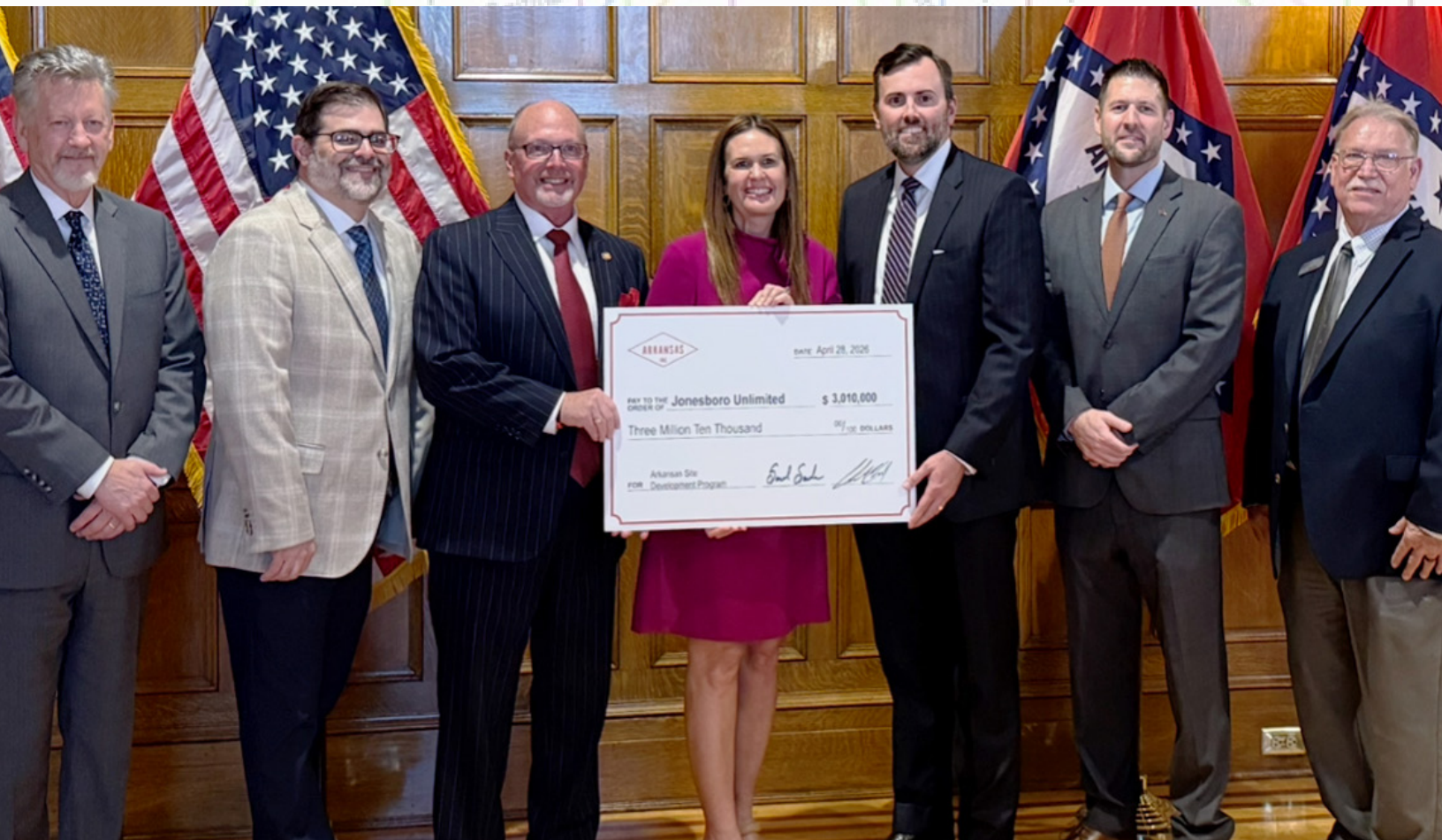


Economic Advancement QUARTERLY REPORT

Jonesboro, Arkansas

**Q2
2026**



**Jonesboro Unlimited Awarded \$3M for Industrial
Site Development**

**A-State Partners with Epicenter Memphis on DRA-Funded
EpicenterU Initiative**

**TekStarz Summer Manufacturing Camp Inspires
Future Workforce**

Economic Data & More!



www.jonesborounlimited.com

Jonesboro Unlimited Awarded \$3 Million for Industrial Site Development

Jonesboro Unlimited (JU) was awarded \$3,010,000 by Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders along with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC) through the Arkansas Site Development Program in a presentation at the State Capitol on April 28, 2026.

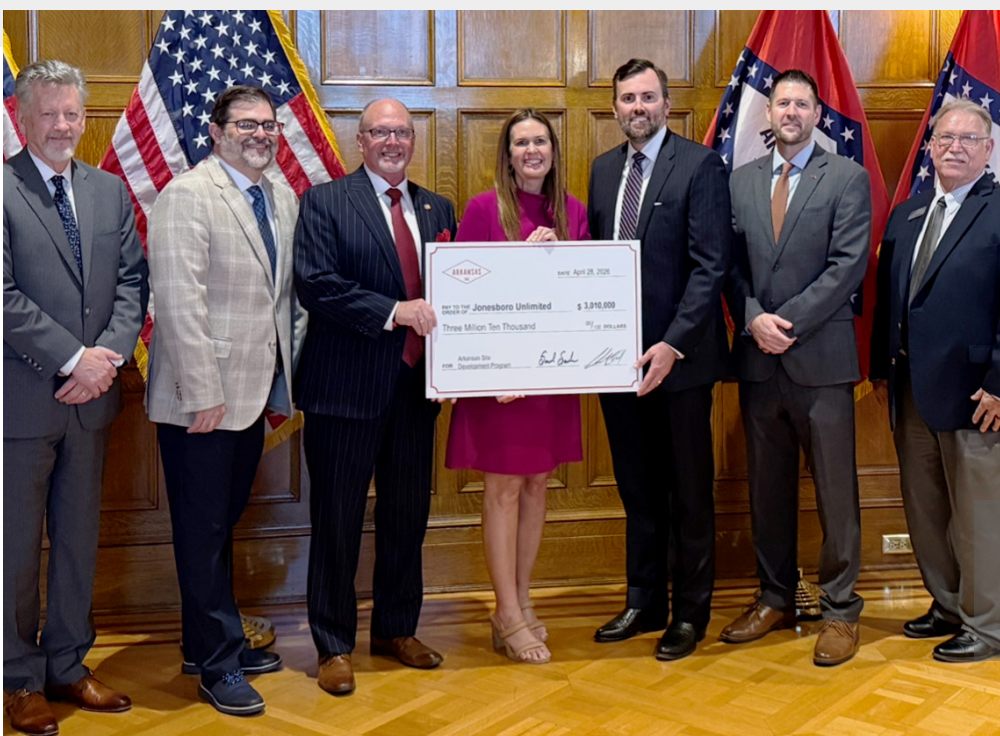
These funds will be used to extend wastewater lines to the 612-acre Craighead Technology Park South (CTP) to further develop it for future industrial growth. Previously, JU was awarded \$2 million in 2024 to support expanding a waterline extension and system enhancements to the same site. This will now extend City Water and Light's (CWL) significant capacity in CTP South.

"We are thrilled to again receive funds from the Arkansas Site Development Program for improving the readiness of our

612-acre property in the Craighead Technology Park," said Steven Lamm, JU Vice President of Economic Development. "With our waterline extension nearing completion, this award will increase wastewater access for future industrial users at this site. CTP South stands out from its peer locations as a prime opportunity in our multi-state region, and with the enhancements made through AEDC, CWL, and other partners, we will further increase its competitive attributes. Thanks to Governor Sanders, the Legislature, and AEDC for this program – these funds will have a powerful impact on economic development in communities across Arkansas, and we are thankful to have qualified."

First announced in 2024, the program was developed by the AEDC with the support of Governor Sanders and the Arkansas General Assembly to

help local communities compete and win economic development projects. To qualify, applicants must have an industrial site of at least 30 contiguous acres of land that is listed in the Arkansas Site Selection Database and that is owned or optioned by the applicant. Eligible applicants include cities and counties, chambers of commerce, and economic development organizations. This year, Jonesboro Unlimited was among 21 others for awards totaling \$25 million.



**Learn More About
CTP South:**

<https://tinyurl.com/3nmcc6zc>

A-State Partners with Epicenter Memphis on DRA-Funded EpicenterU Initiative



In May, Arkansas State University announced a new partnership with Epicenter Memphis to launch EpicenterU: Students to Startups, a university-based entrepreneurship program supported by an approximately \$800,000 grant from the Delta Regional Authority (DRA).

Designed to build the next generation of innovators across the Delta region, EpicenterU will be implemented at A-State as a founding university partner, expanding hands-on entrepreneurship education and creating new pathways for students to develop, launch, and scale venture-ready ideas while strengthening regional economic development.

"The Delta region is home to extraordinary talent, and EpicenterU is our commitment to ensuring that talent has every opportunity to flourish right here at home," said Anthony Young, President and CEO, Epicenter Memphis. "With the support of the Delta Regional Authority, we can now build a sustainable pipeline of homegrown founders who will create jobs, attract capital, and strengthen communities across the region."

EpicenterU is designed to transform undergraduate students into venture-ready founders through a multi-phase initiative spanning four academic years.

The program unfolds in three phases:

- Year One: Program development, curriculum design, and campus launches
- Year Two: Full curriculum delivery including Design Thinking, Customer Discovery, and Capital Readiness modules alongside Experts-in-Residence engagement and competitive fellowship recruitment
- Years Three and Four: Fellowship implementation, with selected fellows receiving \$40,000 annual stipends, up to \$7,500 in Company Development Funds, dedicated mentorship, and regional pitch and showcase opportunities
- Some of the outcomes of the program will include exposing students to entrepreneurship fundamentals, supporting validated business concepts developed by fellows, launching investable startups and attracting capital to those companies, and strengthening partnerships among universities, industry, and funders across the Delta.

"This partnership between A-State and Epicenter is so important to us because it represents the first step in our research strategy to grow commercialization and entrepreneurship in our region," said Dr. Travis Marsico, A-State Vice Provost for Research, Innovation and Discovery. "This is an excellent opportunity to learn and connect with a regional leader, and we are excited about this program and what is to come."



TekStarz Summer Manufacturing Camp Inspires Future Workforce



Jonesboro Unlimited officially passed the torch of the TekStarz Summer Manufacturing Camp to Arkansas State University – Newport at Jonesboro (ASUN-Jonesboro) this year, ensuring the program will continue connecting local students with career opportunities in advanced manufacturing and technical fields.

During the three-day camp in June, 13 junior high students from Westside, Brookland, Nettleton, and Riverside school districts explored Jonesboro's manufacturing and telecommunications industries through hands-on experiences and facility tours. Students visited Best Manufacturing, Frito-Lay, Unilever, TrinityRail Maintenance Services, Ritter Communications, and Hytrol, where they gained firsthand insight into industrial operations and the wide range of career opportunities available.

In addition, participants learned about educational pathways that can prepare them for future careers. The students explored the engineering curriculum at Arkansas State University as well as ASUN programs in Nursing, CNC Machining, Welding, and Industrial Maintenance.

Programs like TekStarz play an important role in helping students discover local career opportunities while strengthening the talent pipeline for Northeast Arkansas's growing industries.



NYITCOM at A-State's Project H.E.A.R.T. Introduces Students to Healthcare Careers

For four days in June, 30 high school students from across Arkansas gathered in Jonesboro to explore careers in healthcare through Project H.E.A.R.T., a medical-themed camp hosted by New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine at Arkansas State University (NYITCOM at A-State).

Designed for rising high school juniors and seniors, the program provides students with an immersive introduction to medical education and the wide range of career opportunities available in healthcare. Students participated in anatomy lab experiences, including a pig heart dissection, practiced placing IVs on medical mannequins, learned basic phlebotomy techniques, and gained insight into the medical school admissions process. They also heard from physicians, nurses, physical therapists, medical technicians, and other healthcare professionals who shared their career paths and the important roles they play in patient care.

Students represented communities across Arkansas, including Jonesboro, Paragould, Little Rock, Hazen, Monticello, Marked Tree, Magnolia, Bentonville, Forrest City, and several other cities.

Project H.E.A.R.T. is one of several pipeline programs offered by NYITCOM at A-State to encourage students to pursue careers in medicine and other healthcare fields. Since launching in 2017 and then expanding to Southwest Arkansas in 2023 through a partnership with Henderson State University, the program has introduced more than 400 students to healthcare careers, with many participants later pursuing medical school, nursing, physical therapy, health education, and other healthcare professions.

"We keep track of where the students end up, and years after they attend, they'll often tell us how Project H.E.A.R.T. impacted their decisions," said Jennifer Wharton, NYITCOM at A-State Director of Admissions and Pipeline Programs. "It's incredibly fulfilling to hear that, and it's why we will continue to make programs like these a priority."

NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

College of Osteopathic Medicine
at Arkansas State University



Building for the Future: Improvements at Jonesboro Municipal Airport



An airport connects more than destinations. It makes a community more attractive to business, supports existing industries, can influence site selection, brings in visitors who spend money locally, and more. Ultimately, it can serve as an important piece of infrastructure that supports a community's long-term growth, and the Jonesboro Municipal Airport (JBR) is no exception. Upgrades currently underway will ensure the airport is ready for the future.

Since breaking ground on a new \$6 million terminal in August 2025, the vision for the impressive 13,300-square-foot facility has taken shape. Replacing the smaller former terminal, the new facility will feature upgrades including a ticket counter, TSA accommodations, food service area, conference room, quiet rooms for pilots to rest, and large restrooms that will double as storm shelters.

Work continues to move forward on both the exterior and interior of the terminal, with design and construction by Michael Baker International, Cooper Mixon Architects, and Olympus Construction, Inc. In addition, construction is underway on two buildings containing four hangars.

In recent years, the airport has experienced significant growth in both the number and size of aircraft using the airport. Growing interest from local businesses in accommodating even larger aircraft, however, has been constrained by existing infrastructure, most notably the strength of the airport's pavement.

To help address this need, the runway and taxiways were strengthened in a previous phase, and now a 500-foot extension is nearing completion. The ability to accommodate larger aircraft in the future is expected to increase fuel sales and generate additional revenue for the community.

Terminal construction and runway expansion do not, however, mean that additional commercial airlines are expected to begin service. Currently, Southern Airways Express operates from Jonesboro Municipal Airport, offering round-trip flights to St. Louis Lambert International Airport (STL) and Nashville International Airport (BNA).



COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPDATES FROM AROUND THE COMMUNITY



RAISING CANE'S

The arrival of the long-awaited international chicken finger chain finally came in May when they opened at 2511 E Highland Drive.



MY PLACE HOTEL

The 63-room extended-stay hotel opened in May at 2905 Gilmore Drive. There are currently over 80 My Place Hotels across 31 states.



MCALISTER'S DELI

The popular deli is returning to Jonesboro with a new location at Fair Park Boulevard next to Panda Express.



7 BREW

The popular coffee chain opened a second location at 1701 Visions Avenue at Hilltop in June. Founded in 2017 with its first stand in Rogers, Arkansas, it has since grown to over 700 locations in 38 states.



HARLEY-DAVIDSON

Already a Jonesboro establishment for 50 years, the dealership located at 2715 Industrial Drive is now under new ownership with facility renovations and expanded service to meet growing demand.



CRAFTON TULL

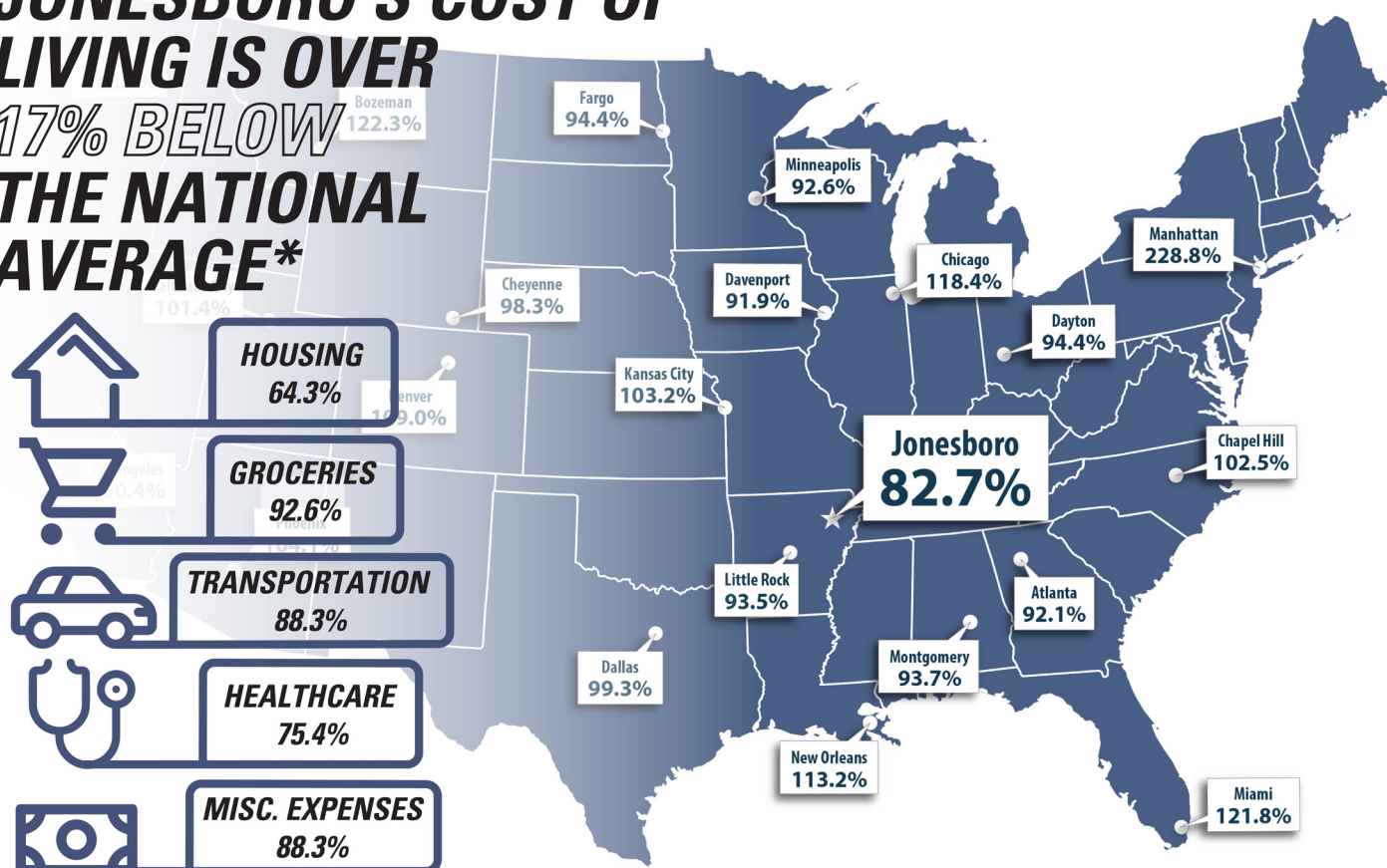
After starting in Jonesboro in 2023 with a small team and big vision, the architect firm has moved into a larger office building. The planning, design, and surveying firm focuses on improving communities.

COST OF LIVING

QUARTER 2 2026

Source: Cost of Living Index, Council for Community and Economic Research, Quarter 2, 2026 Data

JONESBORO'S COST OF LIVING IS OVER 17% BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE*



Utilize the Cost of Living Calculator:

JonesboroUnlimited.com/Cost-of-Living

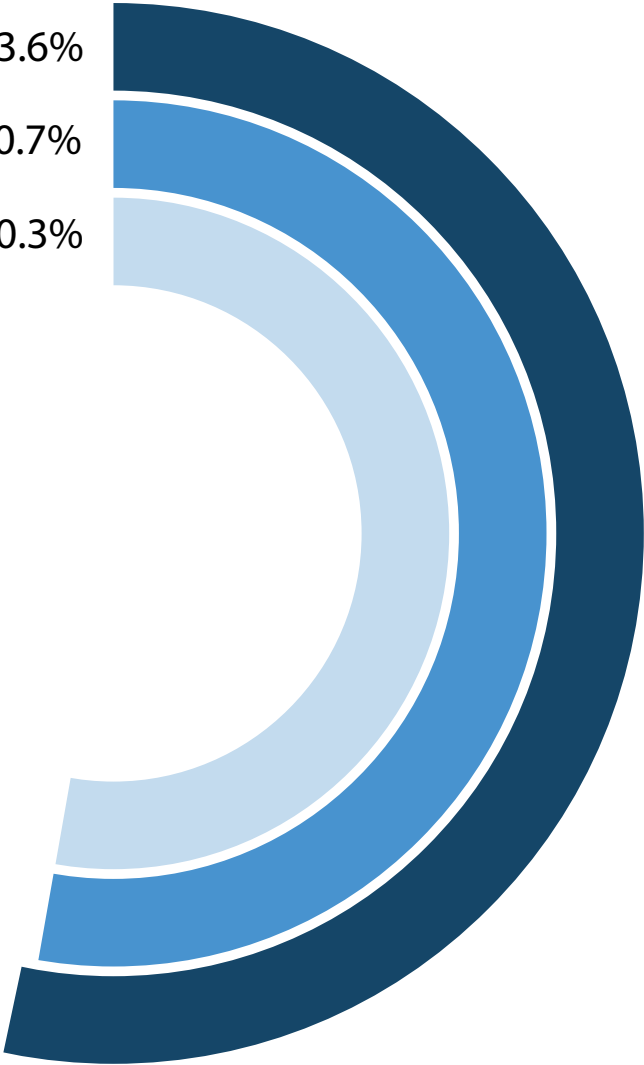
SALES & USE TAX REVENUE

YTD, JANUARY - JUNE, 2026 - 2024, CITY & COUNTY COMBINED (2.0%)

Source: Jonesboro & Craighead County, AR Sales & Use Tax Collection Reports

COLLECTIONS

YR	AMT	% INCR
2026	\$29.1M	3.6%
2025	\$28.1M	-0.7%
2024	\$28.3M	-0.3%



2026 QUARTERLY COLLECTIONS (ACTUALS)

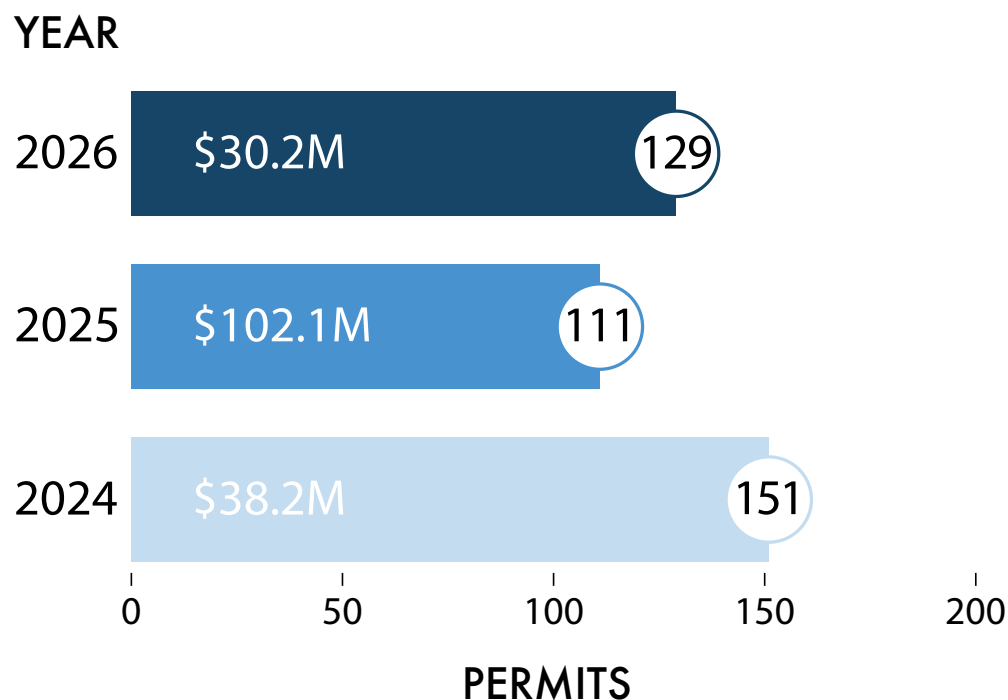
Q1 - \$14,798,030.49 Q2 - \$14,285,496.32

COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION

YTD, JANUARY - JUNE, 2026 - 2024

*Source: City of Jonesboro Inspection Department Monthly Permit Reports.
Totals only include new building construction, apartments, additions, alterations, and signs.*

PERMIT & PROJECT COST TOTALS



NEW BUILDING CONSTRUCTION TOTALS

2026 - 13 Permits | \$19.4M Combined Value

2025 - 12 Permits | \$90.1M Combined Value

2024 - 9 Permits | \$11.9M Combined Value

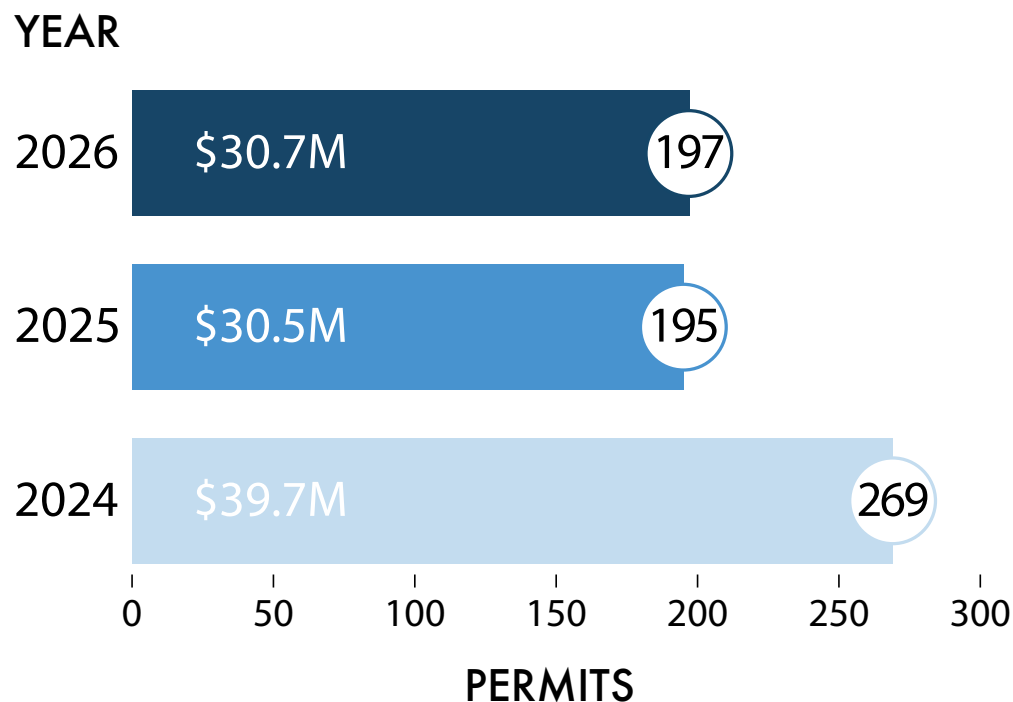
RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

YTD, JANUARY - JUNE, 2026 - 2024

Source: City of Jonesboro Inspection Department Monthly Permit Reports.

Totals include new home construction, additions, alterations, duplexes, storage, storm shelters, and swimming pools.

PERMIT & PROJECT COST TOTALS



NEW HOME CONSTRUCTION TOTALS

2026 - 122 Permits | \$27.1M Combined Value

2025 - 111 Permits | \$24.5M Combined Value

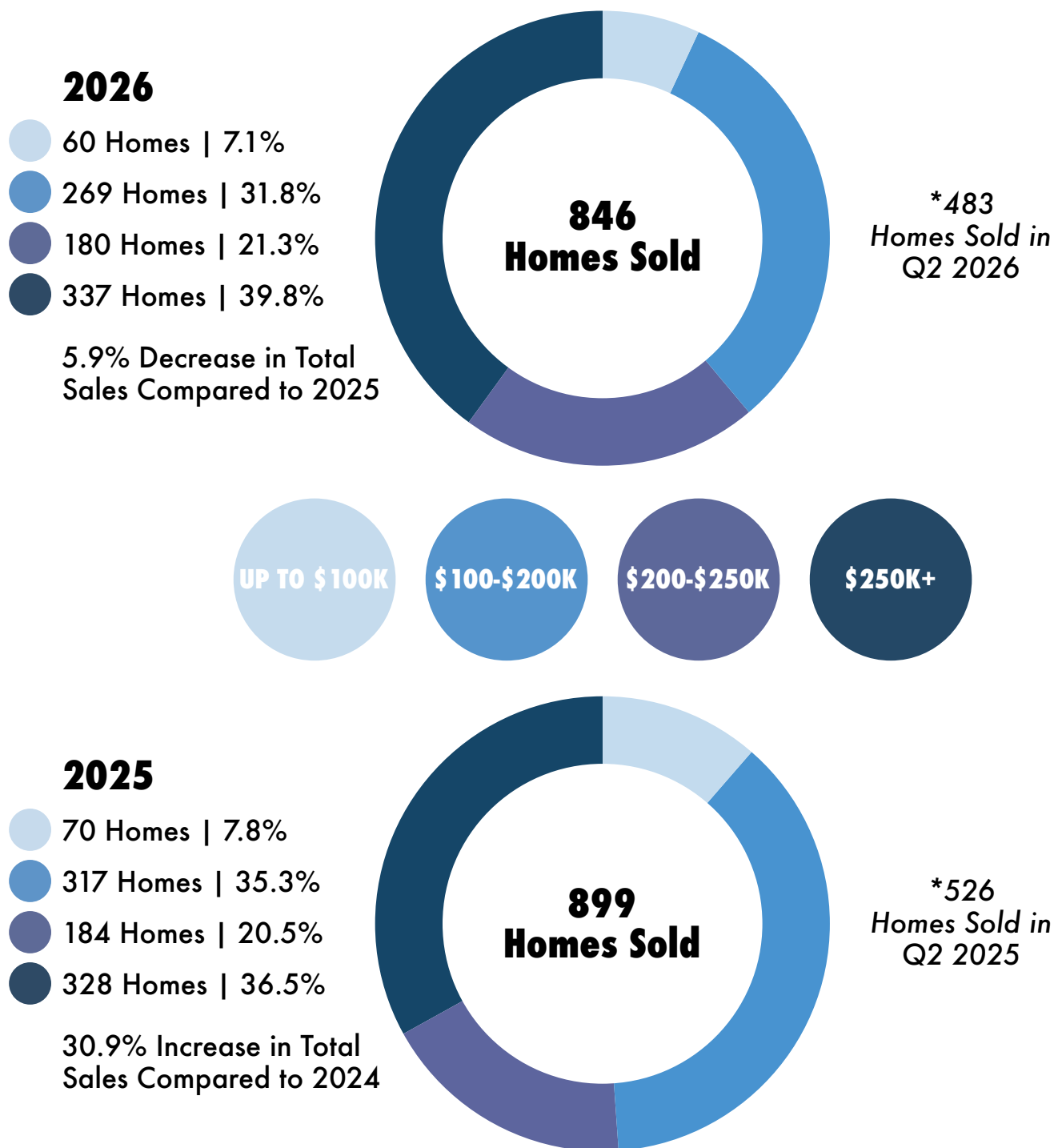
2024 - 158 Permits | \$32.4M Combined Value

HOME SALES

YTD, JANUARY - JUNE, 2026 - 2025

Source: NEA Board of Realtors Home Sales Reports.

Total home sales include new construction and existing homes sold in Jonesboro MSA (Craighead and Poinsett Counties)





JONESBORO
U N L I M I T E D

www.jonesborounlimited.com