

# *Lessons from the Storm*

*Building (and Rebuilding) Strong,  
Sustainable, and Disaster  
Resilient Communities*

# Arkadelphia Tornado March 1, 1997

- F-4 Tornado
- 60 Blocks of the downtown area destroyed
- Destroyed: 76 mobile homes – 70 single family homes –  
7 apartments
- Damaged: 75 single family homes – 10 apartments
- Damaged: 45 commercial businesses – 16 public buildings
- Pulled sewage and gas lines from the ground



# Rebuilding – 2025 Commission

- Commission - 25 members, with 11 permanent seats held by government officials, city and state educational leaders and 14 community-based, at-large seats
- Funding - Economic Development Administration, Community Development Block Grants, the Federal Emergency Management Administration, the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management, the Department of Energy, the Housing and Urban Development Department, the Arkansas Department of Historic Preservation, the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, the Office of Emergency Services, the Arkansas Parks & Tourism Department, Fannie Mae and the Arkansas Development Finance Authority
- Mission - assess community needs, set recovery goals, coordinate between local, state, federal, and private sectors, and serve as the lead agency in rebuilding Arkadelphia

# Rebuilding – 2025 Commission

- Agency Funding = \$15 Million
- Private Investment = \$15 Million
- HUD Housing Equity Buy-Down Program with forgiveness of some debt
  
- Rebuilding efforts spurred:
  - Government Post Office Downtown
  - \$2.5 Million Town Hall
  - An additional \$15 million in construction projects
  - Millage increase for public schools
  - 1 cent sales taxes for parks and rec projects (which included a \$2.3 million aquatic park and a \$1.8 million rec center)





# Clark County Strategic Plan - CCSP

- The CCSP is a long range visioning document created over a fifteen month period by approximately 500 residents of Clark County, Arkansas.
- The CCSP is a comprehensive 10-year planning document that organizes the community's long-term vision into 41 strategic goals and 254 actionable items.
- It is a “Blueprint for Change” for Clark County and Arkadelphia.
- It encompasses six pillars for Community Life:
  - Economic Development
  - Tourism
  - Leadership
  - Education
  - Healthcare
  - Housing



# Main Goals of the CCSP

- To increase the population of Clark County
- To develop a vibrant business environment with a healthy and diverse economy
- To become a leader in outdoor recreational activities
- Develop the downtown area to create a “College Community”
- To enable primary, secondary, and college-level education the ability to provide innovative educational programs
- To increase medical technology to the local hospital and doctor offices
- To produce progressive and forward-thinking leadership

# Funding of the CCSP (2007-2017)

- Since the start in 2007 - \$67,000,000 leveraged dollars in Clark County
- Funding is accomplished through grants and monies from federal, state and municipal agencies, philanthropic foundations, economic development organizations, key regional leaders, legislators, commercial business entities and community citizens through potential county or city tax initiatives.

# Accomplishments of the CCSP

- County Wide Clean-up Funds
- County Wide Façade Grant
- Southwest Arkansas College Prep Academy
- Clark County Charitable Health Services
- Boys & Girls Club of Clark County
- Clark County Farmers' Market
- Iron Mtn. Hiking Trails
- Round About Artists Tour
- Arkansas Downtown Network
- Arkadelphia Regional Economic Development Alliance
- County Wide Jobs Website
- Leadership Clark County
- Diamond Lakes Regional Visitor's Center
- County Wide Master Plan for each city
- Battle of the Ravine Rally
- Ouachita River Bluff Trail and Interpretive Signage
- Regional Fire Training Center
- Art Mural Projects for Arkadelphia & Gurdon

# Leadership Clark County



- Leadership Clark County is a 9 month program to train potential leaders
- One community project must be completed to graduate
- The group trains in all areas of the Strategic Plan as well as local and state government

# Boys and Girls Club of Clark County

- Averaging 70 students a day.
- 75% of members receive free or reduced lunch.
- School attendance ranges between 90%-95% for members.
- A place for at-risk students to receive tutoring and a place to hang.



# Clark County Farmers' Market



- Runs from April to September
- Veggies, Fruits, Flowers, Crafts, Jams, Jellies, & Baked Goods for Sale

# Downtown Arkadelphia Network Goals



- Slim & Shorty's – Grill & Bar with Live Music
- Bliss – Boutique Clothing & Gifts
- Gossip Shop – Boutique Clothing & Jewelry
- Honeycomb Restaurant
- Gypsy Bloom – Boutique Clothing & Jewelry
- KelZek – Fine Jewelry & Gifts
- Laster's – Furniture & Home Décor
- Shuffield Music Co. – Instruments & Lessons
- Java Primo – Coffee Shop, Food, & Bar (coming soon)
- Mary & Martha's – Flower Shop & Gifts
- Glow – Tanning & Boutique Clothing

- Bring events to the downtown area such as concerts, block parties, & Christmas open houses
- Increase retail shopping
- Increase foot-traffic
- Educate HSU/OBU students to the offerings of downtown
- Recently won Arkansas Business' "City of Distinction" award for downtown revitalization

# Matching Façade Grant Program



Before



After



- \$48,000 Awarded to Small Business Owners.
- Over \$150,000 in Improvements.
- 30 Small Business Participated.



# Community Arts Mural Project



- The mural project was funded through a \$25,000 grant from the Mid-America Arts Alliance
- Community volunteer contributed to the design of the mural to reflect Arkadelphia

# Southwest Arkansas College Preparatory Academy



The purpose of the Academy is to decrease the number of students who are in need of remediation as entering college freshman.

# Arkadelphia Promise



- Increase the college-going rate for local students
- Reduce # of students dropping out of college for financial reasons
- Increase enrollment within the school district
- Provide for a more educated workforce

# Iron Mountain Biking Trails



- Currently have 16 miles of trail on the ground. Phase III will add an additional 5+ miles of trail allowing for national-caliber race opportunities.

# Ouachita Bluff Property



- Quarter Mile Paved Trail
- Interpretive Historical Signage
- Possible Education Center if funding is possible



# Arkadelphia Regional Economic Development Alliance – ½ Cent ED Sales Tax

## Tax Money Pledged

Earmarked for Potential Projects. Money has not left the bank.

### Transload Facility Grant MATCH (Railroad Spur)

\$1.7 Million

### Potential Project

\$1.0 Million

### Potential Project

\$1.5 Million

### Potential Project

\$25,000

### Land Purchase Options

\$100,000

### Arkadelphia Regional Economic Development Alliance -AREDA

30% of tax each month

## Tax Money Spent

Money has left the bank.

### DeGray Water Purchase (Extra water for industry use)

\$769,449

### Development/Land Purchase

\$633,639

### Recruiting, Marketing, Office Expenses, Engineering Reports including survey/topographical/environmental, AREDA Staff

30% of tax each month

### Incentive Payments to date

\$434,371 \*

Petit Jean Poultry	\$14,293	
Georgia Pacific	\$80,699	
Alumacraft	\$14,479	25 Jobs
K&P Cabinet Doors	\$30,000	10 Jobs
Print Mania	\$20,000	10 Jobs
Danfoss-Scroll	\$24,900	100 Jobs
Drumco	Assisted	95 Jobs
Rainbow of Challenges	Land	100 Jobs
Vikon/Hillstern Farms	\$250,000	172 Jobs
<b>*TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$434,371</b>	<b>512 Jobs</b>

COMMUNITY SERVICE  
IS NOT ONLY IMPORTANT,



IT'S GOOD FOR YOU  
AS WELL.



SOLD!

WHAT ON EARTH ARE  
YOU DOING OUT ON  
OUR FRONT WALK?!



WAITING FOR THE  
COMMUNITY TO COME  
AND SERVE ME.



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