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**METROPLAN RELEASES 2017 METROTRENDS DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW AND OUTLOOK  
The Commuting Game in Central Arkansas**

**LITTLE ROCK, AR**, July 13, 2017 — Metroplan announces the release of the *2017 Demographic Review and Outlook*, which chronicles demographic trends for the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The 2017 edition focuses on commuting.

The Little Rock MSA generates about \$38.6 billion each year in a diverse array of local jobs. The number and share of jobs in suburban areas like western Little Rock, Conway, and other outlying cities has grown, matching a national trend with more jobs in the suburbs, often closer to workers' homes. That said, jobs in the Little Rock region remain more concentrated in its central area than average among U.S. urban areas.

Additional highlights from the publication include:

1. Central Arkansas Commuting by the Numbers
  - Comparing modes of transportation: 84.4 % drove alone; 9.6% carpooled; 0.7% used transit, 1.4% walked, 2.6% worked from home, 1.4% used other.
  - The average commute in Central Arkansas takes 23.4 minutes, the U.S. average is 26.4 minutes. Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in 2014 was 43.5 for the Little Rock MSA, compared with 26.2 U.S. VMT.
  - Automatic Vehicles (AVs) and the rise of car-sharing could literally change the landscape and alter commuting patterns beyond modern-day recognition.
2. Slow Housing Construction: the year 2016 saw a slowdown in multi-family construction, but picking up into early 2017. Single-family housing construction was up slightly in 2016.
3. Demographic Analysis: Central Arkansas is now seeing its slowest rate of overall population growth since 1980–1990. There are pockets of faster growth, and Austin and Ward are currently among the region's fastest-growing communities.
4. U.S. Life expectancy has risen gradually, but in recent years mortality rates have risen, especially in the 45-54 age group, partly due to "diseases of despair" such as drug overdoses, obesity, alcoholism and suicides.
5. The traditional "brick and mortar" retailing sector is entering a crisis at the national level, competing against Internet sales.

Read the full publication by visiting:

<http://metroplan.org/sites/default/files/media/publications/DemographicReview2017.pdf>

Metroplan publishes *Metrotrends* twice yearly. The spring edition is the *Demographic Review and Outlook*; the fall edition is the *Economic Review and Outlook*. All articles, tables and figures are available for republishing with credit. Further information on this issue may be obtained in the new 2017 *Demographic Review and Outlook*, available as a PDF or paper copy from Metroplan.

Metroplan is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the four-county region of Faulkner, Lonoke, Pulaski and Saline counties. It is a voluntary association of local governments that has operated since 1955.

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