

# **JEFFERSON COUNTY UPDATE**

# **Our Progress**

County Judge Gerald Robinson is focused on growing Jefferson County's economy, repairing and resurfacing roads, creating good-paying jobs, upgrading infrastructure, and improving the county's finances.

# Signature Projects and Accomplishments During the First Term



# \$4.2 Million in County Reserve Funds

3 years ago, the county Reserve Fund was a dangerously low \$30,000. The county Reserve Fund is now \$1.8 million plus \$800,000 in Jail Reserves, \$800,000 in Road Reserves and \$800,000 in County General Reserves. The first term goal was to reach \$5 million in total reserves by 2022 and the county is on pace to surpass that amount with \$6.8 million by the end of 2022.



#### \$600 Million in Capital Investments

New industries are investing millions of dollars in capital investment, creating jobs, opportunity, and development for our area.



#### Over 2,000 Jobs Created

Over 2,000 jobs have been created in 3 years.



# County Employee Raises and Bonuses

Employee bonuses for 3 years in a row and the largest raises ever given in the history of the county.



1st County to Go Solar



Community Involvement



Veteran's Administration Groundbreaking



**Employee Bonuses and Raises** 



Health Department Groundbreaking



E-waste Recycling



Arkansas River Historic Flood Press Conference



Historic Flood Response



#### \$2 Million Invested to Fix County Roads

The county road department invested over \$2 million dollars in new equipment to resurface and repair county roads. Achieved a county record in miles of resurfaced roads completed from base up in 2021. Projected to complete even more miles of resurfaced road in 2022. Resurfacing more miles with fewer road department employees.



**\$2.1 Million to Altheimer, Redfield, and Humphrey for Water Infrastructure Projects** Investing in long overdue water infrastructure improvements in the county. Altheimer, Red field and Humphrey each received \$700,000 to address their needs.



## \$4.9 Million New Health Department

Constructed a 12,834 square foot, state-of-the-art health unit facility on the campus of Jefferson Regional Medical Center that is considered one of the best in the state.



#### \$3.9 Million New Coroner's Office

Constructed a modern, 9,060 square foot Coroner's Office at 503 East 2nd Street in Pine Bluff that can also serve as a multi-use space.

#### \$3 Million New Veterans Service Office

The new Veterans Service Office is a 5,191 square foot facility located at 114 South State Street in Pine Bluff where veterans can access services. It also serves as a Veterans Museum and Memorial that attracts visitors to Jefferson County from around the state.

#### **Remodeled Courthouse**

Installed a new Courthouse roof and installed new flooring, windows, and ceiling tiles throughout the Courthouse. Painted offices, courtrooms, and public areas. Added interior signage and exterior landscaping. Repainted and updated the clock tower and exterior areas. Installed Quorum Court Room microphones and livestreaming equipment.

#### \$20 Million In Carryover Funds

Turned previous budget hardships into an annual carryover of \$20 million. Cut waste and streamlined the budget to improve the county's finances.

#### **Strengthened Partnerships**

Simmons Bank supported the 3 new construction projects with a \$1 million dollar pledge. The county applied for and received \$700,000 in competitive grants from the State Health Department, and Relyance Bank supported the projects with a \$40,000 pledge. Buildings were named after African Americans from Jefferson County who served locally and nationally.



Coroner's Office Groundbreaking



Remodeled the Courthouse



**Cutting County Phone Costs** 



New Road Equipment







**Resurfacing County Roads** 



Saracen Casino Resort Rooftop Ceremony



Coroner's Office Ribbon Cutting



#### \$3,000,000 to Southeast Arkansas College (SEARK)

\$3 million provided to SEARK toward a student center and residential hall that will serve as an emergency facility during future pandemics and natural disasters. The total building project cost to SEARK is \$37 million.



## \$3,000,000 to The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB)

Working with the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and a consulting group to provide \$3 million in funding to UAPB.



#### New Canoe/Kayak Water Trail

Paddling is one of the fastest growing recreational sports in the nation and Jefferson County has unique treasures that many other places do not have. A New Canoe/Kayak Water Trail is coming soon.



#### \$300,000 COVID-19 Survivor's Benefits

Provided close to \$300,000 in benefits to families that experienced economic hardship when they lost a loved one to COVID-19.

# **6 Bridges Replaced**

Replaced a 170-foot bridge on Wilson Road in Wabbaseka and a 130-foot bridge on Mulberry Road in Wabbaseka in 2022. Also replaced 2 bridges in 2021 and in 2020.

#### \$127,000 Energy Savings

Jefferson County is the first county in Arkansas to install a solar panel array. Achieved \$127,000 in energy savings beyond the expected performance over the last two years through solar and other energy efficiency upgrades.

#### \$144,000 Phone Savings

Installed voice over internet protocol (VoIP) phones to cut phone bills. Achieved \$144,000 in savings the first term.

#### \$380,000 Saved Per Year in County Sanitation

The number of customers that the county collects sanitation payments from grew by 5,750 customers within a few months, from 450 to 6,200 customers. Made paying bills easier by adding options to pay online and by phone, and through an automated system 24 hours, 7 days a week. The County Judge's Office saved the county \$380,000 yearly by adding customers and updating the payment collections system.

#### **New County Website**

Launched a new county website on June 20th with additional features that increase transparency, promote engagement and leverage technology for the citizens of Jefferson County.

#### \$400,000 Saved Per Year in Inventory Insurance and Energy Costs

Reduced the vehicle fleet the first week in office which cut costs on maintenance, gas, and insurance. Created a vehicle pool where departments can check out vehicles.

## Remodeled the Road Department

Redesigned the front office to accept sanitation payments. Upgraded the camera system. Installed a backup generator and new fire system.