

# MAUMELLE ARKANSAS GENERAL PLAN



Maumelle, Arkansas, is one of the state's youngest cities. It can boast, nonetheless, of a long history of planning. The original community was one of thirteen "new towns" in America created under the New Town Act of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. As such, it developed from a plan prepared by some of the best talent available at the time of its creation.

This document represents the latest in a long series of efforts to continue the city's planning heritage. It is a summary plan, combining the results of a number of efforts in recent history. It also contains new proposals resulting from citizen involvement in two design workshops or "charrettes." The planning commission hosted these to allow residents to take part in determining the future of their community.

The General Plan serves as an official policy statement of the City, outlining its goals and strategies for directing orderly growth and development within its Planning Area. It does not serve to direct growth elements precisely nor is it a zoning ordinance. Rather, the plan should serve as an instrument to influence decision making in a positive manner. It also serves to illustrate in a clear and concise manner the opportunities available to potential residents and investors.

Above all, however, this document provides the citizens a clear standard with which to measure the

progress toward long-term goals.

Several departments contributed to the various proposals contained herein. The Maumelle Planning Commission provided overall direction.

The purpose of the plan is consistent with the provisions of the Arkansas Codes, Annotated (A.C.A.), § 14-56-403. This section states that plans should be "... prepared in order to promote, in accordance with present and future needs, the safety, morals, order, convenience, and general welfare of the citizens."

## BACKGROUND

The modern history of Maumelle began after Native Americans were dislocated by the western march of American immigrants.

Two brothers, Jacob and James Pyeatt, established the first white settlement in the area in March of 1812.

The settlement became known as Pyeattstown, which is now a part of the golf course of the Maumelle Country Club. By 1819, the settlement had grown to include more than 150 persons. It was reported to be a center of fashion, intelligence, and religion. General Edmund Hogan built a home in the vicinity of the River Run subdivision in 1821.

**Maumelle Mission Statement**

*The Mission of the City of Maumelle is to continue to make Maumelle an outstanding place to live and work, where customer service is based on the relationship between the citizens and the city representatives who are committed to provide a high quality of life through security, preservation of natural beauty and a high standard of service.*

Later, Hogan registered a plat for a town site to be called Crystal Hill.

In 1822, Arkansas Territory Governor James Miller bought most of the property that belonged to General Hogan. Miller wanted a new territorial capital built nearby, but the legislature voted to build it in Little Rock. Governor Miller would return to his native New Hampshire in 1822. The land in Crystal Hill for which Miller had paid hundreds of dollars was sold for \$3.99 in taxes in 1843.

Only farmers remained in the area until 1941, when the U. S. Government purchased the land from a number of landowners to build the Maumelle Ordnance Works. The facility produced munitions for the army during World War Two. After the war, the property went on and off the market for a number of years.

In 1967, Jess P. Odom, an Arkansas businessman and insurance executive, submitted a bid for approximately 5,000 acres and set out to build a "New Town." Odom formed Maumelle Land Development, Inc. and with assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, had a master plan prepared. Maumelle is one of the thirteen master planned cities that appeared across the U.S. in the early 1970s.

By spring of 1974, the town's infrastructure, with master plan, was in place and the first family moved in. Maumelle was declared a first-class incorporated city on June 21, 1985. Today, the population exceeds 15,000 and has grown into a complete community full of businesses, churches, and industries.

## REGIONAL SETTING

Maumelle is located on the bank of the Arkansas River northwest of Little Rock in Pulaski County. Maumelle is 20.6 miles south of Conway and is adjacent to the eastern edge of North Little Rock.

Maumelle has one major east-west corridor running through the area, Arkansas Highway 365. The main north-south corridors include Arkansas Highway 100. Maumelle is located near the interchange of Interstates 40 and 430. The city is also located to the south of Union-Pacific Railroad's main line. This is the largest railroad in the United States.

The topography of Maumelle consists mainly of flat land with some hills. Elevations range from 80 ft. to 160 ft. above sea level, generally increasing from

south to north. White Oak Bayou runs eastward through eastern Maumelle and is surrounded by floodplain. Most of the flood-prone areas in Maumelle are undeveloped.

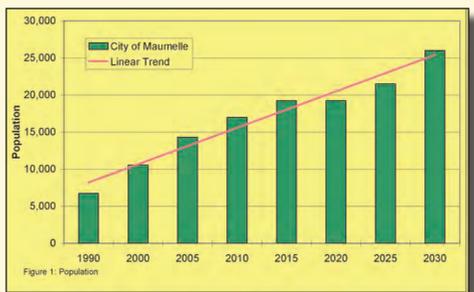
The Maumelle area has a wide range of soils. Most developed areas in the city can be found to have Leadvale soils. These soils series can be classified as having limited to very limited suitability for small commercial buildings, roads, septic tanks, and dwellings without basements.

Linker and Mountainburg soils are found predominantly at the upper elevations in the northwestern part of Maumelle. Pockets of Perry soils are found near the Arkansas River. These soil series have varying suitability, and development should reflect these.

It is important to note that while a particular soil series may have poor suitability for development, this does not preclude a site from being developable. Additional measures are needed to accommodate urban uses, and structures built in these areas may require greater maintenance in the future. Furthermore, soils throughout the planning area generally have very limited suitability for septic tank systems. Due to this, future urban development should be planned around available centralized water and sewer systems.

## POPULATION GROWTH TRENDS

In 2000, the population of the City of Maumelle was 10,557, a net gain of nearly 3,843 persons since 1990. Since 2000, growth has continued at an annual rate of about 5.1%, yielding an estimated population of 16,521 in 2009. Population forecasts for Maumelle through the year 2030 are noted by Figure 1. These figures, prepared by MetroPlan, indicate a future growth trend in population that will closely resemble the trends of the last few decades. By the year 2030, the



city of Maumelle should approach 25,992 persons, a net increase from 2000 of about 15,435 persons. This will no doubt create a significant demand for housing.

## HOUSING DEMAND

Recent trends in housing starts since 1999 have approximated 144 units annually, exclusive of manufactured housing. Nearly nine out of every ten housing units built since 1999 were single-family housing starts. Should current trends continue over the next 20 years, the City of Maumelle will absorb, on average, roughly 170 units annually.

Over the next 20 years, a net increase in population for the City of Maumelle is expected to be approximately 8,628 persons. Such population increase will generate a substantial demand for new housing of all types. Assuming a density pattern of three units per acre, nearly 57 acres per year will be required to meet residential housing demand for the City.

Over the next 20 years, roughly 1,140 acres will be converted from undeveloped land to housing development. As a general rule, residential land use absorption should represent approximately 75% of all areas converted. This will leave 25% for other supporting services: commercial expansion, industrial developments, schools, churches, parks, open space, streets, and other land use activities. These allocations suggest that roughly 1,520 gross acres will be demanded and likely converted from rural or vacant use to urban purposes within the next 20 years.

This land use demand represents approximately 2.4 square miles of urban development for the City of Maumelle of which 1.8 square miles will be for residential purposes. Wetlands and hilly terrain will not support conventional densities. Therefore, it may be necessary to annex additional land into the city in order to accommodate anticipated growth if existing density levels are to be maintained.



Many neighborhoods in Maumelle enjoy access to lakes and trails.

## ISSUES AND NEEDS

During the community charrettes, citizens identified a number of issues confronting the community. Along with these, they identified needs that, if met, would enable the community to address those issues. Following is a summary of the issues and needs as voiced by the citizens.

- Develop a third entrance into the city from I-40.
- Encourage additional commercial development.
- Enforce current building codes especially requirements for sidewalks.
- Secure for Maumelle its own zip code.
- Expand the existing park system.
- Develop and enforce design standards for commercial and public buildings.
- Construct interim traffic improvements until a third entrance into the city is completed.
- Prohibit any additional curb cuts on Maumelle Boulevard.
- Develop a design footprint for the Town Center.
- Unify building design for Town Center.
- Establish an endowment fund to pay for public amenities.
- Strengthen Maumelle building Codes.
- Landscape public areas and City entrances, including Maumelle Boulevard.
- Maintain existing trees and green spaces.
- Enact and enforce a stringent sign ordinance.
- Increase police and fire protection.
- Spruce up public buildings, including City Hall and Senior Citizen Center.
- Create an overlay district for architectural controls in the Town Center.
- Create a wetlands conservation and education center on the peninsula.
- Annex to Faulkner County line.
- Explore securing a new water source, perhaps from Central Arkansas Water.
- Create a connecting path system to Cook's Landing.
- Provide additional tennis courts and racquet ball courts.
- Split parks department into a parks department and a recreation department.

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## Issues and Needs (Continued from Page 3)

- Create additional traffic calming devices.
- Work toward another bridge over Arkansas River.
- Develop Maumelle's own high school.
- Develop a new marina on the Arkansas River.
- Improve ISO rating to a Number Two.
- Support efforts toward building another bridge over Arkansas River.
- Construct a pedestrian bridge over Maumelle Boulevard.



Pedestrian facilities are a major component of Maumelle's planning.

## GOALS

The goals outlined below were distilled from the results of the previous section. They form the base from which present development projects are being undertaken and by which future community development proposals will be evaluated.

Periodically, the planning commission and city council will review and refine the goals to meet unforeseen challenges. In this manner, planning will continue to be an ongoing and dynamic process within city government.

- Maintain the high quality of life for citizens of Maumelle and its planning area.
- Take full advantage of the natural resources within the Maumelle planning area, both natural and man-made.
- Protect and expand the city's system of trails and open-space.
- Protect and expand the city's park and recreation system.
- Maintain and expand development standards that will ensure high quality residential, commercial and

industrial development.

- Create a strong sense of public space within the city in order promote citizen involvement in community life.
- Expand the system of traffic arterials serving the city.
- Improve coordination among community facilities, utilities, and development within the community.
- Maintain an efficient system of land uses that support and complement one another.
- Retain a logical relationship among land-uses and the transportation network.
- Examine logical annexations that will allow the community to expand in logical fashion.
- Create a strong and diversified economic base within the community.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since the original community workshops, the city has effected, or has in progress, a number of accomplishments. A number of these bear mentioning because they will either fulfill or support one or more of the recommendations coming from the workshop.

## Parks

Maintaining and expanding the city's park system were high priorities at the design workshops. To this end, the city has expanded its system by two major facilities. As this document was developing, the city had completed the Diamond Center Baseball complex on the south side of Country Club Boulevard. On the north side of the boulevard, the Diamond Center softball complex was also completed. These facilities greatly enhance the active sports component of the city's park system.



The Veterans Memorial has become a popular attraction for the community.

Another recent addition to the park system is the Veterans Memorial constructed on the banks of Lake Willastein. This is rapidly becoming a focus of Memorial Day and Veterans Day events and a major source of pride for the entire community.



High School under construction in 2009

## Schools

Construction of a new high school will be complete in Maumelle in 2011. This school will replace the existing Oak Grove school. Along with other schools already existing within the city, the new facility will further add to Maumelle's developing maturity as a major, stand-alone city in Arkansas.

## Watershed Management

One of the most exciting prospects for the Maumelle community is the potential management of the White Oak Bayou watershed. The entire watershed contains approximately 1,400 acres, large portions of which lie within Maumelle and North Little Rock. Local leaders have realized the vast potential the area.



Wetlands such as this may become a lasting asset to the entire central Arkansas area.

The watershed provides a valuable habitat for plant and animal species. In addition, it performs other valuable functions such as flood control, sediment retention, pollutant removal, and nutrient cycling. Watershed protection has become a high priority at both the state and national levels in recent history.

The general size and location of the watershed appears on the map on the opposite side of this document. It is readily apparent that wise management of the wetlands could result in a major asset for the entire area.

What is particularly exciting, in terms of managing the watershed, is the potential for recreational and educational activities.

Major shifts in land-cover type have occurred in the wetlands over the last several years. Officials estimate that, between 1999 and 2006, there occurred a 9 percent increase in urban land cover within the watershed coupled with a nearly 9 percent loss of forested land cover.

Consequently, the City of Maumelle, Arkansas, secured EPA funding to begin the process of developing a wetland management plan for the White Oak Bayou watershed. This will represent a pilot program for the area of the watershed located within Maumelle. Ultimately it could become part of a regional ecological preservation, recreation, and educational area for the entire central Arkansas area.

The location of the watershed makes it an ideal location for the developing trail system connecting the cities within the metropolitan areas. This could literally provide access to natural areas for thousands of urban dwellers.

## Other Accomplishments

As this document was being prepared, the city had just finished completing a new fire station and police building in the northeast portion of the urban area. The police facility contains 11,253 square feet and the fire station, 16,158. These will add state-of-the-art technology to the existing public safety system. In addition, the city recently opened a new public works facility.

The City of Maumelle enjoys a proud history of accomplishments that have created a pleasing environment for the families and individuals that make up its population. Through continued planning efforts, such as the ones documented herein, this record will be extended to following generations.

The City of Maumelle moves into the remainder of the Twenty-first Century confident that planning in the past has positioned it well for the challenges of the future. And as this future unfolds, the elected and appointed representatives, along with the city staff, promise continued adherence to the principles of bold and thoughtful planning. At the same time, they promise to respect and protect the very elements that have created a city of choice for so many residents and which will continue to do so for generations to come.



Through the city's model wetlands protection program, those areas can become valuable assets as suggested by this photo-enhancement.

## Acknowledgements

### City Council

- Mike Watson-Mayor
- Lott Roife, IV-Alderman
- Tony Brainerd-Alderman
- James "Jamie" H. Stel-Alderman
- Elizabeth "Liz" Adams-Alderman
- Doug Ladner-Alderman
- Burch Johnson-Alderman
- Jan Hogue-Alderman
- Brenton Witonski-Alderman

### Planning Commission

- John Todd-Chairman
- Wallace Wyeth-Vice Chairman
- Julie K. Kierre-Secretary
- Adrian Greene
- Craig Johnson
- Robin Green
- Mike Fisher
- Dwight Pattison

### City Staff

- Joshua Clausen-City Clerk
- Ja'Nan Davis-City Attorney
- Tyler Wittingham-Finance Officer
- Vernon James-Personnel Director
- Sam Williams-Police Chief
- George Glenn-Fire Chief
- Robert Cogdell-Public Works Director
- Jim Morley-Code Enforcement Officer
- Judy Keller-Economic Development Director
- Phillip Raborn-Parks and Recreational Director
- Jim Narey-Planning Director

Base Mapping - Metroplan

Plan Document - Urban Planning Associates  
Photo-enhancement - Sarah Bennings

