Overview and Trends of Searcy County Finances 1999-2017
How can Searcy County continue to provide services for its citizens?

• What factors and trends are impacting county services and funding sources?
• Which of these can the county control or influence
  – In the short-run?
  – In the long-run?
• What are anticipated changes that might affect the county’s fiscal health?
• What might the county do to eliminate or minimize the impact of anticipated changes?
The population of Searcy County decreased slightly (3%), from 8,200 in 1999 to 7,900 in 2018.
From 2019 to 2031, the county's population is projected to decrease an additional 2% to 7,800.

Data Source: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Population Projections, Woods & Poole
Population Change, 1999-2017

Data Source: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau
Population Change, 2010-2017

Data Source: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Community & Economic Development
Strengthening Arkansas Communities
Employment in Searcy County decreased slightly, from 3,600 in 1999 to 3,500 in 2017, or 3%.

How will future employment levels impact the county's fiscal situation?

Data Source: Employment Estimates, Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis
Employment Change, 1999-2017

Data Source: Employment Estimates, Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis

Community & Economic Development
Strengthening Arkansas Communities
Employment Change, 2010-2017

Data Source: Employment Estimates, Regional Economic Accounts, Bureau of Economic Analysis
Revenue & Expenditures

Searcy County
Searcy County
Total Revenue & Expenditures, 1999-2017

- Total revenue received by Searcy County increased 42% between 1999 and 2017, from $3.6 million to $5.1 million.
- Expenditures increased from $3.3 million in 1999 to $5.3 million in 2017, a total change of about 61%.

*Due to rounding, bars may appear slightly higher or lower than the values stated on this slide.

Data Sources: Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Change in Total Revenue, 1999-2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Change in Total Expenditures, 1999-2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Searcy County
Per Capita Revenue & Expenditures, 1999-2017

- Although trends in per capita total revenue and spending were similar to trends in the total numbers, the per capita measure increased at a faster rate than previously discussed.
- Per capita revenue was $639 in 2017, $32 less than per capita expenditures ($671).

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Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Per Capita Total Revenue, 2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit
Per Capita Total Expenditures, 2017

**Note**: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

**Data Sources**: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit
Revenue

Searcy County
- The share of total revenue from intergovernmental transfers decreased from 50% in 1999 to 45% in 2017.
- Searcy County property tax revenue as a share of total revenue was 13% in 1999 and slightly more in 2017 (15%).
- The share of total revenue from sales tax grew slightly, from 13% to 14%.
The share of total revenue from sales tax in Searcy County in 2017 was 14%, much lower than the statewide average (25%).

The share of total revenue from property tax was 15% in the county in 2017, less than the statewide average of 24%.

The share of total revenue from intergovernmental transfers in the county was 45% in 2017, far more than the statewide average (22%).

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Data Source: Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit
Sales tax revenue in Searcy County increased 44% between 1999 and 2017, from $479,900 to $691,700.

Property tax revenue grew 58%, from $472,400 in 1999 to $746,600 in 2017.

Searcy County's total intergovernmental revenue fluctuated and increased 28%, from $1.8 million in 1999 to $2.3 million in 2017.

Data Sources: Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Trends in per capita major revenue sources were similar to the overall trends discussed in the previous slide. However, population decline caused the per capita measures to increase at a faster rate or decrease at a slower rate than the overall measures.

Intergovernmental revenue per capita was $286 in Searcy County in 2017, more than property tax ($94) and sales tax ($87) per capita revenue.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Per Capita Intergovernmental Revenue, 2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit
Change in per Capita Intergovernmental Revenue, 1999-2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Per Capita Property Tax Revenue, 2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit
Change in per Capita Property Tax Revenue, 1999-2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Per Capita Sales Tax Revenue, 2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit
Change in per Capita Sales Tax Revenue, 1999-2017

Note: Crawford County had sales tax revenue in only the 4th quarter of 1999, because this skews the percent change value for Crawford County is treated as 0 for this map.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.
Officers, Jail and 911 Fees increased greatly in Searcy County (256%), from $78,200 in 1999 to $278,900 in 2017.

Commissions and taxes apportioned grew significantly, from $241,300 to $396,700 or 64%.

Fines, forfeitures and franchise taxes declined 5%, from $187,600 in 1999 to $178,500 in 2017.

Other revenue fluctuated widely while growing 45%, from $347,700 in 1999 to $502,800 in 2017.

Data Sources: Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Trends in per capita minor revenue sources were similar to the overall trends discussed on the previous slide. However, as a result of population decline, the per capita measures increased at a faster rate or decreased at a slower rate than the overall measures.

- Other revenue per capita in Searcy County was $63 in 2017, more than commissions & taxes apportioned ($50), officers, jail & 911 fees ($35), and fines, forfeitures and franchise taxes ($22).

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Expenditures

Searcy County
The share of total spending for law enforcement and public safety in Searcy County increased from 19% in 1999 to 26% in 2017.

The share of total spending for highways & streets declined slightly from 33% in 1999 to 31% in 2017.

The share of total spending for general & other expenditures rose from 29% in 1999 to 34% in 2017.

*Due to rounding, bars may appear slightly higher or lower than the values stated on this slide.

Data Source: Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit
Searcy County's share of expenditures for law enforcement and public safety (26%) was far less than the statewide share (38%) in 2017.

The share of total county expenditures for highways and streets was 31%, greater than the statewide average (23%).

The share of total county expenditures for general and other expenditures was 34%, greater than the statewide average (26%).

*Due to rounding, bars may appear slightly higher or lower than the values stated on this slide.

Data Source: Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit
Searcy County
Major Category Expenditures, 1999-2017

- Law enforcement and public safety expenditures in Searcy County increased 118%, from $625,300 in 1999 to $1.4 million in 2017.
- Highways and streets spending increased 55%, from $1.1 million in 1999 to $1.7 million in 2017, and peaked at a high of $2.2 million in 2008.
- General and other spending grew considerably, from $947,300 in 1999 to $1.8 million in 2017 or 92%.

Data Sources: Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Trends in per capita major category expenditures were similar to the overall trends discussed on the previous slide. However, population decline caused the per capita measures to grow at a faster rate or decrease at a slower rate than the overall measures.

General & other per capita spending in Searcy County was $230 in 2017, more than highways & streets ($209) and law enforcement & public safety ($172) expenditures.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Per Capita Public Safety Expenditures, 2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit
Change in per Capita Public Safety Expenditures, 1999-2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Per Capita Road Expenditures, 2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit
Change in per Capita Road Expenditures, 1999-2017

Note: 2017 data for Benton, Faulkner and Perry counties was not available at the time of publication. For these counties, 2016 values were used in place of the missing data.

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Road expenditures per county road mile in Searcy County were less than the statewide average every year between 1999 and 2017.

During the same period, road expenditures per county road mile increased 56% in the county compared to growth of 45% statewide.

In 2017, road expenditures per county road mile in the county were $1,400, about $2,350 less than the statewide average ($3,750).

Data Sources: Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; Road & Street Report, Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department
Health & social services expenditures in Searcy County increased 670%, from $10,100 in 1999 to $77,600 in 2017.

Recreation & culture spending in the county increased significantly (38%), from $213,300 to $295,100, peaking at a high of $667,900 in 2011.

Capital outlay expenditures decreased from a high of $420,900 in 1999 to $0 in 2001.

Debt service spending fluctuated between a low of $0 and a high of $189,400.

**Data Sources:** Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Trends in minor expenditures per capita were similar to the overall trends on the previous slide. However, population decline in Searcy County caused the per capita measure to grow at a faster rate or decrease at a slower rate than the overall measures.

Recreation & culture per capita expenditures were $37 in 2017, more than debt service ($13), health & social service ($10), and capital outlays ($0).

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Revenue and Expenditure Statements, Arkansas Legislative Audit; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Tax Base

Searcy County
Property assessments in Searcy County increased 38%, from $65.5 million in 1999 to $90.3 million in 2017.

Data Sources: Assessed Values, Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Per capita property assessments in the county were below the statewide average every year between 1999 and 2017. Trends in per capita property assessments were similar to the overall trends discussed on the previous slide, but population decline caused the per capita measures to increase at a faster rate or decrease at a slower rate than the overall measures. Per capita property assessments in the county were $11,400 in 2017, about $4,900 less than the statewide average ($16,300).

**Data Sources:** Assessed Values, Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau
Retail sales in Searcy County decreased 12%, from $56.4 million in 1972 to $49.8 million in 2012.
Retail sales reached a high of $65.9 million prior to the Great Recession in 2007.

*Due to rounding, bars may appear slightly higher or lower than the values stated on this slide.

Data Sources: Census of Retail Sales, U.S. Census Bureau; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Per capita retail sales in the county were below the statewide average every year between 1972 and 2012.

Trends in per capita retail sales were similar to the overall trends discussed on the previous slide, but population decline caused the per capita measure to increase at a quicker rate and decrease at a slower rate than the overall measure.

Per capita retail sales in the county were $6,200 in 2012, about $6,300 less than the statewide average ($12,500).

*Due to rounding, bars may appear slightly higher or lower than the values stated on this slide.

Data Sources: Census of Retail Sales, U.S. Census Bureau; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau
Capacity and Effort

Capacity:
– The maximum amount that can be produced when all the resources in an economy are employed as fully as possible.
– Capacity constraints can be caused by lack of investment and skills shortages.
– Spare capacity can be caused by lack of demand.

Effort:
– The amount to which a county utilizes its ability to generate revenue through taxation.
Property Tax Capacity and Effort

Capacity:
• High capacity = County’s per capita property assessments were above the state average.
• Low capacity = County’s per capita property assessments were below the state average.

Effort:
• High effort = County’s millage rate was above the average of Arkansas counties.
• Low effort = County’s millage rate was below the average of Arkansas counties.
Property Tax Capacity & Effort, 2017

Data Sources: Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; Property Assessments and Millage Rates, the Arkansas Assessment Coordination Department
Sales Tax Capacity and Effort

Capacity:

• High capacity = County’s per capita retail sales were above the state average.
• Low capacity = County’s per capita retail sales were below the state average.

Effort:

• High effort = County’s sales tax rate was above the average of Arkansas counties.
• Low effort = County’s sales tax rate was below the average of Arkansas counties.
Sales Tax Capacity & Effort, 2012

Data Sources: Census of Retail Sales and Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau; South Urban CPI, Bureau of Labor Statistics; Sales Tax Rates, Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration
Options for Providing Services to Searcy County Residents

• Increase cost effectiveness
  – Improve management and productivity
  – Explore possibility of privatizing services
  – Consider intergovernmental agreements to offer shared services

• Increase revenue
  – Alternative (new) revenue sources
    • User charges,
    • Shift tax burden to non-residents
  – Expand the tax base
  – Increase tax rates

• Reduce Services
Contact

For more information and assistance on county government finance options, contact:

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