



City Administration Building



City Newsletter

Terry Coberly, Mayor

Spring 2006

What's Inside

- ✍ Special Census Update
- ✍ Storm Preparedness
- ✍ Planning Ahead...
- ✍ Parks Board
- ✍ Public Library
- ✍ Summer Street Const.
- ✍ Summer Events
- ✍ Electric Dept. Award
- ✍ Tree City USA Honor
- ✍ New City Logo Approved
- ✍ Yard Waste Collection

We're on the Web!
www.bentonvillear.com

City Council Meetings

Council meetings are held the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the council chambers of City Hall, 117 W. Central. Agendas are printed in local papers and on the web page.

Council Members

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Mary Baggett | Ward 1 |
| Chris Sooter | Ward 1 |
| Rod Sanders | Ward 2 |
| Bob McCaslin | Ward 2 |
| Ed Austin | Ward 3 |
| Bryan Bennett | Ward 3 |
| Scott Comiskey | Ward 4 |
| Jim Grider | Ward 4 |

Bentonville: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Excerpt from speech by Mayor Terry Coberly at the Bentonville / Bella Vista Chamber of Commerce Governmental Update Luncheon held on March 30, 2006.

I am happy to report, and I can say with some certainty because I have lived here more or less 57 years, that the City of Bentonville has never been in better shape than it is today and is only getting better. Because we have so many new people in our community, perhaps I should give you a little recent history about where our city was just a few short years ago, so you can appreciate just how far we have come in a relatively short period of time.

YESTERDAY. The year was 1993, our population was 13,390. We were 16 square miles, had already let Rogers come across I-540 and were making no plans to grow. That year our construction was valued at \$75 million. The city was under a consent order from Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) because of wastewater issues and there was talk of a possible building ban. To put it mildly, we were stagnant at best. A survey done during that time showed citizens number one concern was our city government, which they described as poor.

TODAY. To make a long story short, I took office in 1995 and we went to work dusting off the few plans we had, put them into action and started updating and implementing new ones. Let me show you some of what we have accomplished to-date:

- Adopted a Mission Statement.
- Improved financial administration by adopting a comprehensive annual five-year capital improvement plan, an award winning annual budget, and a financial policy that requires we go no lower than 10% of our annual O & M budget.
- Embraced technology with the integration and connection of all city facilities; a quality GIS system; and the ability to pay utility bills, apply for a building permit and view city financials on-line.
- Formed an Advertising & Promotions (A&P) Commission and helped establish Main Street Bentonville.
- Sought additional funding sources with the approval of an additional one-cent city sales tax and implementation of impact and capacity fees.
- Improved our ISO rating from a Class 5 to a Class 3.
- Purchased 100 acres of new park property and partnered with Bentonville Industrial Development Corporation (BIDC) to purchase 140 acres of industrial park property.
- Helped open Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport by providing them with water and sewer service and a north access road.
- Added new city facilities including the Electric Building, Community Development Building, Compost Facility, three fire stations, and a police facility.

We invested in utility infrastructure projects by: building four additional electric substations; adding water storage capacity; expanding current wastewater treatment plant; initiating design and easement acquisition for a new 48" water transmission line; purchasing 470 acres for a regional wastewater treatment plant; and successfully negotiating a water service territory and electric service territory that will serve us well into the future.

Sidewalks, trails, and street construction has occurred as never before in our city's history. New roads include SE 28th, Tiger Blvd., Moberly Lane, E Central to Little Flock, NW Third, SW 4th, Memorial

See **BENTONVILLE** on Page 2

BENTONVILLE

Continued from Page 1

Road, Town Vu Road, and SE C from 18th to 22nd. New trails include Memorial Park Trail, North Bentonville Trail, Moberly Lane Bike Trail, and Town Branch Trail. This year we are working on the Downtown Square Renovations; NW Third from Yukon Trail to Walton, additional turning lanes at W Central and Walton. And to improve access into Bentonville we have begun the design for 8th Street with an interchange a partnership with Wal-Mart; and design for an interchange at NE J St.

We embraced regionalism by partnering with the BIDC to buy property; Benton County to build roads and sponsor clean-up days; the City of Rogers for an animal shelter and the Perry Road interchange; the State Highway and Transportation Department in widening Hwy 102, Hwy 72, and J Street; NACCA for regional wastewater; and with private partners to improve our downtown, construct trails, and build a new state of the art library.

To foster a sense of community, we partner with the A & P Commission and Main Street Bentonville, and we now have one of the largest Fourth of July celebrations in the state and activities in the heart of our downtown at every holiday and beyond including a parade and ice rink during the winter holiday season. We host tournaments that bring people to town. In 2007, we will host the High School All American Classic for high school football and the 2007 16-year old Babe Ruth World Series Tournament.

Master plans are required to be reviewed and updated and kept relevant, especially in times of unprecedented growth and change. Our comprehensive general plan is being updated from the last one adopted in 2000. At that time, the survey showed that 77% of our residents were Highly Satisfied with our city and no longer listed city government as an issue. In addition, our Downtown Master Plan was adopted in 2004; a Master Parks Plan is in process as we speak; the Capital Improvement Plan is updated annually; a Fire Facility Plan was prepared in 2002; and the 1998 Electric Plan was updated this year. A water plan was updated this year and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program prepares an action plan each year and a Consolidated Plan every three years.



Mayor Coberly

Today our population is 28,478, more than double the 1993 population, we are 29 square miles, an 81% increase from 1993; and construction valuation in 2005 was \$370 million dollars, a nearly 400% increase from 1993.

TOMORROW. We have a vision for the future and enthusiasm to lay the foundation to 2025 when our population will be 65,000, our square miles 35-40, and when Crystal Bridges will have been open 16 years.

Knowing that we must have first class infrastructure to have a first-class city, we continue without exception to invest in infrastructure. Our new 48-inch water transmission line is on schedule and expected to be on line next year. Our regional wastewater plant is more than a concept now and should be in operation in late 2008.

Preliminary results from the recent citizen survey indicates traffic as the top issue facing Bentonville. But that is not unique to Bentonville; that is true across northwest Arkansas. But what is unique is that the city has partnered with the state to widen Hwy 102, Hwy 72 and SE J St. . . . moving those projects up by as much as six to eleven years!

In addition to building more streets we continue to invest in Ozark Regional Transit (ORT) and now have Bentonville's first fixed bus route, will encourage park and ride programs, build more pedestrian and bike facilities and are looking forward to having a traffic control center to monitor intersections. We have made provisions to hire an accident reduction and traffic unit in our police department. And, our first pilot project--- the city's first roundabout is being designed for John DeShields and Moberly intersection which will be a gateway into our anxiously awaited Crystal Bridges Art Museum.

We are in the process of addressing city facility needs, as well, by designing a new main fire station at the corner of S.W. A and Eighth, and purchasing property for additional fire stations in the southwest part of the city. We look forward to the opening of our new state-of-the-art library in October and designing and developing our Price Coffee park property.

We've built up steam and momentum since 1995 and we've gained respect throughout the state. We are excited about the growth, diversity and prosperity of our new community and about what new people bring here and the opportunities before us. We are proud to be a destination for commerce, culture and community. We have the best of everything-- respect for the past passion for the present and plans for the future.

CENSUS UPDATE:

Preliminary Population Estimated at:

28,478

(Up 44% from 2000)

Tips on Storm Preparedness

By Fire Chief Dan White

As everyone knows, Bentonville experienced its first tornado that anyone can even remember on March 12, 2006. While so many lost property, roofs, and homes, we know that it could have been so much worse than it was. In Bentonville, we had no reports of any injuries, although there was at least one injury in a neighboring community. We are thankful, that our families did not have to suffer injury or loss of life of loved ones, while also dealing with the loss of their homes and other property.



Recent tornado damage at College Place Subdivision.

It seems appropriate then to again give our citizens information regarding storm preparedness, and warnings. The more prepared we can be, and knowledgeable about information resources, the greater chance we have to survive another outbreak of severe weather. It is in the hope for the safety of all of our citizens that we give this information.

Severe storms strike in this area mostly in the spring. During the change of the seasons, atmospheric conditions become unstable, and inevitably, violence in the atmosphere will bring severe conditions to our area. We must each be responsible for our own safety in these times, and prepare ourselves for riding out a severe storm safely.

First, let's talk about **preparedness**. It is each individual's responsibility to prepare for the likelihood of a severe storm. Here are some questions everyone should ask themselves about being prepared for storms.

Where will you get information about an approaching storm? Where is the best place to take shelter in your home? Generally, we should seek out the lowest level of our homes away from potentially flying glass, near the center of the home. *What if you had to be on your own for a few days? What survival items could you package for just such an event?* The fire department sponsors a course called Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). All of these questions are dealt with by trained instructors who will teach you how to help yourself and others when needed in a disaster situation.



Next, is **warning systems**. There are several parts to the warning system in our area. One of the best information sources we have is the *television* we have in our homes. When threatening weather is approaching, we strongly recommend you tune in to a local station with storm tracking technology. The equipment that these TV stations have is very advanced today and meteorologists can now almost tell us block by block where severe weather may strike. This is our best early warning.

Another part of the storm warning system is *weather alert radios*. The National Weather Service (NWS) is very conscientious about issuing storm warnings in a timely fashion, and one of the quickest and most reliable ways to receive this information is by having a weather alert radio, programmed to receive local storm information, in your sleeping area. When threatening weather is approaching, the NWS sends out a warning, activating the radios with tones through radio signals which turns on the radio with an audible beep. The beep alerts us that a warning is being announced. If the radio is turned up sufficiently, the beep should wake you up to hear the warning.



The City of Bentonville has *storm sirens* as a part of the overall storm warning system. The sirens are dispersed around our city according to the manufacturer's recommended plan. Each year as we have grown, we have been adding sirens to increase the coverage. These sirens are intended to alert those who may be outside and cannot hear a TV or a weather alert radio. It is our hope that people inside most buildings can hear them also. However, we know that in some buildings on the fringes of each siren's coverage area, some may not hear them, especially if televisions, vacuums, stereos, or other items may be operating which may preclude the sirens from being heard.

Sirens are sounded in tornado warning situations. When a tornado warning is received, or if a reliable report is received that a tornado has been sighted and is approaching, consideration is given to the path of the tornado, and its imminence to hit our area. A decision is then made to sound the sirens.

The **storm warning** is a three minute steady blast of the sirens. If not already done, citizens should take cover immediately. **Once the storm has passed, a 45 second "All Clear" blast is sounded.** There will not be multiple warning soundings for the same storm as it approaches. This could serve to confuse people who may be waiting to hear the "All Clear" signal, and come out of their shelter area, possibly as the tornado is about to hit. Should another tornado warning be issued, then a separate blast of the sirens will be sounded.

If you have any questions about the storm warning systems in our area, or if you want to learn how to set up a "survival kit" for you and your family, or if you are interested in attending the CERT program at the fire department, please call 271-3151. Please let us know if the fire department can be of assistance in any way.

Planning Ahead...

Master Trail Plan Adopted

"Building an interconnected trail system to improve health and fitness while enhancing the transportation network" is the goal of the recently adopted Master Trail Plan.

The Master Trail Plan, approved by City Council on Jan. 10, is designed to guide future trail development by identifying trail routes, recommending design standards, prioritizing projects, and identifying and addressing safety issues. Currently, more than 11 miles of trails are on the ground. The plan proposes approximately 55 trail miles and 10 trailheads to be constructed by 2025.

To see the plan, visit the city's website at www.bentonvillear.com, go to the Planning Department or the GIS map.

General Plan Update

Bruce Peshoff and Sara Copeland of Planning Works made the first visit to Bentonville to kick-off the update to the city General Plan on February 14. They spent most of their time here visiting with focus groups, such as local utility providers and developers; and interviewing managers of various city departments. They spent an afternoon on a tour of the city looking at development patterns. On Feb. 15, they met with the Steering Committee to begin identifying issues. That evening, Mr. Peshoff and Ms. Copeland facilitated the first public workshop by beginning with an overview of the planning process followed by roundtables of discussion groups.

During the month of March, citizen surveys went out to all utility billing customers. Surveys are being tabulated and results will be presented at future public workshops. Thank you to everyone who completed and submitted a survey! We appreciate your time to participate in this process.

Our consultants will be back this summer to hold another public workshop. Please watch local newspapers for details, or contact Shelli Rushing at 271-6826 to be added to the contact list for future meetings.



Bruce Peshoff, right, with Planning Works helps facilitate a round table group at the public workshop on February 15.

Parks Plan

Studio 3c, Inc. is currently working with the City of Bentonville and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to create a comprehensive parks master plan through the year 2020. The planning firm is currently updating the parks inventory and meeting with user groups to identify operational needs for the future. The scope of planning includes the conceptual design of the 139 acre city parcel on Price Coffee Road that has been allocated as park land.

The firm has facilitated three public forums over the past few months, providing members of the community the opportunity to express their concerns, complete a written survey, and share ideas for city parks. The outcome of public involvement has helped identify immediate deficiencies as well as provide vision for future park recommendations. An additional three hundred surveys are currently being completed by the youth of Bentonville through the public school system. The survey is available on the city website at <http://www.bentonvillear.com>.

Public involvement in the planning process will ultimately impact the "quality of life" for residents of Bentonville. For additional information please contact Doug Glaysher (Parks Director) at 271-3109 or David Cox, (Studio 3c, Inc.) at 464-7832 or email info@studio-3c.com.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was implemented to act in an advisory capacity to the City, mayor and council on all policy matters pertaining to parks and recreation activities. They serve as a conduit for public input regarding recreation activities and parks and open space facilities. They have been working closely with established organizations to coordinate parks planning and with Studio 3c, which is updating the city's Parks Master Plan. The Board meets on the 2nd and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 5 p.m. in the Community Development Building at 305 SW A Street. **Parks Board** members from left to right: Backrow: Doug Glaysher, Sam Pearson, Steve Creekmore, Richard Wilson. Front Row: John Sparks, Todd Franke



A New Chapter for the Bentonville Public Library

By Cindy Suter

The City of Bentonville and the private Bentonville Library Foundation are building a 38,000 square foot ultra modern library that is now less than six months from opening. The new Bentonville Public Library will be a special civic place, embodying not only Bentonville's civic values, but also conveying a sense of wonder, expectation and discovery.

The story of how this public-private partnership began several years ago when the City leaders understood the need for rapidly changing Bentonville to have a first class library but the rapid growth was putting spending priority on roads, water, sewer and other critical infrastructure needs.

Although for years the City has partnered with the local Chamber of Commerce and other organizations to finance celebrations, promotions and other projects, this was the first time in the history of the city that a partnership like this joined to build a major building in downtown Bentonville.

The Foundation pledged to raise \$9 million for the building and furnishings that will sit on the former Post

Office site, 405 S. Main, that the City purchased in 2001. The City donated the site and pledged \$2 million to the Foundation's campaign.

To date the Foundation has raised gifts and pledges of over

\$8.4 million. It is now trying to raise the last \$600,000 over the next few months before the opening scheduled for October. Contributions of all sizes are welcomed, and several wonderful naming opportunities remain for rooms, collections and special areas of the new library. In addition, everyone has the opportunity to purchase inscribed bricks



Bentonville Public Library under construction.

For the Library Garden pathway for \$50 for a 4X8 or \$100 for an 8X8 brick. It is a wonderful way to honor or permanently remember a loved one, friend or family. The garden is just east of the main entrance and will be viewed and enjoyed by many generations to come.

For more information please contact the Bentonville Library Foundation, 271-2464.

Utility Assistance

The City of Bentonville and Helping Hands have joined together to assist our neighbors in need with their utility bills. It is easy to help, just record on your payment stub the amount you would like to donate to the program and include the donation in the amount of your check or money order. If you are on bank drafting, where we automatically debit your bank account for your utilities, you can participate too. Just call the office and we can add a set amount to your bill each month to go to the assistance fund.

All funds are used to assist City of Bentonville utility customers. If you are a customer in need, contact Helping Hands at 320 Airport Rd, 273-2511.

Summer Street Construction

The following streets will be under construction this summer:

- **Walton**, from I-540 to SW 18th St.
- **SE J St.**, from Hwy 102 to Walton Blvd.
- **NW 3rd St.** Phase 1, from Walton Blvd. to NW Yukon Trail
- **SE C St.**, from SE 28th St. to Walton Blvd.
- **SE C St.**, from SE 18th St., to SE 22nd St.
- **W Central Ave.**, from Walton Blvd. to G St.
- **Tiger Blvd.**, from NE J St. to McCollum Rd.
- **NE J St.**, from Central to Tiger Blvd.(finish work)
- **SW I St.**, from Hwy 102 to Walton Blvd.

Summer Events



- June 3-4:** 8th Annual Ozark Balloon Festival, Bentonville Municipal Airport
- June 14:** Flag Day Celebration, Town Square
- June 19:** 3rd Annual Square Fair Art Walk, 4-9 pm, Town Square
- May Aug:** Farmer's Market, Saturdays 6:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Town Square
- May Oct.:** Pickin' on the Square, Friday nights, Town Square



Keep Meters Accessible

Help your meter reader. To make sure the meter readers are able to record accurate readings for you, please make sure that they have access to your meters. If there are any bushes or other items that are blocking your meter, an inaccurate reading may result. Please trim any bushes and remove any items stored in front of your meter.



PRINTED ON 100%
RECYCLABLE MATERIAL

Yard Waste Curbside Collection

The Yard Waste Curbside Collection program began last year and will be available again this year. If you did not sign up last year, be sure to sign up now.

Each resident will receive 1 - 90 gallon poly cart(s) which will hold the equivalent of 4-6 bags of yard waste. The service will run April - November. The cost of the service is \$6.00 per month. Each additional cart (up to three) will be just \$ 2 . 0 0 per month. The yard waste collected will be disposed of at the City of Bentonville Compost Facility, which also accepts yard waste delivered to the site at no charge.

You may sign-up for this program by calling Bentonville Public Utilities at 271-3100 during City business hours 8:00AM to 4:30PM or by contacting American Disposal Service directly at 855-4226. You may also sign-up online at www.bentonville.com/utbc_yardwaste.html.

KUDOS.... Electric Dept Award

The Bentonville Electric Utilities Department was recently honored by the Municipal Electric Systems of Oklahoma (MESO) as the second place winner in the annual Electric Operations and Reliability contest in the category for cities over 10,000 population.

Bentonville was recognized for excellent customer services and low margin of customer service disturbances. Power was available to the residents of Bentonville 99.98% of the time in 2005; meaning that of the 8,760 hours in 2005, the average Bentonville resident was only without power for 105 minutes over the entire year.

The City was also recognized for outstanding safety practices. Employees of the Bentonville Electric Utilities Department missed only 11 days of work due work-related injury in 2005, despite electric line work being among the most hazardous of industries for workers.

MESO Executive Director Shane Woolbright said, "The current construction and employee training standards of the Utility are superior, and that effort has resulted in the outstanding reliability citizens receive, and the presentation of this award."

MESO is an electric utility trade association representing cities in Oklahoma, Missouri and Arkansas. The association's member utilities provide non-profit electric services to some 700,000 people in the three states.

City Receives Tree City U.S.A. Status, Tree Growth Award

For the 8th year in a row, the City received its leaders of all Tree City U.S.A.'s plan for Tree City U.S.A. status. And, for the first time, the City applied for and received the Tree City U.S.A Growth Award. This award recognizes environmental improvement and encourages higher levels of tree care throughout America. This award is designed not only to recognize achievement, but also to communicate new ideas and help the

improving community tree care. To achieve this award, new activities for the year must be completed in any area covering Education and Public Relations, Partnerships, Planning and Management, and Tree Planting and Maintenance. Communities achieving this growth recognition for 10 years are designated as Sterling Tree City U.S.A.'s, which Bentonville will be continually striving for!



Bank Drafting

The City of Bentonville offers an Automatic Bank drafting program. In this program you receive a bill just like normal, but you do not have to send in a payment. On the due date of your bill, the amount of your bill is automatically drafted from your bank account. To sign-up for this program please stop by or call the Utility Office at City Hall or go to <http://www.bentonville.com/docs/utility/udba.pdf>.

Council Approves City Logo

Last fall, the City of Bentonville was approached by Eric Halsell with The Halsell Agency to design a new logo for the city, pro-bono. The offer was accepted and the Mayor and City staff has been working with the agency to develop the new logo. The logo was presented at the April 25th City Council Meeting and was unanimously approved.

The star is used in the logo for several reasons.

1. It is used in the logos of three other major organizations the City partners with to assist in the betterment of Bentonville. The Bentonville / Bella Vista Chamber of Commerce, The Advertising & Promotions Commission, and Main Street Bentonville;
2. The five points represent what we as a City strive to promote and encourage: community, culture, commerce, communication, and commitment.
3. It is our recognition of Wal-Mart's on-going contribution to the betterment of our community.

Bentonville has expanded by 9,000 new residents since 2000 and a future national museum will be located in downtown. The City continues to expand our facilities to meet the needs of Bentonville and its residents. Bentonville is a new and progressive City and this fresh, new logo represents that progressive growth Bentonville embraces.

