

NARTS TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2023 AT 10:30 AM; *DRAFT*

ENTITY	MEMBER	PRESENT	PROXY
AVOCA	ROBERT WHITEHORN		
BELLA VISTA	DOUG TAPP	X	
BENTON COUNTY	JUDGE BARRY MOEHRING JOSH BEAM JAY FRASIER (TRACY BACKS)	X	
BENTONVILLE	DENNIS BIRGE DAN WEESE	X	
CAVE SPRINGS	MAYOR RANDALL NOBLETT		
CENTERTON	MAYOR BILL EDWARDS LORENE BURNS	X	
DECATUR	MAYOR BOB THARP		
ELKINS	MAYOR TROY REED		
ELM SPRINGS	MAYOR HAROLD DOUTHIT		
FARMINGTON	MELISSA McCARVILLE	X	
FAYETTEVILLE	JONATHAN CURTH PAUL LIBERTINI CHRIS BROWN	X X X	
GENTRY	MAYOR KEVIN JOHNSTON		
GRAVETTE	KURT MADDOX		
GREENLAND	MAYOR JIM RENFROW		
HIGHFILL	JEREMY JOHNSON		
JOHNSON	MAYOR CHRIS KEENEY		
LITTLE FLOCK	MAYOR JEFF VAN SICKLER	X	Nicole Gibbs
LOWELL	KAREN DAVIS		
PEA RIDGE	MAYOR NATHAN SEE		
PINEVILLE	MAYOR GREG SWEETEN		
PRAIRIE GROVE	MAYOR DAVID FAULK	X	
ROGERS	LANCE JOBE SHAWN GRINDSTAFF JOHN MCCURDY	X	
SILOAM SPRINGS	BEN RHOADS (VICE CHAIR) KEVIN MOORE	X	
SPRINGDALE	PATSY CHRISTIE (CHAIR) RYAN CARR	X X	
TONTITOWN	MAYOR ANGELA RUSSELL	X	Mark Latham
WASHINGTON CO.	BRIAN LESTER SAM ATA JEFF CROWDER	X	
WEST FORK	MAYOR HEITH CAUDLE		
WINSLOW	ANN MALKIE		
NWARPC	TIM CONKLIN	X	
BEAVER H2O DISTRICT	CODY HUDSON		
OZARK REG. TRANSIT	JOEL GARDNER		
RAZORBACK TRANSIT	GARY K. SMITH (ADAM WADDELL)	X	
U OF A	SCOTT TURLEY (JAY HUNNEYCUTT)		
McDONALD COUNTY	COMM. BRYAN HALL		
MoDOT	FRANK MILLER (MARVIN MORRIS)	X	Britni O'Connor
NWA NATIONAL AIRPORT	AARON BURKES	X	
ARDOT PLANNING AND DISTRICT 9	CHRIS DILLAHA (SUNNY FARMAHAN) STACEY BURGE	X	

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NWARPC STAFF: Elizabeth Bowen (*others listed as proxies above*)

OTHERS: Nicola Hoofard (Centerton); Rob Smith (NWA Council); Bill Loudon (ATG); Praveen Pasumarthy, Peter Rafferty, and Lia Yakumithis (Cambridge Systematics); Aaron Boehmler (Burns & McDonald); Anna Negret and AJ Cook (CEI); Andy Brewer (Olsson); Nathan Becknell (TEC); Mike Stengel (Michael Baker); Andy Matson (Francis Energy); and Ron Wood (NWADG).

NOTE: THIS MEETING WAS HELD IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY; VIRTUAL PARTICIPATION CONTINUES TO BE OFFERED AS NWARPC REMAINS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

(1) CALL TO ORDER

The in-person and virtual NWARPC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting was called to order by Chair Patsy Christie at 10:33 a.m.

(2) ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

In-person attendees named themselves with Tim Conklin naming the virtual attendees. Nicole Gibbs recorded member names and tallied votes. A quorum was reached.

(3) APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 16, 2023 TAC MEETING MINUTES

Chair Christie asked the Committee whether there were any additions or corrections to the meeting minutes and hearing none, requested a motion to approve the March 16, 2023 TAC Meeting Minutes.

MOTION: Ryan Carr made a motion to approve the March 16, 2023 TAC Meeting Minutes. Mark Latham provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(4) DRAFT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS (TSMO)/INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS (ITS) – Recommendation to RPC/Policy Committee

Chair Christie introduced the item and Elizabeth Bowen said we have been working since August 2021 to develop a TSMO Plan and an ITS Plan. She said the documents have been out for review for about a month and we held a two-week public comment period from March 17, 2023 to March 31, 2023. She said we did not receive any public comment on either plan. She said we have Cambridge Systematics and Alliance Transportation Group (ATG) to present the Plans today.

Praveen Pasumarthy with Cambridge Systematics gave an overview of the Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) Plan; and Bill Loudon with ATG gave an overview of the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Architecture Plan and said this is an update to the 2007 architecture plan.

Bowen asked whether there were any questions on either plan and said they are both currently in draft form and changes can still be made if there are any comments or recommendations. She said last year we adopted the Congestion Management Plan (CMP) and now we are looking to adopt the TSMO and ITS. She said the CMP and ITS are federally required documents in order to spend federal dollars, which is why we have been working hard to get these plans through all of the committees and through the process to get your input and the public's input. She said the next step will be for the two plans to be finalized and the same presentation will be made to the RPC/Policy Committee next week.

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Chair Christie asked the Committee whether there were any questions and hearing none, requested a motion to recommend to the RPC/Policy Committee the Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) and the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Plans.

MOTION: Mark Latham made a motion to recommend to the RPC/Policy Committee the Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) and the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Plans. Ryan Carr provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(5) FY 2024 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) DRAFT REVIEW – Recommendation for 2-week Public Comment Period

Chair Christie introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that this is our annual work program, which is a required document to use the federal funds that we receive for our Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and the draft has been sent to MoDOT, ARDOT, and USDOT for review and comment. He summarized the structure of the program and said this will come back to TAC and RPC/Policy Committee in May for approvals.

Chair Christie asked the Committee whether there were any questions and hearing none, requested a motion to approve entering a 2-week public comment period for the Draft Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

MOTION: Ryan Carr made a motion to approve entering a 2-week public comment period for the Draft Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Mark Latham provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(6) FTA SECTIONS 5307 & 5339 FY 2023 PROGRAM OF PROJECTS (POP) – Informational Item

Chair Christie introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers AR-MO Urban Area receives Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds and NWARPC is the designated recipient. He said this is an annual apportionment process, and we are tasked with programming the Section 5339 and Section 5307 funds for use by the two transit agencies, and we reserve a small portion to use at Regional Planning for transit planning. He said back in the 2000's our organization agreed to split the FTA Section 5307 funds with 55% to Ozark Regional Transit (ORT) and 45% to Razorback Transit and that formula has been used for many years. He said the capital money, Section 5339, is split 50-50 between the two agencies. He said these apportioned numbers, based on our population, are published on USDOT website. He noted that the 2010 populations are still being used for FFY 2023 USDOT program funding, however the 2020 populations are anticipated to be used in FFY 2024. He said we had a significant population increase of around 78K in our region, so next year we expect our funding levels to go up accordingly for all programs that come through Regional Planning. He showed and summarized the proposed split table for Section 5307 and 5339 programs:

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**FAYETTEVILLE-SPRINGDALE-ROGERS, AR-MO FTA URBANIZED AREA FORMULA
FFY 2023 PROGRAM OF PROJECTS (POP)**

FTA SECTION 5307 POP FFY 2023					
OZARK REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY					
Project Description	Project Type	Total Cost	Federal Share	Local Share	
Operating Assist.	Operating	\$ 2,164,902	\$ 1,082,451	\$ 1,082,451	
Preventative Mtn.	Capital	\$ 607,590	\$ 486,072	\$ 121,518	
ADA Paratransit Service	Capital	\$ 345,998	\$ 276,798	\$ 69,200	
TOTAL		\$ 3,118,490	\$ 1,845,321	\$ 1,273,169	
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS – RAZORBACK TRANSIT					
Operating Assist.	Operating	\$ 119,616	\$ 59,808	\$ 59,808	
Preventative Mtn.	Capital	\$ 437,500	\$ 350,000	\$ 87,500	
Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 1,117,647	\$ 950,000	\$ 167,647	
ADA Paratransit Service	Capital	\$ 187,500	\$ 150,000	\$ 37,500	
TOTAL		\$ 1,862,263	\$ 1,509,808	\$ 352,455	
NORTHWEST ARKANSAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION					
Comp. Planning	Capital	\$ 125,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 25,000	
SUMMARY – ALL PROVIDERS					
TOTAL		\$ 5,105,753	\$ 3,455,129	\$ 1,650,624	

FTA SECTION 5339 POP					
FFY 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022 & 2023					
OZARK REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY					
FFY Funding	Project Description	Project Type	Total Cost	Federal Share	Local Share
2019	Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 186,781	\$ 158,764	\$ 28,017
2020	Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 184,246	\$ 156,609	\$ 27,637
2021	Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 167,015	\$ 141,963	\$ 25,052
2022	Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 160,107	\$ 136,091	\$ 24,016
2023	Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 159,912	\$ 135,925	\$ 23,987
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS – RAZORBACK TRANSIT					
2019	Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 186,781	\$ 158,764	\$ 28,017
2020	Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 184,246	\$ 156,609	\$ 27,637
2021	Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 167,015	\$ 141,963	\$ 25,052
2022	Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 160,107	\$ 136,091	\$ 24,016
2023	Bus Procurement	Capital	\$ 159,912	\$ 135,925	\$ 23,987
SUMMARY – FFY TOTALS (ORT + RAZORBACK TRANSIT)					
FFY 2019	FTA Section 5339	Capital	\$ 373,562	\$ 317,528	\$ 56,034
FFY 2020	FTA Section 5339	Capital	\$ 368,492	\$ 313,218	\$ 55,274
FFY 2021	FTA Section 5339	Capital	\$ 334,030	\$ 283,926	\$ 50,104
FFY 2022	FTA Section 5339	Capital	\$ 320,214	\$ 272,182	\$ 48,032
FFY 2023	FTA Section 5339	Capital	\$ 319,824	\$ 271,850	\$ 47,974

4/5/18 ORT – \$3.6 million Sec. 5339(b) Bus grant approved.

9/25/18 ORT – \$2.9 million Sec. 5339(b) Facility grant approved.

3/27/20 – Coronavirus Aid, Relief, & Economic Security (CARES) Act Funding: Total \$7,731,764 – ORT: \$4,252,470/Razorback: \$3,479,294

3/11/21 – American Rescue Plan Act Funding: Total \$996,609 – ORT: \$548,135/Razorback: \$448,474

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Chair Christie asked whether there were any comments or questions and there were none.

(7) PROJECTS AND OTHER UPDATES

A. FY 2023 STBGP-A/TAP/CRP – Project Development

Chair Christie introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that some of you have seen Agreements of Understandings (AoUs) come out in the last few weeks, however, some are still waiting. He said since this program started in 2013, we have awarded over \$120 million to communities throughout Northwest Arkansas. He summarized 2023 project status and said some existing projects have agreements in place and only needed supplemental agreements to add funds. He said we will continue to work with our planning partners to make progress.

Christie said there are projects ready to be bid out and it is important for those projects to get released because we are getting into prime bidding season.

B. FY 2024 STBGP-A/TAP/CRP – Application Cycle Update

Elizabeth Bowen said for the current funding cycle, FFY 2024, the call for projects was issued on March 23, 2023 and applications are on our website. She said the deadline for all programs, Surface Transportation Block Grant Program – Attributable (STBGP-A), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP), is July 14, 2023 at 4:00 PM. She said do not wait until the last minute as you will need a resolution from your legislative bodies to apply. She said applicants will need to present their projects to TAC on July 20, 2023. She said a selection committee will visit and review the applications, and their recommendation will come to TAC on August 17, 2023, who will make a recommendation to the RPC/Policy Committee on August 23, 2023.

Conklin reminded those with existing projects to assess whether additional funding is needed to get the project up to be 80% federal funded. He said we anticipate several existing projects to come back this cycle due to increases in construction costs.

Chair Christie said we have never let any federal money go back and we want to ensure all the money possible stays in the region.

C. Regional Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) Update

Elizabeth Bowen said we originally anticipated the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) discretionary grant application deadline to be September 15, 2023, which is what it was last year and what FHWA had been telling us; however, the actual deadline has been released for July 10, 2023. She said we are having to update the timeline of the Regional Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) project, which was already aggressive, to have a plan in place so that communities and/or the region can submit grant applications by the deadline. She said we have communicated with the larger cities to ensure they have projects that they feel are ready and can be competitive, and all four cities said yes, let's move forward. She summarized the following:

IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS DUE JULY 10:

- Listening sessions, stakeholder meetings, public outreach -May
- Public survey –Began March 16
- Schedule demonstration projects –Week of May 1
- Third working group meeting –May 4 1-2:30
 - Equity Analysis Methodology and Preliminary Maps
 - Descriptive Analysis Memo and Tables

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- High Injury Network
- 1 month of public data to review
- Draft list of projects

She asked everyone to pass out the survey again and said we have received a couple hundred responses already, but we really need more for this particular plan. She said we need to know where safe places are to understand what the public likes, and where they feel unsafe to know where improvements are most needed. She said the outreach is a big component of this plan and we will be making arrangements to attend events in your communities the week of May 1, including Square2Square on May 6.

Bowen said we must get the plan reviewed, approved, and adopted by June 28, 2023. Tim Conklin said we often do not meet in June, however, it will be necessary to get this plan adopted and a quorum will be critical at those meetings.

Bowen said we originally anticipated to have a regional plan, along with individual community plans for the larger cities and possibly others, however, it most likely will just be a regional plan, which will be sufficient to cover all communities' applications. She said it is an 80%-federal, 20%-local matching grant, and communities will need a resolution and proclamation that you support and plan to implement Vision Zero throughout your community, along with a self-certification document. She said we will discuss more details at the May 4th meeting but be prepared to go to your Councils in May or June for the resolutions. There was discussion regarding project readiness and whether design can be covered in the implementation grant. Bowen said to make sure that you have sent her or our consultant any projects you will be submitting, to ensure that it is included in the CSAP. There was discussion regarding the High Injury Network (HIN) and ARDOT's partnership when a project is on a state highway. Bowen and Conklin said communities will need to get a letter of support from ARDOT when projects are on state highways.

Bowen said to keep in mind there were 437 SS4A Safety Action Plan grants awarded, and in a year we will have all of those areas to compete against for SS4A Implementation grants, which is why we are pushing so hard to get a plan in place for this funding cycle.

Bowen explained that we had originally set aside STBGP-A funding and have a matching grant from the Walton Family Foundation. She said we were awarded a \$300,000 USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Action Plan Grant and we still do not have our Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). She said we are still spending our STBGP and WFF money, and not the SS4A award.

D. US Army Corps of Engineers - Illinois River Flood Study

Elizabeth Bowen said the US Army Corps of Engineers presented their Illinois River Flood Study at a public meeting in Siloam Springs on April 11, 2023. They shared their perspective on land use and urban development impacts and indicated that the impervious surface was not the significant contributor to our stormwater and flooding issues. She said they presented various scenarios, one relying on detention basins throughout the area and another hybrid method primarily utilizing riparian buffers, which they recommended. She said many comments and questions were made during the meeting and they are modifying the report based on the comments received at the meeting. We have invited them to make a presentation of the report to TAC at the May meeting.

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E. Other Grant Opportunity Updates

Bowen summarized information pertaining to an EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program, to develop and implement plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful air pollution. She explained there is a formula grant for planning, with \$3M going to every state, and \$1M to the largest 67 MPOs, and \$27M to tribes and other agencies. The EPA has encouraged MPOs to submit a notice of intent to participate (NOIP) for instances where states or larger MPOs do not claim their grant. She said there is some crossover between this plan and the Carbon Reduction Strategy and other efforts, however, these plans are required to be in place to access certain federal funding. She said this is a five-year funding program with planning and implementation grants. She said the state plan will cover us for implementation grants, but projects will need to be aligned with the state plan.

Elizabeth Bowen summarized additional grant opportunities being highlighted today as follows:

USDOT Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs):

- [FY 2023 Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\)](#) - deadline July 10, 2023 @ 5:00 PM EDT
- [FY 2022/2023 Charging and Fueling Infrastructure \(CFI\) Program](#) - deadline May 30, 2023 @ 11:59PM EDT

Arkansas State Grant Programs

- [FY 2023 ARDOT Transportation Alternatives \(TAP\) and Recreational Trails Program \(RTP\)](#) - deadline June 1, 2023 @ 4:00 PM
- [AR Dept. of Parks, Heritage, & Tourism -Outdoor Recreation Grants Program](#) - Application Workshop, April 27, 2023 @ 11:00 AM, Harrison, AR
- [ARDOT Intersection Improvement Program \(IIP\)](#)
- [ARDOT Local Bridge Program \(LBP\)](#)

Tim Conklin described the USDOT Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant and said this federal grant application seeks out private entities, but for those entities to access the grant, they must seek out eligible public agencies to be the applicant. He said the grant requires the private entities to provide the 20% local match, and the deadline is May 30, 2023. He explained that Regional Planning has been contacted by private entities to partner on the grant.

Andy Matson with Francis Energy gave an overview of their agency, along with their model and services as a charging partner for these applications. He said they are looking for partners, whether it is the regional agency, or individual municipalities and counties in order to identify sites to direct charging infrastructure in the area.

Conklin said while the private agency provides the match money, the public agency is the applicant, and must ensure all federal aid requirements are being met. He said this information will also be shared with the RPC/Policy Committee next week, but we wanted to bring this to you all for discussion and consideration. He said ORT intends to apply for the CFI grant for 17 areas in the region and has requested a letter of support from Regional Planning, which we plan to provide. He asked if anything else is in the works, to please let us know. He said the next EV working group meeting is being held next Friday in this room and we can discuss the opportunity in more detail. He said there is a lot of EV activity going on and highlighted a few.

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Conklin described various state aid programs including the Arkansas State Aid City Street Program, the Intersection Improvement Program (IIP), the Local Bridge Program, and summarized the interactive bridge dashboard tools that are available. He said Regional Planning is happy to do a deeper dive if anyone is interested.

Bowen summarized other tools available and said the slides will be distributed to the committee after the meeting.

(8) COMMITTEE AND GROUP UPDATES

A. Active Transportation Committee (ACT)

Elizabeth Bowen summarized the recent meetings of the Committee and Bike/Ped Plan Update Subcommittee as follows:

Last Met: March 16, 2023

- LovetoRide, BFC-Rogers, LoTS, Tunnel Standards, E-bike rebate program pilot, AR Bike/Ped Coalition
- Sub-committee for NWARBPMP March 16, 2023
 - Cities/UofA have continue to make progress on Plans
 - Cities/UofA working to finalize proposed trails so map can go to public comment

Next Meeting –

- Subcommittee NWARBPMP April 20, 2023 at 1:30
- ACT May 18, 2023 at 1:30
- Map will go to public comment –TBD / Est April

(9) PUBLIC COMMENT – *Any public comment received via email will be provided to TAC members prior to the meeting and will become part of the meeting record.*

Chair Patsy Christie asked whether there were any public comments received. Nicole Gibbs read a comment received and said it was distributed in the meeting packets. There were no other comments made.

(10) OTHER BUSINESS

A. Future Meeting Dates:

Chair Christie went over the future meetings as follows:

- **RPC/Policy Committee Meeting** – Wednesday, April 26, 2023 @ 1:30 PM
- **Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) Meeting** – Wednesday, April 26, 2023, *immediately following RPC/Policy Committee*
- **TAC Meeting** – Thursday, May 18, 2023 @ 10:30 AM
- **NACTO Conference, Denver, Colorado** – May 15-18, 2023
- **CNU Conference, Charlotte, North Carolina** – May 31-June 3, 2023

B. FutureIsNow Workforce Housing Speaker Series with Emily Hamilton & Matthew Petty – Tuesday, April 25, 2023 @ 12:00 PM | [Register Here](#)

C. Beaver Watershed Alliance Smart Growth for Source Water Protection Public Forum #1 – April 27, 2023 @ 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM, NWARPC Office | [Register Here](#)

D. ARDOT Public Involvement Meeting (Phase III) – Hwy 112 (Truckers Dr. - Howard Nickell Rd., Fayetteville) – Job 040746 – Thursday, April 27, 202 @ 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm, Mount Comfort

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Church of Christ, 3249 West Mount Comfort Road, Fayetteville, AR 72704

E. NWA Electric Vehicle (EV) Quarterly Working Group Meeting – April 28, 2023 @ 10:30 AM, NWARPC Office

F. Special Census Program Resumes

Tim Conklin said if you have a lot of population growth or significant annexations, you can now request a Special Census, at the city's cost, more information here:

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/specialcensus.html>

Conklin said the July 1, 2022 population estimates came out and just in Benton and Washington Counties, we added over 12,888 people in one year. He said from 2020 to 2022, Benton and Madison counties both had growth over 5%.

Bowen said the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage, & Tourism is putting an application workshop on for their Outdoor Recreation Grants Program on April 27, 2023 @ 11:00 AM, NWAEDD, Plaza 818 Hwy 62/65-412N, Harrison, AR, <https://adpht.arkansas.gov/office-of-outdoor-recreation/arkansas-outdoor-grants>

(11) ADJOURN

The meeting was ended at 11:43 am.