiration for the event came from Jonesboro's growing love of cycling.

"It's been very cool to see so many people get involved in this sport because gravel cycling is such a growing sport in outdoor recreation," said Craig Rickert, Executive Director of the Jonesboro Advertising and Promotion Commission. "We knew it was Jonesboro's time to get in and be a part of it."



With four route options ranging from a 24-mile ride for beginners to a harder 100-mile challenge for seasoned cyclists, the festival offered something for every rider. The routes showcased the unique beauty of Northeast Arkansas, leading cyclists from Downtown Jonesboro, along Crowley's Ridge, and through the Delta farmland. \$750 prizes were awarded to the winners of the 100-mile race.

But the festival wasn't all competition. Downtown Jonesboro transformed into a family-friendly celebration, complete with live music, vendors, and activities for kids. A slow ride from downtown to Arkansas State University and back created an accessible and fun option for families and casual riders.



The Skirmish brought not only economic activity but also new energy and visibility to the region's growing outdoor recreation scene.

"The 2025 Skirmish was by far the most successful inaugural event in our 23-year history because of the level of commitment, excitement and engagement from the amazing sponsors, as well as the entire Jonesboro community," said Bruce Dunn, CEO of All Sports Productions.

Planning is already underway for The Skirmish to return next year.



**Watch The Skirmish Highlight Video:**

<https://youtu.be/SbusQVx8GDQ?si=FRzRhBDHoBILQbHW>

## COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPDATES FROM AROUND THE COMMUNITY



### CAVENAUGH KIA

Serving Jonesboro since 2001, Cavanaugh Kia opened their new dealership at 3311 Stadium Boulevard.



### PANDA EXPRESS

Known for their bold flavors of American-Chinese cuisine, the popular chain opened their much anticipated restaurant in May at 2020 Fair Park Boulevard.



### ROCK & ROLL SUSHI

Founded in Mobile, Alabama, the fast-growing chain has spread throughout mid America in a short amount of time. The restaurant features flavors that are big, bold, and loud like rock and roll music and is located at 2411 Race Street, Suite A.



### SHERWIN-WILLIAMS

With a legacy dating back to the 1860s, this industry leader in paint is currently constructing a 4,500 SF building at 3700 E Johnson Avenue.



### WHATABURGER

The legendary Texas burger brand will soon be coming to Jonesboro. Founded by Cushman, Arkansas native Harmon Dobson, Whataburger has been serving up bold flavor and generous portions since 1950.

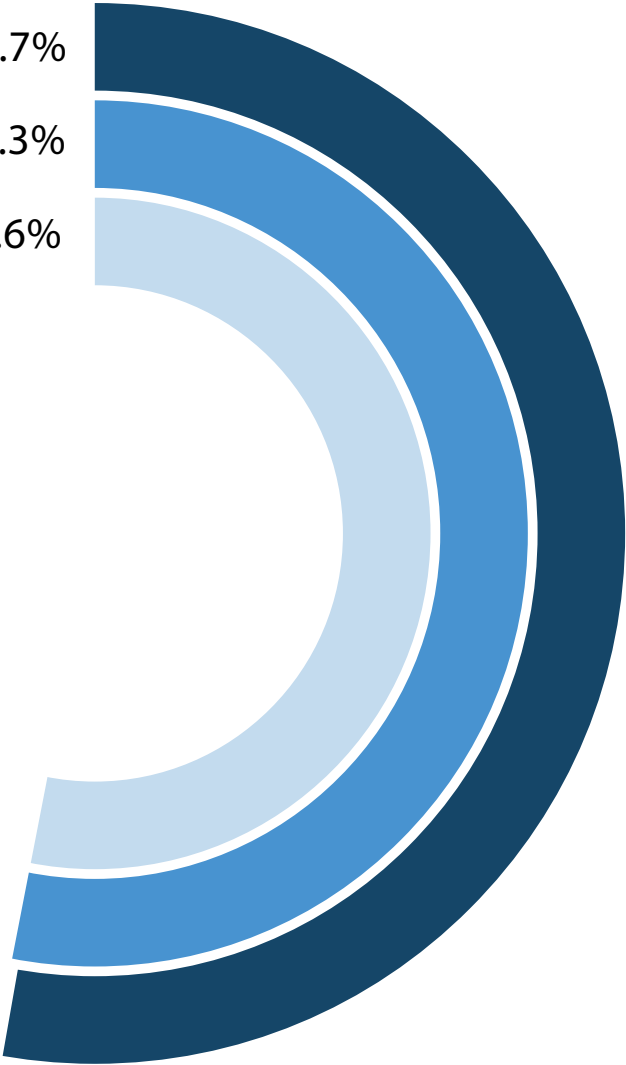
# SALES & USE TAX REVENUE

YTD, JANUARY - JUNE, 2025 - 2023, CITY & COUNTY COMBINED (2.0%)

Source: Jonesboro & Craighead County, AR Sales & Use Tax Collection Reports

## COLLECTIONS

YR	AMT	% INCR
2025	\$28.1M	-0.7%
2024	\$28.3M	-0.3%
2023	\$28.4M	7.6%



## 2025 QUARTERLY COLLECTIONS (ACTUALS)

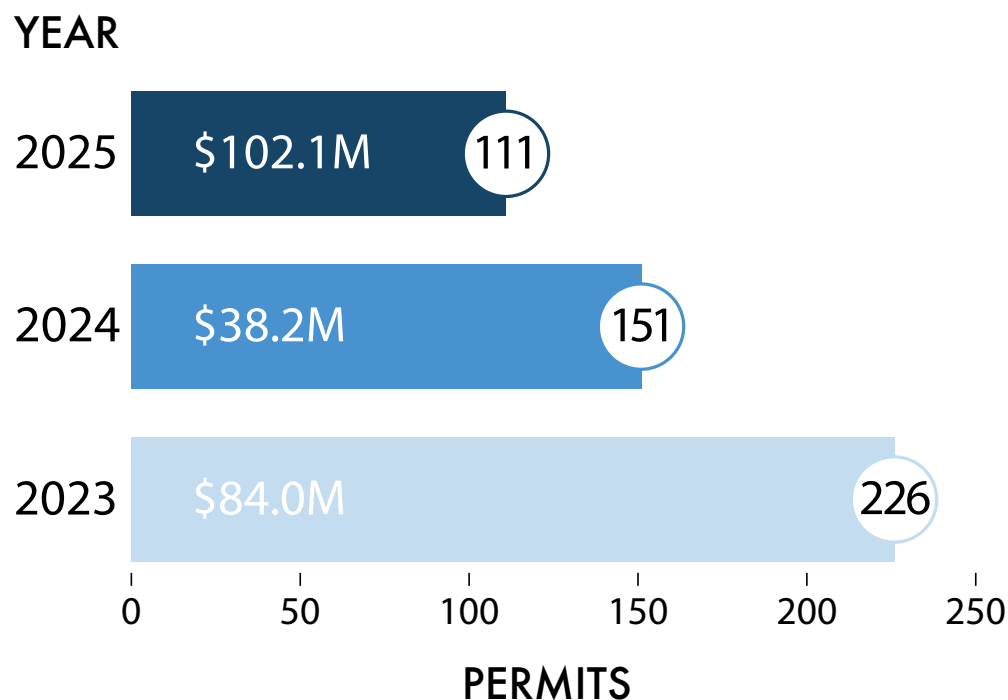
Q1 - \$14,235,500.58      Q2 - \$13,847,796.90

# COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION

YTD, JANUARY - JUNE, 2025 - 2023

*Source: City of Jonesboro Inspection Department Monthly Permit Reports.  
Totals only include new building construction, apartments, additions, alterations, and signs.*

## PERMIT & PROJECT COST TOTALS



## NEW BUILDING CONSTRUCTION TOTALS

2025 - 12 Permits | \$90.1M Combined Value

2024 - 9 Permits | \$11.9M Combined Value

2023 - 24 Permits | \$35.5M Combined Value

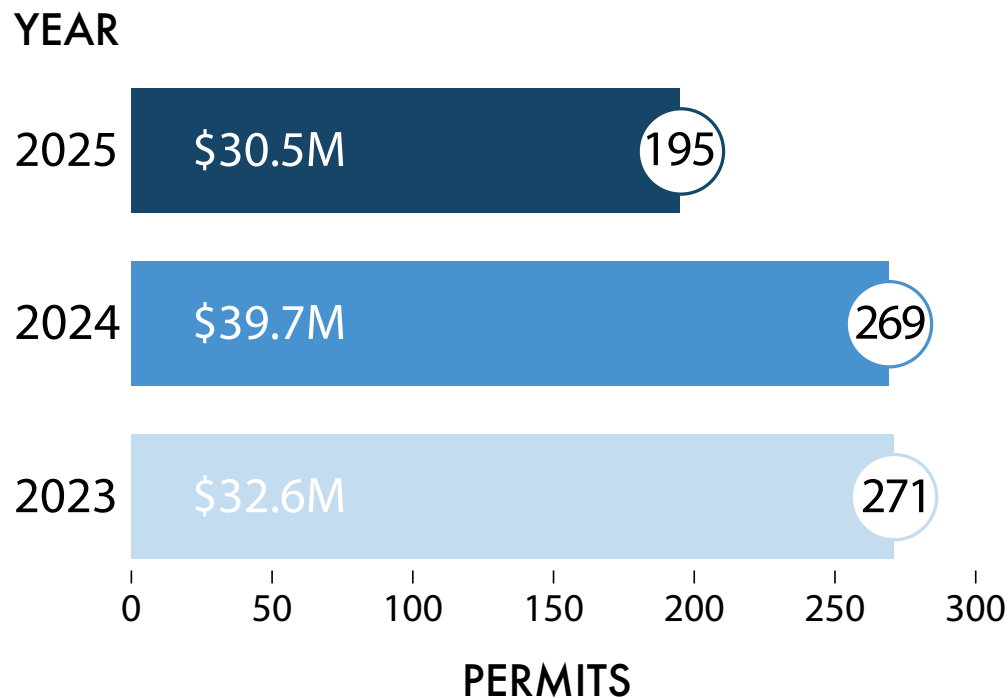
# RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

YTD, JANUARY - JUNE, 2025 - 2023

*Source: City of Jonesboro Inspection Department Monthly Permit Reports.*

*Totals include new home construction, additions, alterations, duplexes, storage, storm shelters, and swimming pools.*

## PERMIT & PROJECT COST TOTALS



## NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION TOTALS

2025 - 111 Permits | \$24.5M Combined Value

2024 - 158 Permits | \$32.4M Combined Value

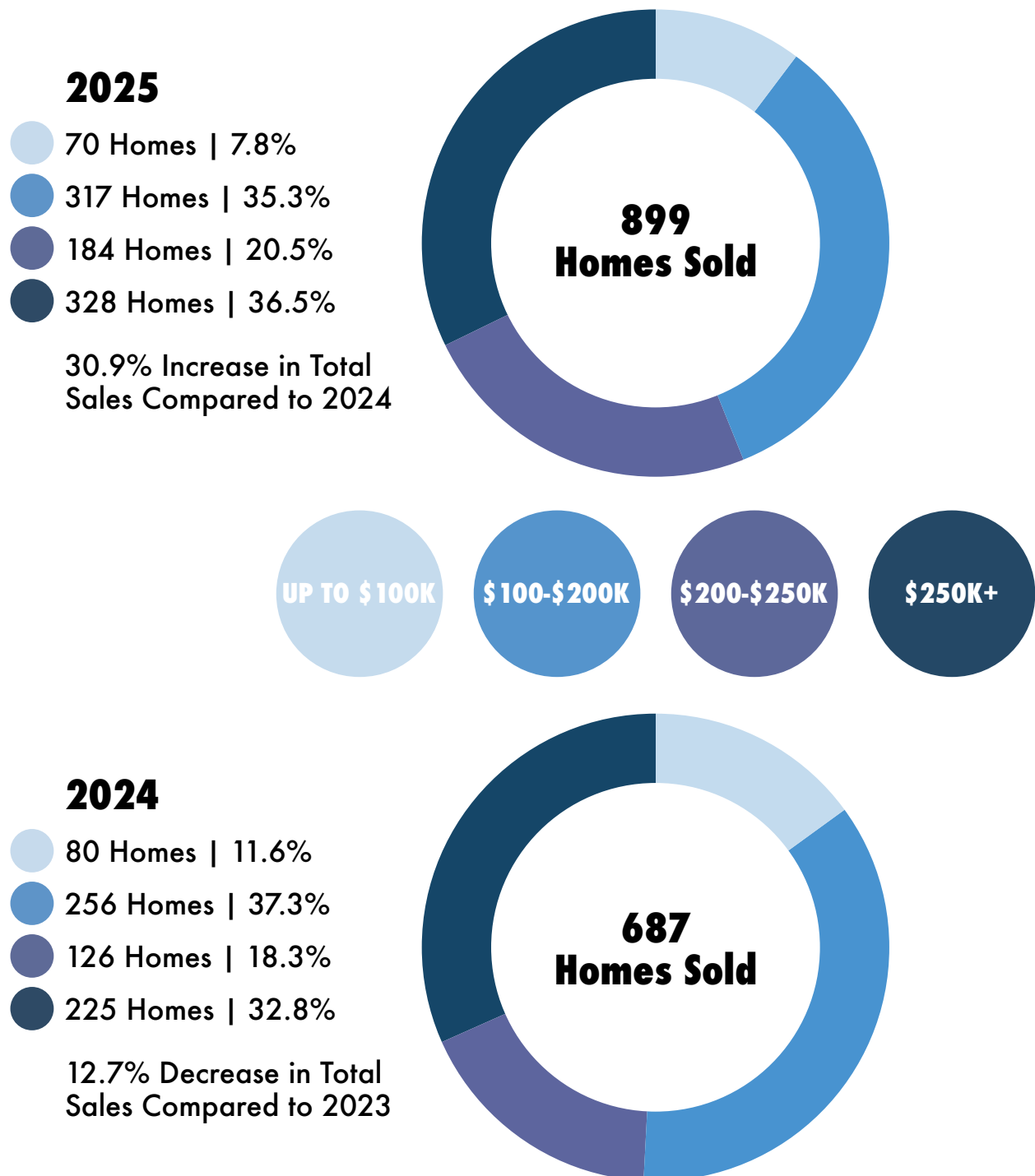
2023 - 135 Permits | \$26.2M Combined Value

# HOME SALES

YTD, JANUARY - JUNE, 2025 - 2024

Source: NEA Board of Realtors Home Sales Reports.

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





**JONESBORO**  
**U N L I M I T E D**

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