

# Hot Springs Village Arkansas Legislative Issues

2010-2012



Hot Springs Village  
Property Owners' Association  
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## Hot Springs Village Property Owners' Association

### **HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE AT A GLANCE**

Hot Spring Village, established in 1970, is America's largest gated community. The Village covers 40.6 square miles and is comprised of 26,000 acres. It is located in Garland and Saline Counties 12 miles north of Hot Springs, Arkansas. There are 34,000 property owners. Currently there is a population of approximately 14,000 individuals, with over 8,000 private residences. Home prices range from \$80,000 to more than \$1 million. Volunteering is a major activity. There are over 200 social clubs and civic organizations.

The Property Owners Association, a private, tax-exempt home owners association, is the governing body of Hot Springs Village, and is responsible for all Village amenities including fire and police protection, a public works department that maintains roads, water, sewer and sanitation services for Hot Springs Village, as well as the recreation and golf amenities available within Hot Springs Village.

Hot Springs Village makes substantial contributions to the local economy, school districts, and County, State and Federal Governments. Currently there are **8,000** dwellings, housing **14,000** full-time residents in HSV. Collectively, these property owners and/or residents contribute \$40M in federal revenue via income taxes, **\$11M** in state revenue via income tax, and **\$12.2M** (including **\$9M** specifically for schools) in county revenue for roads, libraries, schools, and governmental operations. Its makeup and services are not unlike many incorporated areas/municipalities within the state of Arkansas and throughout the country.

The Village generates employment opportunities and therefore millions of dollars in income, spending and taxes. Additional household spending generates more jobs and additional millions of dollars to the economic region.



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## HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE KEY CONTACTS

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**STATE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM**

**1. ENHANCE STATE PROGRAMS TO ATTRACT RETIREES TO ARKANSAS**

The community of Hot Springs Village continues to recommend increased emphasis in and funding to State of Arkansas Parks and Tourism Department programs to attract retirees to move to the state. It further recommends the State of Arkansas Economic Development Department recognize retirement and relocation as a “clean industry” and incorporate it as a component of its program to grow the state’s economy.

**2. PROVIDE FUNDING FOR HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS IN GARLAND COUNTY**

The community of Hot Springs Village recommends Arkansas Department of Transportation provide funding to complete the construction of Martin Luther King Expressway from US 70 east of Hot Springs to SH 5 and SH 7 in Fountain Lake; to complete improvements of SH 7 from Hot Springs to the West Gate entrance of Hot Springs Village; and to complete construction of an East-West arterial system from the western terminus of the Martin Luther King Expressway to Fountain Lake/Hot Springs Village.

**3. FUND IMPROVEMENTS TO STATE HIGHWAY 5**

The community of Hot Springs Village recommends Arkansas Department of Transportation provide funding to improve the safety and design of SH 5 from Fountain Lake to Interstate 30 in Benton.

**4. SUPPORT FOR LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO WATERSHED MANAGEMENT**

The community of Hot Springs Village (HSV) seeks concurrence that Saline River Middle Fork watershed issues are best addressed through the efforts of stakeholders working with the Alliance for an Improved Middle Fork (AIM) in cooperation with State and Federal agencies. It is the position of HSV that there are sufficient environmental controls currently in place for the Saline River Watershed.



## Hot Springs Village Property Owners' Association

### **1. ENHANCE STATE PROGRAMS TO ATTRACT RETIREES TO ARKANSAS**

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

The community of Hot Springs Village recommends increased emphasis in State of Arkansas Parks and Tourism programs to attract retirees to move to the state. When looking for a place to retire, potential retirees go to the state's website at [www.arkansas.com](http://www.arkansas.com), the Arkansas Tourist Welcome Centers, "Where to Retire" and similar types of magazines, and/or write the state for retirement information. They are specifically looking for reasons why Arkansas may be the best location in which to retire and to find some retirement communities that may be of interest to them to which they could visit.

Hot Springs Village believes that communities in Arkansas interested in attracting retirees should be profiled (similar to what is being done in Mississippi) in state publications and on the state's website. We recommend additional coverage be given to special benefits of retiring in Arkansas: free tuition to most colleges and universities; home property tax appraisals that will not increase after the age of 65; special income tax breaks for retirement income; and generally lower property taxes. In addition, more emphasis needs to be placed on recreation, particularly golf, where Arkansas boasts some of the most beautiful and affordable golf courses in the nation. We suggest increased advertising in "Where to Retire" types of magazines, development of some new state publications aimed at retirees, and a special section in the state's website, [www.arkansas.com](http://www.arkansas.com), aimed specifically at retirees looking for a retirement location. The State of Arkansas Department of Economic Development should also recognize retirement and relocation as a "clean industry" and incorporate it as a component of their program to grow the state's economy.

Increased funding to the State of Arkansas Parks and Tourism programs by the Arkansas General Assembly is essential, and a stronger focus by that department on retirement and relocation, is essential to implementing these recommendations, and to the enhancement of our state as a retirement and relocation destination.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Attracting retirees is a major growth and economic development opportunity for Arkansas and its communities. Retiree relocations boost the local economy via creation of jobs as the result of increased spending of the retirees' disposal income. An Arizona study showed that relocated retirees create new jobs at the rate of 1.2 to 2.5 per retiree family moving to the state. There are estimated to be 79 million baby boomers approaching retirement age throughout the next 15 years. Of that number, 20% are estimated to move to another state when they retire. That is 15 million retirees who are looking to relocate to another state upon retirement. Arkansas has many advantages for retirees and a major push should be made to attract them to this state.

Currently, the State of Arkansas is attracting retiree interest primarily through magazine advertising, state tourism materials, and the relocation section at [www.arkansas.com](http://www.arkansas.com). Formerly, the State of Arkansas had an *Arkansas Retirement and Relocation Guide*, but a *Living in Arkansas* magazine recently replaced it. While this is a very good publication, it has more general interest and has little focus on retirement. This current marketing campaign produced over 30,000 inquiries in 2005 which is considerable, but we believe this could be greatly expanded to position Retirement/Relocation as a "clean industry" for the State of Arkansas, thus taking advantage of the huge economic boon it could mean to Arkansas.



## Hot Springs Village Property Owners' Association

### **2. PROVIDE FUNDING FOR HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS IN GARLAND COUNTY**

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The community of Hot Springs Village recommends Arkansas Department of Transportation utilize federal assistance to provide funding to complete the construction of Martin Luther King Expressway from US 70 east of Hot Springs to SH 5 and SH 7 in Fountain Lake; to complete repaving of SH 7 from its current terminus just south of the Hot Springs Village west gate entrance to that entrance; and to complete construction of the belt system from Fountain Lake/Hot Springs Village to the western terminus of Martin Luther King Expressway.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Hot Springs Village covers 40.6 square miles and is comprised of 26,000 acres with 34,000 residential property owners. Currently there are 8,000 dwellings, housing 14,000 full-time residents but future growth projections will multiply those numbers exponentially. HSV residents utilize SH 7 to access commercial businesses along these routes, as well as those in the neighboring city of Hot Springs. Additionally, Hot Springs is the county seat for Garland County and is home to centers of higher education as well as emergency medical services.

- **MARTIN LUTHER KING EXPRESSWAY:** Since 1987, \$71.7M has been spent to complete a Hot Springs by-pass from SH70 East to SH270 and SH70 West. However, cost projections are \$80M for the remaining 5.5 miles needed to complete this project, which will connect SH5 and SH7 from the north to the by-pass. Earlier concerns by interested federal agencies have been alleviated, thus removing previous administrative road blocks to the project. Completing MLK Expressway would provide improved access between Hot Springs Village and Hot Springs (via the by-pass connection) for all residents and is essential to emergency services response times in saving lives requiring transport to the city. This project should move forward.
- **SH 7:** Hot Springs Village recognizes and is deeply appreciative of the improvements to SH 7 from Fountain Lake to near the Village's West Gate entrance that have occurred over the past two years. They have greatly enhanced the flow of the estimated 16,000 vehicles daily passing through that thoroughfare, and thus have facilitated commercial activities in the region and enhanced the security and safety of its citizens. However, those improvements were terminated less than one mile south of the Village's West Gate entrance leaving a short stretch of rough pavement and pot holes to greet north bound drivers. We strongly recommend the Arkansas Department of Transportation complete the task it has so competently begun by re-paving the previously described stretch of SH 7, along with other stretches of SH 7 that need repair.
- **Beltway:** Begin a study for construction of a loop to connect MLK Expressway at Hwy 270 west to the entrance of Hot Springs Village. Completing this construction will provide improved access between Hot Springs Village and Hot Springs and essentially completes MLK Expressway. This is especially important to HSV residents for access to medical and educational facilities, and industrial businesses in this corridor. This project currently ranks as the number nine priority of Hot Springs Area Transportation MPO.



## Hot Springs Village Property Owners' Association

### **3. PROVIDE NECESSARY FUNDING FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO STATE HIGHWAY 5 FROM BENTON TO HOT SPRINGS VILLAGE**

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The community of Hot Springs Village (HSV) requests the State of Arkansas, through the Arkansas Department of Transportation, provide necessary funding to bring SH 5 from Interstate 30 in Benton to Fountain Lake into compliance with current highway safety and design standards.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Hot Springs Village currently has nearly 14,000 full-time residents who enter/exit SH 5 via its east and Balboa gate locations in excess of 500,000 times annually. Studies indicate traffic on SH 5 from Hot Springs Village alone result in approximately 11,000 cars per day. Residents from HSV utilize the two major ingress/egress points of the east gate at Desoto Blvd. and the Balboa Road gate to access SH 5 to frequent businesses along this route, as well as in the neighboring cities of Benton, Bryant and Hot Springs. Furthermore, this is the most direct route to Interstate 30 and Little Rock.

Benton is the county seat for HSV residents living in Saline County and is a major center for medical services, shopping, dining, and entertainment. Likewise, Little Rock provides expanded medical services, shopping, dining, cultural events, and entertainment opportunities plus transportation depots to national and international destinations via Little Rock National Airport.

Maintaining roadway surfaces with frequent overlays is essential to emergency service response times in saving lives requiring transport to Benton, and HSV and is deeply appreciative of the resurfacing of SH 5 that has occurred the past year. However, bringing this highway to current design and safety standards should be a priority to further enhance emergency services' ability to provide optimum response times to save lives.

The Department of Transportation has been extremely helpful in agreeing to improve SH 5 at the east gate entrance of HSV. It also has committed to improve the SH 5 shoulders from the Saline River to Interstate 30 in Benton as funds become available, and has authorized funds for planning additional improvements. HSV is hopeful that additional funding can be provided and improvements can be made to SH 5 as traffic continues to grow exponentially on this heavily utilized road to Benton, Bryant, and Little Rock.

The Saline County Transportation Plan includes a recommendation that a specific plan be developed to route SH 5 through a new corridor northwest of Benton to Little Rock. HSV endorses this recommendation and supports the request for the necessary funding to make this a reality.



## Hot Springs Village Property Owners' Association

### **4. SUPPORT FOR LOCAL SOLUTIONS TO WATERSHED MANAGEMENT**

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The community of Hot Springs Village (HSV) seeks concurrence that Saline River Middle Fork watershed issues are best addressed through the efforts of stakeholders working with the Alliance for an Improved Middle Fork (AIM) in cooperation with State and Federal agencies. It is the position of HSV that there are sufficient environmental controls currently in place for the Saline River Watershed. Further, it recommends conducting on-going dialog with appropriate state and federal agencies to assure all applicable regulations are met consistently and in a manner that is compatible with the economic realities of our community.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Hot Springs Village is a part of both the Middle Fork and South Fork watersheds and has riparian rights to the Middle Fork of the Saline River. The capacity of the potable water supply system and the safe yield of the Middle Fork are sufficient to meet HSV's potable water needs through 2050. A safe yield study conducted by Garver Engineers in 1996 indicated that the HSV potable water system would support the complete build out of HSV.

Hot Springs Village is a gated community with nine excellent golf courses that require supplemental irrigation to protect the investment of property owners. HSV uses seven of its 10 lakes and treated wastewater effluent to irrigate the golf courses during drought periods. HSV staff continually monitors water usage, wastewater treatment, and golf course operations to ensure HSV remains good stewards of this valuable and limited resource.

HSV intends to protect its water sources. It has and will continue to cooperate with other governments and water purveyors in the area in securing other possible sources of water, such as Lake Ouachita and has indicated its desire to secure .5 mgd (500,000 gallons per day) of reallocated Lake Ouachita water from the U.S. Corps of Engineers through the Mid-Arkansas Water Alliance.

HSV encouraged and participated in the creation of AIM. Membership in AIM is open to anyone subscribing to the Mission and Purpose of AIM. AIM provides the forum for stakeholders to evaluate scientific data and issues, initiate public outreach and education, develop and implement improvement projects that promote effective stewardship of the Middle Fork.