



City of Elm Springs, Arkansas

# Vision Plan

**Future Land Use and Master Street Plans**

**Adopted - April 23, 2026**

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 The Plan

This document contains the Vision Plan for the City of Elm Springs, Arkansas, also known as the Elm Springs Vision Plan. The City's Vision Plan (referred to as 'the Plan') includes two primary plan elements: the Future Land Use Plan and the Master Street Plan.

The Plan serves as an official policy statement of the City of Elm Springs for directing growth and development. With direction and oversight from the Planning Commission, the Plan was prepared through a detailed analysis of the study area. This analysis entailed several key plan components including Elm Springs' history, its demographic composition and projected population changes, physical landscape and topography, utility capacity, transportation systems, existing infrastructure, and surrounding land use.

The Plan will assist both the Planning Commission and City Council in making informed decisions during the Plan's time period, estimated to be 20 years. The Plan serves all citizens and property owners in the City as well as many others having a vested interest in the future of the City.

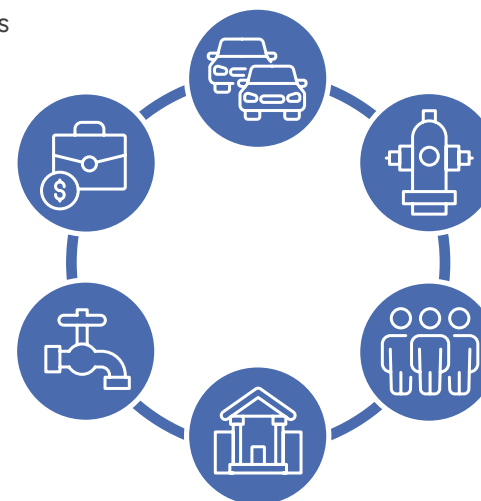
The Plan is to be used as broad guidance for enacting orderly growth and development policies. While the associated Future Land Use Map provides policy level land use recommendations, it is not regulatory and should not be interpreted as a zoning ordinance. Rather, the Plan serves as a tool to inform how both public and private entities should be engaged in a manner that will best suit the entire community. Given the 20-year time period for the Plan, it is expected that the City will amend the document in the future to meet new and unanticipated growth challenges.

The Plan will serve as a 'living document', remaining flexible by allowing for necessary modification of land uses. Like many municipal policy documents, this Plan delineates land use areas in concert with long-term community needs and not based on short-term individual gains.

## 1.2 Authority

The purpose of the Vision Plan is consistent with the provisions of Arkansas Codes, Annotated (A.C.A.), §14-56-403. This section requires that plans of a municipality be "... prepared in order to promote, in accordance with present and future needs, the safety, morals, order, convenience, and general welfare of the citizens." The statutes further state that plans may provide for, among other things, the following:

- Efficiency and economy in the process of development
- The appropriate and best use of land
- Convenience of traffic and circulation of people and goods
- Safety from fire and other dangers
- Adequate light and air and the use and occupancy of buildings
- Healthful and convenient distribution of population
- Good civic design and arrangement
- Adequate public utilities and facilities
- Wise and efficient expenditure of funds



# 1 Introduction

## 1.3 Relationship to Land Use Regulations

The Arkansas planning statutes, in A.C.A. § 14-56-416 (a)(1) provide:

*Following adoption and filing of the land use plan, the commission may prepare for submission to the legislative body a recommended zoning ordinance for the entire area of the municipality.*

The statutes further provide in A.C.A. § 14-56-417 (a)(1):

*Following adoption and filing of a master street plan, the planning commission may prepare and shall administer, after approval of the legislative body, regulations controlling the development of land.*

These provisions, along with the modern history of planning since the landmark case of Village of Euclid, Ohio v. Ambler Realty Co., 272 U.S. 365 (1926), signify a strong relationship between the Plan and its supporting regulations. In simple terms, a municipality first plans and then regulates. The primary supporting regulations consist of the zoning code and development (subdivision) regulations. As stated in A.C.A. § 14-56-412 (e):

*In order to promote, regulate, and control development and to protect the various elements of the plans, the commission, after adoption of appropriate plans as provided, may prepare and transmit to the legislative body such ordinances and regulations as are deemed necessary to carry out the intent of the plans, or of parts thereof.*

Planners encourage municipalities to base land use and development decisions upon adopted plans to the greatest extent possible. At the same time, it has been noted in court decisions in Arkansas that plans are not legal documents but rather broad statements of municipal policy. The legal force arises from the adopted regulations developed to support the Plan.



# 2 Context

## 2.1 Regional Setting & Background

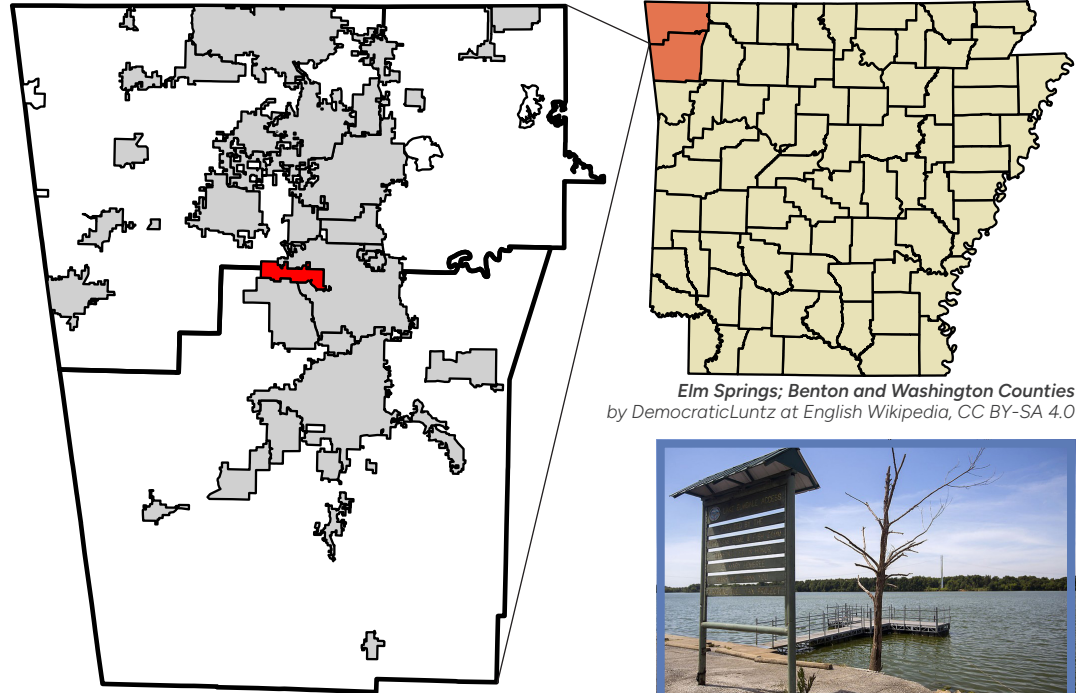
Located just west of I-49 in the rolling hills of Northwest Arkansas, Elm Springs is a small city experiencing significant population growth since its 2020 (2,361) and 2010 (1,535) U.S. Census Data. Sitting in both Washington and Benton Counties, Elm Springs lies adjacent to both Springdale and Tontitown.

Elm Springs is midway between Bentonville and Fayetteville along Highway 112, a significant regional route that will be widened from 2 lanes into a 4-lane boulevard with sidewalk/sidepaths. Additionally, ARDOT is actively constructing a portion of Hwy 612 (Springdale Bypass) through the western part of the City, without direct access in the municipal boundaries.

A significant tributary of Osage Creek and the Illinois River Watershed, Brush Creek, flows west through the City. 200-acre Lake Elmdale was constructed on Brush Creek by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission in 1953. A prominent community recreation area, the lake features a boat ramp off Lake Rd and is a destination for anglers and birders.

Named after naturally occurring local springs, an important spring near Water Ave is permanently protected through a conservation easement for its historical and ecological significance. Identified as Steele-Stevens Heritage Park, the 1-acre conservation area protects water quality and helps preserve the area's historic and ecological significance.

This Plan is a significant community planning update and resource that represents the City's desire to proactively coordinate and plan for its future growth.



*Elm Springs; Benton and Washington Counties*  
by DemocraticLuntz at English Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 4.0



*Lake Elmdale*  
photo credit: NWA Democrat-Gazette



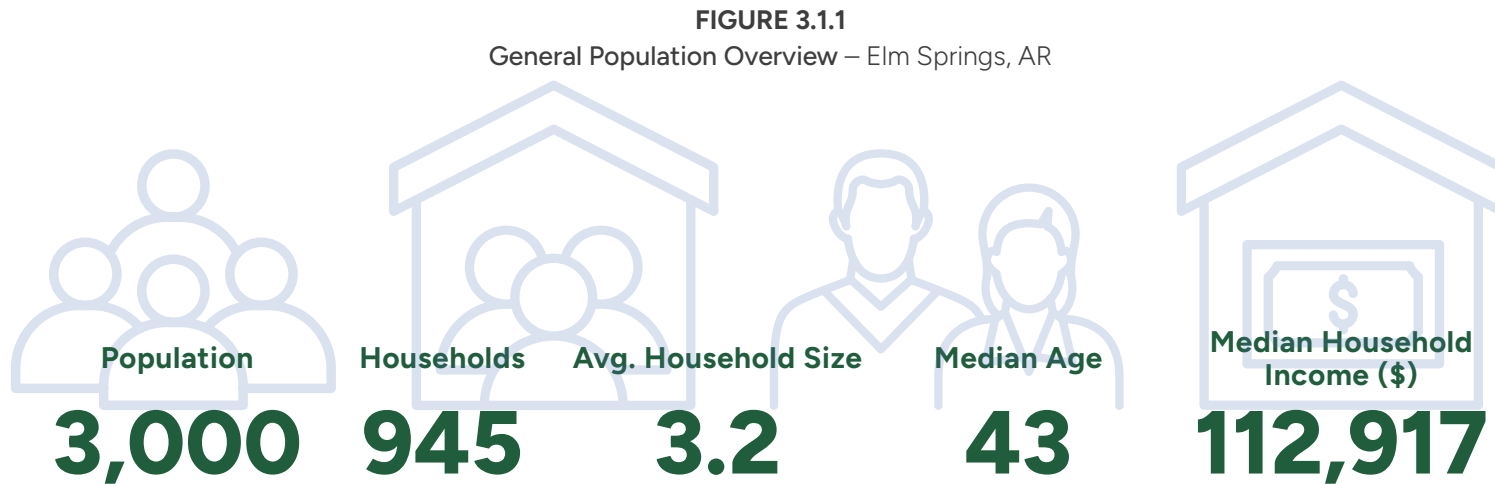
*Welcome sign on Elm Springs Road* photo credit: City of Elm Springs, AR

# 3 Demographic Trends

## 3.1 Population

Unless otherwise clarified below, the data presented within Chapter 3 is provided by the U.S. Census Bureau (2023) and [censusreporter.org](https://censusreporter.org), which provides there is a margin of error of at least 10% on the total value of each statistic.

The average age of Elm Springs residents is 43 years which is 25% higher than that of the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR Metro Area which is 34.6 years and is 10% higher than Arkansans overall which is 38.4 years.



**TABLE 3.1.2**  
County and City Population Comparison Percent Change – Benton County, Washington County, and Elm Springs, AR

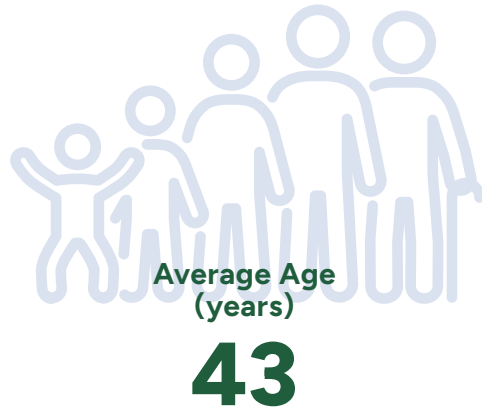
Jurisdiction	2010 Census	2020 Census	2023 ACS	Percent Change 2010 to 2023	Percent Change 2020 to 2023
Benton County	221,339	284,333	311,013	40.51%	9.38%
Washington County	203,065	245,871	261,549	28.80%	6.38%
Elm Springs	1,535	2,361	3,000	95.44%	27.06%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Elm Springs, AR [http://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0521430-elm-springs-ar/](https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0521430-elm-springs-ar/)

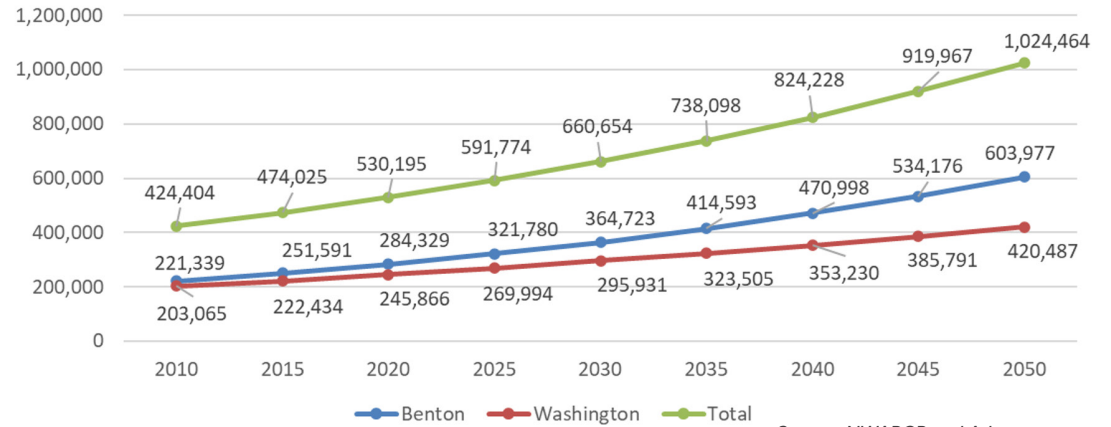
# 3 Demographic Trends

## 3.1 Population

**FIGURE 3.1.3**  
Average Age – Elm Springs, AR

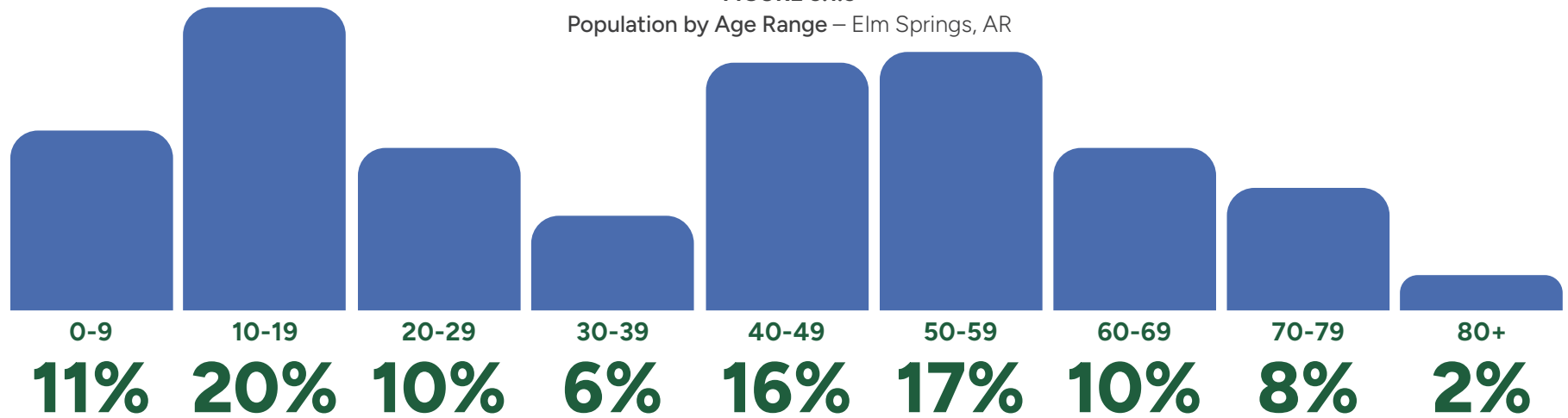


**FIGURE 3.1.4**  
Two County Population Projection Summary 2010 - 2050 – Benton and Washington Counties



Source: NWARCP and Arkansas Economic Development Institute, 2024

**FIGURE 3.1.5**  
Population by Age Range – Elm Springs, AR



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Elm Springs, AR <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0521430-elm-springs-ar/>

# 3 Demographic Trends

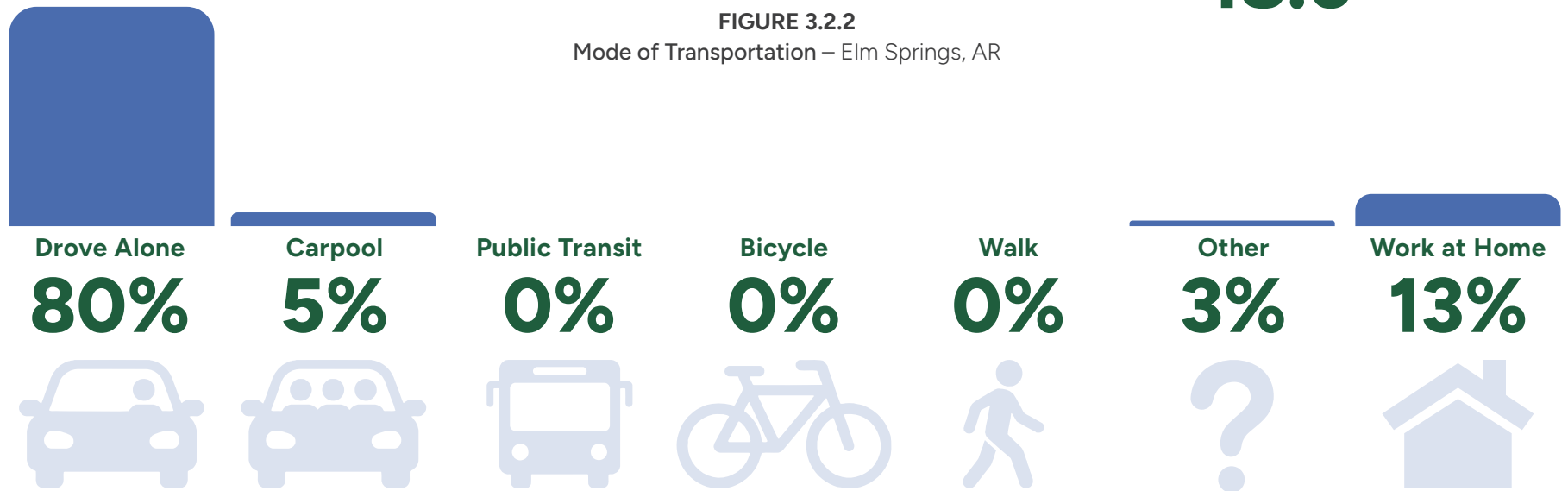
## 3.2 Transportation

The travel time to work for residents of Elm Springs is approximately 90% of that of the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR Metro Area which is 21.2 minutes and approximately 80% of that of Arkansans on the whole at 22.4 minutes.

**FIGURE 3.2.1**  
Travel Time to Work – Elm Springs, AR



**FIGURE 3.2.2**  
Mode of Transportation – Elm Springs, AR



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Elm Springs, AR <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0521430-elm-springs-ar/>

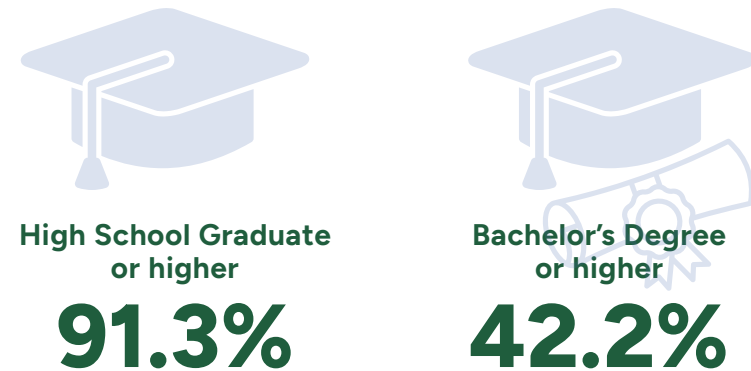
# 3 Demographic Trends

## 3.3 Education

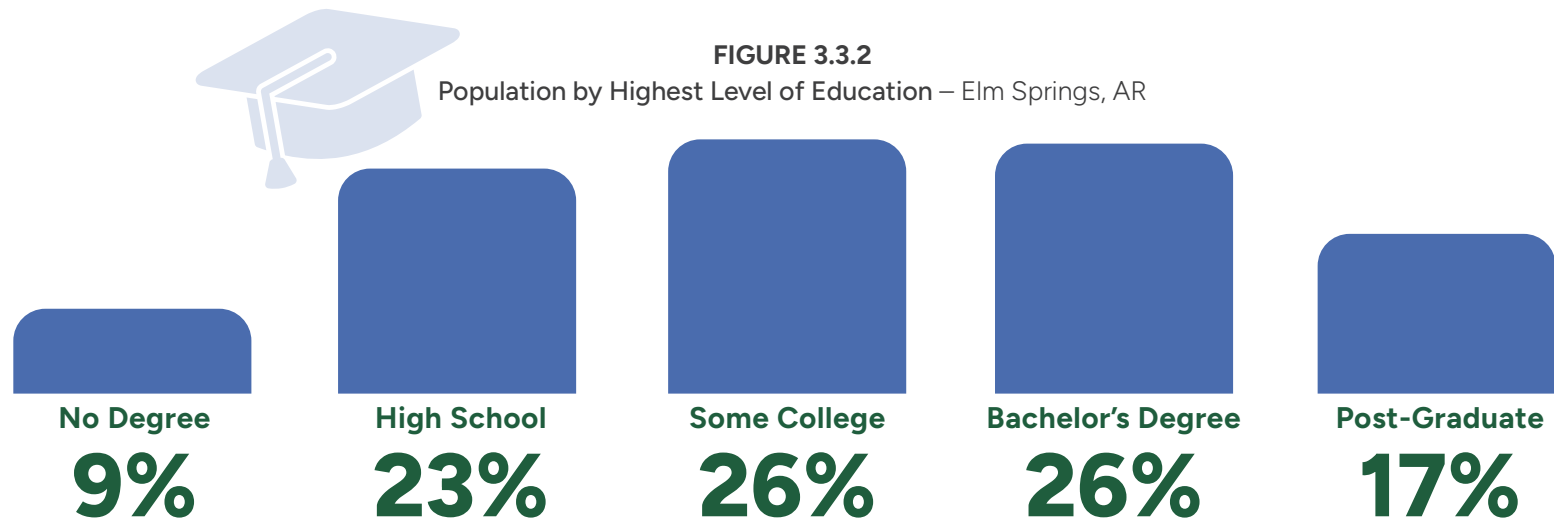
The high school graduation and/or some college education rate in Elm Springs is slightly higher than that of the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR Metro Area which is 89% and that of Arkansans overall which is 88.6%.

The rate of completion of bachelor's or higher degree of residents of Elm Springs is approximately 20% higher than that of the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR Metro Area which is 35% and significantly greater than that of Arkansans overall which is 25.1%.

**FIGURE 3.3.1**  
Educational Attainment – Elm Springs, AR



**FIGURE 3.3.2**  
Population by Highest Level of Education – Elm Springs, AR



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Elm Springs, AR <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0521430-elm-springs-ar/>

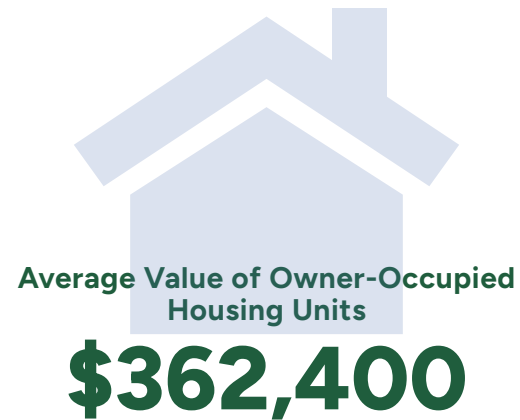
# 3 Demographic Trends

## 3.4 Housing

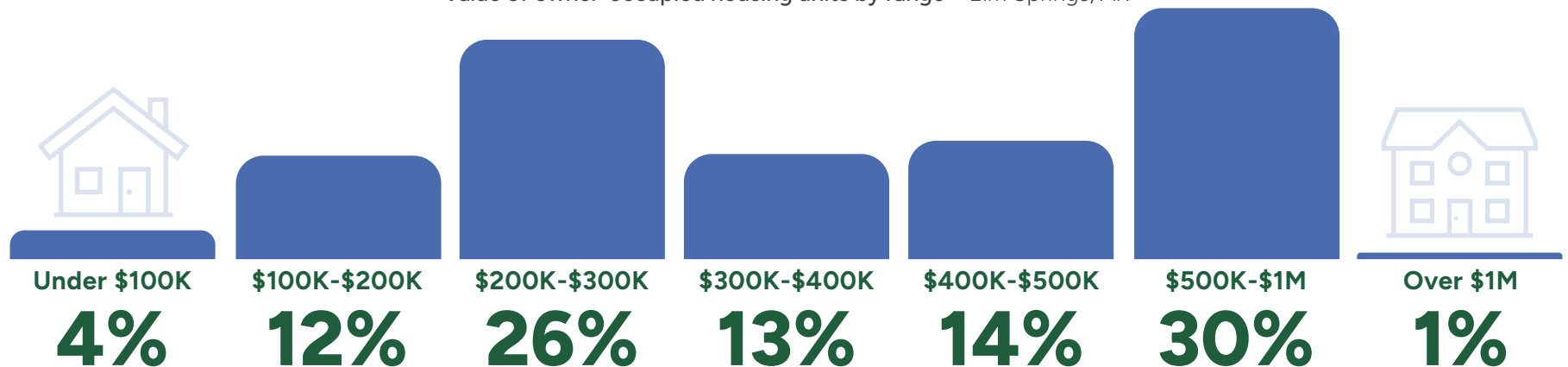
The average house value of owner-occupied units in Elm Springs is significantly higher than that of the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR Metro Area which is \$273,400 and more than double of that of Arkansans overall which is \$175,300.

Regarding the years in which most residents moved into their dwelling units, more than 1/2 of residents (57%) moved in between the years of 2010 and 2020 [Figure 3.4.3].

**FIGURE 3.4.1**  
Average House Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units – Elm Springs, AR



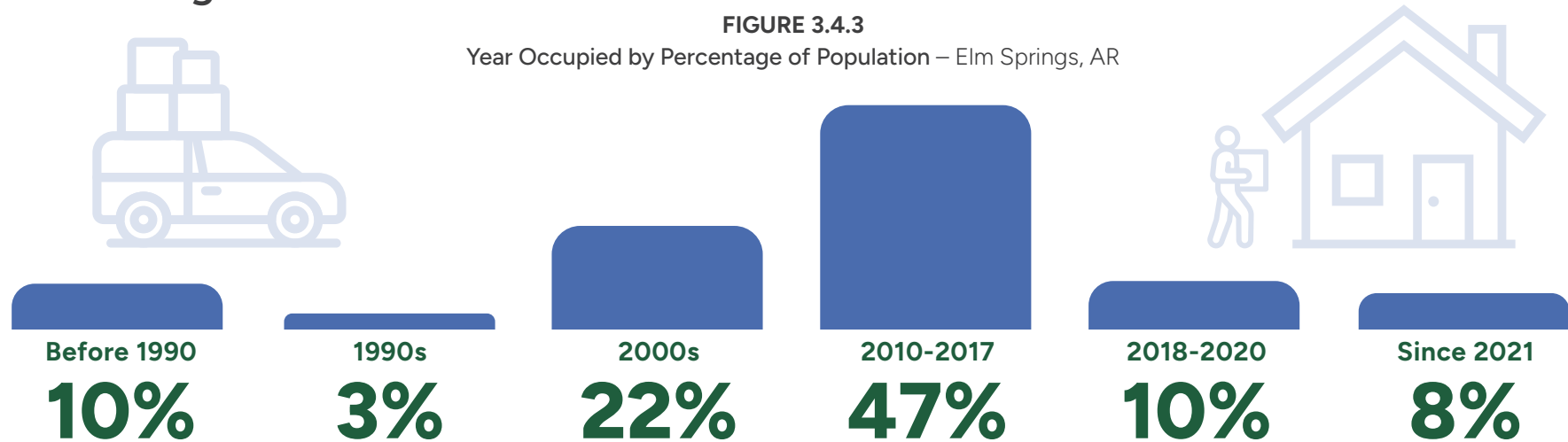
**FIGURE 3.4.2**  
Value of owner-occupied housing units by range – Elm Springs, AR



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Elm Springs, AR <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0521430-elm-springs-ar/>

# 3 Demographic Trends

## 3.4 Housing

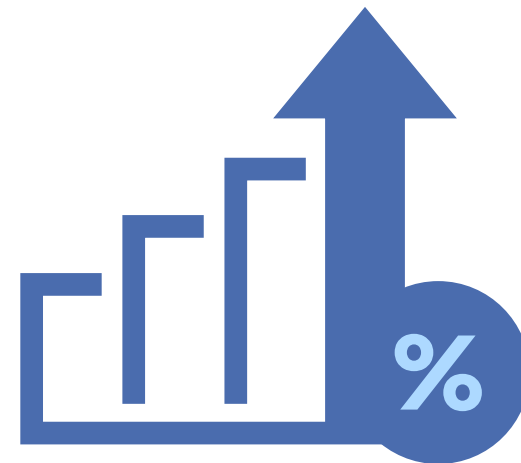


## 3.5 Demographic Conclusions

Elm Springs is a growing community located in a quickly growing region of Arkansas. The City has grown by over 95% in population since 2010. The most recent (2023) US Census estimated population is 3,000.

Compared to the NWA Region (Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR MSA), Elm Springs:

- Features a 25% higher median age;
- Features a median household income that is 1.5 times higher;
- Features a poverty rate approximately 20% higher;
- Features a median value of owner-occupied housing units that is 1.3 times higher.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2023). American Community Survey 5-year estimates. Retrieved from Census Reporter Profile page for Elm Springs, AR <http://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US0521430-elm-springs-ar/>

# 4 Public Engagement

## 4.1 Public Meetings

### SUMMARY

The Elm Springs Vision Plan ran throughout 2025, beginning with a kickoff meeting in March, a public input/open house session in September, and ending with a City Council meeting on \_\_\_\_\_, 2026. Public meetings dedicated specifically to the Vision Plan were held April through July. These work sessions yielded hours of discussion in which the Planning Commission members offered significant insight and guidance to the consultant team. This included details on challenges and opportunities in Elm Springs, which yielded the draft vision, goals, and objectives reflected in this document.

A record of all public meetings is reflected below:

- Kickoff Meeting at Planning Commission (public meeting):  
March 13, 2025
- Planning Commission Work Session (public meeting): April 10, 2025
- Planning Commission Work Session (public meeting): April 29, 2025
- Planning Commission Work Session (public meeting): May 20, 2025
- Planning Commission Work Session (public meeting): July 22, 2025
- Public Input Session (public meeting):  
September 30, 2025

### Public Input Meeting

*Help us shape the future of Elm Springs, through review of draft updates to the Future Land Use and Master Street Plan!*

**Tuesday, Sept. 30, 2025**  
5:30pm – 7:30pm\*  
Elm Springs City Hall  
289 Jayroe Ave  
Elm Springs, AR



# 4 Public Engagement

## 4.2 Public Input

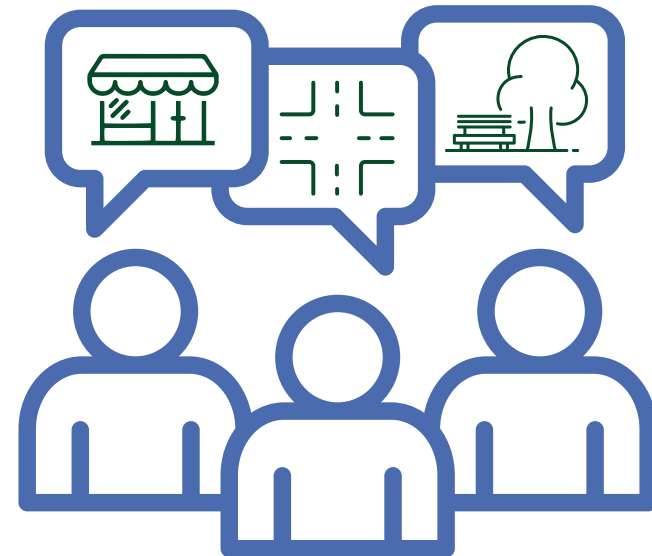
The public input session on September 30 was an open house style meeting held at City Hall. The meeting included a presentation from the consultant, a display of the proposed different plan components, as well as an open input and discussion session. An overview of the Vision Plan process, components of a Vision Plan, and the proposed future land use categories were shared along with the proposed Master Street Plan and typical street sections. The recent growth of Elm Springs as well as reasons why planning is beneficial to the community were discussed. A large copy of the proposed Future Land Use Map and Master Street Plan was available on a central table, and that map became a central focus point for questions and discussion as attendees were able to use markers to annotate ideas and questions on the large format map.

During the meeting people were encouraged to visit the Elm Springs Vision Plan website and take the Public Input Survey which is discussed more on the next page.



### PUBLIC INPUT SESSION SUMMARY

- Priorities include attracting community amenities while preserving the City's history and maintaining the "small-town" feel.
- Protecting green, open space and rural residential areas was also discussed as a priority.
- Attendees discussed a desire for retail opportunities in the City.
- Attendees discussed recent progress and ongoing challenges with sewer.
- Significant time was spent discussing redevelopment and revitalization of the downtown area.
- There was discussion about proposed Master Street Plan routes.



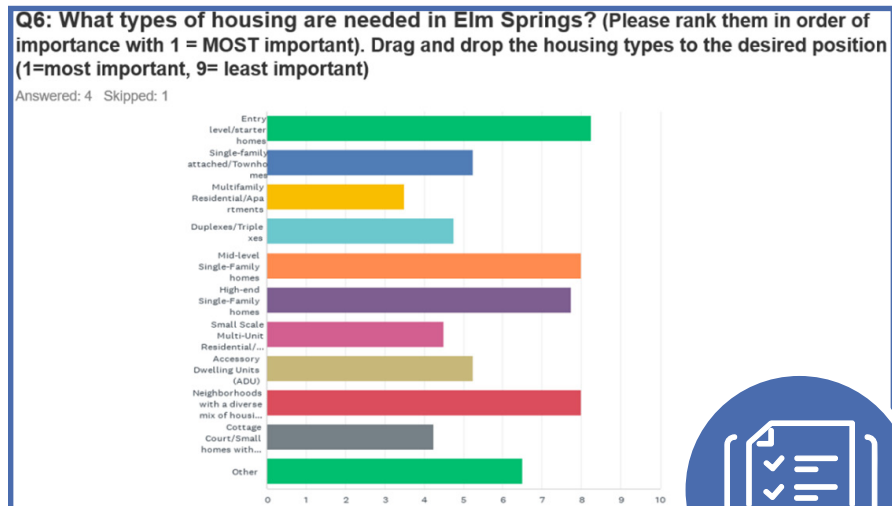
# 4 Public Engagement

## 4.2 Public Input

### VISION PLAN SURVEY

Initially shared during the September 30, 2025 Public Input Meeting, a public input survey was created and posted on the City's website with a link to the Elm Springs Vision Plan website in October 2025.

A total of six (6) responses were received between September 30th - November 30th, 2025. The survey consisted of twenty-one (21) questions, including questions on preferred types of land use and housing, questions related to the master street plan including where street and pedestrian improvements are needed, opportunities and challenges for Elm Springs, plus an open response additional feedback opportunity. Additional questions asked respondents to what level they agreed with the proposed Vision, Goals, and Objectives.



### PUBLIC SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

#### Survey Question: What types of developments would you like to see in Elm Springs?

Responses to this question favored the following types of development:

- Sit-down restaurants
- Downtown-like Mixed-Use
- Passive Recreation

The types of development ranking lowest on this question included:

- Residential
- Small-scale neighborhood businesses/amenities
- Industrial
- Food Trucks
- Arts/Entertainment

#### Survey Question: What types of housing are needed in Elm Springs?

Responses to this question favored the following types of housing:

- Entry level/starter homes
- Mid-level single-family homes
- Neighborhoods with a diverse mix of housing types
- High-end single-family homes

Responses to this question also supported the following types of housing:

- Single-family attached/townhomes
- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

# 5 Goals & Objectives

## 5.1 Vision, Goals, & Objectives

### VISION

*The City of Elm Springs desires to develop a plan that respects the City's sense of community and small-town character, while proactively planning for context appropriate growth. The Plan should encourage amenities and infrastructure that contribute to a high quality of life for current and future residents, organizations, and businesses in the community.*

### GOAL 1

#### Maintain small-town character and sense of established community, while also growing in a welcoming way

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** Along Hwy 112, encourage thoughtful development that strengthens Elm Springs' sense of community through a mix of compatible land uses and development scale/character. Approach this through the revised Future Land Use Map as well as updates to zoning district regulations.
- **OBJECTIVE 2:** Recognize and prioritize improvements in the downtown core and ensure thoughtful transitions to adjacent areas. Adopt clear and focused design standards for this area that encourage new community amenities. The downtown core is generally recognized as the area between:
  - Brush Creek (south)
  - Elm Springs Rd/Jayroe Ave (north)
  - Elm Springs Cemetery (east)
  - Up to but east of Mill Park Subdivision (west)
- **OBJECTIVE 3:** Reserve a portion of City-owned land or otherwise plan for a downtown park/square/plaza that can complement private sector development and other amenities. Ensure that pedestrian access is prioritized.
- **OBJECTIVE 4:** Update the zoning code, zoning districts, and district regulations to clearly depict the development scale and form the City envisions downtown and in other priority development areas.
  - Neighborhood Services (*Goal 2, Objective 6*)
- **OBJECTIVE 5:** Ensure that new development advances walkability and connectivity throughout the City.
- **OBJECTIVE 6:** Pursue and advance private and institutional partnerships with the City that can advance community resilience and redevelopment in a way that is supportive of the City's vision and goals, especially downtown. Partnership opportunities that should be further explored may include:
  - churches
  - cemeteries
  - businesses
  - state and regional agencies
- **OBJECTIVE 7:** Maintain centralized City services and infrastructure as this is an important aspect of what makes living in Elm Springs convenient and supports the welcoming atmosphere of the community.
  - Administration/Public Works
  - Police
  - Planning/Building
  - District Court

# 5 Goals & Objectives

## 5.1 Vision, Goals, & Objectives

### GOAL 2

**Attract small-scale businesses, mixed-use development, and daily destinations (e.g. coffee, parks, town square, small/local restaurants) that are connected and accessible via bike/pedestrian/vehicular accommodations**

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** Assess development patterns, land use trends, and transportation projects in surrounding jurisdictions. Discuss related opportunities and challenges. Explore ways to leverage these activities to spur appropriate connections and opportunities in Elm Springs.
- **OBJECTIVE 2:** Update the zoning map, zoning codes, and future land use map to more clearly indicate the desired land uses, density, and scale of development throughout the City.
- **OBJECTIVE 3:** Identify approaches to strengthen the local identity of Elm Springs to attract desirable small businesses, entrepreneurs, and community amenities, including through:
  - marketing and communications
  - the planning of a central focal point or public space
  - infrastructure investments
- **OBJECTIVE 4:** Building on the current development in west Springdale, prioritize the southwest corner of Gene George/Elm Springs Rd as an eastern gateway into the City, and ensure the applicable plans and regulations are updated as needed to facilitate quality development that connects to the community identity of Elm Springs.
- **OBJECTIVE 5:** Review the home-based business application process to ensure it is manageable and meets the intent of the City's support of home-based business. This review should also consider if an additional future land use category or zoning district is needed. Ensure related procedures comply with state law.
- **OBJECTIVE 6:** Explore the creation of a neighborhood services (small-scale mixed-use) zoning district to support local businesses; add necessary design standards and mitigation measures to assist with land use compatibility.
- **OBJECTIVE 7:** Plan for long-term water and wastewater needs, including future operations, management, and maintenance. Visit *Goal 4, Objective 5* for more details.

### GOAL 3

**Encourage context-appropriate growth by managing development in a way that concentrates higher intensities and densities in planned locations to allow the City to maintain and improve its overall positive quality of life**

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** Review and update the future land use map to ensure it identifies areas that should remain as Rural and/or Rural Residential, including but not limited to the Brush Creek corridor.
- **OBJECTIVE 2:** To manage a balance of both rural residential and higher density housing options, focus mixed uses and higher density housing downtown, near Shaw Park and at Gene George Blvd.
- **OBJECTIVE 3:** Assess where additional park/recreation land may be needed and consider adoption of a park land dedication ordinance to support both park land dedication/acquisition as well as park management resources through certain development types.

# 5 Goals & Objectives

## 5.1 Vision, Goals, & Objectives

### GOAL 4

#### Ensure infrastructure improvements that support residents and encourage visitors

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** Review and update typical street sections and the 2022 Master Street Plan map as needed to ensure they depict future transportation needs in a nuanced, Elm Springs-specific way.
- **OBJECTIVE 2:** Ensure that new development advances walkability and connectivity. Update the Master Street Plan to best accommodate future local and regional bike/ped and vehicular connections that will serve the City's needs as it grows and that will provide a high quality of life. Identify priority projects and connections.
- **OBJECTIVE 3:** In the downtown area, identify priority options and potential solutions to providing a grade-separated pedestrian crossing across the planned 4-lane AR 112.
- **OBJECTIVE 4:** Proactively approach franchise utilities to improve residents' options or quality of service.

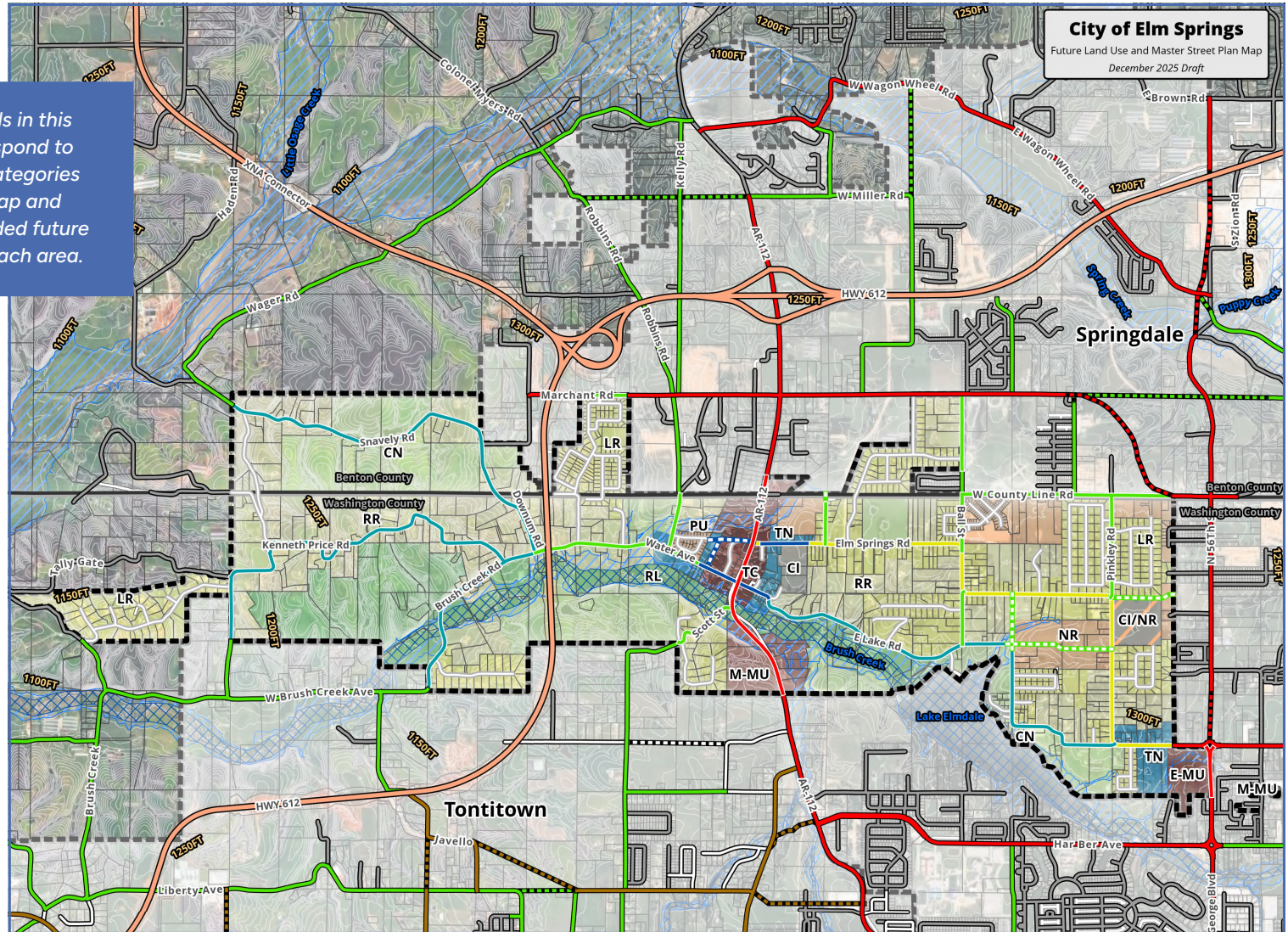


- **OBJECTIVE 5:** Plan for long-term water and wastewater needs to best accommodate this goal by considering the following long-range planning and capacity initiatives:
  - Digitally document current wastewater infrastructure, including both as-built locations and the general condition of main collection lines and pump stations/lifts. As individual septic systems have a finite lifespan and individual pumps/tanks supporting the pressurized system can complicate future development, utilize infrastructure documentation to plan for future wastewater needs, including:
    - A plan for future connections to accommodate both new development as well as failing individual septic systems;
    - A plan to determine and fund future needed wastewater treatment capacity; and
    - A plan to assess long term maintenance of the overall pressurized system.
  - Require that all new development provide record/as-built drawings of both water and wastewater infrastructure provided; and
  - Plan for future operations, management, and maintenance needs for both water and wastewater infrastructure.

# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.1 Future Land Use Plan

The land use standards in this section directly correspond to the Future Land Use categories depicted on the map and describe the intended future character for each area.



**LEGEND**

**FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**

- Town Center (TC)
- East Elm Mixed Use (E-MU)
- Main Street Mixed Use (M-MU)
- Town Neighborhood (TN)
- Neighborhood Residential (NR)
- Low Density Residential (LR)
- Rural Residential (RR)
- Conservation Neighborhood (CN)
- Rural (RL)
- Civic/Institutional (CI)
- Public/Semi-Public Utility (PU)

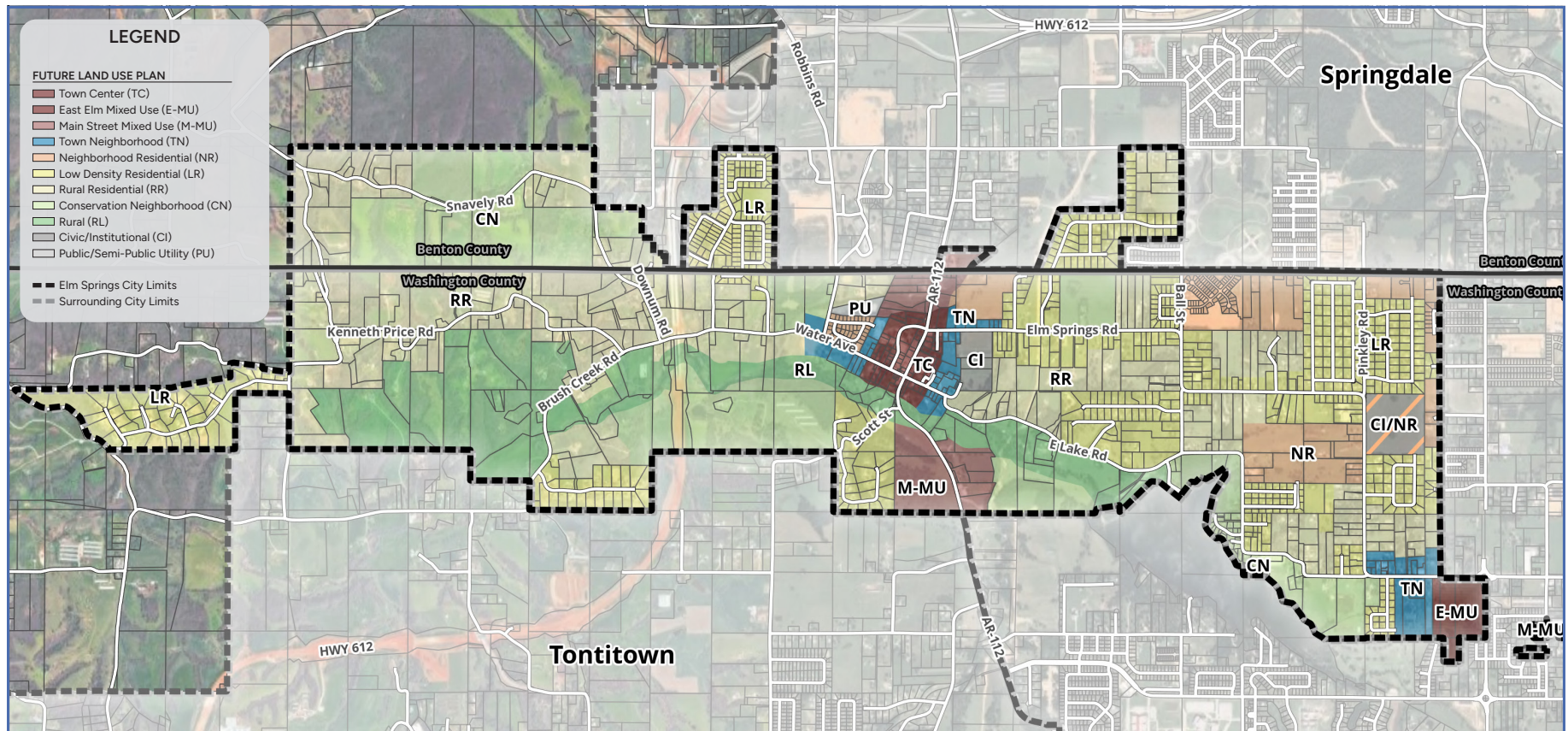
--- Elm Springs City Limits  
--- Surrounding City Limits

**MASTER STREET PLAN**

- Principal Arterial
- Principal Arterial (other city)
- Proposed Principal Arterial (other city)
- Minor Arterial (other city)
- Proposed Minor Arterial (other city)
- Collector
- Proposed Collector
- Downtown Collector
- Proposed Downtown Collector
- Minor Collector
- Elm Springs Road Collector
- Local
- Proposed Local

# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.1 Future Land Use Plan FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP



This Plan emphasizes the character of potential land uses and development types. Thus, the size, use intensity, traffic generation, and overall impacts of a development become as [or more] important than the actual activity conducted on the property. The final product is the Future Land Use (FLU) map which is meant to inform and guide future zoning in the City based upon the future land use categories contained in this section.

# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.2 Future Land Use Categories

### Town Center (TC)

The community center of Elm Springs, **Town Center** is a land use category that:

- advances walkability and connectivity,
- provides public gathering/open space,
- encourages vibrant retail and community services,
- promotes diverse housing options to support local business and strengthen the sense of community,
- supports local identity, resilience, and economics, and
- clearly functions as the central core of the community.

These areas support a mix of uses both within a single building (e.g. commercial on the ground floor and residential on upper floors) as well as in separate structures (e.g. a commercial only building and a residential only building). All development supports a welcoming urban form with buildings fronting the street and parking generally on-street, where possible, in the rear, or within structures.

A public park/green space should be set aside in the downtown area to support Goal 1, Objective 1.



*E. Main at 3rd Ave, Franklin, TN: A multi-lane roundabout in the center of a historic downtown could provide inspiration for the redevelopment of downtown Elm Springs, especially where Town Center lies.*

# 6 Plan Elements

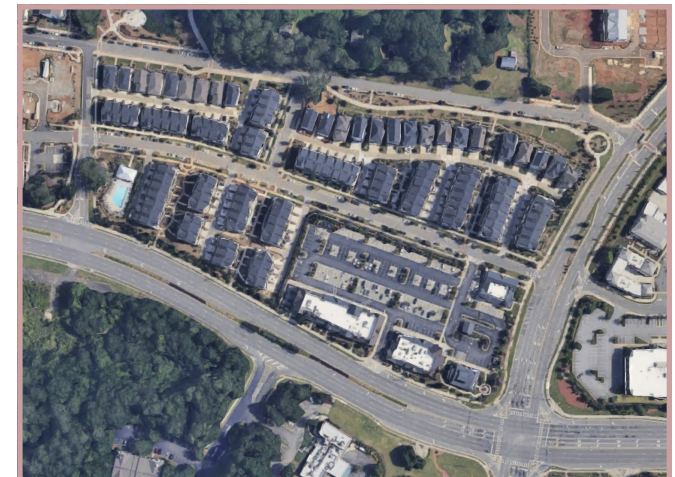
## 6.2 Future Land Use Categories

### Main Street Mixed-Use (M-MU)

Lying directly adjacent to Town Center along Elm Street (AR 112), this category represents a prominent entry point into Elm Springs and provides a transition into the heart of the community Town Center. There is great infill potential within **Main Street Mixed-Use**, and while development will be less urban than within Town Center, this area should still feature structures placed near the street with the majority of parking in the rear.

While certain highway corridor uses are appropriate here, the site design and architectural quality of development shall be of high quality, promoting a sense of community along the City's effective main street. As development occurs, pedestrian and other multi-modal transportation infrastructure should be incorporated to tie into the shared use path and sidewalks planned along the AR 112 Parkway.

A mix of uses, including both within a single building, such as commercial on the ground floor and residential on upper floors, as well as in separate structures (a commercial only building and a residential only building) is encouraged in these areas.



*Old Milton Pkwy near Westside Pkwy, Alpharetta, GA: Providing potential inspiration for the mapped Main Street Mixed-Use, these images feature pedestrian elements, retail, and mixed residential within proximity to a 6-lane parkway/boulevard. This section in Alpharetta has a 45mph posted speed limit; however, downtown Elm Springs could benefit from a much lower speed limit, such as 25 or 30mph, to better allow safe and comfortable pedestrian activity.*

# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.2 Future Land Use Categories

### East Elm Mixed-Use (E-MU)

Located just over a half-mile from I-49 Exit 73, this area provides a significant regional and community opportunity, and it represents a critical entry point into Elm Springs.

New development should be focused on creating a strong sense of community by providing welcoming outdoor gathering spaces, active transportation connectivity, retail/amenities, and higher density residential developments. Buildings should be placed close to the street with parking in the rear or internal to the site.

A mix of uses, including both within a single building, such as commercial on the ground floor and residential on upper floors, as well as in separate structures (a commercial only building and a residential only building) is encouraged in these areas.



*The District, Duluth GA: An area in a small suburb of Atlanta that could inspire the overall scale and feel of East Elm Mixed-Use.*

### Town Neighborhood (TN)

**Town Neighborhood** features a variety of housing types and small-scale neighborhood businesses, with an overall focus on pedestrian connectivity and access to amenities including parks. Specifically envisioned to support Town Center and East Elm core areas, it serves as a transition zone.

Housing types include a mix of single and context appropriate multi-unit housing while small-scale businesses typically provide services and amenities to residents and visitors. Design standards are utilized to promote compatibility between uses and to support the small-town character of Elm Springs.

A public park/green space should be set aside in the downtown area to support Goal 1, Objective 3.



*N. Broadway/E. University, Siloam Springs, AR: A café, law firm, church, and residential units all lie within a block of this intersection, supported by ample crosswalks, broad sidewalks, and parallel parking. This image/idea may provide inspiration for Town Neighborhood.*

# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.2 Future Land Use Categories

### Neighborhood Residential (NR)

Created to promote walkable, established neighborhoods through an efficient use of land, this land use category includes single-family and two-family dwelling units, with a flexible density that is higher than that of Low-Density Residential. Both smaller lot subdivisions as well as smaller rural tracts, generally less than ½ acre, are included within this residential category.



*Parkside Subdivision: An area of Neighborhood Residential at W. County Line Rd and Ball St.*



*Gulley Grove Subdivision, Fayetteville, AR: With direct access to Gulley Park via dedicated central sidepath, this neighborhood near N. Old Wire Rd/Collette Ave features single-family homes on less than 0.10 acre lots, with approximately 1.5 acres dedicated to POA open space and recreation areas. This image/idea could inspire the mapped Neighborhood Residential areas.*

### Low-Density Residential (LR)

This category represents low density platted subdivisions as well as unplatted land tracts of the general lot size noted. Primarily featuring single-family homes, lot sizes generally range from ~0.5 to ~2 acres.



*Pinkley Subdivision: A neighborhood of Low Density Residential at Pinkley Rd and Cynthia Ln.*

# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.2 Future Land Use Categories

### Rural Residential (RR)

This category supports **Rural Residential** uses on large tracts of land, typically with no uniform development pattern. With a primary tract size of ~2 to ~10 acres, this category often lies adjacent to the Rural category but is more residential in nature. Large tracts in this category seeking subdivision of land in the future should consider Conservation Neighborhood when possible.



*Brush Creek Rd at Kenneth Price Rd: An area of Rural Residential at Brush Creek Rd and Kenneth Price Rd.*

### Rural (RL)

This category includes active agricultural areas, open spaces in floodplains, as well as other large tracts of rural land. Looking at its contextual application on the Future Land Use Map, the **Rural** category generally follows the Brush Creek corridor and plays a key role in retaining the rural aspects of the community. The Rural land use category includes limited rural recreation and rural-compatible accessory uses.



*Brush Creek Rd at Brush Creek: An area of Rural near Rural Residential.*

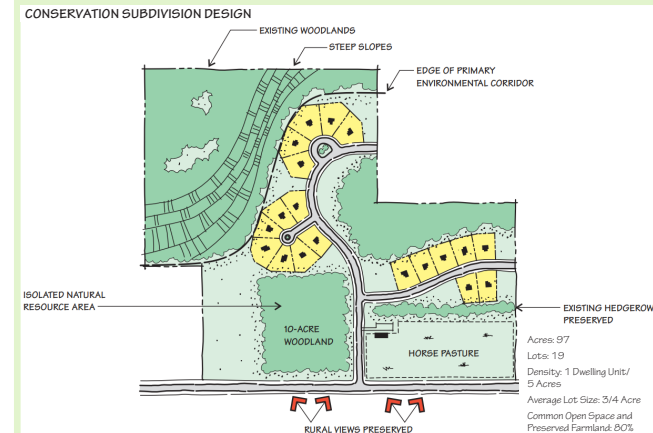
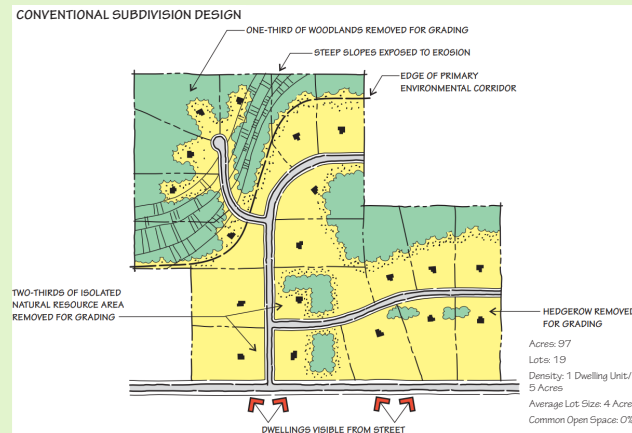
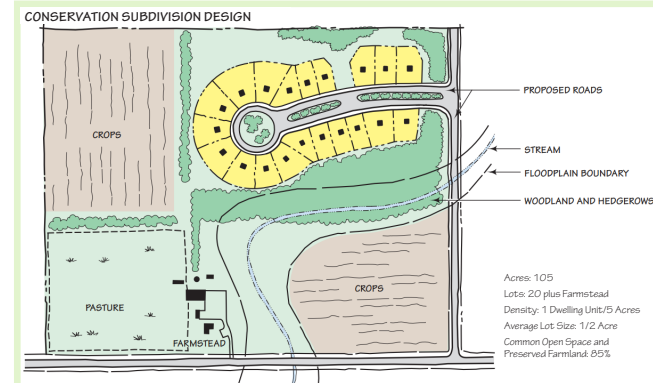
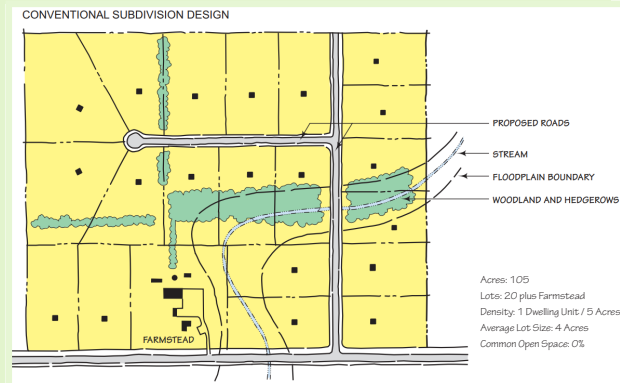
# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.2 Future Land Use Categories

### Conservation Neighborhood (CN)

This category is created to build a greater sense of community and add housing while also identifying land for general conservation, recreation, or open space. Adaptable on both large tracts as well as smaller tracts of land where infrastructure allows, ideally 50 to 70% of the land is set aside as open space by grouping structures on the developed portions of the land. Compared to traditional subdivision design, this land use category may offer environmental benefits to water quality, retention of wildlife habitat, protection of steep slopes, preservation of existing tree canopy, and a strengthened sense of community, among other benefits.

Where Special Flood Hazard Areas (such as Zone A) lie within an area mapped as another FLU category, the land uses associated with **Conservation Neighborhood** may also be an appropriate and desirable land use type.



*The Conservation Subdivision Design Process, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC)*

# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.2 Future Land Use Categories

### Civic/Institutional (CI)

Owned or operated by public and quasi-public entities, these areas provide public services or are projected to do so in the future. Examples include public parks, government facilities, large cemeteries, and schools. Currently limited on the map due to redevelopment anticipated downtown, it is likely that additional properties may transfer to this category in the future as the City grows.



*Elm Springs Cemetery: An area of Institutional/Civic along Elm Springs Rd.*

### Public/Semi-Public Utility (PU)

Owned or operated by utility companies serving the community, this land use category reflects public and semi-public facilities that generally have a footprint more substantial than a cellular tower. Wireless communication facilities and utilities occupying smaller footprints are integrated throughout the community and regulated by the zoning code, as applicable.



*Southwestern Electric Power (SWEPCO): An area of Public/Semi-Public Utility along Weston St.*

# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.3 Master Street Plan

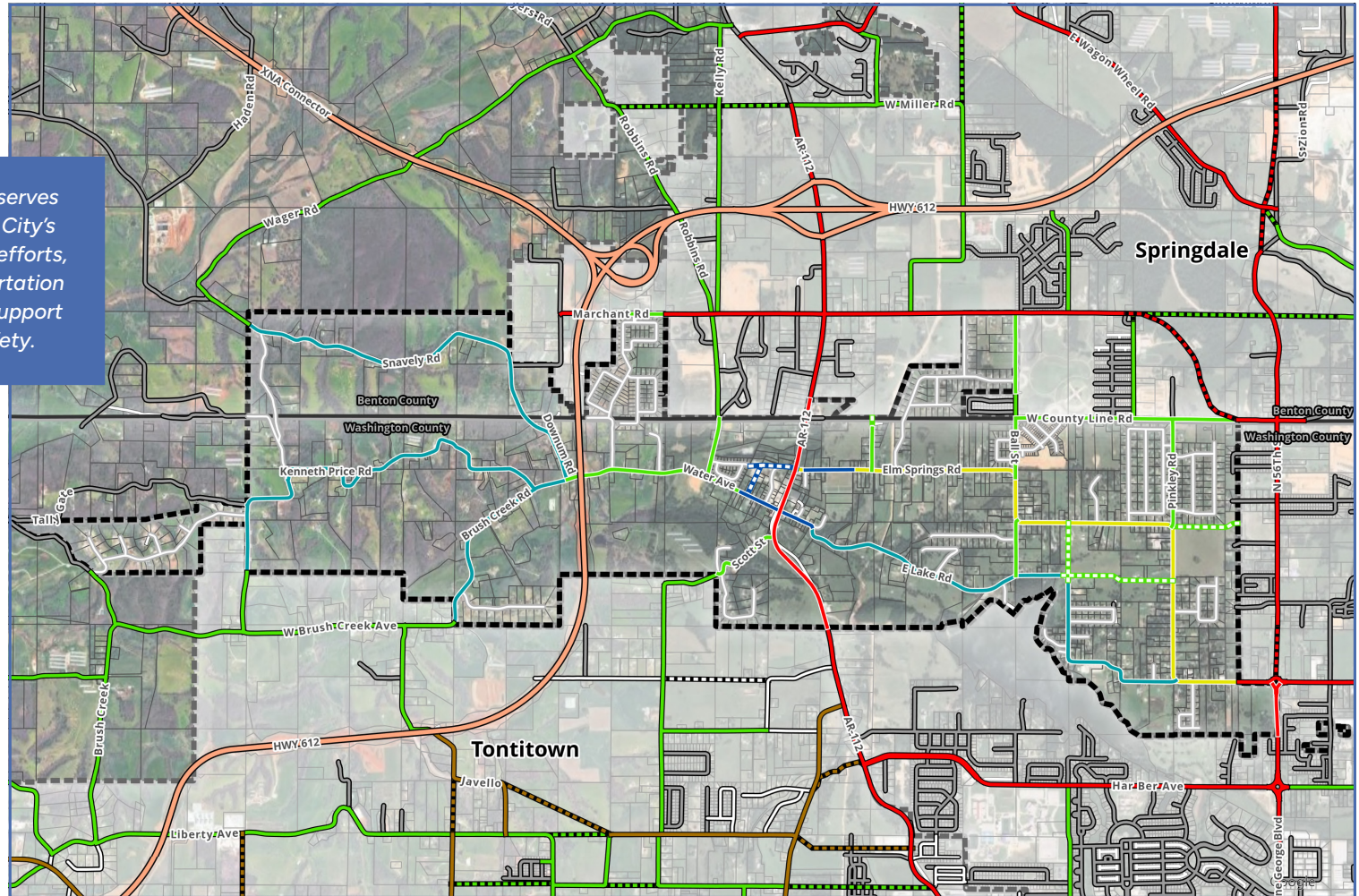
### MASTER STREET PLAN MAP

The Master Street Plan serves as the backbone of the City's transportation planning efforts, organizing how transportation networks evolve to support growth and safety.

**LEGEND**

**MASTER STREET PLAN**

- Principal Arterial
- Principal Arterial (other city)
- - - Proposed Principal Arterial (other city)
- Minor Arterial (other city)
- - - Proposed Minor Arterial (other city)
- Collector
- - - Proposed Collector
- Downtown Collector
- - - Proposed Downtown Collector
- Minor Collector
- Elm Springs Road Collector
- Local
- - - Proposed Local

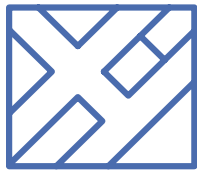


# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.3 Master Street Plan

### MASTER STREET PLAN MAP

Transportation planning is an important element of the Vision Plan. The primary planning document that facilitates the City's transportation planning is the Master Street Plan (MSP), which contains a corresponding map and typical sections for each of the street classification types identified.



Elm Springs has an existing network of City and State roadways. With growth and time, changes are needed to ensure the roadway system is efficient, strong, and connected to facilitate future use and to address congestion.

The MSP accomplishes this by identifying key areas needed for future extensions and other roadway improvements. These improvements will typically occur along with future development.

The MSP map shows the existing street network, as well as the approximate location of future street connections and improvements. Flexibility in the exact alignments is expected based on constraints and practicalities, but the connections indicated are important and will be required as development occurs. The MSP includes all elements within the right-of-way where vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation modes are considered together. Independent of the City's network of streets, ARDOT routes (existing and proposed) are shown on the MSP.

### STREET CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The street classification system is a hierarchical breakdown of how roadways function now and how they are planned to function in the future. This MSP provides for three (3) primary types of street classifications: Arterial, Collector, and Local. A street function classification system should represent a well-planned, connected network.

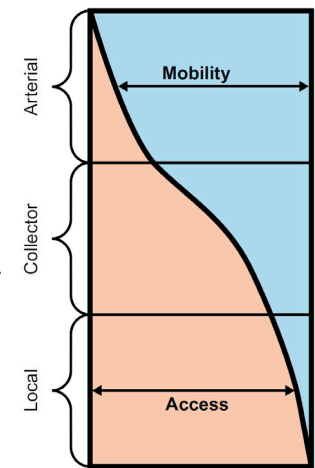
#### Arterials

Arterials provide for increased mobility by moving traffic. Arterials are typically designed around permitting unimpeded traffic flow and are not primarily designed to provide high property access. This Master Street Plan provides for both 'Principal' and 'Minor' Arterials.

In Elm Springs, the arterial roads include Hwy 112, Hwy 612 (under construction), Gene George Blvd, and a very short portion of Elm Springs Rd in the southeast corner of the City.

The only minor arterial streets on the map are outside the City limits in adjacent jurisdictions.

Drive spacing requirements and access limitations are common with Principal Arterial streets, as seen with Hwy 612 which will function as a freeway over the western part of the City. Alternatively, Hwy 112 and the non-ARDOT streets allow property access, at varying degrees.



# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.3 Master Street Plan

### Collector

Collector streets connect the arterial roadway network to the local streets and accommodate access to adjoining land. They are designed to balance adjacent land access standards with providing sufficient traffic flow to permit greater mobility within the City. This MSP provides several different Collector street types to be sensitive to the character of different areas of the City. Following is a highlight of each Collector type:

1. **Collector:** featuring both a 2-Lane and 3-Lane option, this general collector includes a sidepath and sidewalk on either side (Lakeview, Ball St, and Weston St are examples).
2. **Elm Springs Collector:** a 3-Lane collector with streetlights, sidewalk and sidepath (Elm Springs Rd).
3. **Downtown Collector:** designed for downtown, this section features on-street parking and extra wide sidewalk/sidepaths to accommodate more pedestrian activity downtown (Water Ave and School Ave near Hwy 112 are examples).
4. **Downtown Limited Collector:** similar to the Downtown Collector, this is a narrower section designed for limited use downtown where constraints make it difficult to achieve additional right-of-way (reserved to be utilized in unique cases).
5. **Minor Collector:** designed for roads that function like collectors but lie in more rural or rugged terrain areas, this section includes open drainage with a sidewalk on one side. (Snively Rd and Kenneth Price Rd are examples).

### Local

Local streets are intended to connect traffic with collectors and ultimately to the arterial roadway network. They have the lowest capacity and thus are not intended to carry large traffic loads. Local streets are designed for low speeds and to provide ready access to adjoining land.

**Note:** While the MSP shows a few proposed roads or street extensions, it is intended that these road projects would primarily be built by the applicable developer and constructed as property is developed in the future. In this way, existing residents and taxpayers will not bear all of the burdens of the cost for these road projects. Rather, those costs will be borne by the developers/developments that create the necessity for the new roads. However, circumstances may arise where it is advantageous for the City to be proactive in widening or constructing roads to meet the needs of the community and help manage growth in an orderly manner.

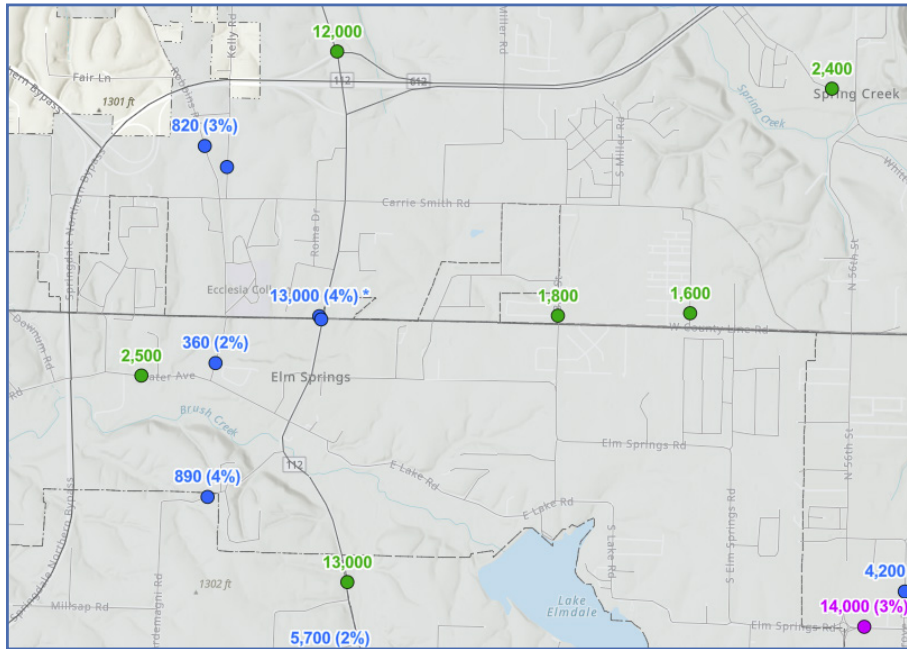
## TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS

The street classifications described above each have a corresponding graphic cross section. The cross sections govern the improvement and construction of street and bicycle/pedestrian facilities in the right-of-way. Street classifications shown on the MSP Map correspond to the street cross sections shown in this document. Moreover, these cross sections work in concert with the City's standard street specifications that further depict the remaining aspects of roadway design and construction. Typical cross sections are shown in **Appendix A** of this document.

# 6 Plan Elements

## 6.4 Traffic Growth Trends

### GROWTH HISTORY AND AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC



2024 Average Daily Traffic Volumes (Source: ARDOT)

Elm Springs and the surrounding Northwest Arkansas region have experienced significant growth which has led to substantial and continuous pressure on the transportation network. The graphic at left shows the most recently tabulated average daily traffic (ADT) volumes for the Elm Springs area (no relevant traffic counts were available west of Hwy 612/Springdale Bypass).

Average Daily Traffic at Select Locations - Historical Comparison	2010	2015	2024
Hwy 112 north of Elm Springs Rd	6,000	9,300	13,000
Hwy 112 south of municipal boundary	5,800	8,900	13,000
Water Ave	1,000	1,400	2,500
Ball Rd	550	860	1,800
Elm Springs Rd (east of Gene George Blvd)	4,300	5,600	14,000



# 7 Implementation & Recommendations

Utilizing and implementing the vision represented in this document will require strategic planning, budgeting, and coordination with local private, public and state sector stakeholders. A matrix has been created to organize the recommended action items to implement the Elm Springs Vision Plan and is provided below and on following pages.




## IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The following matrix includes the necessary action items needed to implement the Vision Plan and the approximate timeline for when these should be addressed. Some items will take longer than others and some are important to achieve before others. The matrix timeline includes four (4) periods of time:



- Short: 4 years or less
- Medium: 5-9 years
- Long: 10+ years
- Ongoing

<b>GOAL 1: Maintain small-town character and sense of established community, while also growing in a welcoming way.</b>						
Associated Entities	Objectives	Action Items	Timeframe			
			Short Term (4 yrs or less)	Medium (5-9 yrs)	Long-Term (10+ yrs)	Ongoing
Planning Commission, City Council	Along Hwy 112, encourage thoughtful development that strengthens Elm Springs' sense of community through a mix of compatible land uses and development scale/character.  Approach this through the revised FLU Map as well as updates to zoning district regulations.	1. Adopt associated FLU Map and utilize as a primary resource with future development and zoning applications.  2. Adopt updated zoning regulations and districts to directly accommodate intent of this Objective and the Vision Plan.				
Planning Commission, City Council	Recognize and prioritize improvements in the downtown core and ensure thoughtful transitions to adjacent areas. Adopt clear and focused design standards for this area that encourages new community amenities.	Ensure that updated zoning regulations include effective and balanced design standards.				

# 7 Implementation & Recommendations



<b>GOAL 1: Maintain small-town character and sense of established community, while also growing in a welcoming way.</b>						
Associated Entities	Objectives	Action Items	Timeframe			
			Short Term (4 yrs or less)	Medium (5-9 yrs)	Long-Term (10+ yrs)	Ongoing
City Council, Planning Commission, City Administration	Reserve a portion of City-owned land or otherwise plan for a downtown park/square/plaza that can complement private sector development and other amenities. Ensure that pedestrian access is prioritized.	Recognize the financial and community value of existing City-owned parcels, and coordinate with public/private partnerships to retain a City-owned parcel through future downtown redevelopment.				
Planning Commission, City Council	Update the zoning code, zoning districts, and district regulations to clearly depict the development scale and form the City envisions downtown and in other priority development areas. •Neighborhood Services (Goal 2, Obj. 6)	Ensure that updated zoning regulations effectively address building scale and form to meet the intent of each zoning district.				
Planning Commission	Ensure that new development advances walkability and connectivity throughout the City.	With new development requiring street improvements, enforce the pedestrian improvements included with the applicable sections. Adopt updated Subdivision Code standards and construction details as necessary.				

# 7 Implementation & Recommendations

<b>GOAL 1: Maintain small-town character and sense of established community, while also growing in a welcoming way.</b>						
Associated Entities	Objectives	Action Items	Timeframe			
			Short Term (4 yrs or less)	Medium (5-9 yrs)	Long-Term (10+ yrs)	Ongoing
Planning Commission, City Administration	Pursue and advance private and institutional partnerships with the City that can advance community resilience and redevelopment in a way that is supportive of the City's vision and goals, especially downtown. Partnership opportunities that should be further explored may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• churches</li> <li>• cemeteries</li> <li>• businesses</li> <li>• state and regional agencies</li> </ul>	Utilize the upcoming CNU Legacy Project "Revitalizing Downtown Elm Springs" in a way that involves downtown private partners to advance the downtown revitalization vision.				
Citizens, City Council, City Administration	Maintain strong investment in City services and infrastructure as this is an important aspect of what makes living in Elm Springs convenient and supports the welcoming atmosphere of the community.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support future bond, grant, and other financial initiatives to maintain and improve City services.</li> <li>2. Maintain City Hall (Administration, Planning/Building, etc) in a central location. City services that involve fleet operations (police, public works/streets) may be best located outside of the downtown area, so as to have adequate land and to retain prime downtown land for private development and amenities.</li> <li>3. Communicate and coordinate effectively amongst City departments/services to ensure efficiency and good community service is achieved.</li> </ol>				





# 7 Implementation & Recommendations

**GOAL 2: Attract small-scale businesses, mixed-use development, and daily destinations (e.g. coffee, parks, town square, small/local restaurants) that are connected and accessible via bike/pedestrian/vehicular accommodations.**

Associated Entities	Objectives	Action Items	Timeframe			
			Short Term (4 yrs or less)	Medium (5-9 yrs)	Long-Term (10+ yrs)	Ongoing
Planning Commission, City Council	Assess development patterns, land use trends, and transportation projects in surrounding jurisdictions. Discuss related opportunities and challenges. Explore ways to leverage these activities to spur appropriate connections and opportunities in Elm Springs.	Adopt Future Land Use and Master Street Plan, which includes future land use recommendations and future street connections that support this.				
Planning Commission, City Council	Update the zoning map, zoning codes, and FLU map to more clearly indicate the desired land uses, density, and scale of development throughout the City.	Adopt/update these resources.				






# 7 Implementation & Recommendations

**GOAL 2: Attract small-scale businesses, mixed-use development, and daily destinations (e.g. coffee, parks, town square, small/local restaurants) that are connected and accessible via bike/pedestrian/vehicular accommodations.**

Associated Entities	Objectives	Action Items	Timeframe			
			Short Term (4 yrs or less)	Medium (5-9 yrs)	Long-Term (10+ yrs)	Ongoing
City Administration, City Council	Identify approaches to strengthen the local identity of Elm Springs to attract desirable small businesses, entrepreneurs, and community amenities, including through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• marketing and communications</li> <li>• the planning of a central focal point or public space;</li> <li>• infrastructure investments.</li> </ul>	1. Use strategic communication, marketing, and branding to produce a road map or guide that summarizes the benefits and advantages to developing or bringing desirable business/amenities to Elm Springs, particularly within the TC, M-MU, and E-MU Future Land Use classification areas. Partner with a consultant as necessary.				
		2. Document and digitally map existing wastewater infrastructure. Complete wastewater masterplan. Pursue funding that improves/replaces existing infrastructure as needed.				
		3. Implement code updates to ensure that all approved development upgrades or extends their fair share of infrastructure when warranted.				





# 7 Implementation & Recommendations

**GOAL 2: Attract small-scale businesses, mixed-use development, and daily destinations (e.g. coffee, parks, town square, small/local restaurants) that are connected and accessible via bike/pedestrian/vehicular accommodations.**








Associated Entities	Objectives	Action Items	Timeframe			
			Short Term (4 yrs or less)	Medium (5-9 yrs)	Long-Term (10+ yrs)	Ongoing
Planning Commission, City Council	Building on the current development in west Springdale, prioritize the southwest corner of Gene George/Elm Springs Rd as an eastern gateway into the City, and ensure the applicable plans and regulations are updated as needed to facilitate quality development that connects to the community identity of Elm Springs.	Ensure that updated zoning regulations effectively address building scale and form, to meet the intent of each zoning district.				
Planning Commission, City Council	Review the home-based business application process to ensure it is manageable and meets the intent of the City's support of home-based businesses. The review should also consider if an additional land use category or zoning district is needed; ensure related procedures comply with state law.	Review existing City codes and update accordingly, particularly the zoning code.				
Planning Commission, City Council	Explore the creation of a neighborhood services (small-scale mixed-use) zoning district to support local businesses; add necessary design standards and mitigation measures to assist with land use compatibility.	Update the zoning districts/ regulations to support the vision of the Plan.				
City Council, City Administration	Plan for long-term water and wastewater needs, including future operations, management, and maintenance. Visit Goal 4, Objective 5 for more details.	Work with City Engineer and other consultant(s) as needed to analyze and plan for these needs.				

# 7 Implementation & Recommendations

**GOAL 3: Encourage context appropriate growth by managing development in a way that concentrates higher intensities and densities in planned locations to allow the city to maintain and improve its overall positive quality of life.**

Associated Entities	Objectives	Action Items	Timeframe			
			Short Term (4 yrs or less)	Medium (5-9 yrs)	Long-Term (10+ yrs)	Ongoing
Planning Commission, City Council	Review and update the FLU map to ensure it identifies areas that should remain as Rural and/or Rural Residential, including but not limited to the Brush Creek corridor.	Adopt the draft Future Land Use Map associated with the 2025 Vision Plan. Recommend updating every five (5) years.				
Planning Commission, City Council	To manage a balance of both rural residential and higher density housing options, focus mixed uses and higher density housing downtown, near Shaw Park, and at Gene George Blvd.	Adopt the draft FLU Plan associated with the 2025 Vision Plan. Review and update the City zoning map and zoning district regulations to support the vision of the FLU Plan.				
City Administration, City Council, Planning Commission	Assess where additional park/recreation land may be needed and consider adoption of a park land dedication ordinance to support both park land dedication/acquisition as well as park management resources through certain development types.	Conduct a basic park/recreation analysis for the community and discuss then adopt a park land dedication ordinance to address any land or management gaps.				

# 7 Implementation & Recommendations

GOAL 4: Ensure infrastructure improvements that support residents and encourage visitors.						
Associated Entities	Objectives	Action Items	Timeframe			
			Short Term (4 yrs or less)	Medium (5-9 yrs)	Long-Term (10+ yrs)	Ongoing
Planning Commission, City Council	Review and update typical street sections and the 2022 Master Street Plan map as needed to ensure Elm Springs nuanced transportation needs are reflected.	Adopt the draft Master Street Plan associated with the 2025 Vision Plan. Monitor regularly in the future for any needed updates.				
Planning Commission, City Council	Ensure that new development advances walkability and connectivity. Update the Master Street Plan to best accommodate future local and regional bike/ped and vehicular connections that will serve the City's needs as it grows and that will provide a high quality of life. Identify priority projects and connections.	Adopt the draft Master Street Plan associated with the 2025 Vision Plan. Enforce the pedestrian improvements associated with the typical section.				
City Administration, City Council, Planning Commission	In the downtown area, identify priority options and potential solutions to providing a grade-separated pedestrian crossing across the planned 4-lane AR 112.	Partner with an engineering consultant to study the updated corridor and offer a conceptual grade-separated crossing design.				
City Administration, City Council, City Attorney	Proactively approach franchise utilities to improve residents' options or quality of service.	Advance communications with existing utilities and approach new utility providers through strategic relationship building.				
City Administration, City Council	Plan for long-term water and wastewater needs to best accommodate this goal.	Document current wastewater infrastructure; Require that all new development provide as-built drawings of water/wastewater infrastructure provided; and plan for future operations, management, and maintenance needs for both water and wastewater infrastructure.				

# A Appendix

## MASTER STREET PLAN TYPICAL SECTIONS

The Master Street Plan Typical Sections are appended as a separate document.

