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METROPLAN RELEASES 2020 METROTRENDS DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW AND OUTLOOK

LITTLE ROCK, AR, August 11, 2020 — Metroplan announces the release of the *2020 Demographic Review and Outlook*, which chronicles demographic trends for the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The 2020 edition focuses on housing.

The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the economy in Central Arkansas. Prior to the pandemic, a strong economy was pushing housing costs upward. Compared with the U.S. average, homeowners in Central Arkansas generally get a lot of house for their money. Local costs are also moderate for renters. However, almost 50 percent of renters in Central Arkansas have incomes below \$35,000, meaning the local share of cost-stressed renters is well above the U.S. average. This edition also gives rankings of housing and income inequality as compared with other metro areas.

Housing construction continues across the region. Several large multi-family projects begun prior to the Covid crisis are still under construction. Single-family housing construction has slowed. In May 2020 the region saw about 75 percent as many single-family permits as in May of 2019.

Additional highlights include:

- By January 1, 2020, regional population had reached approximately 750,000, or three-quarters of a million.
- Slow but steady population growth continues. Saline County is the region's fastest-growing area.
- African-American homeownership in the Little Rock metro ranks 30th among the top 100 metros in the country, with 43.7 percent of local African-American households owning their own homes.
- Median household income for African Americans in the Little Rock region stands at 59.4 percent of white household income. This ranks the region in the middle among the largest 100 U.S. metros.
- During April 2020, the month of greatest coronavirus "lockdown", regional employment dropped by 37,000 jobs from April 2019. In May 2020 local unemployment was 10.1 percent, down from 10.9 percent in April.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has seen an unprecedented rise in pedestrian and biking activity in the region.

Metroplan will take a closer look at the economic impacts of the Covid-19 crisis in the fall/winter edition of *Metrotrends Economic Review and Outlook*.

Read the full publication by visiting:

<http://metroplan.org/sites/default/files/media/publications/DemographicReview2020.pdf>

Metroplan publishes *Metrotrends* twice yearly. The spring/summer edition is the *Demographic Review and Outlook*; the fall/winter edition is the *Economic Review and Outlook*. All articles, tables and figures are available for republishing with credit. This issue is 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.