

For more information:
Denver Peacock or Lucy Speed
501-258-5691 or 501-580-4571

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**LITTLE ITALY DELIVERS PETITION
TO PULASKI COUNTY COURTHOUSE**
POISED TO BECOME ARKANSAS' 501ST MUNICIPALITY

LITTLE ITALY, Ark. (May 13, 2015) – The Little Italy Incorporation Task Force today delivered its petition for Little Italy to become an official town in Arkansas to the Pulaski County Courthouse with 235 residents signing in favor of the efforts. Under Arkansas law, a minimum of 200 qualified voters' signatures was required before the petition could be submitted.

“The Little Italy Incorporation Task Force is grateful for the continued support and positive feedback we've received from voters in the community,” said Kristy Eanes, great-granddaughter of the area's first Italian settlers and incorporation co-chair. “This is a proud moment for the Little Italy community as we mark our centennial anniversary and welcome the possibility of becoming Arkansas' 501st municipality.”

Together with co-chair Chris Dorer, a Little Italy resident, local historian and author, Eanes formed a task force that has spent three years researching the advantages the community will have with town status. In an effort to understand the intricacies of establishing a municipality, Eanes and Dorer researched similarly-sized towns in Arkansas, sought expertise from individuals with legal and practical knowledge in municipal planning and developed a business plan.

While historical preservation and eventual urban sprawl are chief concerns for voters, they also cited a need for improved services. An incorporated Little Italy will have the ability to apply for grant money for improved roads, buildings, tornado sirens, protected bike lanes, historic preservation and other improvements. These increased services are also possible using existing funds that are currently shared with Pulaski County, which includes state turn-back funds based on population and franchise fees levied on utilities.

“The voters of the Little Italy community have spoken, and it's our honor to represent them as we follow the legal process to official township,” said Dorer. “We believe the original Italian settlers would be supportive of our efforts to preserve the beauty and history of the area. They loved Arkansas and all its opportunities, and we as a community still echo those feelings.”

Now that the petition has been submitted to the Pulaski County Clerk's office, the county will verify the signatures, make it public, announce a hearing and publicize the date of the hearing. If the Pulaski County Judge orders that the incorporation should proceed, an order will be sent to the Secretary of State's office. The date it arrives will be the final step in the process and the official date of incorporation. The first election for town officials can be held one month after the incorporation is official. For a town the size of Little Italy, with a population of approximately 400, they would have a mayor, recorder/treasurer and five aldermen elected by the voters.

Founded on December 23, 1915, and originally named Alta Villa by its settlers from northern Italy, Little Italy is located in Pulaski County just 16 miles northwest of Little Rock.

For more information about Little Italy and its incorporation efforts, visit littleitalyarkansas.com or www.facebook.com/LittleItalyIncorporation or [@littleitalyark1](https://twitter.com/littleitalyark1)

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