

State of the City 2023

How do we start describing 2023 other than what a year?

Our city staff have taken everything that 2023 threw at them and continued to provide our daily city services in every area. Our community is grateful for and appreciate what our staff have done over the last year.

Pea Ridge is a city located in Benton County Arkansas. Pea Ridge has a 2023 population of 8,182. Pea Ridge is currently growing at a rate of 7.05% annually and its population has increased by 22.67% since the most recent census, which recorded a population of 6,559 in 2020. This is from the World Population Review website.

We continue to keep our mission set as: To continue to be a place of growth and opportunity, that value family, and cultivates community involvement.

We have been fortunate to receive Tree Grants from the Walton Family Foundation which allowed us to do two trees give away events last year and to plant trees around our community.

Our future is bright thanks to the dedicated service of those who have preceded us in all areas of the city, whether city administration, city staff, city council, and planning commission members.

Highlights of 2023.

Street Department:

- It'll Do sidewalk project.
- Painted all light poles at city park.
- Installed power pole for 2nd Sat.
- Installed Drive and new sidewalk Infront of shop.
- Clean Easement on Harison St
- Curtis St Storm drain by Ember Mountain
- Oakley St drain Project
- Finished clean-up of Ryan Rd drain crossing
- Replaced Buckets on Splash Pad
- Built Handrail for N Curtis Drain
- Cleaned and Reshaped Alder St Drain
- Replaced buckets and put hydrant at splash pad.
- Built handrail for N Curtis drain.
- Cleaned Sugar creek Rd after flood and reshaped N side ditch.
- Cleaned and reshaped ditch at Alder St
- Built grate for drain on Alder St box.
- Cleaned and reshaped bike trail behind shop and had new gate and fence installed.
- Installed new crosswalk lights on It'll Do Rd for walkers' safety.

- Installed new speed limit signs down Hazelton Rd.
- Cleaned out and reshaped for the dog park.
- Had new fence installed to make a dog park.
- Purchased shipping container to help with storage at street dept yard.
- Cleaned up down trees on E Harris Rd after bad weather.
- Installed 2 sidewalk benches for patrons.
- Installed water fountain and bike repair station for patrons.
- Took down and winterized splash pad.
- Asphalt patched Barris and two spots on state Hwy.
- Set up and tore down mule jump.
- Replaced 8 new sections for sidewalk on Weston St.
- Had a new security system installed in the street department.
- Set up Christmas décor and new snowflakes downtown.
- Leaf control across town with leaf sucker and street sweeper.
- Reshape and fix drainage ditch beside ACE hardware.

Parks:

- Continued Park maintenance and improvement.
- Applied for a \$250,000 Grant from the Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism.
- Installed 2 drink fountains/bike stations.
- Fence installed for the dog park at the Carr Street Park
- Had a new Starlink internet and new security system installed at the city park.

Water/Sewer Department:

- Completed, tested, and put into service the Otter Creek sewer line.
- Completed the third version of the City of Pea Ridge Water Utilities 2023 Specification and Drawings. This manual was approved on 3/19/23.
- Server for our SCADA and GIS programs was installed. Staff were involved in multiple training opportunities.
- Installed new drive thru window at the water office.
- Completed multiple renovation projects on the inside of the office. A couple more will be completed in 2024.
- A new 2500' water line was installed on Price Coffee Road.
- The older version of the utilities accounting software was replaced with a program from Continental Utility Solutions Inc.

Fire/Ambulance:

- Stopped billing for Lift Assist
- Relationship Building with the residents.
- Spoke to Lions Club partnered for books for 1st grade class and passed out this year.
- City Business for oil changes had outstanding bill and reputation differences worked out.
- Residents for Lift assist, spoke with them. Assured citizens we were a public service not a for profit business.
- Stopped auto post to Facebook that could cause other agencies more work/stress potential HIPAA.
- Fixed Ambulance billing to be more aligned with other FD and not trying to get the most money out of patients.

- Simplified Fire Dues for this year many rural fire members were getting multiple bills for same piece of property due to county parcel divisions.
- Uniform changes- making us look more professional. Also cut cost of polos by 50% through different vendor.
- Personal Fitness 30 minutes of mandatory PT
- Station improvements
- Exhaust Fan added and lights in restrooms on auto function.
- Parking lot one section done; others planned.
- Roof over the living/office area
- Back attic ladder bought and installed.
- Hard wired internet makes FD and Ambulance reporting more reliable and security higher.
- Phone in the back for the firefighters available to answer after-hours calls.
- Drop box for payments.
- Security upgrades better accountability in med room
- Actively painting
- Promote LT Brown and created “3 shifts of volunteers” for better accountability.
- Assign Volunteers to LT to make chain of command clear.
- Removed Comp time and just went to paying our people for when they are here.
- Metro Chiefs representation
- Hired 2 replacements with multiple years and officer experience.
- Ensured maintenance workers are getting paid.
- Consistent officer meetings with agendas beforehand and group buy in for direction of the FD.
- Moved LOPFI reporting from PD to our Admin, and we can add and drop volunteers without waiting.
- EMS committee created.
- EMS Director
- Additional iPad for truck checks bought.
- Standard set for Truck checks that will be followed up on
- 442 was in the shop before he came – got us moved up and fixed.
- 441 motor was on back order – approved us to move to a more expensive but available now motor.
- School Familiarization for all shifts
- 3 AEDs to replace out of date and expired.
- Training Committee revamped.
- Genesis Combi tools bought giving 3 different apparatus extrication abilities.
- Installed App and received training on new SCBA’s for tracking
- SOP for promotions
- Fire code digital
- Wrecker services partnership for unlimited cars to cut up and practice on
- Rock Garden in front of station
- Whole department is doing inspections not just one person
- Transparent narcotic sign offs
- Gear checks
- First officer test for full time personnel
- Promoted 2 Captains -moved people to spread out experience
- Fire Inspector hired

- Tahoe donated
- Budget for 2024 started in July
- Active Shooter training/plan with PD
- Hats donated for duty wear
- Combined training to involve volunteers in same training as full time
- Conducted 1st advanced rescue and self-rescue training
- Added 8 PRN's who work for large well reputable dept's
- Initiated Paramedic agreement to send 1st firefighter to school
- Improved relations with surrounding volunteer dept/joint training
- Secured Poker Run starting point for BB&BBQ
- New and improved representation and giveaways for 2nd Saturday
- All Full time and Volunteer Officers badges, name plates, collar brass and flying cross (class A) dress uniform for parades, funeral etc.
- RTF trauma bags for Active Shooter/Mass Casualty
- In house/paid IT for our specific reporting systems
- Improved communication with local and regional medic to get safety information out
- Transparency from Chief all the way down
- Only Chief in Benton County to go to a county corium court meeting to express the need to keep fire codes in the county.
- Grant for Smoke alarms was given to the Pea Ridge Fire Department
- Only Department that sent info about smoke detectors home with elementary kids to make sure all parents knew these were available.
- Partnered with Avoca Fire, and NEBCO Fire to have them install our smoke detectors in homes in their fire district, but have children in our school.
- Obtained a dump tank
- New Ambulance was secured and placed in service
- Resumed hose testing in a timely manner
- Used contacts to complete pumper service testing
- Partnered with street dept to give them the use of the side by side
- Partnered with police chief to pass city ordinance for parades and permits
- Spoke with Blackhawk football team about keys to success (Public interactions)
- Obtained new 3,000-gal tanker from county/sent old one to piney point
- Institute 56 hr. pay week to get away from short/long checks
- Institute 18-day FLSA period to regulate OT more efficiently
- Coordinate training room lay out and function, logo on wall
- Conducted 2 regional classes at PRFD
- Haz Mat Operations
- Carroll Electric, electric safety and demo trailer
- Secured better pricing through vendor contact
- Uniform shirts saving \$50 on each
- Extrication gloves
- Structure gloves
- Hoods
- Hose was on order looked at order and was able to switch to something that aligns with department need/value it is already here and in use

Police Department:

- Addition of two additional SRO's and two additional patrol officers.
- Conviction of a suspect accused of the rape of a child.
- Arrest for a class Y felony for Kidnapping.
- Suspect identified for an Aggravated Burglary.
- 46 DWI's which is an increase from last year.
- 123 Drug related arrests which is an increase from last year.
- IT
- New network equipment including new switch.
- Onboarding with Haven MS has assisted with IT management.
- Moved to cloud-based storage for files, more ability to share and access needed data.
- Increased security with 2-factor authentication.
- Fleet
- Acquired, upfitted, and placed into service 4 new patrol vehicles
- Grants
- Awarded the annual BVP grant for bullet proof vest replacements (Approximately \$3,000)
- Awarded 2023-2024 mini-STEP Grant through State DPS with increased budget. (Approximately \$19,000)
- Other grants and reimbursements for equipment. (Approximately \$12,000)
- Public Relations
- Conducted first National Night Out community event –more than 100 in attendance.
- Conducted annual trunk-or-treat event at PD.
- Conducted mini trunk-or-treat events at local day cares.

Library:

Library Statistics to date: (These numbers have surpassed last year's totals.)

- Enrolled 492 new patrons.
- A little over 11,500 visits to the library
- Offered 198 programs so far with 2430 participants.
- Projects/Community Relationships
- New furniture and new flooring
- Community members are now allowed to use the community room for personal events.
- Started a Community Cares Cart that offers personal hygiene products to those in need.
- Started Personal Book Shopping for residents of Autumn Place.
- Summer Reading Program: Saw an increase in the number of programs offered as well as those participating.
- Partnered with the Blackhawk Pantry to give away baskets of food and household items; Also had Snack Packs to hand out during the summer.
- Hosted Coffee with a Cop in July.
- Attended the Back to School Bash, Teacher Fair, and the Pre-K Open House.
- Partnered with the Extension Office to offer a 6-week cooking class geared towards those looking for budget friendly options.

- Partnered with the school to host the Pre-K classes at the library.
- Offered two fine forgiveness programs (Christmas in July & Fines for Food)
- Donating food from “Fines for Food” to the Blackhawk Pantry
- Participating in the Mister Roger’s Sweater Drive; All clothing will be donated to Bright Futures.
- We will also be participating in the Angel Tree program and should have “angels” available on or around November 20th. We also have some exciting programs coming up in December like our First Annual Cookie Swap and a visit from Santa.

Annual Highlights:

Designing a Community Center
 Hired a full time Planning Director
 Hired a full time Code Enforcement Officer
 Hired an additional Building Inspector
 Hired a new Library Director
 Hired a new Fire Chief
 Building a relationship with ARDOT for highway and intersection improvements.

Grant Use	Grantor	Amount
Park Improvement	Project for Public Spaces	\$80,000.00
McCulloch St. Sidewalk	ARDOT Tap Funds	\$183,000.00
N. Davis St. Sidewalk	ARDOT CRP Funds	\$332,872.00
Lee Town Rd. Trail	ARDOT CRP Funds	\$386,180.00
2023 Tree Grant	Walton Family Foundation	\$185,260.00
Park Improvement	Arvest Bank	\$10,000.00
Open Space/Parks Plan	Urban Land Institute	\$250,000.00
N. Davis St. Sidewalk	ARDOT TAP Funds	\$126,000.00
	Total	\$1,553,312.00

Building Official / Inspections:

- Added an additional inspector.
- Commercial, new construction 14 permits –, value – \$28,043,437.00
- Residential units – 431, value - \$134,318,707.00.00
- Miscellaneous Permits:
 - Building – 22
 - Electrical – 69
 - Mechanical – 46
 - Plumbing – 68
 - Total – 205
- Total inspections performed – 4,100.
- Impact fees collected – 491, value \$,1055,154.09.

Community Development:

1. Final Plats
 - Sedona Rose Ph. 2
 - Walnut Hill Ph. 2
 - Stephanie Estates
 - Wellington Hills Ph. 1
2. Large Scale Developments
 - Dollar General
 - Today's Bank
3. Ordinance 794 – Cash and Performance Bond Options.
4. Ordinance 822 – Building Setbacks, 911 addressing requirements.
5. Soccer Fields (Locations/Topo/Design)
6. Assisted Street Dept w/ various projects.
7. Captured aerial photos of Pea Ridge for Greater Bentonville Area Chamber of Commerce.
8. Obtained ArcGIS
 - Created Project Tracker

Future Planning for Projects

- Givens Subdivision along S. Harvey Wakefield Topo
- Ross Salvage Topo

Planning Department:

- 2023 List of Projects and Accomplishments:
- Jan. – Hazelton Townhomes Large-Scale Development
- Feb. – N/A
- Mar. – Urgent Care Large-Scale Development, Master Bike/Ped updates for Regional and Local connectivity
- Apr. – Planning Commission By-laws update
- May – KKD Daycare Large-Scale Development, Drainage Manual update, Subdivision Regulations update (performance bonds)
- Jun. – Patton Place Townhomes Large-Scale Development
- Jul. – Pensago LLD Butcher and Pint Large-Scale Development Admin. Review, Pea Ridge Point Large-Scale Development, Walnut Hill Ph 2 Final, Walnut Hill Ph. 3 & 4 Prelim, Stephanie Estates Final, Sedona Rose Ph. 2 Final
- Aug. – N/A
- Sep. – N/A
- Oct. – Code updates for Large-Scale Developments, Home Occupation, and Accessory Uses, Today's Bank Final, Wellington Hills Ph. Final
- Nov. – Subdivision Regulation updates, Concord Prelim
- Dec. – 2021 Zoning Conversion Chart recommendations

- Please note the following:
- Edited development applications to include updated regulations, process chart, and information packets.

- Updated Tec. Reviews to streamline our process to be more efficient and effective.
- Project for Public Spaces, with the Walton Family Foundation Placemaking Grant, in the amount of \$80,000.00, for updates to the Pea Ridge City Park.
- Urban Land Institute grant for Small Cities, in the amount of \$250,000.00, to identify and preserve open and green spaces within the City of Pea Ridge. This will aid us in creating a master plan for our open and green spaces as we prepare for future growth.
- Created and implemented 3 subcommittees: Main Street, Bike/Ped, and Parks & Recs.
- Honorable Mention, at the Arkansas Municipal Leagues yearly convention in June, for our Main Street Revitalization concept. This was the “Reimagine the Town you Love” competition with Block, Street, and Building. This competition was to showcase The Best of New Urbanism in Arkansas. This was achieved through collaboration with Issac Diaz (consultant) and Dustin Phy.
- Implemented the QR code for public hearing notices. This provided a tool the public could use to receive public hearing information at their convenience. This was achieved by collaborating with Dustin Phy.
- Public outreach at the Second Saturday events.
- Completed Active Transportation Training with LaneShift.
- Completed New Urbanism certification courses with the University of Miami and the Congress for New Urbanism. I am still waiting to hear back to confirm my CNU-A from the Congress.
- Updated and streamlined our Planning Dept. Admin. Review process.
- Received a grant from the Walton Family Foundation to attend the 2023 Congress for New Urbanism in Charlotte North Carolina through Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning.
- Represented the city of Pea Ridge at the 2023 Urban Land Institutes Placemaking Summit in the Small Cities Charettes.
- 2023 City Trendsetter, for Technology and Security, for our QR Public Hearing Notice tool. This was a collaboration effort with Dustin Phy.
- Completed Placemaking training through Project for Public Spaces.
- Mainstreet Subcommittee created the First Annual Festival of Lights.
- **This list does not include 2023 Rezones, Home Occupation Permits, Business Licenses, Sign Permits, or Admin. Reviews for Incidental Subdivision,

City of Pea Ridge projected growth:

- Year 2022 – population 6,559
- Year 2030 – population 7,649
- Year 2040 – population 9,428

Pea Ridge Population History by Census Year:

- 1940 – 72
- 1950 – 268
- 1960 – 380
- 1970 – 1088
- 1980 – 1488
- 1990 – 1620
- 2000 – 2346
- 2010 – 4794
- 2020 - 6559

