



# BUILDING MOMENTUM FOR THE FUTURE



## Introduction to Moving Prairie County Forward

I feel that the best method of introducing this report to Prairie County residents is to first introduce the Mission Statement crafted by a group of fellow citizens.

***“Moving Prairie County Forward is a joint effort by the citizens of Prairie County to facilitate community and economic growth by expanding opportunities and proactively planning for the future.”***

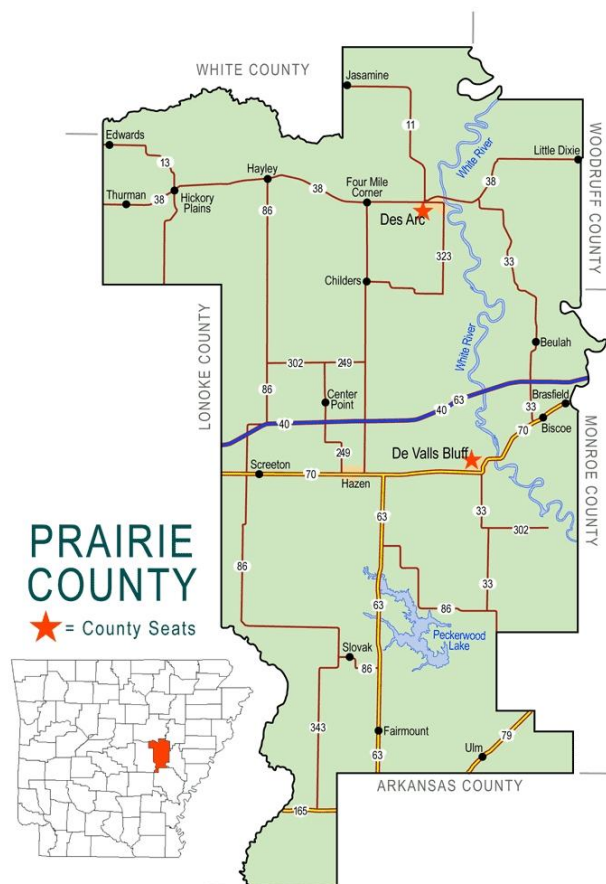
These two lines say a lot about this effort that began several months ago. The two very key and crucial words are **“joint effort”** because without that ingredient we are unlikely to achieve the goals outlined in this concise but forward thinking statement.

The initiative that began the task of uniting Prairie County communities grew from communication with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, which is encouraging all communities to consider the concept of regionalism as they pursue economic development efforts. Two events that occurred in 2011 in Prairie County brought more urgency to our examination of regionalism. The U.S. Census Report of 2010 documented a population loss and perhaps

more alarming was a forecast of declining populations far into the future. The Great Flood of 2011 dealt much of the county a severe blow in April and May, when the White River reached levels not seen since 1927. During and since that devastation we witnessed a fantastic outpouring of compassion and assistance for neighbors who lost homes and belongings. We also saw a monumental volume of donated labor and equipment used to rescue people, protect homes and property. The tasks performed were nothing short of heroic!

It seems very obvious that a fragmented approach to economic development and doing things the old way is simply no longer adequate. Each person acting on their own to combat the floodwaters would not have been nearly as effective. Such is the way with our economic future. When we speak as a county, our workforce numbers, our assets and resources make a much stronger statement about what we have to offer. There is no doubt that rural areas, like Prairie County, face some difficult challenges but when we face those challenges in a unified

manner and with an attitude built on the premise that regardless of where in the county employment or business opportunities expand, we will all benefit.



In addition to selecting a name and adopting a mission statement, much work has been done in reaching out to citizens while relying on a team of professionals to assist us in identifying the issues and in developing strategies that can utilize this current impressive county unity as we move forward to implement specific projects that address the concerns of county residents.

To this point, the countywide effort has functioned with a very cooperative spirit among members of the Steering Committee and our team of professionals. However, the responsibility and burden to follow through on an agenda is ours. Please consider what role you might play in this ground-breaking effort.

Sincerely,

Harvey Joe Sanner  
Chair, Moving Prairie County Forward

## **Moving Prairie County Forward**

The initiative now known as Moving Prairie County Forward began as a way to build momentum for an economic development agenda within the county. Demographic and economic realities from the 2010 census data confronted county leaders and residents, and there was a sense that something must be done so that the county could hopefully influence its own destiny, and not merely wait and watch as indicators projected a bleak future.

Current demographic and economic data for Prairie County were made available by the Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC). This data, as well as some high-level analysis, are provided in the appendix to this report.

### **Building Momentum**

The first meeting that kicked off the countywide effort focused on economic development, and was in Des Arc at the County Annex Building on July 12, 2011. It was held immediately following the regular monthly meeting of the Prairie County Quorum Court, and approximately 50 people were in attendance. A second meeting was held at this location on August 9, 2011, again following the Quorum Court meeting. Approximately 30 people attended. Denisa Pennington, Director of Community Development with AEDC and Kelly Lyon, Director of the University of Central Arkansas's Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED) were both present. The purpose of these meetings was to determine the level of interest in working together as a county. Based on the floods experienced during 2011, as well as the sobering 2010 census numbers, the importance of working together seemed to be understood by those in attendance.

A third public meeting was held at the Hazen Civic Center on September 1, 2011. Approximately 50 people attended, including representatives of AEDC and CCED. The general consensus of the meeting was that there was enough interest and momentum in working toward a county-wide development agenda, but that the group should appoint representatives to get the process organized. By the close of the meeting, a Steering Committee was selected. These members were selected so that there would be one representative from each community in Prairie County, a representative from each of the school districts, and a representative for the County Judge.

### **Getting Organized**

The Steering Committee held its first meeting in the DeValls Bluff City Hall on September 19, 2011. The purpose of this meeting was for the committee members to get to know one another, discuss the committee's role, and to review possible outcomes of the initiative. Harvey Joe Sanner, the original organizer of the first public meetings, was selected as Chair of the committee.

The Steering Committee held its second meeting in the Hazen City Hall on October 17, 2011. The purpose of this meeting was to develop a mission statement for the effort so that it would begin to form an identity and purpose. Renee Doty, a Community

FINAL MISSION STATEMENT,  
AS ADOPTED BY THE STEERING COMMITTEE:

**Moving Prairie County Forward is a joint effort by the citizens of Prairie County to facilitate community and economic growth by expanding opportunities and proactively planning for the future.**

Development Specialist with AEDC, made a presentation on the most relevant and recent demographic and economic data available for Prairie County (provided in the appendix to this document).

The Steering Committee held its third meeting in the Des Arc High School Superintendent's Office on November 10, 2011. At this meeting, the committee adopted an official name for the effort—Moving Prairie County Forward. Developing a project graphic was also discussed.



To keep the county's elected officials updated on the Steering Committee's progress, Amy Whitehead, Coordinator for CCED, and Harvey Joe Sanner addressed the Prairie County Quorum Court at the County Annex Building on December 12, 2011.

By the end of 2011, the Steering Committee had adopted a graphic design that would serve to help identify the effort.

## Gathering Public Input

### Survey development and distribution

The Steering Committee knew that public input and buy-in was important to the process, and so a survey was developed to try and gauge the needs and desires of county residents related to their futures. Toward the end of 2011, the Steering Committee, in conjunction with CCED, developed a survey instrument to be distributed to county residents in a hard copy and electronic format. The committee advertised for this survey through word-of-mouth, newspaper ads, creation of a Facebook event, and email communication.

Beginning January 10, 2012, hard copy surveys were available at eleven sites in the county, including banks and city halls. The survey was also printed in the local paper, and could be clipped out, completed, and submitted by mail. The electronic survey was also available during this time. Survey responses were collected through February 8, 2012.

The survey was four questions long, and asked information regarding citizens' views of the future, what they perceived as county assets, and what the priorities should be for the county's efforts. A copy of the survey questions is included in Appendix B. A total of 114 surveys were collected by the deadline. Of those collected, 73 were completed



online, 19 were completed hard copy by the community at-large, and 22 were completed by a Hazen High School class of students.

The survey results were shared at public forums in February 2012. The responses from the public forums were combined with the survey responses, and are discussed in the next section.

### Public Forums

The Steering Committee held its fourth meeting on January 23, 2012 in Hazen City Hall. Dates were chosen and preparations were made to hold two public forums. The purpose of holding public forums was to discuss the survey results and to hold breakout sessions to seek additional ideas and comments from those present.



On February 20, 2012 the first public forum began at 6:00 p.m. in the Des Arc Elementary Cafeteria. CCED provided a short presentation and acted as facilitators. They were assisted by UCA graduate student Cecil Clark, UCA Outreach Marketing Coordinator Robyn Clark, and Community Development Specialist Andrew Pack of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis - Little Rock Branch. The session was well attended, with 33 citizens participating, and a sense of county unity expressed by many in the audience. Des Arc, Hazen, and De Valls Bluff were represented among the group.

On February 23, 2012 the second public forum began at 6:00 p.m. in the Hazen Civic Center. Representatives from the CCED team, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, and the Arkansas Economic Development Commission were on hand to help facilitate. This meeting was also well attended, with 55 citizens present from the Hazen, Biscoe, DeValls Bluff, and Des Arc communities. Again, the comments were suggestive of a county residents wanting to work together to move forward a countywide development agenda.

### **Asset Mapping**

Moving Prairie County Forward has been characterized by an asset-based approach to planning for the future. The county has many assets, and citizens are ready to look at new ways to leverage existing assets for future success. While this process has not tried to ignore the threats or weaknesses that the county may be facing, it has chosen to focus on the positive assets that create a competitive advantage for the county, and identify strategic opportunities to work together across jurisdictional boundaries.

On the next page, a list of assets for Prairie County has been provided. This information was compiled through citizen input during the public forums and through the survey. It is broken in to various categories of assets, which are defined on the left hand side of the chart.

# Assets Prairie County, Arkansas

## BUILT ASSETS

*buildings, infrastructure, schools, roads, water & sewer systems, main streets*

I-40 / Highways - Rest Area - County Roads - Bridges - Helipads - 911 System - Ambulance Service - Fire Departments - WCA Waste Corporation & Landfill - Crop Irrigation - Grain & Rice Dryers - Stuttgart & Hazen Airports - National Guard Armory - Utilities - Broadband Service - County Water Supply - Electricity - Grocery Stores - Convenience Stores - Available Land & Commercial Buildings - Post Offices - Schools - Healthcare Facilities - Sports Complexes - Grand Prairie Country Club - Riverfront Park - Attractive Downtowns - De Valls Bluff School Facilities - Restaurants & Cafes - Motels

## FINANCIAL ASSETS

*money, charitable giving, grants, access to funding & wealth*

Agriculture - Small Businesses - Banks - Arnold Family Foundation - Grants - Community Fundraisers - Philanthropy - Educational Scholarships - Grocery Stores - Restaurants & Cafes - Central Arkansas Planning & Development District - Riceland Foods - Landfill - Millage - Main Street Government Grants

## POLITICAL ASSETS

*connections to people in power, access to resources, leverage, influence to achieve goals*

Strong Local Governments - Strong County Government - Access to State Government Officials - Access to National Political Leadership - Active Political Organizations - State Representatives - Chambers of Commerce - Family-Owned Media Outlets - Strong Political Leadership

## SOCIAL ASSETS

*groups, organizations, networks, sense of belonging, bonds between citizens*

Good Quality of Life - Community Spirit / Pride - Law Enforcement - Leadership - Volunteer Fire Departments - First Responders - Boy Scouts - Sports Organizations - 4H - Spirit of Cooperation & Caring - Future Farmers of America - Des Arc Industrial Development Corporation - Potential for Regional / County Structure - Smaller Communities Working Together - Head Start Program - Schools / Pre-K - Chambers of Commerce - Nursing / Rehab - Newspaper - Charitable Citizens - National Guard Presence - Social Groups - Food Pantry - Civic Organizations - Booster Club - Cancer Society

## HUMAN ASSETS

*skills & abilities of people, leadership, knowledge, ability to access resources*

Great People / Citizens - Workforce - Motivation - Volunteerism - Curtis Arnold - Philanthropic - Booster Club - High Morals - Skilled Retirees - Local Business Expertise - Chambers of Commerce - Non-Profits - Literacy Council - Youth Workforce - Charitable Citizens

## CULTURAL ASSETS

*ethnicity, generations, stories & traditions, spirituality, habits, heritage*

History - Churches / Spirituality - Tourism - Civil War Markers - Lower White River Museum - Hazen Train Depot - Steamboat Days - Fort Lincoln Fest - Rice Festival - Food - Festivals - Sports - Museums - Band Concerts - County Fair - School Spirit & Competitiveness

## NATURAL ASSETS

*the environment, natural beauty, lakes, rivers & streams, forests, wildlife, soil, local landscape*

White River - Nature / Scenery - Farm Land - Hunting / Fishing - Parks / Recreation - Guide Services - Cache River Refuge - Potential Riverport Sites at De Valls Bluff & Des Arc - Water - Large Tracts of Land - Lake Des Arc - Raft Creek WMA - Dagmar WMA - Wattensaw WMA - Bayou Des Arc - Numerous Oxbow Lakes - Wildlife - River Transportation - River Trail - Camping & Trail Areas

## Vision for the Future

When discussing the future of Prairie County, there were definite trends related to what residents would like to see happen over the next 20 years. Information on the vision statements, listed below, was gathered through the survey and public forums. Though a shared vision is beginning to form among residents, there also seems to be an emerging consensus that a focused approach to development would be necessary to achieve this desired future state.

Based on citizen input, the following vision statements have been developed:

**In 20 years, Prairie County should be a thriving community where people will want to live, because there is available housing, a healthy retail business community and job opportunities.** A proactive approach to housing needs, including addressing housing blight, affordability and availability, will be developed. Retail opportunities will be identified by understanding where and how local dollars are leaking out of the community. Economic development efforts will become more coordinated, with a focus on creating jobs in the way that makes the most sense for the county, which could include small business development, expansion of existing businesses, or attraction of new business investment.



“To improve Prairie County it will take commitment. We must be persistent and take the first step. This group is a seed for change. Even though there will be snags, we must remain persistent in what we do.”  
—Hazen Forum Participant

**In 20 years, Prairie County should be a place that has a continued commitment to educational excellence.** In order for the county to succeed economically, residents know that a trained and ready workforce will be needed. A focus on training, educational attainment, and school excellence will become a point of pride and a competitive advantage for the county.

**In 20 years, Prairie County should be a place with opportunities to develop active and effective youth and adult leaders.** Developing leaders will be critical to implementing a proactive agenda for the county’s future development. Increased collaboration and communication among existing leaders and opportunities to engage new leaders will be the hallmark of a successful regional effort. Youth involvement and leadership development will bring fresh ideas and energy to community building, and offer county youth an opportunity to see that they are valued and needed.

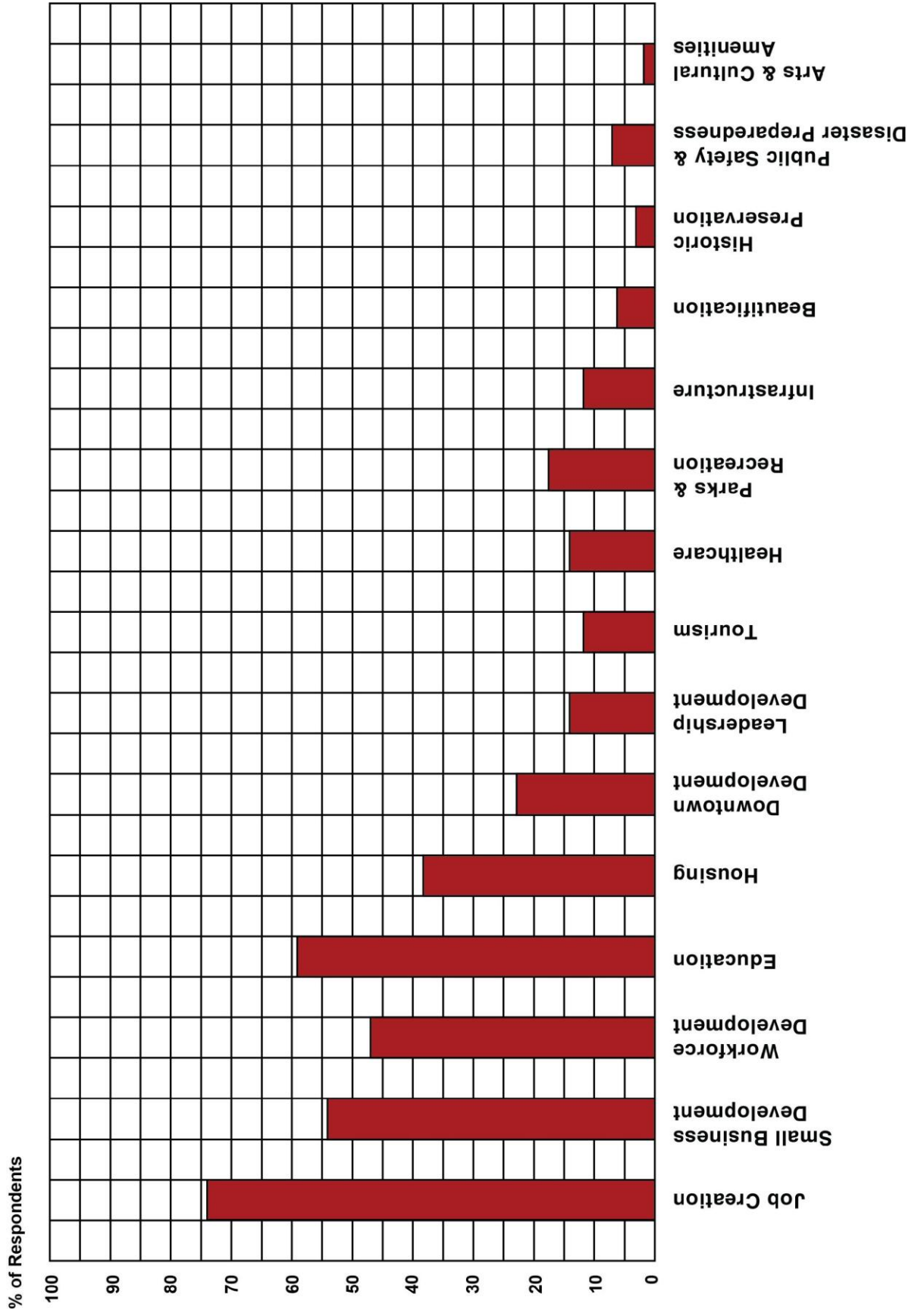
## Priority Areas

Based on the assets identified in the county, as well as the vision for the future that was articulated by residents, it was important to hone in a set of key priority areas that should be the focus for county-wide efforts over the next several years.

A bar graph is provided below that reflects the priority areas that residents felt most strongly about. These categories were developed for the purpose of the survey. The bar graph results are a compilation of the survey results and voting that took place in the public forums. Job creation, small business development, workforce development, education, and housing were all ranked high during the public input process.



## Priority Areas Prairie County, Arkansas



There is much overlap among the top-ranked priority areas. For instance, education and workforce development are two different ways of saying the same thing—a prepared workforce is important to the future of the county. From preschool through high school education, to skills and vocational training and higher education, developing an educated, skilled workforce will reap positive benefits. These benefits include attracting and retaining families to the county who are interested in high quality educational opportunities for adults and children in the family, preparing current residents for entrepreneurial endeavors that will create jobs in the county, and attracting and retaining businesses in a time when labor can be one of the primary drivers behind an investment decision.

“When doing these things, we don’t know where we will end up but we have to try. Although the population of the county is small, if we think regionally then there is potential.”  
—Hazen Forum Participant

Understanding the role of education on economic development will help county residents see that they are inextricably linked. Job creation and small business development will depend not only on an educated workforce, but on local leaders educating themselves on the “how-to’s” of doing economic development in today’s and tomorrow’s competitive environment. Recommendations related to economic development efforts are provided further on in the document.

### **Opportunities and Challenges of a County-wide Effort**

At the public forums, participants were asked for input on a wide variety of issues, including identifying new ways that county leaders would need to work together to be successful, and any barriers that might arise as the development efforts matured.

Participants thought that there were several opportunities to work together to achieve the vision, as it is articulated above. Breaking down barriers between communities and generations and to work together as a unified group with a common goal was a common theme in both public forums. Working together as a unified group would allow county leaders to set goals, improve community involvement, and motivate one another. Forum participants believed that Prairie County has a lot of offer citizens, and that it is important to make people more aware of the county’s assets. Marketing the county and its assets would help with the development of the community, as would continuing efforts to get public input and buy-in. Partnering with key community groups and organizations would be a big part of that process, as would educating leaders on how to successfully develop their communities as part of a regional approach.

“I live in DeValls Bluff and I needed help in raising money for my sick child. All towns in our county gave and it’s that spirit of giving and caring that will make any project a success here in Prairie County.”  
—Hazen Forum Participant

Citizens believe that these opportunities to work together are achievable, and necessary, but several challenges were also discussed. Community competition can have some healthy benefits, but overcoming rivalry for the greater good of the county will be important. Attitudes of negativity, pessimism, apathy, jealousy, and competing priorities could derail efforts if not dealt with in a respectful and open way. However, by organizing as a county and utilizing available technology, these challenges can be overcome.

## Recommendations

While the vision and priorities of Prairie County citizens are now known, turning these ideas in to reality will take a sustained and dedicated effort from county leaders and citizens. Community development and economic development do not happen by accident—visionary leadership, resource development, strategic partnerships, collaborative activity, and a sense of self-help and responsibility will be required.



Based on the input from professional community and economic developers in the state, the following recommendations should be considered by the citizens of Prairie County as they begin to chart out a course for implementation.

### **Recommendation # 1: Establish a permanent, county wide economic development entity**

The steering committee of Moving Prairie County Forward has been charged with seeking public input from county residents and organizing an initial effort. However, in order for implementation of these ideas to take root and be sustained, a permanent group of leaders needs to be established to oversee and conduct development efforts on behalf of the county. Knowing that communication and coordination are critical to the effort, a permanent body would be able to facilitate the process more effectively than an informal group of volunteers. Several Arkansas counties have formed economic development entities. Prairie County may find it beneficial to contact those counties to learn from their experiences.

### **Recommendation # 2: Members of a Prairie County economic development entity should consider undergoing economic development training**

Those in the county who will be tasked with working on development issues need to have the most up-to-date information on tools and strategies for achieving success. This means that leaders will need to be educated on how to develop the community. Trainings that might be beneficial include:

- How to work with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and other state agencies
- How to develop sites and buildings
- How to market the community
- What mix of economic development strategies make the most sense for the county, which might include an emphasis on entrepreneurship and small business development
- How to respond to requests for information and request for proposals from investors
- Identifying and developing competitive grant applications

The education process might also include surveying similar communities who have had success in economic development to see if any of their practices would be transferrable to Prairie County.

If the county ever develops a position for a part time or full time economic developer, that person would need to attend professional training on how to conduct community and economic development if they were not an experienced or a trained professional in the field.

### **Recommendation # 3: Involve private sector leaders**

The development process requires many different types of leaders, including volunteers who are willing to commit time and resources, elected officials who can impact public policy and support, as well as school district and faith-based leaders. It is also very important to include private sector leaders in the process of development. Private sector leaders are able to add continuity, expertise, and resources to an effort that might not be available from other types of community leaders. The private sector is a direct beneficiary of improved community vitality and economic growth, so having these leaders at the table will be important to sustaining the effort.

### **Recommendation # 4: Conduct a target market analysis and target industry analysis**

In order for leaders to be effective at economic development, they must use their limited resources wisely, and in a targeted fashion. This results in a higher return on investment.

There are certain types of people and certain types of business and industry sectors that are a natural fit with Arkansas, with different regions of the state, and with different communities in the state. The approach that works in one county may not be suitable for another county. A shotgun approach to economic development spreads limited resources over many different projects or leads, with hopes that one of them will hit a target. This is not the most effective strategy.

Prairie County should work to better understand what types of people or investors would be a natural fit with the community, and then target resources on those areas. This may take time and money to develop, but it will inform a strategic marketing effort and give guidance to development leaders on how to utilize their time and efforts.

### **Recommendation # 5: Develop a marketing campaign and county-level web presence that can be used for development efforts**

Once the county understands the types of people and investors that they want to retain, attract, or create, a marketing campaign and web presence can be developed so that the target audiences (and yes, there will probably be more than one) can easily access the information needed to make decisions about the county. As an example, the marketing information that the county would provide to a tourist would be different than the marketing information provided to prospective residents or prospective companies. Understanding the information requirements of these groups, and fashioning a web presence based on those requirements, will provide Prairie County an advantage.

### **Recommendation # 6: Establish a dedicated source of funding for development efforts**

Sustained, effective economic development requires resources: of time, expertise, and money. To be competitive, a community must begin to consider how they will compete with other communities that have dedicated funding streams for economic development. Offering financial incentives, developing a robust website, and having a professional staff member are all things for Prairie County to consider, but the effort will not move much beyond the talking stages without an injection of resources.

While the county may be able to tap some external resources for development efforts, ultimately local resources may need to be committed to ensure a coordinated, professional and competitive effort. While many communities get “hung up” on funding issues, there are plenty of communities who have developed funding streams that could be used as model for Prairie County, if and when county leaders and residents are ready to make that level of commitment.

### **Recommendation # 7: Focus on community development efforts to improve the quality of life in the county**

Community development efforts help facilitate economic development. Housing, education, safety, and infrastructure are examples of community development issues that all have a direct impact on a community’s ability to thrive. Community development efforts that focus on education and housing have been identified as priorities for Prairie County. Addressing the need for quality, affordable housing for rent or to own will be important to help attract and retain residents in the area. Providing high quality education for pre K through high school will also allow the county to have a skilled workforce, and serve as an incentive for families to stay in the county.

## **Conclusion**

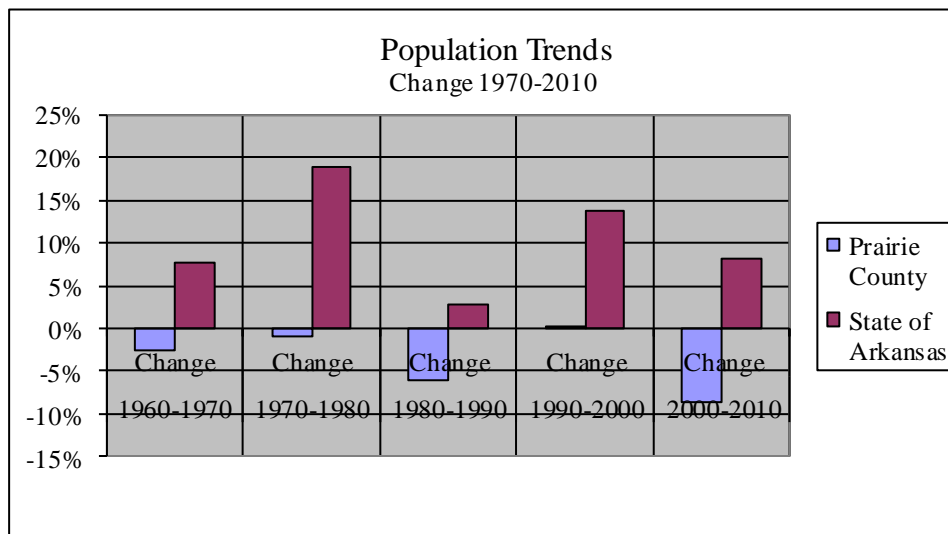
Moving Prairie County Forward is an initiative of the people of Prairie County. The project participants were coached by members of the University of Central Arkansas’s Center for Community and Economic Development, but the momentum for this process has been based in the people’s desire to proactively plan for the future. While many of the ideas and efforts identified in this document are ambitious, they can be achieved if people are willing to work together to create something bigger than any one community could do alone.

## Appendix A. Demographic and Economic Base Analysis

When trying to plan for the future, it is important to understand the demographic and economic data that is available, and use that data to inform the process. The Arkansas Economic Development Commission was able to pull several pieces of data for Prairie County. This section provides an analysis of the data set.

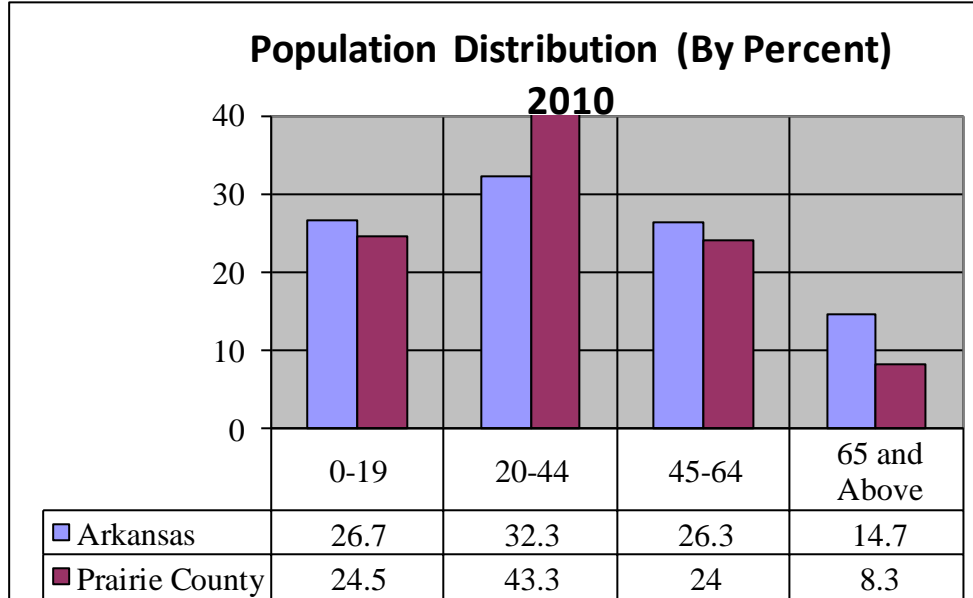
### Population

Since 1960, Arkansas's population has seen a continual increase. The data on Prairie County's population trends shows a somewhat different picture, with decreases being recorded each decade since the 1970 census, except for a 0.02 percent increase from the years 1990 to 2000. The most recent census numbers show that Arkansas population experienced an 8.1 percent increase, while Prairie County had an approximately 8.6 percent decrease.



Sources: 1970-2010 data from US Census Bureau and Census State Data Center. 2010 county and state projections from Institute for Economic Advancement (UALR). 2010 city projection from ESRI.

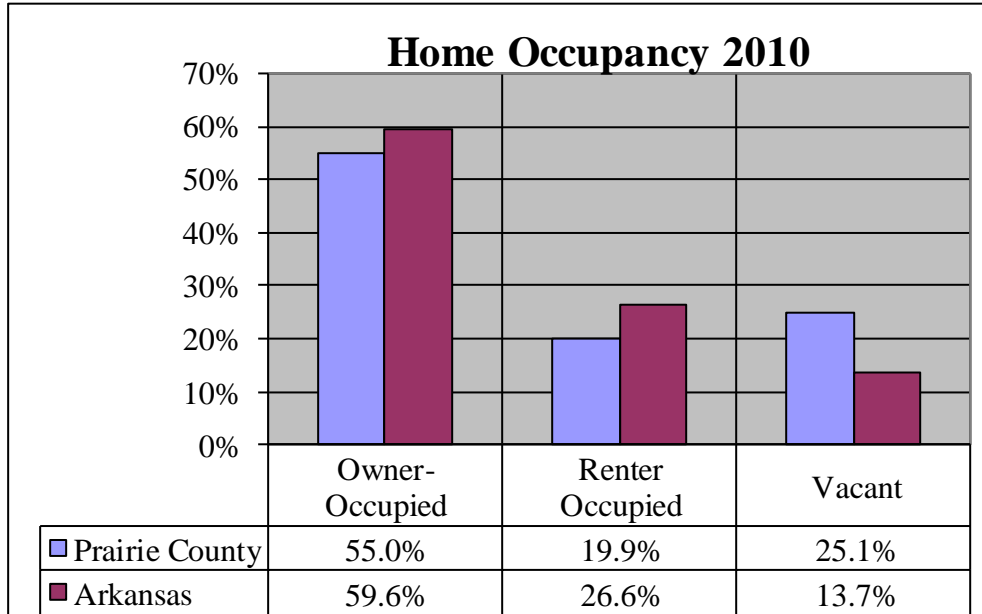
When looking at the 2010 census data, Prairie County's population appears to be more concentrated in the 20-44 age group, with 43.3 percent of the county population begin in this group, as compared to only 32.3 percent of Arkansas's population. Another significant different in population distribution between Arkansas and Prairie County can be noticed in the 65 and above demographic, with Arkansas posting 14.7 percent of its population in this bracket, as compared to 8.3 percent in the county.



Source: ESRI

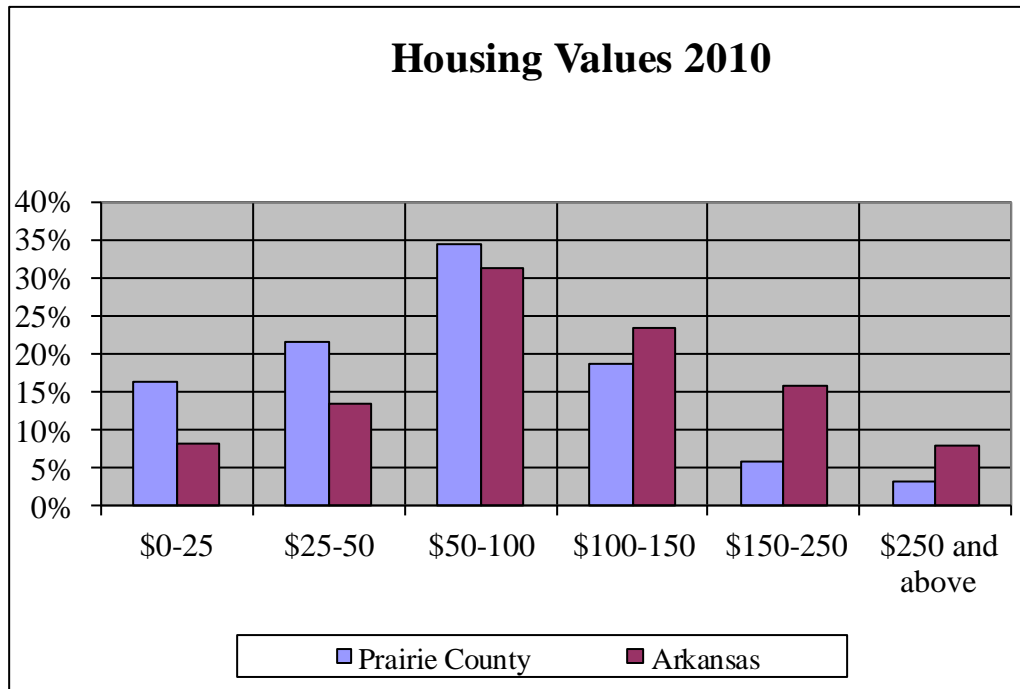
## Housing

When comparing home occupancy in Arkansas to that in Prairie County, we see the biggest difference is in the number of vacant homes. Prairie County has 25.1 percent vacant homes compared to 13.7 percent in Arkansas. Owner-occupied housing percentages are about the same: Prairie County posts 55 percent and Arkansas 59.6 percent. There are few renter-occupied homes in the county, which may have to do with the availability of rental property.



Source: ESRI

Looking at housing values in 2010, Prairie County is consistently higher than Arkansas in the range of \$0-

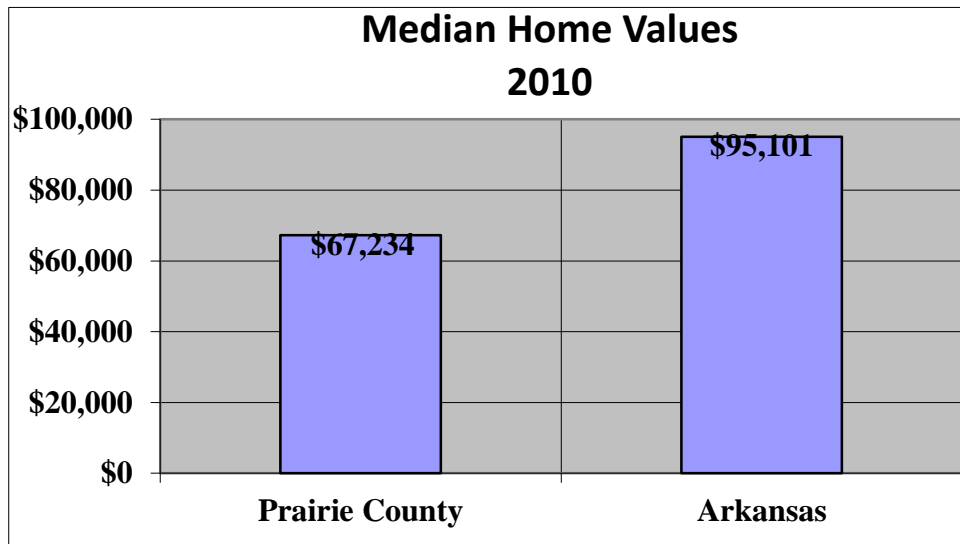


\$100,000 homes. Arkansas is leading in home values in all ranges from \$100,000 and higher.

Source: ESRI



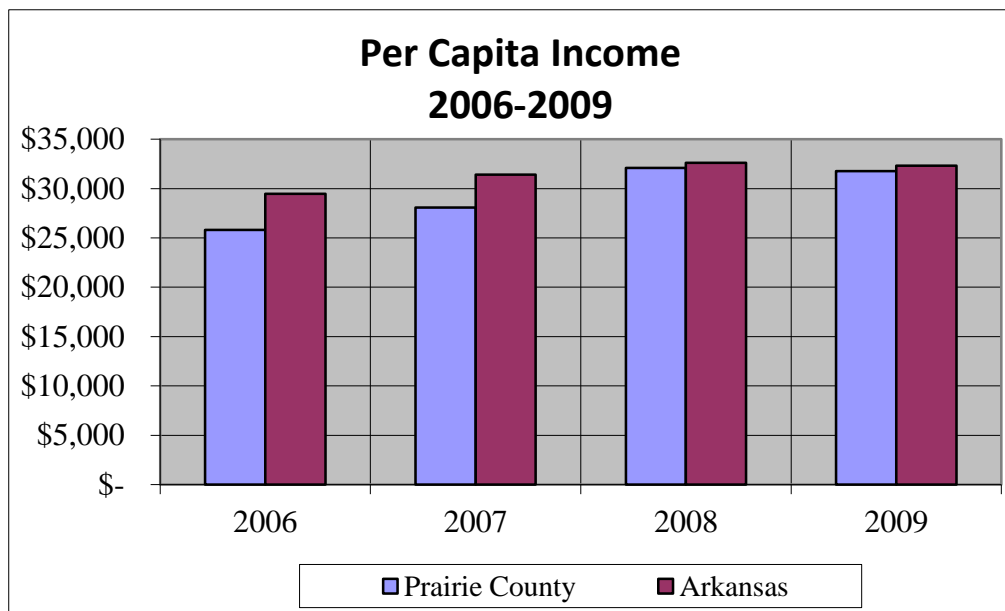
The median home value in Prairie County is \$67,234, compared to \$95,101 of Arkansas.



Source: ESRI

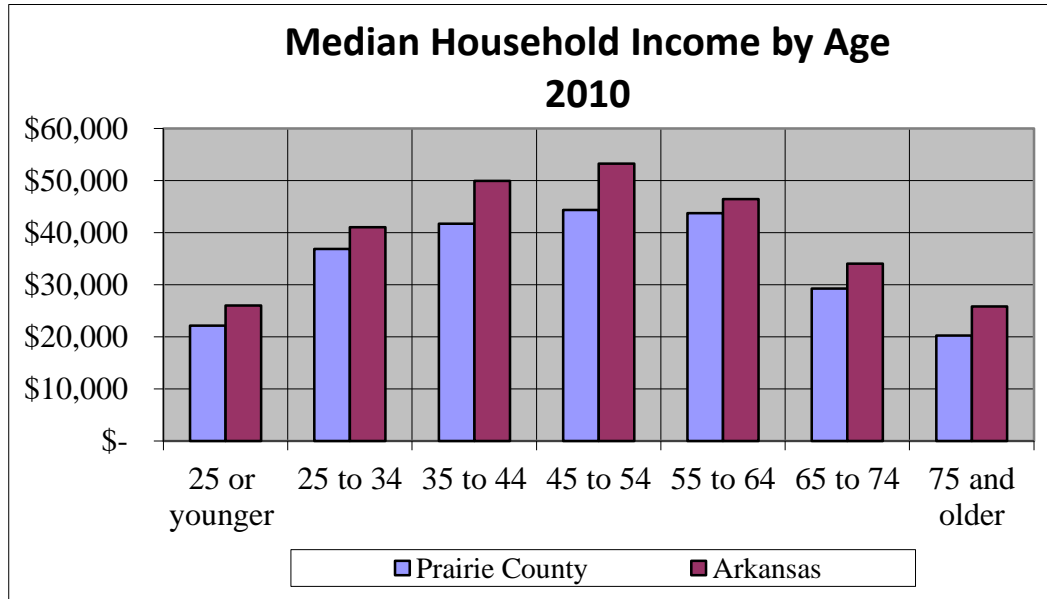
### Income

The per capita income from 2006-2009 has been comparable between Arkansas and Prairie County, specifically in the years 2008 and 2009.



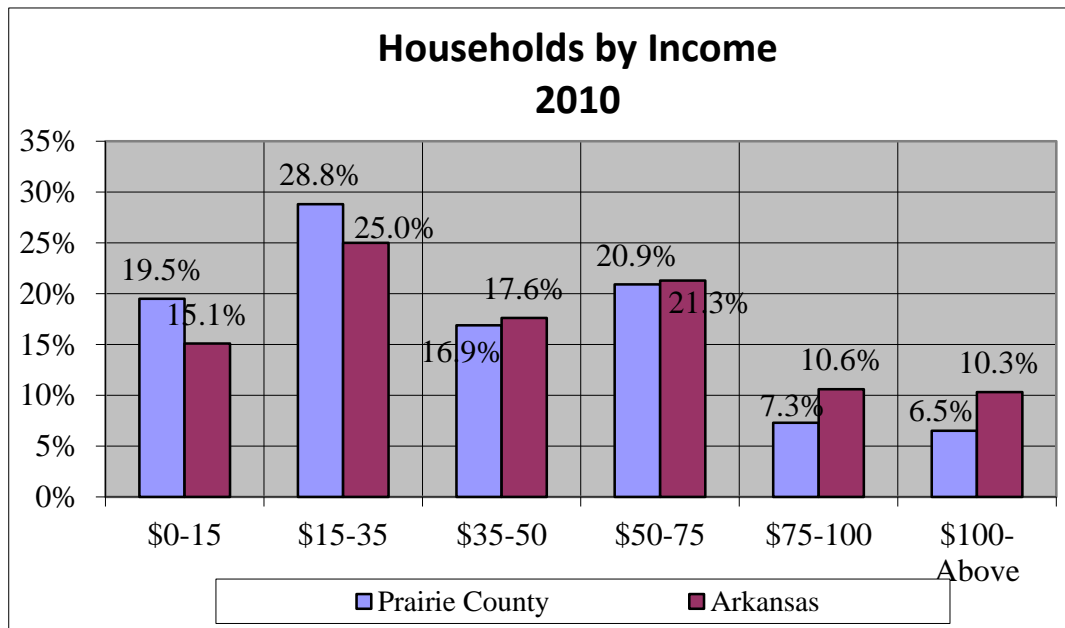
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

In the year 2010, median household income by age was consistently higher in each age group for Arkansas as compared to Prairie County.



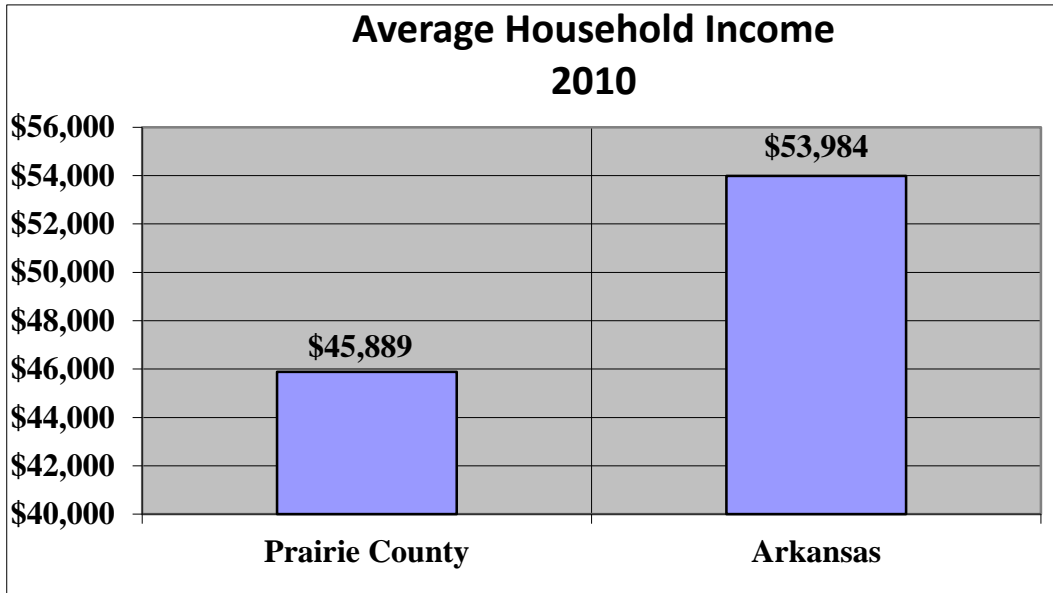
Source: ESRI

In 2010, Prairie County showed a higher percentage of households in the \$0-15,000 income bracket. Arkansas lead Prairie County in each income group over \$35,000.



Source: ESRI

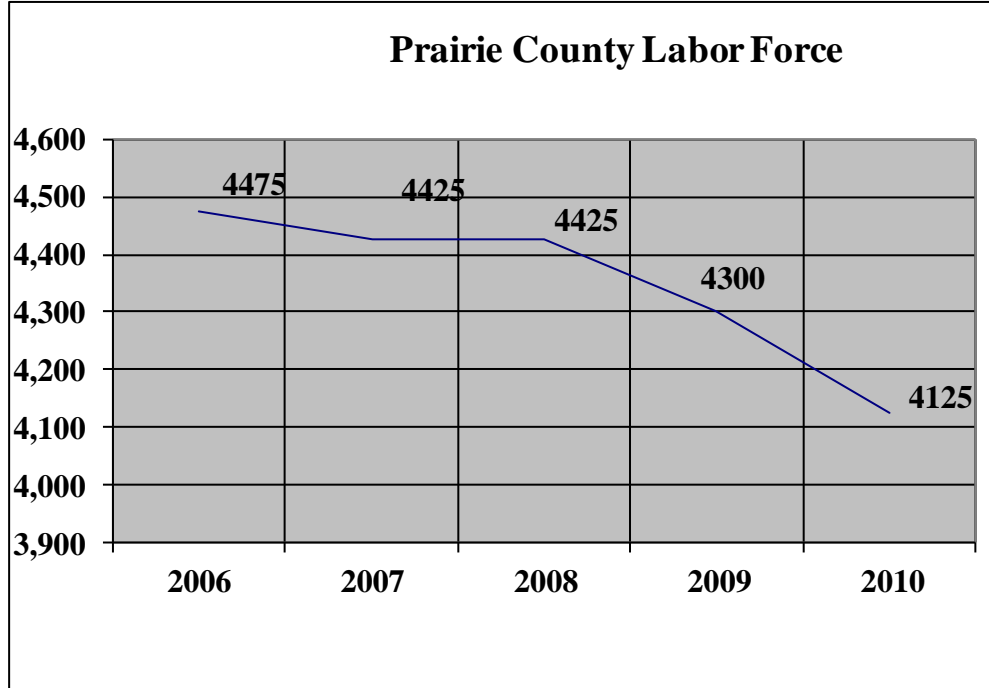
Arkansas households overall have a higher income level, which is also supported by the graph below, which is also demonstrated in the graph below, showing average household income.



Source: ESRI.

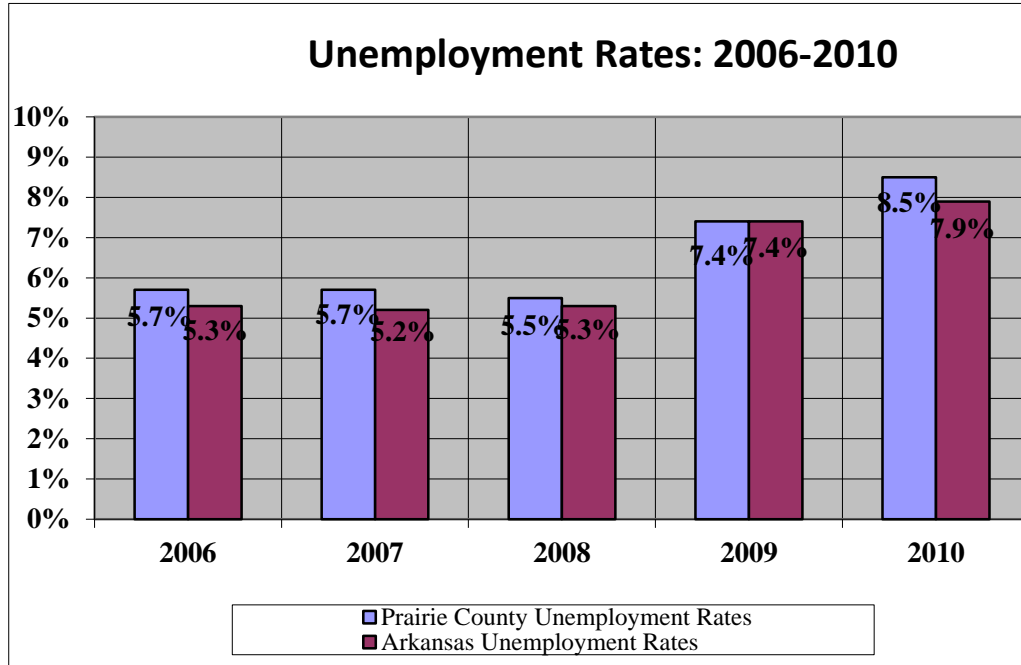
**Employment**

Prairie County's labor force has a mostly steady decline since 2006, which may be attributed to population loss in the county.



Source: Arkansas Labor Market Information, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services.

Excluding the year 2009, where Arkansas and Prairie County were equal, the unemployment rates since 2006 have been higher in Prairie County than in Arkansas. The difference isn't extremely significant during any year. The 2010 difference was the greatest, being 0.6% higher in Prairie County than Arkansas.



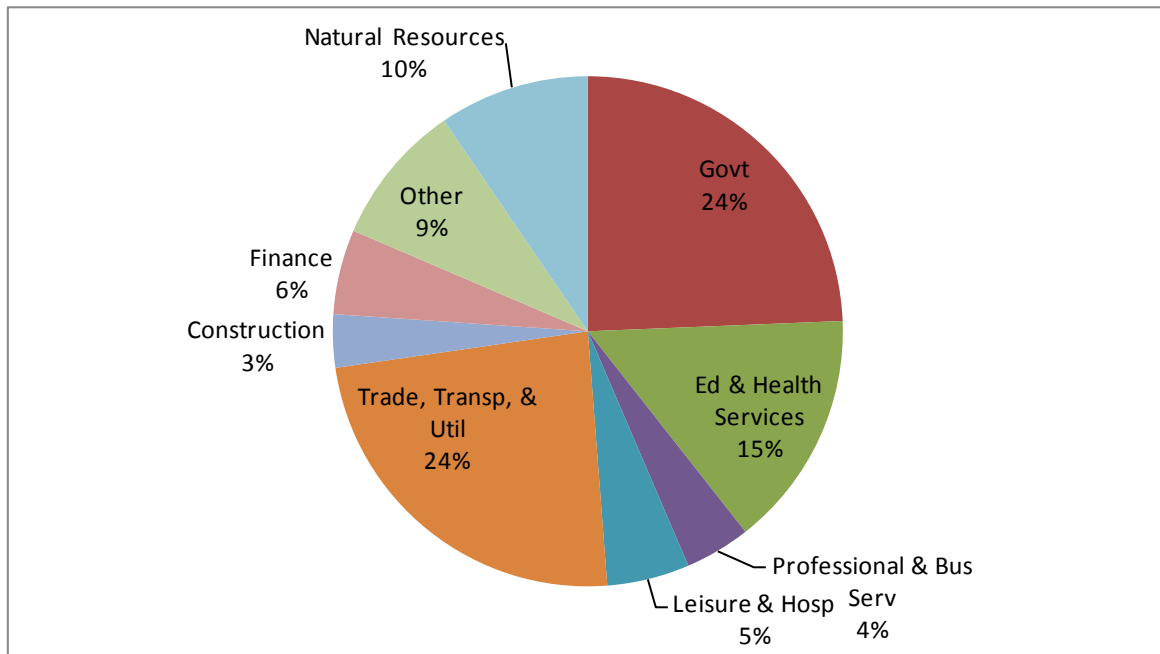
Source: Arkansas Labor Market Information, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services.

Of 75 counties, Prairie County is ranked 70<sup>th</sup> in terms of total travel expenditures, travel generated payroll, and travel generated employment. This may represent an opportunity for Prairie County to grow its tourism-related efforts.

Tourism			
	Total Travel Expenditures	Travel Generated Payroll	Travel Generated Employment
<b>2008</b>	\$4,161,089	\$633,099	45
<b>County Rank</b>	70	70	70
<b>2009</b>	\$3,972,725	\$603,952	43
<b>County Rank</b>	70	70	70
<b>2009 travel generated local tax in Prairie County was \$250,020 down from \$262,280 in 2008.</b>			

Source: Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism annual reports

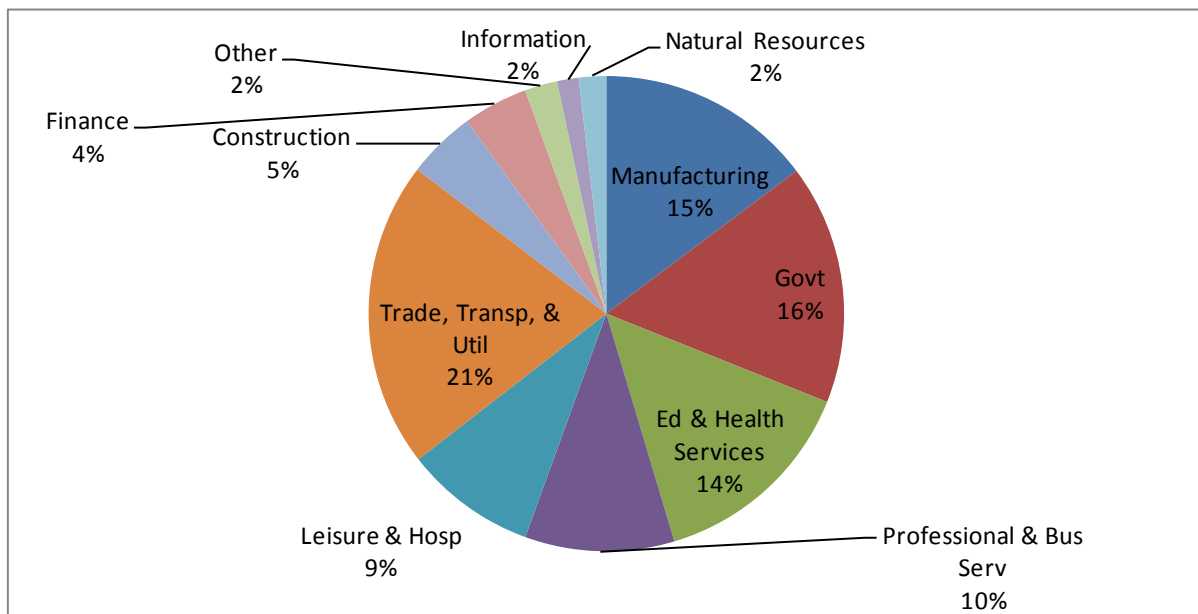
### Prairie County Employment by Sector



Source: 2009 Annual Covered Employment and Earnings, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services.

When looking at employment by sector in Prairie County and Arkansas, Prairie County shows no manufacturing employment and a larger percentage of government employment as compared to the state.

### Arkansas Employment by Sector



Source: Annual 2009 Covered Employment and Earnings, Arkansas Department of Workforce Services.

The chart below shows the major employers in the county, with none of them employing over 250 people.

<b>Prairie County Major Employers</b>	
<b>Employer</b>	<b>Employee Code</b>
Hazen School District	A
Des Arc School District	A
Patterson Hardwoods, Inc.	A
AR Care	A
Skarda Enterprises	A
Des Arc Nursing Center	A
Bancorp South	A
H & N Stores Inc.	A
The Hurley House	A
All Star Travel Plaza	A
Employee Code: A. 75-250; B. 251-500; C. 501-1,000; D. 1,000-1,500; E. 1,501-2,500	

## Appendix B. Moving Prairie County Forward—Survey Questions

1. In your opinion, what does a successful Prairie County look like in 20 years?
2. In your opinion, for Prairie County to grow, what top 5 priorities need to be the focus for the next 10-15 years?

Workforce Development	
Leadership Development	
Tourism	
Small Business Development	
Job Creation	
Education	
Infrastructure	
Beautification	
Healthcare	
Parks & Recreation	
Arts & Cultural Amenities	
Housing	
Historic Preservation	
Downtown Development	
Public Safety & Disaster Preparedness	
Other/Comments	



3. What do you think are the top FIVE assets for Prairie County? Assets are positive attributes of the county.

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

4. If you would like to participate in future meetings, please provide your information below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## THIS PROJECT WAS COMPLETED WITH FUNDING FROM:



The Center for Community and Economic Development (CCED) is a part of the University of Central Arkansas' Outreach and Community Engagement Division. CCED manages the Community Development Institute Central, supports Arkansas communities and community developers, and helps represent the university in its community engagement efforts.

For more information on CCED, go to [www.uca.edu/cced](http://www.uca.edu/cced).



For over 35 years, the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation has worked to make a difference by helping to build and sustain the organizations that serve and strengthen Arkansas. Through grantmaking and strategic partnerships, we are working even harder to help close the economic and educational gaps that leave too many Arkansas families in persistent poverty. Working together, the needle can and must move from poverty to prosperity for all Arkansans.

For more information on the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, go to [www.wrfoundation.org](http://www.wrfoundation.org).