

2012

LITTLE ROCK CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
ANNUAL REPORT

FEBRUARY 21, 2013



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The travel and tourism industry continues to be recognized internationally as a major economic driver. As the second largest economic industry in Arkansas, Little Rock serves as the state's capital and primary hub for tourism. 2012 was a record year for the Little Rock Advertising and Promotion Commission and the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau (LRCVB). In late 2011, a three year organizational strategic plan was published and 2012 was spent focused on the goals outlined in that plan.

The bureau experienced another year of significant revenue growth, with total tax collections up 4.69%, fueled by strong performances in both prepared food and hotel room sales.

The LRCVB managed more than \$2 million in capital projects this past year, including final renovations and improvements at Statehouse Convention Center, several outdoor beautification projects, and improvements to the River Market, including construction of a permanent roof on Riverfest Amphitheater and milestones in the future Robinson Center expansion and renovation project. For the first time, secret shoppers were contracted to inspect the LRCVB-managed facilities on multiple front-of-house and customer service measures. The staff received outstanding scores and continues to provide exceptional service to clients.

The sales and services team surpassed room night and lead goals amid transition and the addition of many new faces to the team. The LRCVB was also honored with several industry awards including the Smart Meetings Platinum Choice award, the Convention South's Readers Choice award and Meetings and Convention Magazine's Gold Service award. Little Rock hotels fared well in 2012, demonstrating a slight increase in overall revenue compared to 2011, as well as ranking second in average daily rate and revenue per available room and third in occupancy compared to our 10 city competitive set.

Additionally, much of 2012 was spent negotiating a new hotel lease agreement for the city-owned convention hotel attached to the Statehouse Convention Center. Transition is now underway for Arkansas's first full-service Marriott property. The internationally-recognized brand will provide many benefits to the destination in coming years.

Work on a new destination brand is ongoing and scheduled for completion – and an official announcement – will be made by the end of the first quarter of 2013. The all-new websites launched in 2011 continue to see increased traffic and visitation as well as all social media platforms. LRCVB sponsored events and



Bicyclists cross the Arkansas River at the Big Dam Bridge.

local media campaigns were all very successful in both attendance and publicity values.

Finally, the destination saw a lot of positive movement toward continued revitalization with numerous projects in the works, both in conceptual phases, or nearing completion. It is truly a great time to be in Little Rock!

Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau (LRCVB)

The Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau (LRCVB) is a full-service destination management organization (DMO), charged with marketing and selling Little Rock as a meeting, convention and visitor destination, as well as responsibly managing public funds and efficiently operating and managing multiple public facilities. The organization is divided into four primary divisions: finance and administration, facility operations, sales and services, and marketing and communications.



The U.S. Travel Association's VoteTravel bus visits Little Rock.

VALUE OF TOURISM

The Value of Tourism in Arkansas

- Tourism is the second largest economic industry in Arkansas.
- Domestic and international travelers to Arkansas spent \$5.6 billion in 2012 and generated \$405 million in state and local taxes, dollars that help fund jobs and public programs such as police, firefighters, teachers, road projects and convention centers.
- Tourism provides over 58,600 jobs in Arkansas.
- Average spent per trip to Arkansas in 2011 = \$392.93

Information from US Travel Association and Arkansas Parks and Tourism 2011-2012 Annual Report

The Value of Tourism in Pulaski County

- Total travel expenditures in 2011 = \$1.5 billion (\$1,560,647,602)
- Travel generated local tax = almost \$27 million (\$26,776,328)
- Travel generated state tax = \$60 million (\$60,946,680)
- Visitor trips in 2011 = over 5.58 million (5,582,627)
- Tourism jobs = 12,890

Information from Arkansas Parks and Tourism 2011-2012 Annual Report

Leisure and Hospitality employment:

% Change from August 2011 – August 2012

- United States – 2.2% increase
- Little Rock – 5.5% increase (the largest growth of any employment sector)

Information from MetroPlan

LEADERSHIP

Little Rock Advertising and Promotion Commission

The Little Rock Advertising and Promotion Commission is the governing body for LRCVB. It is a volunteer board consisting of seven members – two City of Little Rock elected officials or board members, four owners within the Little Rock hospitality industry and one at-large seat.

Philip Tappan, Chairman

Capi Peck, Vice Chair

Mayor Mark Stodola

Larry Carpenter

City Director Gene Fortson

Tim Morton

Warren Simpson

LRCVB Executive Team

Gretchen Hall, President and CEO

Leisa Pulliam, Sr. VP/ Chief Financial Officer

Jim Rice, Sr. VP/Chief Operating Officer

Alan Sims, VP / Sales and Services

John Mayner, / VP Marketing and Communications

LRCVB Management Team

Gretchen Hall, President and CEO

Jim Rice, Sr Vice President / COO

Leisa Pulliam, Sr. Vice President / CFO

Alan Sims, Vice President Sales and Services

John Mayner, Vice President Marketing and Communications

Kim Berry, Executive Assistant to the SVP/COO

Dan DeLaughter, Director of Information Technology

James 'Doc' Doolittle, Sr. Dir. of Facilities Maintenance/Engineering

Bobby Green, Security Supervisor

Randy Guptill, Director of Technical Services

Ricardo Henderson, Building Services Manager

Dan Limke, Creative Services Manager

DIVISIONAL REPORTS

Finance and Administration

Finance and Administration is comprised of Human Resources, Information Systems, Purchasing, Accounting and Tax departments. It oversees not only the functions of these departments, but also coordination of all annual public audit procedures, contract renewal and compliance, asset management and legal matters pertaining to contract review and compliance for the entire organization. Finance and Administration is also the primary liaison with the City of Little Rock Human Resources Department, which is the contracted hiring, H.R. consulting, and pension benefits entity for the Bureau.

2012 Year in Review

Human Resources

- Recruitment and retention of employee base has improved through the implementation and success of new pay grade system and procedures.

Information Systems

- Implemented a virtual server to provide consolidation of multiple servers, increase efficiency and cost savings.
- Implemented virtual desktop computers for cost savings, increased security, and improved efficiency when deploying system upgrades.
- Contracted with TW Telecom for a 40mg fiber connection for internet and telephone service that increased bandwidth and connected all bureau locations to the central service.
- Installed a unified telephone system that allows users to leverage their computer interface to manage all aspects of their voice and data communications.
- Installed new copier/scanner equipment resulting in cost savings and connecting all locations through networked equipment.

Purchasing

- Created a web page within LittleRock.com to offer more transparency with bid postings and RFQ solicitations, as well as dialogue with potential vendors throughout the purchasing process (LittleRock.com/about/documents.aspx).

Johnny Loney, Auxiliary Services Manager

Diana Long, Director River Market Operations

Trudie Long, Parking Manager

Libby Lloyd, Communications Manager

Phyllis Lucas, Director of Event Operations

Ionette Neal, Senior Director of Tax Revenue

Charlie Oppedisano, Retail Sales Manager

Sydney Ragsdale, Controllor

Kim Sanders, Human Resources, Payroll and Benefits Representative

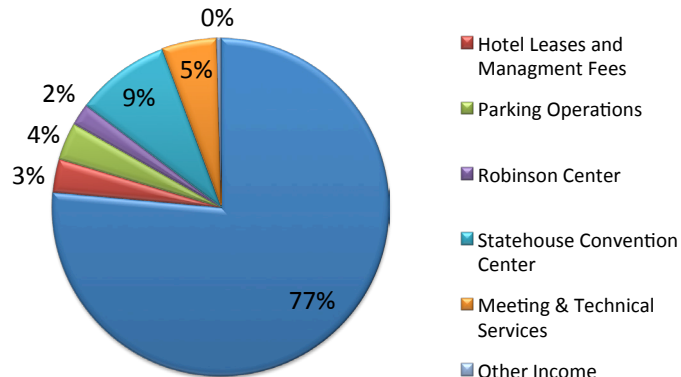
Vicki Spears, Executive Assistant to the President and CEO

Gwen Stallings, Building Services Supervisor

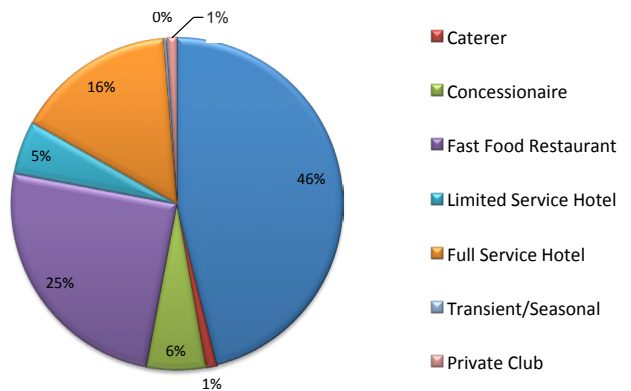
Jennifer Willis, Convention Services Manager

2012 LRCVB FINANCIAL SUMMARY

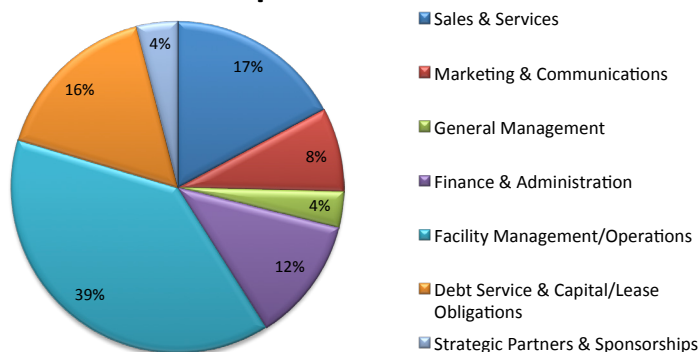
2012 Total Revenue



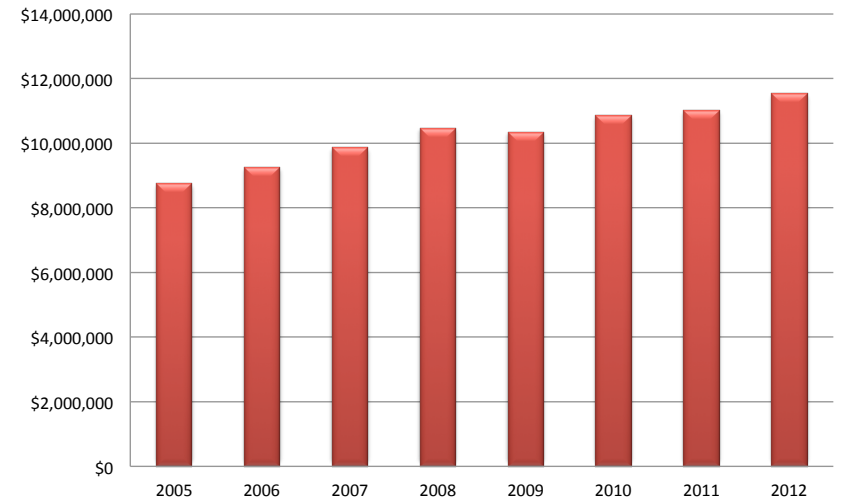
2012 Tax Collections



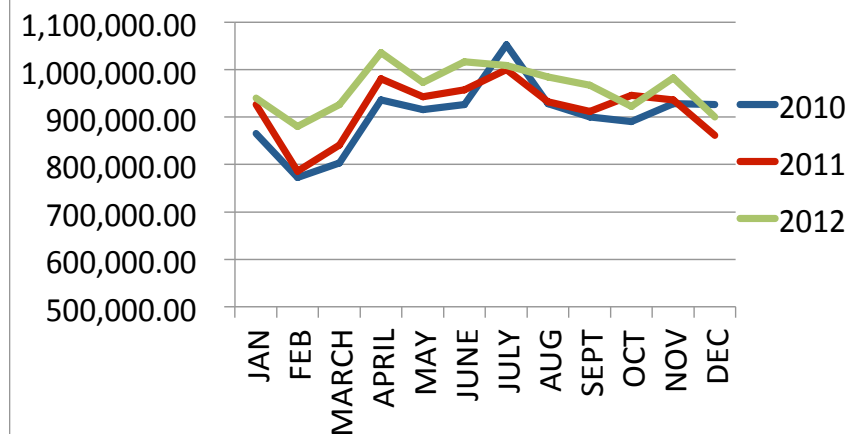
2012 Total Expenses



LRCVB Tax Collections



Monthly Tax Collections



2012 LRCVB Financial Summary

Revenue

Tax Receipts	\$11,540,277
Hotel Leases & Management Fees	\$480,200
Parking	\$542,365
Robinson Center	\$319,543
Statehouse Convention Center	\$1,369,024
Meeting/Technical Services	\$796,388
Other Mics.	\$54,753
Total Revenue	\$15,102,550

Expenses

Parking	\$344,109
Robinson Center	\$1,114,629
Statehouse Convention Center	\$2,327,880
Meeting/Technical Services	\$949,548
General Management	\$524,298
Finance & Administration	\$1,802,090
Sales & Services	\$2,560,840
Marketing & Communications	\$1,216,352
Facility Management	\$847,951
Debt Service/Capital Obligations	\$2,445,326
Strategic Partnerships/Sponsorships	\$746,358
Total Expenses	\$14,879,381

Revenue Less Expenses **\$223,169**

Accounting

- Through updated and improved policies and procedures, accounting maintains the overall tracking and reporting of financial performance, and provides a check and balance for purchasing through review of quotes, expenses and reports.

LRCVB Statement of Financial Condition

Assets

Cash & Equivalent	\$798,442.88
Restricted Fund Balances for Future Obligations	\$1,847,489.33
Accounts Receivable	\$1,869,139.79
Pre Paid Expenses	\$419,235.60
Deposits	\$4,500.00
Total Assets	\$4,938,807.60

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$231,819.51
Accrued Expenses	\$526,197.54
Unearned Event Deposits	\$180,106.72
Other Operational & Payroll Related Accruals	\$653,893.52
Total Liabilities	\$1,592,017.29

Equity

General Fund Equity	\$1,276,127.17
Net Restricted Fund	\$1,847,489.33
Equity	
Net Income	\$223,173.81
Total Equity	\$3,346,790.31

Total Liabilities & Equity **\$4,938,807.60**

Tax

- 2012 Business Activity
 - 124 New Businesses
 - 74 Closed Businesses
- Total collections were up 4.69% over 2011.
- The Tax Department maintains a delinquency rate of less than 1%.



Robinson Center

Facility Operations

The Facility Operations division, under agreement with the City of Little Rock, is responsible for the operation of Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Center, Robinson Center Music Hall, the municipal parking garage at Robinson Center and the 2nd Street parking decks at Main Street and River Market Avenue. Additionally, under a Memorandum of Understanding with the city, LRCVB is also the management entity of the River Market. These responsibilities include Ottenheimer Market Hall, two 6,000 sq. ft. outdoor pavilions, the 7,500 seat First Security Amphitheater and all surface parking within Riverfront Park. Additionally, this division has direct operational responsibility, and serves as contract liaison, between the city-owned hotel properties and the Little Rock Advertising and Promotion Commission. Hotel contractors are Trinity Hotel Group of New York (Double Tree Hotel), and Peabody Hotel Group of Memphis (Peabody Hotel). Lastly, the facility operations division manages the commission owned parking lot at Block 2 Lofts directly across from the Statehouse Convention Center.

2012 Year in Review

2012 proved to be another successful year for LRCVB managed properties, with a consistent number of events hosted at Statehouse Convention Center compared to previous years, and increases in events and programming at Robinson Center and the River Market. In 2012 the organization completed (or in-process) more capital projects than in the past ten years, totaling approximately \$2,208,800.

Capital Projects Completed

- Robinson Center Concept Team – Final Report
- Statehouse Convention Center sidewalk and paver replacement
- Statehouse Convention Center office renovation and new carpet
- Statehouse Convention Center trashcans
- Robinson Center Music Hall lobby carpet

- Robinson Center plaza beautification
- River Market elevator foyer floor replacement
- River Market 3rd Floor renovation

Projects In Process

- Statehouse Convention Center Ballroom renovations: new carpet, paint, sound system, door hardware and security upgrades, and repair/addition of air-walls
- River Market Amphitheater Roof, in conjunction with City of Little Rock, Riverfest and First Security Bank

Statehouse Convention Center Renovations

The final phase renovation for the entire center was completed in January 2013. New ballroom and foyer carpet; paint and wall treatments throughout; refinished air walls; new air walls in the ballroom which expanded the meeting capabilities and flexibility; sound system upgrades; door hardware replacement, and security upgrades were all included.

These projects completed the renovation, begun in 2010, of all three levels of the Center.

In addition, the Statehouse Convention Center replaced the aged pavers on the front walk with a stamped concrete surface and added The Little Rock Nine plaques, provided by UALR, along the walk. Lastly, the office area was reconfigured, painted and re-carpeted.



Statehouse Convention Center

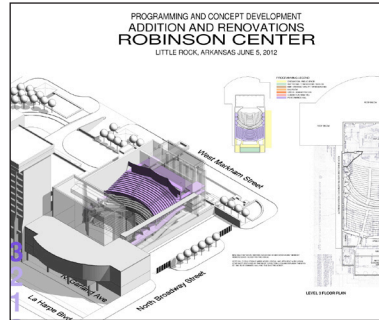
Robinson Center Renovation Project

The official Robinson Center Concept and Programming Study was completed in June, 2012 after seven months of investigation and programming assessments with multiple architects, engineers and consultants.

An RFQ for architectural design was published in October and Little Rock-based Polk Stanley Wilcox, along with Ennead of New York City, were selected to lead the design efforts for the renovation and expansion of Robinson Center and Robinson Center Music Hall. The iconic 1939 structure will receive a much-needed restoration to enhance its presence as the western most anchor to the city's downtown entertainment area.

The project is scheduled to run concurrently with the replacement of the Broadway Bridge, and is estimated to begin in summer 2014 – with completion in fall 2016. Goals include restoring the historic exterior of the existing facility, a ballroom addition on the north side of the building, improving acoustics, technology, and sight lines within the Music Hall, and expanding or creating a more functional loading facility. Increased storage, service capabilities and circulation within the building is also anticipated.

Additionally, city and civic leaders would like to improve the plaza adjacent to the center and possibly connect it with the western-most portion of Riverfront Park.



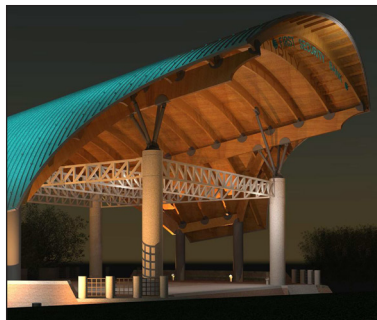
Rendering of proposed Robinson Center renovations

New Amphitheater Roof

Riverfront Park's Amphitheater will officially become First Security Amphitheater with the spring 2013 installation of a permanent roof that will forever change the look and feel of the Little Rock's riverfront skyline. In early September 2012, a storm system destroyed the existing canvas roof during a concert.

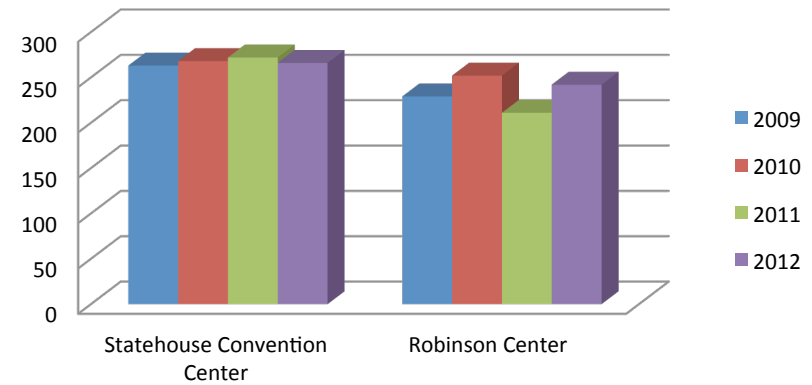
A financial partnership between Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau, the City of Little Rock, Riverfest and First Security Bank is making the new structure possible.

Construction is expected to be complete around April 2013.



First Security Amphitheater

Facility Usage Days



Statehouse Convention Center 2012 Facility Statistics

	Type of Group	Patrons	Patron Days	Estimated Expenditures
36	Conventions	30,220	92,829	\$23,859,954
2	Shows	2,350	2,350	\$178,600
4	Dances	2,480	2,480	\$188,480
32	Banquets, Receptions & Luncheons	24,261	27,295	\$2,074,420
26	Meetings	7,144	8,448	\$642,048
15	Trade Shows/Exhibits	31,558	79,645	\$6,598,136
4	Basketball/Sports	4,009	9,777	\$743,052
8	Graduation	8,500	8,500	\$646,000
3	Recital/Competitions	1,950	2,700	\$205,200
1	Exams	250	500	\$38,000
131	TOTALS	112,722	234,524	\$35,173,890

Expenditure calculations based on DMAI multipliers: convention w/o exhibits = \$224/day; convention w/ exhibits = \$281/day; tradeshow = \$495.36/day; event = \$76/day

Statehouse Convention Center 2012 Building Usage

248	Days a Governor's Hall or Ballrooms were booked.
18	Days only meeting rooms were booked.
100	Days, including weekends and holidays, nothing was booked.
266	Total Usage Days

of days each room was booked

127	Governor's Hall I	60	Miller	114	Toltec
125	Governor's Hall II	61	Izard	80	Osage
102	Governor's Hall III	71	Pope	63	Quapaw
135	Governor's Hall IV	78	Caraway I	64	Caddo
137	Ballroom A	74	Caraway II		
133	Ballroom B	73	Caraway III		
131	Ballroom C	96	Fulton		

Parking Deck at 2nd & Main Streets

80,740 cars served

Robinson Center 2012 Facility Statistics

	Type of Group	Patrons	Patron Days	Estimated Expenditures
14	Conventions	6,445	14,170	\$3,248,180
47	Shows	62,161	95,339	\$7,245,764
4	Dances	1,800	1,800	\$136,800
24	Banquets, Receptions & Luncheons	5,438	5,438	\$413,288
46	Meetings	5,840	7,374	\$560,424
2	Trade Shows/Exhibits	1,800	3,300	\$329,098
2	Basketball/Sports	2,062	2,062	\$156,712
2	Graduation	2,250	2,250	\$171,000
15	Recital/Competitions	14,350	25,100	\$1,907,600
8	Exams	843	1,223	\$92,948
164	TOTALS	102,989	158,056	\$14,261,814

Expenditure calculations based on DMAI multipliers: convention w/o exhibits = \$224/day; convention w/ exhibits = \$281/day; tradeshow = \$495.36/day; event = \$76/day

Robinson Center 2012 Building Usage

194	Days Music Hall or Exhibit Hall were booked.
48	Days only meeting rooms were booked.
124	Days, including weekends & Holidays, nothing was booked.
242	Total Usage Days

of days each room was booked

163	Music Hall	29	Room 104
78	Exhibition Hall & Balcony	13	Room 401
47	Room 101	30	Room 402
86	Room 102	12	Room 403
66	Room 103		

Parking Garage at Robinson Center

198,431 cars served



River Market	
2012 Building Usage	
200	Days Amphitheater or Pavilions were booked.
39	Days only Bill & Margaret Clark room were booked.
127	Days, including weekends & Holidays, nothing was booked.
239	Total Usage Days
# of days each room was booked	
60	Amphitheatre
118	East Pavilion
162	West Pavilion
119	Bill & Margaret Clark Room
Parking Deck at 2nd & River Market Avenue	
281,036 cars served	

River Market				
2012 Facility Statistics				
	Type of Group	Patrons	Patron Days	Estimated Expenditures
21	Shows	120,162	283,162	\$21,520,312
15	Dances	1,510	1,510	\$113,240
90	Banquets, Receptions & Luncheons	24,840	24,970	\$2,917,640
33	Meetings	2,528	2,658	\$180,728
54	Trade Shows/Exhibits	107,124	107,524	\$8,885,760
16	Basketball/Sports	32,386	69,009	\$5,282,684
229	TOTALS	288,550	488,833	\$38,900,364
Expenditure calculations based on DMAI multipliers: convention w/o exhibits = \$224/day; convention w/ exhibits = \$281/day; tradeshow = \$495.36/day; event = \$76/day				



The Bernice Garden

Secret Shopper Summary

In 2012 GEO Advisors conducted a secret shopper evaluation to grade LRCVB facility operations on a range of items such as: cleanliness, maintenance, appearance, customer service, etc. Locations evaluated included: all LRCVB parking operations, Statehouse Convention Center, Robinson Center and LRCVB managed areas of the River Market.

Cumulative Ratings: On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=poor, 2=fair, 3=good, 4=very good, 5=excellent)

Staff Scores: On items such as appearance, proactivity, helpfulness, availability, friendly attitude, ability to answer questions, etc.– out of a total of 53 ratings given, the average score was 4.32 (Very Good –Excellent)

Performance Scores: On items such as overall condition of facility, restrooms, cleanliness, maintenance, etc. – out of 93 ratings given, the average score was 3.98 (Very Good)

Structural Scores: On items such as exterior signage, quality of lighting, visibility of room signage, etc. – out of 32 ratings given, the average score was 3.04 (Good)

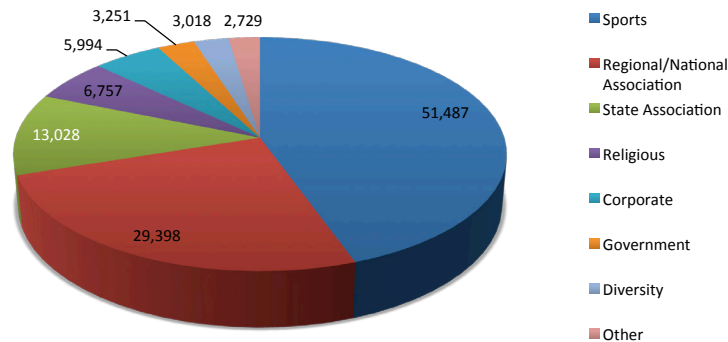
Sales and Services

The primary goal of the LRCVB Sales and Services Team is to bring visitors to Little Rock. When visitors spend money they become temporary taxpayers positively impacting the local economy and reducing the financial tax burden of every household within the community. Tourism equals economic development, creating and sustaining jobs, paychecks, growth and tax revenue.

2012 Year in Review

In 2012, new leadership introduced strategic initiatives focused on achieving two critical goals – #1 generate more leads and #2 book more hotel room nights. The Sales and Services Team was successful in accomplishing both by distributing 235 leads and booking 115,662 room nights compared to goals of 205 leads and 109,000 room nights. These accomplishments demonstrated high levels of achievement considering the department experienced much transition throughout the year with the addition of three sales directors and managers and the addition of a new convention services manager.

2012 Definite Room Night Productivity by Market Segment



Other category includes markets such as social, military, educational, and reunion.

Meetings and Conventions

Year/Year Performance Comparison

	2010		2011		2012	
	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
Definite Room Nights	90,000	107,231	99,000	99,902	109,000	115,662
Leads	*	176	*	166	205	235
Leads + Lead Assists	240	389	264	363	*	361

* Not Applicable



Tourism

Year/Year Performance Comparison

	2010		2011		2012	
	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
Definite Bookings	160	269	176	244	250	237
Definite Room Nights	*	9,369	*	9,493	*	11,988
Leads & Assists Combined	48	85	53	82	75	94

* Not Applicable

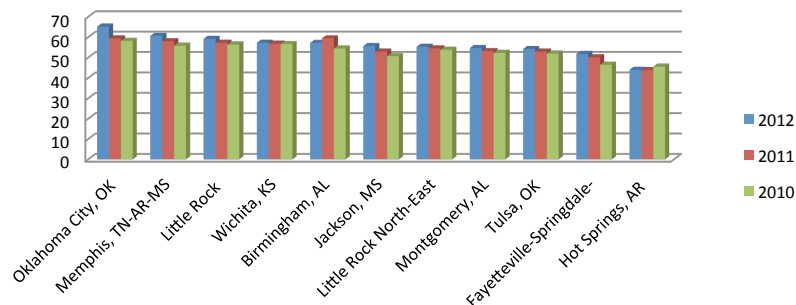
2012 Competitive Market Hotel Information

	Occ %		ADR		RevPAR		Percent Change from YTD 2011				
	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	Occ	ADR	Rev PAR	Room Rev	Room Avail
Memphis, TN-AR-MS	60.6	58.1	78.49	75.45	47.60	43.81	4.5	4.0	8.7	6.3	-2.1
Oklahoma City, OK	65.1	59.2	75.45	72.16	49.11	42.74	9.9	4.6	14.9	13.8	-1.0
Tulsa, OK	54.1	52.8	73.01	72.68	39.47	38.37	2.4	0.5	2.9	4.8	1.8
Wichita, KS	57.2	56.6	78.06	76.54	44.62	43.30	1.1	2.0	3.1	5.4	2.3
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers	51.7	49.9	76.50	71.78	39.55	35.84	3.6	6.6	10.4	8.7	-1.5
Birmingham, AL	57.1	59.3	78.11	77.27	44.63	45.81	-3.6	1.1	-2.6	-3.0	-0.5
Montgomery, AL	54.6	52.9	66.17	64.53	36.14	34.11	3.3	2.6	6.0	2.0	-3.7
Little Rock Zip Codes+	59.1	57.3	81.26	80.07	48.05	45.90	3.2	1.5	4.7	4.4	-0.2
Jackson, MS	55.6	52.7	71.11	70.29	39.52	37.01	5.5	1.2	6.8	4.8	-1.8
Little Rock North-East	55.2	54.4	69.33	67.59	38.29	36.79	1.5	2.6	4.1	5.9	1.8
Hot Springs, AR	43.9	43.6	89.57	89.19	39.29	38.85	0.7	0.4	1.1	0.9	-0.2

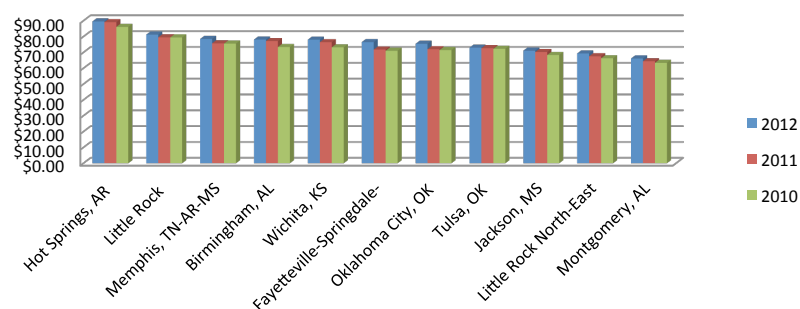
Zips 71901 & 71913

Source: Smith Travel Research

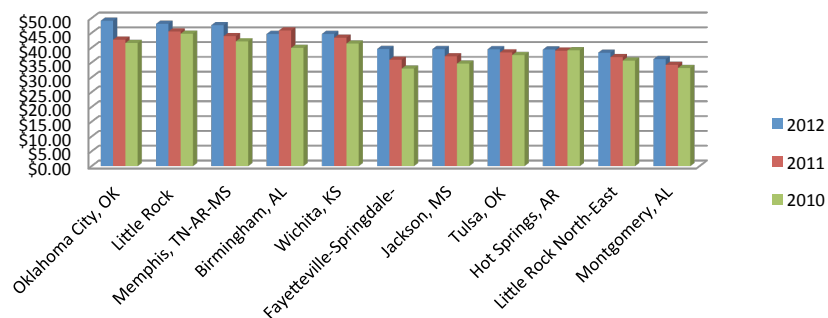
Occupancy %



Average Daily Rate

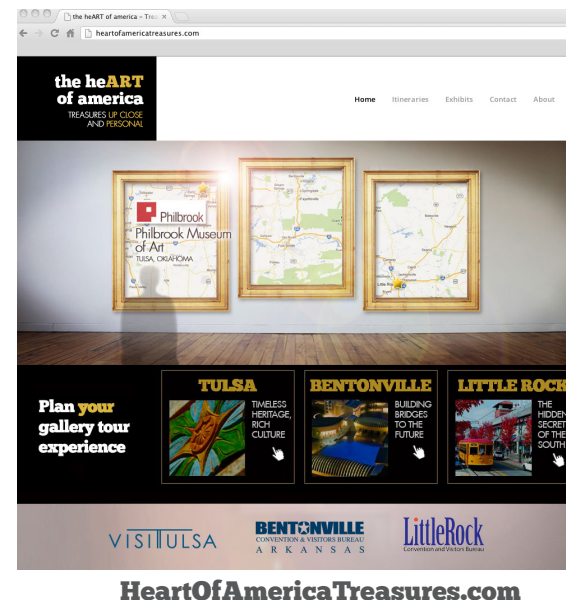


Revenue Per Available Room



The tourism department, along with the marketing team, began the development of a “heART of America” tour, partnering with the Bentonville and Tulsa CVBs.

The cooperative effort includes the cross-promotion of each destination’s primary art and cultural institutions – Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, the Philbrook Museum of Art and Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, and the Clinton Presidential Library and Arkansas Arts Center in Little Rock. The website HeartOfAmericaTreasures.com, as well as collateral material has also been created to assist with the sales efforts.



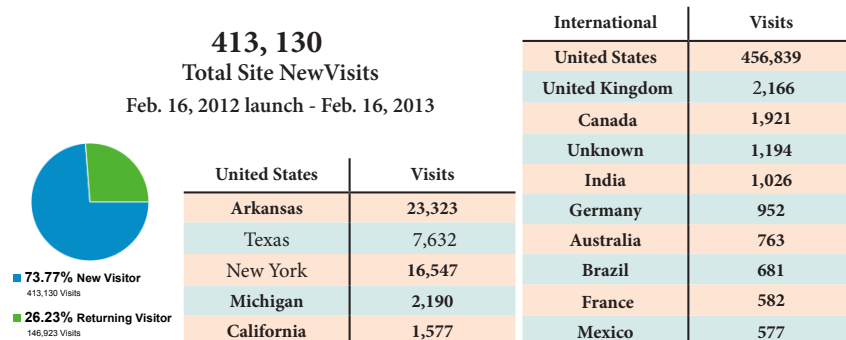
How the strategic initiatives contributed to 2012 performance:

- Developed and leveraged key relationships with third party and independent meeting professionals. Established a preferred destination agreement with HelmsBriscoe and will continue to be aggressive in developing networking, sponsorship and preferred positioning opportunities with ConferenceDirect and Experient.
- Redeployed the sales team to increase efficiency and cost effectiveness.
- Created a Little Rock presence by retaining a representative with an established base of national association clients in the Washington, DC market. In the first year, JSP Marketing was able to generate new leads just shy of 14,000 hotel room nights and close almost 3,000 room nights in definite bookings.
- The sales team continues to develop and implement Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s) to make the team more proactive and accountable. Additional focus was placed on identifying new business opportunities resulting in more than 1,200 qualified prospecting calls.
- The most significant area of growth was the sports market. This invaluable segment of business grew more than 10% in 2012.
- A communication strategy was developed and successfully implemented with all of the Little Rock hotel partners that included monthly meetings, improved reporting, response and communication.

Marketing and Communications

The Marketing and Communication division of the LRCVB oversees the following disciplines within the organization: Destination marketing and advertising, special event promotions, visitor information centers and collateral distribution, public relations, publicity and media communication, retail operations, website and online marketing, sponsorship oversight, graphic design, and assistance with Sales and Services marketing efforts and logistic planning for hosted events. The Marketing and Communications division works as an “in-house” agency, assisting with numerous advertising, public relations and special events.

2012 Year in Review



Website Marketing

Launching multiple new websites in 2011 has resulted in an uptick in visitation. The growing dependency of the Internet makes the destination website truly the lifeblood for the overall success for destination marketing organizations. The department will continue to add enhancements and micro sites for niche audiences.

Social Media and Newsletters

The LRCVB continues to see growth in multiple social media efforts. The Little Rock Facebook account now has 32,552 fans/friends/likes, and the Little Rock Twitter account has almost 2,000 followers. The River Market Facebook account has grown to 14,741 fans/friends/likes and the River Market Twitter account has 3,851 followers. In addition, LRCVB manages YouTube and Flickr galleries to display destination videos and photographs. The bureau also produces two monthly newsletters highlighting events and activities for Little Rock and the River Market District specifically. Subscribers total 4,335 and 1,024 respectively.

Visitor Information Centers

The LRCVB strives to provide exceptional visitor experiences with a focus on true hospitality. Our Little Rock Visitor Information Centers continue to service large numbers of guests and the primary purpose of each center is to enhance the visitor experience by providing accurate and helpful destination information.

The LRCVB has staffed locations at the Little Rock National Airport, Shop the Rock in the River Market District, Statehouse Convention Center and Robinson Center. The LRCVB also provides support for the visitor information center at Historic Curran Hall. Visitor information center representatives are truly ambassadors for the destination.

Collateral Distribution

The LRCVB publishes a variety of collateral materials to assist visitors in future planning and while visiting the destination. Additionally, the LRCVB distributes multiple partner and third party brochures at our visitor information centers. We also ensure coverage of Little Rock-related materials in all statewide and area visitor information centers and local brochure racks. The LRCVB also offers direct fulfillment services from phone, email and online requests.

Local Media Campaigns

We have partnered with Angela Rogers Group to provide publicity and media coverage in conjunction with several of our large LRCVB managed events as well as large special events and activities that take place in Little Rock. Below is a brief summary of those efforts:

Airport VIC			
	2012	2011	2010
Visitors Served	46,804	48,318	51,554
Phone Calls	361	293	67

Statehouse Convention Center			
	2012	2011	2010
Visitors Served	430*	1,600	2,251
Phone Calls	661*	1,192	847

*due to staff changes the information provided is only for part of the year

Robinson Center			
	2012	2011	2010
Visitors Served	3,718	5,228	4,541
Phone Calls	13,903	14,364	17,167

Shop the Rock			
	2012*	2011	2010
Visitors Served	7,573	8,305	7,717
Purchase Only	6,571	9,906	7,635
Purchase & Visitor Information Provided	1,999	2,989	2,496
Total Visitors Served	16,143	21,200	17,848

*Shop the Rock was closed for approx. 2 months due to relocating

Curran Hall			
	2012	2011	2010
Visitors Served	11,593*	14,202*	16,495*

*numbers reported also include special events and meeting attendance

2012 Destination Communication PR Value SUMMARY		
Promotion Description	PR VALUE:	GROSS IMPRESSIONS:
Arvest River Market on Ice	2,133,783.95	30,649,741
Farmers' Market	2,184,882.00	30,591,730
Garden Gourmet	973,735.00	18,512,999
Movies in the Park	459,099.50	14,586,695
American Taekwondo Association Convention	685,745.80	9,812,250
Little Rock Restaurant Month (Formerly Savor the City)	402,849.40	7,774,699
Fright Night & Big Boo!-seum Bash	390,914.50	6,510,298
Robinson Center Renovation (on-going)	On-Going	On-Going
Big Jingle Jubilee Holiday Parade	128,101.55	2,600,625
GRAND TOTALS:	7,359,111.70	121,039,037
An additional 39 press releases, story starters, or media alerts were written and distributed		
Publicity Values are derived using the Public Relations Society of America's (PRSA) original standard formula of assessing PR in relation to ad value and utilizes a conservative 5 time multiplier due to the credibility publicity lends.		

LRCVB EVENTS

The LRCVB supports a variety of local festivals and events in order to enhance the local economy through increased visitor travel into and throughout the City of Little Rock. There is an event funding application used to evaluate support given. In addition, LRCVB directly manages several local events.

The LRCVB is in its third year of managing the River Market public facilities and continues to increase programming and public offerings. A few of the new event additions in 2012 included the introduction of Shakespeare in the Park, a summer concert series in partnership with the Walton Arts Center and Verizon Arena and Market Mile – a walking and exercise program.

The ever-popular **Farmers' Market** continues to expand, operating from April through October each year. Thirty-four farmers and 153 vendors participated in 2012. For the season, the market served approximately 107,000 patrons. New this year was the creation of Veggie Valet, a program that allowed people to drop off their purchases while they enjoyed other activities within the park or district, then offering a curbside pick-up. The Farmers' Market mascot, Dean the Bean, continues to be a kid's favorite at the market.



**Little Rock's
Farmers' Market**

The Garden Gourmet Chef Series was created in 2011 to feature local chefs on the second Saturday of the Farmers' Market each month. It celebrates sustainable food and culinary traditions, with a showcase of Little Rock chefs demonstrating their use of fresh, local ingredients. Patrons enjoy complimentary bite-sized tastings highlighting seasonal selections while learning more about the market, its specialty farmers, the chefs, local restaurants and ways to eat and shop locally.

Movies in the Park continues to grow each summer with its eight show season every Wednesday night in June and July. The series averages an attendance of over 2,500 patrons per show.

Arvest on Ice celebrated its third season of the outdoor ice rink, and continues to attract large crowds. Continued success brings a growing number of ancillary events surrounding the ice rink,



Arvest On Ice

including Cocoa with the Clauses, ice sculpting demonstrations, gingerbread house building, and more. Total attendance for the 2012-2013 ice rink was 17,884.

Big Jingle Jubilee Holiday Parade, a free community event hosted each year by the LRCVB is held on the first Saturday of December in conjunction with the Arkansas Secretary of State's lighting of the State Capitol. Thousands line the downtown streets to partake in free candy, fanfare and to catch a glimpse of Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Cruisin' in the Rock is a free family event that took place five times in 2012. The shows displayed more than 800 vintage and specialty vehicles and almost 5,000 owners and spectators enjoyed the variety of vehicles on display in Riverfront Park and the River Market pavilions.

Big Boo-seum Bash is held each Halloween in conjunction with the Greater Little Rock Museum Consortium. This year, eight organizations participated. The event provides a safe, free environment for kids and families to enjoy fun Halloween activities and treats.

Little Rock Restaurant Month was created by the LRCVB in 2010 to celebrate dining in the city. The August event features approximately 60 restaurants and offers a wide array of deals and specials at lunch and dinner for diners throughout the city.



**Little Rock
Restaurant Month**

Hospitality Training and National Travel and Tourism Week is a LRCVB hospitality training program for visitor information representatives, hotel front desk and sales staff, cab drivers and various tourism volunteer groups within the community. Training is offered in conjunction with promotions surrounding National Travel and Tourism Week each May.

The event was developed to showcase new destination amenities and remind people in the hospitality industry of the wonderful features central Arkansas has to offer. In 2012 the program trained over 125 hospitality staff and 88 central Arkansas cab drivers. Additionally, Little Rock was a stop on US Travel Association's "Vote Travel" national bus tour, raising awareness and promoting the value of tourism.

Hospitality Marketing Mixers are held quarterly for area hospitality partners to discuss what's happening at LRCVB, destination development, co-op and packaging opportunities as well as industry news and events throughout central Arkansas.

NOTABLE LITTLE ROCK AWARDS, HONORS AND NEWS

Date	Media Outlet	Award
January	Advocate.com	Gay-Friendly mid-sized City in US Little Rock # 11
January	US News & World Reports	Best Hotel in Arkansas - #1 (Capital Hotel); also named #123 in US
January	US News & World Reports	Best Hotel in Arkansas - #2 (Peabody)
March	Meetings Focus	Little Rock feature
Spring	MPG - Meeting Planner Guide	Interview with LRCVB CEO, Gretchen Hall
May	Topeventsusa.blogspot.ca	RiverFest Top Event
May	SATW	Big Dam Bridge named one of North America's Top Ten Bridge Sites by SATW (75th Anniversary of the Golden Gate Bridge)
June	Gourmet Magazine	World Cheese Dip Festival named top Food Festival for 2012
July	Delta Sky	Large feature on Arkansas
July	Milken Institute	Best Cities for Successful Aging (LR/NLR named #15 in US)
July	American Way	Rock Town Distillery one of three distilleries featured
September	Meetings & Conventions Mag	LRCVB Receives Gold Service Award
September	Southern Foodie	Several Little Rock Restaurants on the "100 places to eat before you die list"
September	AAA	Recommends Little Rock For Girls Get-a-way Weekends
September	ABA (American Bus Association)	Riverfest named a Top 100 Festival in US
October	Garden & Gun	Root Benny at the Root Café named a Top Ten Dishes of the Year
October	U.S.News & World Report	Little Rock Named Among Best Places to Retire for Under \$40,000
October	Small Market Meetings	Feature on the Capital Hotel
October	Group Travel Leader	Feature on Little Rock
October	Yahoo! Travel	Little Rock Named Among US Ten Most Unexpectedly Romantic Cities
October	Smart Meetings	LRCVB named 2012 Platinum Choice Award Winner
October	travelormove.com	Little Rock named to list of "SuperCool" Cities in US
October	liveability.com	Top Ten Downtowns in US (#5)
November	Convention South	LRCVB and Peabody Hotel receive Convention South's Reader's Choice Award
November	Smart Meetings	Peabody Receives a Platinum Choice Award
November	CNN and Travel + Leisure	Names Little Rock Zoo Baby Adelina (gorilla) Cutest Baby Gorilla in the Nation
Nov/Dec	Taste of the South	Feature on the culinary scene in Little Rock
Nov/Dec	Group Travel Leader	Feature on Little Rock hosting Travel South Showcase
December	ABPG	City of Distinction Award for River Market (Tourism) and Arkansas River Trail (Quality of Life)
December	Washington Post	Feature on Club de Madrid meeting in Little Rock
December	Convention South	Little Rock one of Four Cities in US Honored with a New or Renovated Meeting Site Award

"The most exciting new city I've discovered in the past two years of global travel was Little Rock."

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL WRITER
PICO IYER, APRIL 2012 *BLOOMBERG BUSINESSWEEK* AND *GADLING.COM*.



"I love it here in Little Rock. The bar at the Capital Hotel is probably the friendliest spot on the globe. This is paradise."

BEN STEIN WROTE ABOUT
HIS PLEASANT TRIP TO LITTLE ROCK,
APRIL 2012 *AMERICAN SPECTATOR*



The LRCVB's advertising co-op with Arkansas Parks and Tourism and other industry partners was included in multiple Time Inc. publications in May and September. Time Inc. is a division of Time Warner, one of the largest branded media companies in the world.

Little Rock was featured with other Arkansas destinations in a **major fall newspaper travel feature** in the Austin American-Statesman, Dallas Morning News, Houston Chronicle and San Antonio Express News. Print circulation totaled more than 1.3 million.



The U.S. State Department hosted an Experience America trip to Arkansas that brought more than 45 U.S. Foreign Ambassadors, representing countries on four continents. The group was in the Natural State October 21 – 23, learning about our unique and diverse history, and exploring the cultural and historical landmarks.

The LRCVB, in conjunction with the Clinton Foundation and Council of Women World Leaders, hosted **Club de Madrid's Annual Conference** in mid-December. The Club de Madrid is an independent non-profit organization composed of 88 democratic former presidents and prime ministers from 58 countries, constituting the world's largest forum of former heads of state and government, responding to a growing demand for support among leaders in two key areas – democratic leadership and governance and response to crisis and post-crisis situations.

The conference drew more than 40 members and more than 100 additional participants including Michele Bachelet, Secretary General of U.N. Women, actress Geena Davis, Director of the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media and Tawakul Karman, 2011 Nobel Peace Prize winner.

NEW DESTINATION AMENITIES

The Laura P. Nichols Cheetah exhibit opens

The Little Rock Zoo opened its new cheetah exhibit in July 2012. Funded primarily by the Laura P. Nichols Foundation, the new exhibit is a long, linear exhibit that envelops a large portion of the zoo's new African Savannah area. It features two yards of open space and two new observatory decks for viewing the cheetahs in their habitat.

Shop the Rock relocates

Little Rock's souvenir store and visitor information center, Shop The Rock, has a new home in the River Market's Ottenheimer Hall. The new shop has more merchandise display options, and will be positioned to assist visitors eating and shopping in the hall. The former home of Shop the Rock is now a Little Rock Police Department substation, a move that became necessary when construction began on the new Arcade Building in October.



Shop the Rock

Construction of the Arcade Building in the River Market District

The 60,000 sq. ft. Arcade Building will be the home of a state-of-the-art 325-seat movie theater and the nationally-renowned Little Rock Film Festival. The \$17 million facility will be home to other opportunities including Cache, a dramatic new food and beverage concept by Chef Payne Harding, one of the partners in the new Savoy 1620.

Peabody to become Arkansas's first full-service Marriott

Little Rock's Peabody Hotel will be replaced with Arkansas's first full-service Marriott Hotel. A subsidiary of Fairwood Capital LLC of Memphis, Tennessee, will become the new lease holder for the property and has announced that Davidson Hotels and Resorts of Atlanta will manage the 418-room high-rise. An estimated \$16 million will be allocated for a remodel and upgrade of the property.

Airport name change and Phase I renovations nearing completion

With the renaming of Little Rock National to Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport, the first phase of construction is nearing completion. The remodel has focused on laying the foundation for future improvements including new energy savings measures, a new baggage handling system and renovated ticketing lobby. Phase 2 will feature a new 16-terminal concourse, international arrival facility and baggage terminal.

Historic signing of MOU to extend ART to nearly 90 miles

Leaders from the cities of Little Rock, North Little Rock, Maumelle, Conway, Mayflower and Bigelow, along with the county judges of Pulaski, Faulkner and Perry counties, and the U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers and Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department gathered in June at the Big Dam Bridge to sign "A Memorandum of Understanding" for the biking and hiking trail that will eventually expand to nearly 90 miles.

When completed the trail will connect the three counties and over thirty-eight parks, six museums, 44,000 residents and 54,000 jobs will be located within a half mile of the trail.



River Trail MOU signing

Public Sculpture Additions

Over the past several years, many public sculptures have been added to Riverfront Park and the Vogel Schwartz Sculpture Garden. Little Rock's abundant amount of public sculpture is possible in large part to the annual Sculpture at the River Market Show and Sale, and the generous donations of many residents and sponsor companies.

In 2012, the following pieces were added:

- Native Knowledge, a tribute to the Caddo, Osage, and Quapaw Native American Cultures of Arkansas, was installed near the base of the Junction Bridge in Riverfront Park. The three twice-life-size figures are individually titled "Give of Yourself," "Respect All That is Natural" and "Observe Nature." The back sides of the stone panels are etched with designs inspired by pottery from each of the three Native American tribes.
- "The Center," was the 2011 Sculpture at the River Market Show and Sale contest award winner and was installed in the fall of 2012. The 15-foot-tall sculpture was designed and created by California artist Ron Chapel and is constructed of stainless steel, glass and bronze. There were three pieces installed in the Vogel Schwartz Sculpture Garden in 2012.



Native Knowledge

Bass Pro Shops coming to Little Rock

America's most popular outdoor store announced they will be part of the new 169-acre Gateway Town Center development in Little Rock, which will also include an outlet mall. The location off Interstate 30 and Interstate 430 is one of the most highly traveled, high profile, intersections in the state. The center is slated to open in November, 2013.

Floorcloth installed at Curran Hall

A replica-period floorcloth was added to Historic Curran Hall's main entrance hallway. The floorcloth is a reproduction of a fragment found in the 1850 Soulesbury Institute-Glenn House in Batesville, Arkansas. The 1842 Greek Revival house serves as a Little Rock visitor information center, the Mayor's official reception hall, and the Quapaw Quarter Association headquarters.



Curran Hall's new floorcloth

Oxford American begins South on Main Project

The *Oxford American*, a literary magazine of Southern culture, announced plans to transform its building in Little Rock's burgeoning South Main Street (SOMA) district into a home for diverse arts programming, thanks to a significant grant from ArtPlace. The space will include a restaurant that will celebrate Southern culinary culture.

Accompanying the food will be nightly cultural programming featuring the best of Southern arts and culture across a variety of formats including literature, music, film, art and drama. The *Oxford American* will focus on community-oriented programming developed through partnerships with local organizations and institutions.



Oxford American

Food Truck Festivals abound in Little Rock

With the growing popularity of food trucks nationally, Little Rock has also seen an influx of excitement surrounding the "meals on wheels" phenomenon. The Downtown Little Rock Partnership created the Main Street Food Truck Festival in 2011 and the event continues to grow in popularity.

Food Truck Fridays were created on Main Street and a food truck court popped up on South Avenue, both promoting special days to find multiple food truck selections.

New culinary school to open in 2013

Pulaski Technical College broke ground May 31 on a new 52,000-sq.ft. culinary arts and hospitality management center that will enable the college to serve a growing number of students pursuing training through the college's Arkansas Culinary School.

The facility will be equipped with state-of-the-art technology, including a 130-seat media classroom that allows broadcast via direct video capture for television of cooking demonstrations by celebrity or faculty chefs. It will also include classroom space, cooking labs and 10 kitchens designed for specific purposes, such as baking, candies, chocolates and butchery. All of the cooking labs will have glass walls that allow visitors to watch students prepare meals without disrupting the class. The center is expected to open in fall 2013.

Segway of Little Rock offers River Market tours

Segway of Little Rock opened at 404 E. 3rd Street in 2012, giving tourists and locals the chance to learn to ride a Segway and take group or individual tours throughout the River Market area and along the Arkansas River Trail.

New Residence Inn opening May 2013

The 107-room Residence Inn by Marriott is on schedule to open in May, 2013. Located at 219 River Market Avenue, this hotel is in the heart of the entertainment center of Little Rock. The property will be the third limited service property within the River Market district developed by McKibbin Hotel Group of Atlanta.

Broadway Bridge plans announced

After much public expression and evaluation by the Arkansas State Highway Commission and selected design firm, Garver Engineering, the final design of the Broadway Bridge is anticipated to be a double arch, basket handle bridge and is expected to be a dedication to all American Veterans with the financial support from Pulaski County. The construction schedule is expected to coincide with the Robinson Center renovation project.

Main Street Revitalization Plan

Through a grant received by the City of Little Rock, a concept study was presented that outlines ideas to revitalize Little Rock's Main Street into a "creative corridor." The plan suggests pulling together many of the areas performing and visual arts institutions into a more concentrated area on Main Street. The goal is to create an identity by installing a series of nodes to establish a sense of place within the corridor segment. The strategy identifies four phases including: creating gateways on both ends of Main Street, developing a central event plaza, thickening the edge and creating more of a pedestrian promenade, without eliminating traffic; and creating a transit district with the existing streetcar system.

