

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION STATING THE CITY OF FORT SMITH'S SUPPORT  
FOR THE SUSTAINABLE ARKANSAS PROGRAM**  
\_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, the Applied Sustainability Center at the University of Arkansas is proposing the creation of a Sustainable Arkansas program; and

WHEREAS, said program would be a voluntary certification program for Arkansas cities to demonstrate their commitment to sustainable development practices; and

WHEREAS, said program can further economic development goals by communicating a community's support for sustainable development; and

WHEREAS, said program encourages the adoption of best practices that enhance quality of life and stewardship of resources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of the City of Fort Smith, Arkansas that:

The City of Fort Smith hereby supports the creation of the Sustainable Arkansas program. Formal recognition of sustainable development policies and practices is essential to promoting progressive economic development in all Arkansas cities.

This Resolution passed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of June, 2014.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
No Publication Required



1

## MEMORANDUM

May 23, 2014

**TO:** Mayor and Board of Directors

**FROM:** Ray Gosack, City Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray", enclosed in a rectangular box.

**SUBJECT:** Sustainable Arkansas Cities

The Applied Sustainability Center at the University of Arkansas is working to create a Sustainable Arkansas program.

The program would be a certification for cities. It would demonstrate a city's commitment and support for sustainable development practices. Such practices might include construction of trails and sidewalks, building codes that promote energy efficiency, waste minimization and recycling, and a stream side protection ordinance. The attached synopsis provides greater detail.

The program organizers are seeking to identify cities who might be interested in this program. The organizers are pursuing grant and foundation funding to get the program up and running, and they need to demonstrate that there's interest from cities.

This program has the potential to produce economic and development benefits as described in the synopsis. However, implementation of the measures could be viewed by some as being burdensome, unnecessary regulation, and development unfriendly.

Michele Halsell, managing director of the Applied Sustainability Center, and Peter Nierengarten, sustainability and resilience department director for the City of Fayetteville, will be present at the May 27<sup>th</sup> study session to discuss the Sustainable Arkansas program.

Attachment

cc: Michele Halsell, Applied Sustainability Center  
Peter Nierengarten, City of Fayetteville

## Sustainable Arkansas: Where the Natural State meets the Land of Opportunity

### Executive Summary

Sustainability offers a strategy for harnessing Arkansas' natural assets to generate economic opportunity. A 2012 report prepared by Boyette Strategic Advisors for the Arkansas Economic Developers highlighted the importance of sustainability as an economic development strategy for the state. The report makes the case that Arkansas has sustainability assets that can be leveraged to promote economic growth and development and that cities play a key role in capitalizing on these assets.

The report recommends establishing a Sustainable Arkansas program to help cities be more competitive in attracting investment. The program would provide a process for cities to become certified as Sustainable Arkansas cities, and would provide training, access to grant funding, and access to student interns. The program would be *free to cities*, strictly *voluntary*, and flexible enough to accommodate *local priorities*.

By modeling the program after an existing program, Arkansas could quickly gain traction, accelerate progress and gain momentum in leveraging sustainability as a pathway to economic prosperity. A program could be in development by July 2014 with cities joining the program in 2015.

This proposal outlines the economic benefits of sustainability for Arkansas cities, program components, a funding strategy, a process for launching the program, and a time line for action.



## Introduction: Sustainability as Pathway to Prosperity

The Applied Sustainability Center at the University of Arkansas proposes to coordinate a certification program for Arkansas cities to help them leverage sustainability to enhance prosperity and promote economic growth. The program would be modeled after Sustainable Jersey, a highly successful program that promotes the adoption of best practices, policies and programs among municipalities in New Jersey.

A 2012 report by Boyette Strategic Advisors titled *Arkansas Sustainable Agenda for Economic Development* highlighted Arkansas' strengths in sustainability and pointed out that these strengths could be leveraged to promote job growth and enhance economic prosperity for the state. Many Arkansas cities and regions are poised to take advantage of various sustainability attributes to attract new investment and new residents. The report cites a CoreNet study that revealed that 92 percent of corporate real estate executives consider sustainability criteria in their location decisions.

The Boyette report recommends establishing a Sustainable Arkansas Program modeled after Sustainable Jersey. Sustainable Arkansas would provide a framework that cities can use to guide their sustainability efforts as well as a certification program that helps cities communicate their sustainability attributes to citizens and other stakeholders.

The Sustainable Arkansas program would be **free** to cities. The program would be strictly **voluntary** and would provide flexibility for cities to emphasize **local priorities**. Sustainable Arkansas would be a grass-roots, community-centric approach to expanding the adoption of policies and programs that would help Arkansas cities expand prosperity and promote economic development. The program would provide the following services to cities:

- Certification as a Sustainable Arkansas City
- Training for local leaders in a variety of topics related to sustainability
- Access to grant funding to support local sustainability initiatives
- Access to interns to assist with local sustainability projects
- Recognition for leadership

## Economic Development, Sustainability, and Cities

Arkansas cities stand to reap economic benefits from participating in Sustainable Arkansas.

1. Increased competitiveness in attracting new investment: Corporations increasingly factor sustainability into their location decisions. A CoreNet study showed that 92% of corporate real estate executives include sustainability criteria in their location decisions. They are looking for locations that help them meet their sustainability goals which are often mandated by their customers. Arkansas cities and regions that are not actively addressing sustainability issues will be at a disadvantage relative to cities that help employers meet their sustainability goals. Topeka, Kansas, is an example of proactively addressing employer sustainability needs at the Kanza Fire Commerce Park. Employers who build in the park achieve 60% of the points needed to achieve LEED Gold certification. Sustainable Arkansas can assist cities by providing a framework that helps them develop sustainability assets and communicate these effectively to prospective employers.

2. Increased competitiveness in attracting talent: In a global economy, investment follows talent. Arkansas cities must position themselves to attract talent in order to attract investment. Millennials choose where they want to live and then find work in their chosen city. Employers know this and are looking to locate in cities that allow Millennials to live a lifestyle that emphasizes active transportation, cultural amenities, and authenticity. Cities that develop sustainability assets that attract Millennials will be more competitive in attracting new investment from corporations seeking to hire talent in this generation.
3. Affordability – Save Money, Live Better: This is the Walmart principle played out on a community scale. Local elected officials are not in a position to mandate pay raises by employers, however they have an opportunity to build cities that address affordability factors, thus stretching incomes and enhancing the health of the local economy. Arkansans use 25% more energy than the national average, and the ACEEE estimates that the average Arkansas household could reduce their energy consumption by 37%. Cities play a role in tapping these savings and diverting them to local businesses. For example, adopting and enforcing stricter building codes could save Arkansas households as much as \$1,000 in utility bills annually, dollars that could be spent in the local economy. Cities can also help residents save money on transportation. A study by the Center for Neighborhood Technology reported that residents in Northwest Arkansas spend 29% of their disposable income on commuting-related expenses compared to a national average of 19%. Additionally, the study revealed that only three cents of every dollar spent on gasoline stays in the local economy. Cities that invest in building sidewalks and trails that connect residential areas to jobs, education, and shopping can help residents reduce their commuting-related expenses, dollars which could also be spent locally. Combining energy savings with a “Shop Local” campaign can help to insure the sustainability of local businesses and keep dollars circulating in the local economy. Sustainable Arkansas would provide a framework for sharing policy tools and promoting best practices among Arkansas cities.
4. Distributed Jobs through Mining Arkansas’ Clean Energy Potential: Arkansas has abundant potential to create jobs in the emerging clean energy sector. Arkansas has a relatively energy intensive economy with the 11<sup>th</sup> highest energy consumption per real dollar of gross state product (US Energy Information Administration, [http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/states/\\_seds.html](http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/states/_seds.html).) Mining energy efficiency in Arkansas could create thousands of jobs distributed across the state. Cities that adopt stricter building codes or that create energy improvement districts would help to foster demand for the services of companies such as Viridian or Harrison Energy Partners, allowing them to add new employees. Similarly, Arkansas can mine clean energy resources including solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass. Arkansas ranks 11<sup>th</sup> among US states for solar energy potential and 6<sup>th</sup> among US states for biomass potential. Developing these assets not only creates jobs for individuals working in these fields, but also helps to attract new investment among employers who are looking for greener energy supplies. Cities that develop their renewable energy assets and make them available to employers will be more competitive in attracting new investment.

5. Regional Collaboration for Economic Benefit: Sustainable Arkansas could help to foster regional collaboration on sustainability projects that no city could accomplish singly and that would have economic benefit for multiple communities. The Razorback Greenway in Northwest Arkansas is an example of a sustainability project that has a positive impact on the regional economy and requires collaboration among the cities in the region. Collaboration among cities could help them to achieve their sustainability goals faster whether it involves expanding public transportation or developing a regional renewable energy network. Regional efforts focused on tourism or local food specialties could also be fostered under the Sustainable Arkansas umbrella.

### Sustainable Arkansas Program Components

The Sustainable Arkansas program would provide the following program components to cities:

1. Certification as a Sustainable Arkansas City
2. Training for local leaders in a variety of topics related to sustainability
3. Access to grant funding to support local sustainability initiatives
4. Access to interns to assist with local sustainability projects
5. Recognition for leadership

### Certification

Sustainable Arkansas would be modeled after Sustainable Jersey as recommended in the 2012 report by Boyette Strategic Advisors. Cities would achieve certification based on the accumulation of **points** awarded for **actions** taken in different **categories** such as energy efficiency, transportation, renewable energy, water stewardship and waste minimization and recycling. Points are awarded for the adoption of specific policies or the implementation of a specific program. Some of the actions are listed as “priority actions” and cities choose at least two priority actions. Cities take additional actions which are spread out across the categories to earn the remaining points needed to be certified. The chart below illustrates the bronze and silver certification levels for Sustainable Jersey, which can be modified for Arkansas. Certification categories, actions and points awarded would be developed by convening Arkansas subject matter experts and stakeholders (see Program Development Activities on p. 6).

Bronze Certification	Silver Certification
Green Team	Green Team
150 points	350 points
2 out of 11 priority actions	3 out of 11 priority actions
Actions in 6 out of 17 categories	Actions in 8 out of 17 categories



## Certification Dimensions

Cities would earn points toward certification by adopting policies, programs, and best practices in a number of areas related to sustainability such as energy efficiency, water stewardship, waste minimization, land use, or health. The criteria would be established by working groups comprised of subject matter experts from academia, state agencies, business and industry, and non-profit groups. The chart below provides examples of actions that might be included in the certification process.

Examples of Sustainable Arkansas Categories & Actions					
<b>Energy Efficiency</b>	Adopt 2009 or 2012 IECC bldg. codes	Energy labeling for homes	New bldgs. 5000+sq.ft. LEED or Green Globes certified	Green MLS	
<b>Transportation</b>	Adopt no-idling ordinance	Purchase fuel-efficient fleet vehicles	Adopt a complete streets ordinance	Allocate some turn-back funds to sidewalks, trails, safe routes to school	
<b>Renewable Energy and Alternative Fuels</b>	Reduce restrictive covenants for residential renewables	Fast-track permitting process for residential renewables	Pursue landfill gas to energy	Install CNG fueling station & Electric Vehicle (EV) recharging stations	Convert city fleet to biodiesel and CNG
<b>Water</b>	Adopt streamside protection ordinance	Adopt Low-Impact Development ordinance	Water conservation outreach program	Encourage installation of rain gardens	Repair leaking water infrastructure
<b>Waste</b>	Implement waste reduction and recycling programs	Expand recycling, incl. e-waste recycling	Implement a city or county composting program	Collect restaurant waste oil to convert to biodiesel	
<b>General Criteria</b>	Internal Green Team	External Green Team	Sustainability Office	Sustainability Coordinator or Director	Sustainability Plan with targets and goals

## **Training**

Training can be delivered in an online format such as a webinar or in a classroom setting face-to-face. Training may be delivered by University of Arkansas faculty and staff or may be outsourced by contracting with experts from other organizations such as the Urban Land Institute, the Center for Neighborhood Technology, or the Sustainable Cities Institute. Training may be offered on a wide array of topics to assist cities in leveraging sustainability for local benefit. Training topics may include:

- How to start a sustainability office/program
- Communication – how to tell your city’s sustainability story without “greenwashing”
- Power of the purse – green purchasing
- Community engagement and outreach for sustainability
- How to engage the business community – Greenway Business Certification Program (S. Bristow)
- LEAN Manufacturing – E3 (AIEC/Nutter and Harding)
- Greening your tourism, hotels, and hospitality (R. Harrison)
- Land use, transportation, & health – getting the most benefit from city investments
- Drive Smart Training for city staff (David Baxter at AML)

## **Access to Grant Funding**

Similar to Sustainable Jersey, a pool of funds could be established that cities can use to implement various sustainability initiatives. Cities would need to meet minimum criteria of establishing a Green Team in order to apply for a grant. A committee would review applications and award funding based upon criteria established by the grant funder.

## **Internships**

Students in the University of Arkansas’ sustainability minor and urban planning minor must complete capstone projects. Cities could specify projects or specific needs related to sustainability and then interview interns. Internships could be paid or unpaid. This would give students hands-on real-world experience to build their resumes while giving cities an opportunity to advance sustainability priorities or projects. For example, a student might complete a tree canopy inventory for a city or assist with mapping food deserts. These completed projects could be used to inform city decisions regarding tree planting priorities and where to focus efforts to expand access to healthy food.

## **Recognition**

Annual Awards: Currently, Arkansas Business recognizes several Arkansas cities each year for their efforts in various categories. The categories include Workforce Development, Green/Energy Conservation Initiatives, Main Street Preservation, Tourism Development, Quality of Life, and Technology Advancements. Sustainable Arkansas can work with Arkansas Business to establish objective criteria for awards in various categories based on points earned or actions taken.



## Program Development Activities

In order to launch a Sustainable Arkansas program, the following activities would need to be undertaken:

- Convene stakeholder groups comprised of subject matter experts to establish certification criteria in key areas such as energy, water, waste, land use, health, local food systems, etc.
- Build the website portal to publish certification guidelines, accept city applications for certification, provide educational materials, etc. (Note: Sustainable Jersey has offered to share their website code with Arkansas in order to reduce development costs and accelerate progress.)
- Establish a process for city applications and supporting documents to be reviewed and certification to be awarded.
- Host an annual recognition event, perhaps in conjunction with the Arkansas Municipal League's annual conference to recognize cities that achieve certification as well as cities that exhibit leadership in different dimensions of the certification.
- Provide training to municipal leaders on a variety of topics including local sustainability planning, communicating with stakeholders without green-washing, establishing a green business certification program, and developing effective community outreach campaigns.
- Secure grant funding from various sources to support municipal sustainability efforts and administer a process for awarding grant funds to cities.
- Develop a program for matching municipal project needs and student intern skills and learning needs.

## Timeline

Pre-work: February 2014 – July 2014

- February: write proposals
- March-June: secure funding

Year 1: Develop certification criteria, build website, recruit cities: July 2014-June 2015

- July – September: convene working groups to discuss action areas and establish criteria for bronze, silver, gold certification
- July – November: Website development
- October: Convene all working groups together and announce launch
- November – December: recruit cities
- December: Applications available
- January 2015: Orientation for cities at AML Winter Conference
- February 1: Applications due; first review
- March: Cities make revisions as needed
- April: Revised applications due
- June: 1<sup>st</sup> cities certified, Announce at AML Annual Conference

Year 2: Launch training programs, small grant programs, and internship programs.

## Funding Goals

In the first year, the required level of funding is projected at \$300,000. This includes funding for convening stakeholder groups to develop the certification criteria, developing the website, technical support from the staff at Sustainable Jersey, recruiting cities into the program, and hosting the first annual recognition event.

In the second year, less funding is needed for developing certification criteria, website development, and technical support. Instead funding shifts to providing training programs and the certification process. With the addition of free training programs for city leaders and launching an internship program, the funding needed would grow to \$400,000 in the second year. Similar to Sustainable Jersey, we would like to develop a small grant program with \$200,000 to \$300,000 available to award to cities to support their sustainability initiatives starting in the second year of operations.

## Diversified Funding Strategy

Funding for Sustainable Arkansas would come from three main sources: one-third from state agencies, one-third from philanthropic organizations, and one-third from corporate underwriters. Sustainable Jersey receives funding from Walmart Stores, a natural gas company, and other entities each year to support small grants to cities in New Jersey. Potential funding sources for Sustainable Arkansas are summarized in the table below.

Charitable Foundations	State Agencies	Corporate Underwriters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Surdna Foundation</li><li>• Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation</li><li>• Arkansas Community Foundation</li><li>• Blue &amp; You Foundation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arkansas Economic Development Commission</li><li>• Arkansas Energy Office</li><li>• Arkansas Dept. of Environmental Quality</li><li>• Arkansas Dept. of Health and Human Services</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walmart Stores</li><li>• Tyson Foods</li><li>• Entergy, SourceGas, other Arkansas utilities</li><li>• Siemens, Viridian, et. al.</li></ul>

## Arkansas Cities Demonstrate Readiness

There is increasing evidence that Arkansas cities are already engaged around sustainability and would like to be more engaged. Some cities have a longer history and more comprehensive initiatives underway. Cities are moving beyond recycling to address energy efficiency, community gardens and alternative transportation. Other cities are just beginning their sustainability journey.

- Fayetteville was the first city to adopt the 2009 IECC building codes and require energy labeling for new homes, the first city to establish an Energy Improvement District, and the first city to adopt a streamside protection ordinance and a low-impact development ordinance.

- North Little Rock has leveraged its hydro-electric dam to attract new investment (Caterpillar) and retain business (L’Oreal). The city is the first to implement smart meters and has adopted a complete streets ordinance.
- Searcy established the “Searcy Energy Smart” program in 2013 which included outreach to residents and the business community and resulted in savings of \$466,473 in one-time cash incentives and \$352,598 in ongoing annual energy savings.
- Arkadelphia is working toward becoming a zero net waste city, has purchased the first hybrid police car fleet, and uses geothermal energy at city hall.
- Harrison implemented a “road diet” on Main Street that has resulted in new businesses opening and increased tax revenues and is the first city to have an energy plan for municipal operations.
- Eureka Springs is the first city in Arkansas to conduct a greenhouse gas inventory and publish a climate action plan (CAP).
- Jonesboro is building a multi-modal transportation facility that connects rural and urban transportation services and there is an active green team at the Chamber of Commerce.
- DeWitt is the first city to have a mini-biofuels refinery and a purchasing policy to purchase biofuels for city vehicles.

These efforts should be encouraged and expanded. This can happen in an organic, ad hoc fashion, but such an approach would result in wasted time and energy as each city attempts to reinvent the wheel. An ad hoc approach would also result in a missed opportunity to capitalize on municipal sustainability efforts as a key element in attracting residents and new business investment.

By providing a structure around which cities can organize their sustainability initiatives, along with training for city staff and other stakeholders, Sustainable Arkansas can help to accelerate city efforts and reduce the up-front investment of time and energy that is usually required in determining what to do and how to go about it. Sustainability is so broad and so all-encompassing that city leaders may be reluctant to move forward, overwhelmed by the breadth of choices and actions involved. A Sustainable Arkansas program could assist cities by providing structure and guidance to help them move from wherever they are on the path toward greater and greater levels of sustainability. Sustainable Arkansas can facilitate the sharing of municipal policies and best practices among cities and be flexible enough to allow cities to focus on local priorities.

Sustainable Arkansas would also provide third party, independent certification for municipal sustainability efforts. Participation in the program would be free of charge and strictly voluntary, but flexible enough so cities can customize their efforts to focus on local priorities.

### **University of Arkansas as Host**

*Arkansas Sustainable Agenda for Economic Development* highlighted the University of Arkansas as an asset that could be leveraged as a valuable resource in pursuing sustainability as a strategy for economic development. The following paragraphs describe the University’s strengths particularly as they relate to cities, sustainability and economic development.



**Leading by Example:** The University of Arkansas is the ideal institution to host Sustainable Arkansas. In 2007, the university was among the first 100 colleges and universities to sign the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment pledging to achieve carbon neutrality by mid-century. Since 2008, the university has reduced its energy consumption by 43 million kilowatt hours avoiding 18,800 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and realized energy savings of \$4.55 million in 2013.

**Academic Program - Educating Students:** Beyond reducing its own environmental footprint, the University is committed to educating students about sustainability. The university is the first institution of higher education in Arkansas to establish a minor in sustainability. The 18 credit-hour interdisciplinary minor is open to students in any major, from accounting to zoology. The Sustainability Minor provides foundational knowledge and skills related to the discipline of sustainability and prepares students to become innovators within their diverse fields.

In addition to the sustainability minor, the university has proposed a major in sustainability. If approved by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, the new program would prepare students for careers in sustainability. Graduates of the program would have an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of sustainability issues and would be able to use data, metrics and statistical analyses to make recommendations to advance sustainability of organizations and institutions. The university also offers a Graduate Certificate in sustainability.

The University launched a minor in Urban Planning in fall 2013. The program offers two areas of emphasis – urban infrastructure design and public policy – and three concentrations: Policy, Spatial, and Environmental. Students learn to solve problems related to complex issues in the built and natural environment, transportation, health, economic development, and others. It also gives students the knowledge of how to participate with government and community organizations in building better communities and cities.

**Business & Industry Partnerships:** Students at the Sam M. Walton College of Business have worked with the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce to develop and administer a green business certification program called Greenway. Students conduct a site visit and collect information about the businesses sustainability practices and policies. Businesses that meet minimum criteria are certified as a Greenway business and may display the Greenway logo.

On a much larger scale, the University is co-founder of The Sustainability Consortium, an organization of diverse global participants working collaboratively to deliver science-based tools to improve consumer product sustainability. Working with universities, leading retailers, consumer products companies and non-governmental organizations, the TSC's vision is to drive a new generation of innovative products that address environmental, social and economic imperatives.

**Research & Outreach Centers:** The University houses a number of centers that bring expertise and key assets to bear on sustainability in cities.

- **Applied Sustainability Center:** Housed in the Sam M. Walton College of Business, the Applied Sustainability Center is an interdisciplinary research and outreach center whose mission is to accelerate learning about sustainability and expand the commitment to sustainable practices in the public and private sectors. The Center has hosted an annual conference, The Sustainable Communities Leadership Summit, to bring together sustainability leaders across the state. The

ASC has offered training programs such as Energy, Jobs and the Economy for candidates for the Arkansas Legislature, and has brought nationally renowned presenters such as Chuck Marohn of Strong Towns to the state to conduct workshops for municipal leaders. The ASC has worked with utility companies to develop energy scorecards for 14 Arkansas cities in order to help municipal leaders understand energy consumption in the city and options for promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy. The center is also assisting the city of Fayetteville in collecting and reporting data to the STAR Community Rating Index as the first city in the state to achieve a STAR rating.

- ***Center for Advanced Spatial Technology:*** Established in 1991, CAST is a unit of the J. William Fulbright College of Arts and Sciences. The Center for Advanced Spatial Technologies (CAST) focuses on application of geospatial technologies in research, teaching, and service. These technologies include geomatics, GIS, GPS, remote sensing, photogrammetry, geospatial software and systems design, interoperability, and large (multi-terabyte) geospatial databases. CAST's capabilities are directly relevant to enhancing sustainability in cities from addressing issues related to watershed protection and storm water runoff to siting for photovoltaics or mapping community gardens. CAST provided technical support and analysis for the ASC's municipal energy scorecard program.
- ***Community Design Center:*** The mission of the University of Arkansas Community Design Center is to advance creative development in Arkansas through education, research and design solutions that enhance the physical environment. As an outreach center of the School of Architecture, UACDC is developing a repertoire of new design methodologies applicable to community development issues in Arkansas with currency at the national level. The Community Design Center has worked with a number of Arkansas cities including Lake Village and Monticello. The CDC published the Low Impact Development Design Guide and has published visual guides for a Fayetteville trolley system, light rail for NWA, and neighborhood design for Habitat for Humanity emphasizing affordable housing that is energy efficient, low impact, and high design.
- ***Center for Business and Economic Research:*** The Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) is a public service/outreach center and a student-faculty research center. An integral part of the Sam M. Walton College of Business, CBER conducts externally sponsored research for local and state government, as well as the state business community. The staff responds daily to requests for state and local economic and demographic data. The Center partnered with CAST and the ASC on the municipal energy scorecard program.

## **Appendices**

**Letters of Support**

**Faculty Bios**

DRAFT



City Letterhead

To: Whom It May Concern

From:

Date:

Re: Sustainable Arkansas

As the mayor of Fayetteville, Arkansas, I am writing to express my support for Sustainable Arkansas. In Fayetteville, we are proud of our city's efforts to be more sustainable. Fayetteville was the first city to adopt the 2009 IECC building codes and implement energy labelling for new homes. Fayetteville was the first city to adopt a stream side ordinance to protect surface water. Fayetteville has one of the most extensive trail systems in the state and one that has been designed intentionally to serve as an alternative to the car and not merely as a recreational amenity.

In short, we recognize the importance of sustainability as a strategy that helps Fayetteville address affordability and cost of living issues by helping our residents save money on utility bills and commuting-related expenses. We recognize that sustainability helps promote public health by fostering active transportation and healthy lifestyles. And we recognize that sustainability helps to protect our natural resources. All of these things make Fayetteville an attractive place to live, work and raise a family and we believe that this in turn helps Fayetteville to attract investment and jobs.

We are proud of our accomplishments, but we also know that there is more that we could do. Sustainable Arkansas will help Fayetteville by providing recognition for the work we have already done with regard to sustainability. The program will also help to guide our efforts going forward and help us to remain competitive with cities in other states. For example, accelerating the expansion of renewable energy resources and expanding public transit will help Fayetteville and NWA compete to attract new investment and jobs. Finally, the program will help to build a community of cities and municipal leaders across the state who can share best practices and policies.

Sustainable Arkansas, as described in the proposal, will provide training, access to interns, and potentially access to grant funding to expand sustainability efforts, not just in Fayetteville, but in other cities across the state. As more and more cities adopt sustainable practices and policies, Arkansas as a whole will prosper. Fayetteville would welcome an opportunity to be certified as a Sustainable Arkansas city. We are happy to share what we have learned with other cities.