

RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024

ENTITY	MEMBER	ATTENDING	PROXY
AVOCA	MAYOR ROBERT WHITEHORN		
BELLA VISTA	MAYOR JOHN FLYNN	X	
BENTON COUNTY	JUDGE BARRY MOEHRING (CHAIR) JOSH BEAM JAY FRASIER/DEAN KLINGMON	X X	
BENTONVILLE	MAYOR STEPHANIE ORMAN SHELLI KERR	X X	
CAVE SPRINGS	MAYOR RANDALL NOBLETT		
CENTERTON	MAYOR BILL EDWARDS (SECRETARY) LORENE BURNS	X	
DECATUR	MAYOR BOB THARP		
ELKINS	MAYOR TROY REED		
ELM SPRINGS	MAYOR HAROLD DOUTHIT		
FARMINGTON	MAYOR ERNIE PENN (VICE CHAIR)	X	
FAYETTEVILLE	MAYOR LIONELD JORDAN CHRIS BROWN JONATHAN CURTH	X X	
GARFIELD	MAYOR GARY L BLACKBURN		
GATEWAY	MAYOR CHERYL TILLMAN		
GENTRY	MAYOR KEVIN JOHNSTON		
GOSHEN	MAYOR RUSSELL STROUD		
GRAVETTE	MAYOR KURT MADDOX		
GREENLAND	MAYOR JIM RENFROW		
HIGHFILL	CASSIE ELLIOT	X	
HINDSVILLE	MAYOR STEPHANIE CASEY		
HUNTSVILLE	MAYOR TRAVIS DOTSON		
JOHNSON	MAYOR CHRIS KEENEY (TREASURER)		
LINCOLN	MAYOR DOUG HUTCHENS		
LITTLE FLOCK	MAYOR JEFF VAN SICKLER	X	
LOWELL	MAYOR CHRIS MOORE		
PEA RIDGE	MAYOR NATHAN SEE		
PRAIRIE GROVE	MAYOR DAVID FAULK		
ROGERS	LANCE JOBE JOHN McCURDY SHAWN GRISNDSTAFF	X	
SILOAM SPRINGS	MAYOR JUDY NATION ALLAN GILBERT		X Ben Rhoads
SPRINGDALE	MAYOR DOUG SPROUSE PATSY CHRISTIE JIM ULMER	X X	X Jim Ulmer
SPRINGTOWN	MAYOR TERRI GLENN		
SULPHUR SPRINGS	MAYOR SHANE WEBER		
TONTITOWN	MAYOR ANGELA RUSSELL	X	
WASHINGTON CO.	JUDGE PATRICK DEAKINS BRIAN LESTER SAM ATA		X Bridget Russell
WEST FORK	MAYOR HEITH CAUDLE		
WINSLOW	ANN MALKIE		
ARDOT PLANNING + DISTRICTS	BRAD McCALEB JASON HUGHEY (DISTRICT 4)	X	X David Siskowski
BEAVER H2O DISTRICT	LANE CRIDER		
MCDONALD COUNTY	COMMISSIONER BRIAN HALL		
MoDOT	DAVE TAYLOR (BRITNI O'CONNOR)	X	
NAT. AIRPORT AUTH.	AARON BURKES	X	
PINEVILLE, MO	MAYOR GREG SWEETEN		
RAZORBACK TRANSIT	GARY K. SMITH (ADAM WADDELL)	X	
U OF A	SCOTT TURLEY (JAY HUNEYCUTT)	X	
OZARK REG. TRANSIT	JOEL GARDNER (NON-VOTING)		
ARDOT TRANSIT	GREG NATION (NON-VOTING)		
HWY COMMISSION	PHILLIP TALDO (NON-VOTING)		

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024

NWARPC STAFF: Tim Conklin; Nicole Gibbs; Tim Reavis; and Cristina Scarlat

OTHERS: Doug Tapp (Bella Vista); Ami Murray (Gravette); Mark Latham (Tontitown); Sunny Farmahan, Anthony Dao, Cindy Grisham, and Joshua Sumers (ARDOT); Jon Nelson (MoDOT); Nick Steinke, Eric Fuselier, Andy Brewer, Stacey Roach, and Valerie Miller (Olsson); Phillip Patterson (ARML); 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 hybrid, in-person and virtual NWARPC/Policy Committee meeting was called to order by Chair, Judge Barry Moehring at 1:30 p.m.

(2) ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS

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

(3) APPROVAL OF AUGUST 23, 2023 RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Chair Judge Moehring said the approval of the minutes will be deferred until the next meeting.

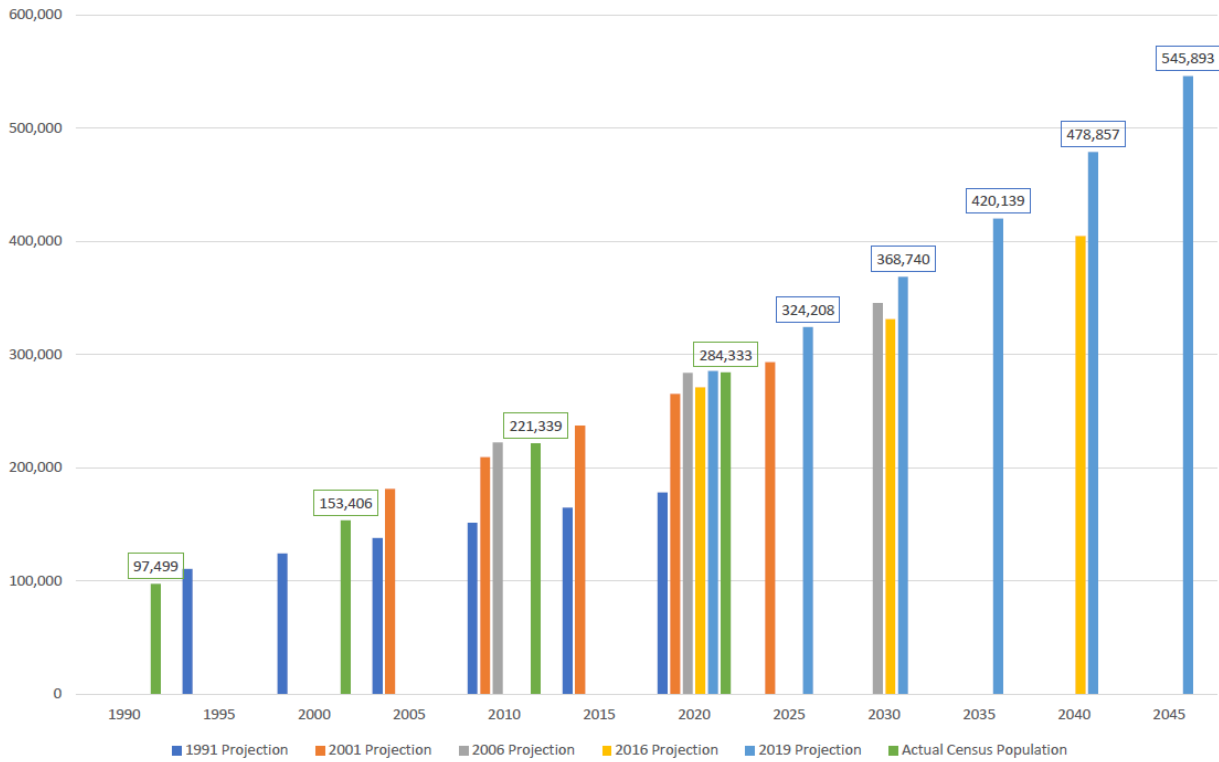
(4) DIRECTOR'S REPORT/CLEARINGHOUSE REPORT

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin said as you are aware, the U.S. Congress passed, and the president signed a 45-day continuing resolution on September 30th to keep the government open until a final budget for fiscal year 2024 is passed and signed into law. He said this 45-day continuing resolution funds the government at 2023 levels and will expire on November 17, 2023. He said the Commission and our federal funding programs – STBGP-A, TAP, and CRP – are all tied to the 2024 federal funding. He said we are looking forward to seeing the full year funded and see the result of our apportioned amounts with our increase in Urban Area population.

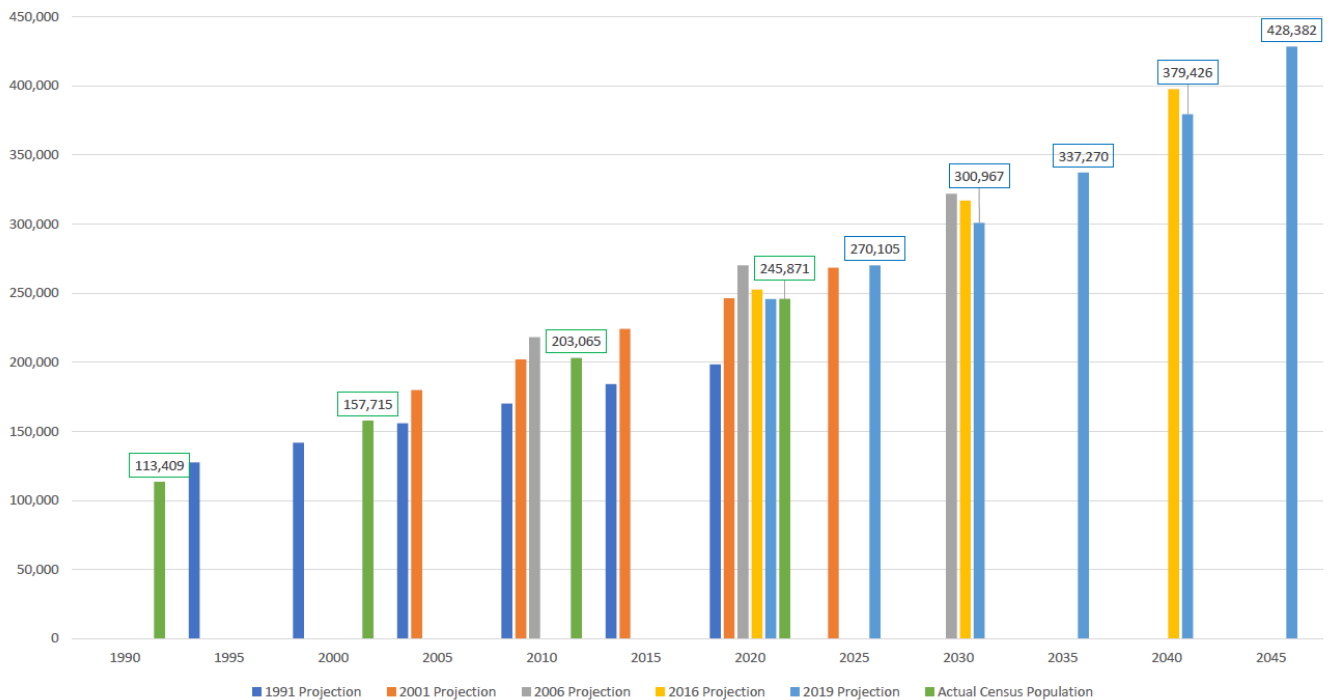
Conklin said NWARPC has met with the new state demographer, Jessica Omoregie, who is currently preparing new population projections for Benton and Washington Counties to the year 2050. He said these new county-level projections will change your city projections in late 2024. He said NWARPC has met with the four largest cities and the water/sewer utilities to discuss population projections and growth. He said there is a lot of discussion in the region about land use patterns and household and employment densities. He said it was a great discussion and the takeaway was that we all need to communicate more with each other, and the utilities have asked for a seat at the table when assigning population and employment to our projections to ensure infrastructure planning and community development and growth planning are well coordinated. He said we are actively working with the cities to understand your plans and ordinances, including plans currently being updated in Bentonville and Rogers, to populate our growth projections. He showed comparisons of projected versus actual population over time for Benton and Washington Counties and said the hardest thing for Regional Planning to understand when preparing projections for the region is employment and student populations:

RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024

Benton County Population Projections vs Actual Census Population
 Decennial Census Shown in Green with Official Population
 2019 Projection to 2045 Shown in Light Blue



Washington County Population Projections vs Actual Census Population
 Decennial Census Shown in Green with Official Population
 2019 Projection to 2045 Shown in Light Blue



RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024

Conklin said ARDOT provided a response to the NWARPC Highway 112 Comments we sent last December, and he has reached out to some of the cities to share the comments. He said ARDOT is still asking us to pay for the additional concrete for the sidepath and the trail connection over 612 Bypass. He said NWARPC will continue to seek out other sources of funding to pay for the preferred accommodation and apply for ARDOT TAP grants and USDOT discretionary grants.

Conklin said FEMA will have new Flood Insurance Rate Maps that will become effective on January 25, 2024, for Washington County, Arkansas. He said communities will need to verify or update their ordinances if they reference the old FIRM map panel date.

Conklin said the USDOT approved the use of our SS4A \$300,000 grant and the agreement was signed this week. He said this will free up approximately \$130,000 of STBGP-A funds that the Commission can award to projects during the next project selection cycle.

Conklin said we signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment (ADEE) and contracted with Olsson as the consultant for the Energy & Environment Innovation (EEI) Plan. He said we have Olsson here today to give an overview of the project and progress next on the agenda.

He said later in the agenda we will provide an update on the FTA Areas of Persistent Poverty (AoPP) grant that also involves an additional, expanded funding opportunity through the Walton Family Foundation to match additional funds.

Conklin said Elizabeth Bowen resigned to take a position with US Department of Agriculture (USDA) last month and he is actively working to fill the position.

Conklin said we are working on a Smoothed Urban Area Boundary with ARDOT and MoDOT along with an update to the MPA boundary in Missouri, which will have to be approved by Governor Mike Parson. He said we do have the Clearinghouse Report that will be distributed, and no action is required. He said this is to make everyone aware of what grants are being applied for within the region.

Conklin asked whether there were any questions and there were none.

(5) ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT INNOVATION (EEI) PLAN – Presentation by Olsson

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin said we signed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment (ADEE). He said they are providing 100 percent funds to carry out the work to ensure eligible entities that have implementable projects in our region are part of the plan. He said we went through procurement and contracted with Olsson as the consultant for the Energy & Environment Innovation (EEI) Plan. He said the deadline for this first phase is December 1, 2023, when we need to submit our regional Priority Action Plan (PAP) supplement to ADEE, which will roll up into their statewide plan.

Conklin introduced Nick Steinke with Olsson to give further information on the work being done. Steinke gave a high-level overview of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) and summarized the following:

What is this all about?

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG)

Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment:

- Awarded \$3 million planning grant from EPA to create an Arkansas Energy and Environment Innovation Plan
- Plan will make state and local governments eligible for future CPRG Implementation Grants

OUR ASK OF YOU

Take the survey so we can understand what kinds of **pollutant reduction incentive programs or specific projects** you would like us to include both in the state and region-specific plans.

You'll learn more about the survey questions on the following posters.

THIS is what we need your help with!

Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission:

- Awarded funding for an NWA regional plan to be included in state-wide plan
- Partners: Arkansas Dept. of Energy & Environment, Metroplan, NWA Regional Planning Commission, and the City of Fort Smith

PURPOSE OF THE PLANNING GRANT

To ensure targeted investment in energy infrastructure and technologies that **reduce pollutants, create high-quality jobs, and spur economic growth** in your region and across the state.



Steinke said this is a multi-year process that we are engaging in, with the first deadline for us being December 1, 2023 to provide regional information to the state to meet their March 1, 2024 deadline to submit the statewide Priority Action Plan (PAP) to the EPA. He summarized the following:

Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC)

Regional Plan Phases

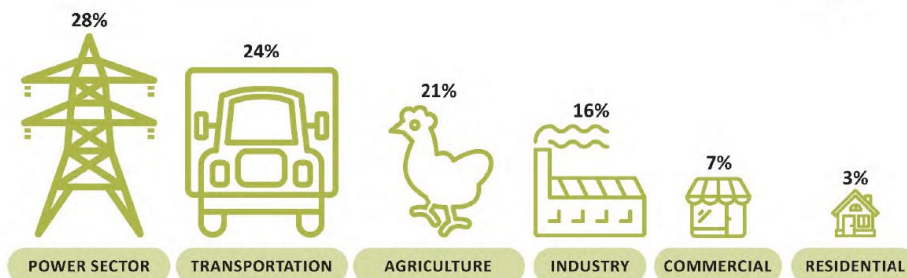


**RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024**

Steinke said it is important to keep in mind as we move through this process, that successful grant applications will be for measures that move the needle when it comes to decarbonizing in the state and shared the following:

DID YOU KNOW?

- The power sector is currently the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in Arkansas
- Carbon dioxide makes up 70% of Arkansas greenhouse gas emissions followed by methane (19%), nitrous oxides (10%), and fluorinated gases (3%)



Arkansas Greenhouse Gas Emissions (CO₂e), 2020 obtained from U.S. EPA's Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks by State: 1990 - 2020



Conklin said we are not starting from scratch and have done a lot of previous work at Regional Planning Commission regarding types of plans that work to reduce emissions. He highlighted plans and showed the following:

DID YOU KNOW?

The Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission has been working on pollutant reduction efforts for a long time. *Here are some examples of other projects they've worked on.*



Conklin said there is a public survey to capture sentiment on various measures including low and zero-emissions energy, including solar and hydrogen projects; efficient and waste minimization, including materials management, transportation choice, and traffic management; electrification and building efficiencies; workforce and technical assistance; and carbon sequestration and sustainable farming methods. He said we are required to collaborate with eligible entities to ensure that priority measures are included in the plan that are implementable by those entities. He said only measures included in the plan are eligible to apply for CPRG Implementation Grants.

Steinke said we are jumping a bit between the Planning Grants that we are undertaking now, and looking forward to the Implementation Grants, which are competitive across the country. He said once the states put together the required planning documents, the EPA will be awarding \$4.6 billion in competitive grants. He said they plan to award between 30 and 115 grants ranging from \$2 million and \$500 million per grant. He said as we are strategizing for the competitive grants, we can conceive of Arkansas receiving one, maybe two of these grants, based on population. He said it is not a requirement to participate, but it is money that is available as long as we have the projects we want to pursue addressed in our planning process. He summarized the following:

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)

✓ IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

- EPA intends to award approximately 30 to 115 grants ranging from \$2 million to \$500 million.
- Applications for grants must seek funding to implement measures that are included in the PCAP developed with funding from a CPRG planning grant.
- There are funding tiers based upon grant ranges, and applications will be evaluated against other applications within the same tier.
- A group of eligible applications applying as a coalition may not submit multiple applications for the same set of GHG reduction measures using different lead applicants.
- An eligible application may submit one application as the individual applicant and one application as the lead applicant for a coalition.
- Grants are intended to support measures for which dedicated funding or financing from other sources (e.g., BIL, IRA) is unavailable, or that leverage other sources of public and private funding to the fullest extent possible, prior to seeking CPRG funding.

Steinke gave an overview of the scoring that is outlined in the CPRG Implementation Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):

SCORING OVERVIEW (250 POINTS TOTAL)

- ✔ SUMMARY/APPROACH - 45 POINTS (18%)
- ✔ GHG REDUCTION - 60 POINTS (24%)
- ✔ OUTPUTS/OUTCOMES - 30 POINTS (12%)
- ✔ LIDAC - 35 POINTS (14%)
- ✔ JOBS - 5 POINTS (2%)
- ✔ CAPABILITY/PAST PERFORMANCE - 30 POINTS (12%)
- ✔ BUDGET - 45 POINTS (18%)



Steinke said the application for the Implementation Grants is due April 1, 2024, so you can see the timeframe for all this work is very tight.

Conklin said at this time, Regional Planning is not necessarily planning to apply for an Implementation Grant unless the Board wants to direct us to apply, or to join up with other MSA’s on a joint project. He said we have not yet jumped over that hurdle.

The Board was asked to participate in two surveys that asked:

- **Which sector(s) should be prioritized for a successful implementation grant application?**
 Choose your top three: Transportation | Energy | Agriculture Industry | Building | Carbon Removal | Waste/Water/Material
- **What is the most feasible or most implementable Priority Action for your organization?**

Conklin said we are trying to capture the various things our regional entities are already doing or considering doing. He said our thinking is that if an implementation grant is pursued, it will come from a member or a coalition of members working together.

Conklin summarized the next steps as follows:

NEXT STEPS

Event/Deliverable	Date/Due Date
Public Engagement Meetings	October 23 & October 26
Stakeholder Meeting #2	November 2, 2023
NWARPC Priority Plan Supplement to ADEE	December 1, 2023
ADEE Priority Plan to EPA	March 1, 2024
CPRG Implementation Grant Applications	April 1, 2024
Comprehensive Plan Supplement	February 28, 2025
Status Report Supplements	March 1, 2027



**RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
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Conklin said once again, this is 100 percent EPA funding, flowing through the Arkansas Department of Energy & Environment (ADEE) to NWARPC. He thanked Nick Steinke and the Olsson team for the presentation and ongoing work. He said everything has been moving very quickly since we last updated you in August; and we will have a regional Priority Action Plan to you in December.

NWA
Regional
Planning
Commission

WE NEED YOUR HELP

- 1** Please share public outreach materials
Will be emailed to you
- 2** Take the survey
- 3** Fill out idea box
- 4** Attend Public Open House(s)
*Mon., Oct. 23 / 4-7PM
Carroll Electric Comm. Rm,
Huntsville, AR*
*Thur., Oct. 26 / 4-7PM
Jones Center, Rm 226
Springdale, AR*

NWA
Regional
Planning
Commission

Conklin asked whether there were any questions and there were none.

(6) 2024 ARDOT & MoDOT SAFETY TARGETS APPROVAL

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Nicole Gibbs explained that each year we must establish safety targets for the region. She said we establish targets for five (5) performance measure areas with different target-setting cycles. She said last year we looked at targets for nearly all measures, however this year we are just considering safety targets.

**6. 2024 ARDOT & MODOT SAFETY TARGETS – RECOMMENDATION TO
RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE**

Five (5) Transportation Performance Measures (PM's), with 25 Required Targets that NWARPC supports

- Three (3) PM's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), with 14 Required Targets:
 - (1) Safety (5 targets)**
 - (2) Pavement (4 targets) and Bridges (2 targets)**
 - (3) System Performance (3 travel time reliability targets)**
- Two (2) PM's Federal Transit Administration (FTA), with 11 Required Targets:
 - (4) Transportation Asset Management (TAM)**
4 Required FTA Targets – TAM Ozark Regional Transit and Razorback Transit – Bus, Cutaway Bus, Minivan, Non-Revenue Vehicles, Administration, Maintenance, Passenger Facilities
 - (5) Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)**
7 Required FTA Targets PTASP Ozark Regional Transit and Razorback Transit – Bus, Demand Response

**RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024**

Gibbs said the state establishes their annual safety targets, and we as a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) have 180 days to either create our own safety targets or support the state targets. She said in the past, the Regional Planning Commission has chosen to support both ARDOT and MoDOT safety targets. She said we have representatives from ARDOT and MoDOT to give a brief refresher on their various methodologies and targets that they have established this year, since the methodology is slightly different between them. Gibbs introduced Anthony Dao, ARDOT and Jon Nelson, MoDOT, who gave overviews of their methodologies and targets.

EXHIBIT A																
NORTHWEST ARKANSAS REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION SUPPORTED ARDOT AND MoDOT TARGETS																
September 26, 2018 - Res. No. 2018-13																
2020 Safety Targets - January 22, 2020 - Res. No. 2020-01																
2021 Safety Targets and Mid-Performance Report Target Adjustments - December 2, 2020 - Res. No. 2020-07																
2022 Safety Targets - October 27, 2021 Res. No. 2021-12																
2023 Safety Targets - October 26, 2022 Res. No. 2022-14																
2023 PM2 & PM3 - February 22, 2023 Res. No. 2023-02																
2024 Safety Targets - October 25, 2023 Res. No. 2023-20 (pending approval)																
SAFETY	MoDOT								ARDOT							
	Baseline	CY 2018	CY 2019	CY 2020	CY 2021	CY 2022	CY 2023	CY 2024	2013-2017 Baseline	CY 2018	CY 2019	CY 2020	CY 2021	CY 2022	CY 2023	CY 2024
Number of Fatalities	910.0	857.7	872.3	859.3	871.6	877	948.2	972.4	514.4	555	543	541.2	536.3	631.5	704.9	698.5
Fatality Rate per 100 Million VMT	1.213	1.163	1.160	1.130	1.119	1.126	1.212	1.258	1.474	1.662	1.615	1.595	1.560	1.808	1.895	1.854
Number of Serious Injuries	4,681.2	4,559.3	4,433.8	4,505.4	4,463.9	4,299.0	4,848.7	4,861.8	2,991.2	3,470.0	3,637.0	3,201.4	3,103.8	2,996.9	2,790.1	2,775.7
Serious Injury Rate per 100 Million VMT	6.241	6.191	6.168	5.953	5.829	5.520	6.205	6.227	8.584	10.419	10.824	9.441	9.043	8.608	7.815	7.686
Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries	462.2	431.9	445.4	437.4	462.2	485	499.2	523.0	149	149	170	300.3	220.3	229.2	274.4	266.8
PAVEMENTS	MoDOT 2017-2021*				MoDOT 2021-2025*				ARDOT 2018-2022*				ARDOT 2022-2026*			
	Baseline (2017)	2019 Target (2-year)	2021 Target (4-year)	2021 Target (Revised)	2021 Baseline	2023 Target (2-year)	2025 Target (4-year)		(IRI Only)** Baseline (2018)	2020 Target (2-year)	2022 Target (4-year)	2022 Target (Revised)	Baseline (2022)	2024 Target (2-year)	2026 Target (4-year)	
Percentage of Interstate Pavements in Good Condition	77.5%	N/A	77.5%	77.5%	79.9%	77.5%	77.5%		77.0%	N/A	79.0%	79.0%	65.2%	54.0%	48.0%	
Percentage of Interstate Pavements in Poor Condition	0.1%	N/A	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%		4.0%	N/A	5.0%	5.0%	1.3%	5.0%	5.0%	
Percentage of non-Interstate NHS Pavements in Good Condition	61.1%	61.1%	61.1%	61.1%	61.3%	61.1%	61.1%		52.0%	48.0%	44.0%	59.0%	35.0%	41.0%	45.0%	
Percentage of non-Interstate NHS Pavements in Poor Condition	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%		8.0%	10.0%	12.0%	7.0%	5.3%	4.0%	4.0%	
BRIDGE	MoDOT 2017-2021*				MoDOT 2021-2025*				ARDOT 2018-2022*				ARDOT 2022-2026*			
	Baseline (2017)	2019 Target (2-year)	2021 Target (4-year)	2021 Target (Revised)	2021 Baseline	2023 Target (2-year)	2025 Target (4-year)		Baseline (2018)	2020 Target (2-year)	2022 Target (4-year)	2022 Target (Revised)	Baseline (2022)	2024 Target (2-year)	2026 Target (4-year)	
Percent of NHS bridges by deck area classified as Good condition	34.0%	30.9%	30.9%	26.4%	27.2%	22.8%	19.2%		50.3%	50.0%	50.0%	42.0%	43.6%	39.0%	40.0%	
Percent of NHS bridges by deck area classified as Poor condition	7.1%	7.1%	7.1%	8.2%	7.1%	7.7%	7.8%		3.9%	4.0%	6.0%	6.0%	3.5%	6.0%	8.0%	
TRAVEL TIME RELIABILITY	MoDOT 2017-2021*				MoDOT 2021-2025*				ARDOT 2018-2022*				ARDOT 2022-2026*			
	Baseline (2017)	2019 Target (2-year)	2021 Target (4-year)	2021 Target (Revised)	2021 Baseline	2023 Target (2-year)	2025 Target (4-year)		Baseline (2018)	2020 Target (2-year)	2022 Target (4-year)	2022 Target (Revised)	Baseline (2022)	2024 Target (2-year)	2026 Target (4-year)	
Interstate Travel Time Reliability Measure: Percent of Reliable Person-Miles Traveled on the Interstate	91.6%	88.9%	87.1%	87.1%	98.4%	87.1%	86.0%		95.0%	91.0%	89.0%	93.0%	98.5%	93.0%	93.0%	
Non-Interstate Travel Time Reliability Measure: Percent of Reliable Person-Miles Traveled on the Non-Interstate NHS	92.3%	N/A	87.8%	87.8%	95.5%	87.8%	87.0%		96.0%	N/A	90.0%	92.0%	95.6%	92.0%	92.0%	
Freight Reliability Measure: Truck Travel Time Reliability Index	1.25	1.28	1.30	1.45	1.18	1.45	1.45		1.21	1.45	1.52	1.40	1.24	1.35	1.35	

*MoDOT refers to data years; ARDOT refers to report years

**ARDOT: Non-interstate NHS data analysis transitioned from IRI-only to full distress in 2020; Interstate analysis transitioned in 2018

Gibbs asked whether there were any questions on the ARDOT or MoDOT safety targets and there were none.

A. RESOLUTION #2023-20 – Supporting the ARDOT and MoDOT Established 2024 Performance Targets for Safety

Chair Judge Moehring asked if there were any questions and hearing none called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-20 – Supporting the ARDOT and MoDOT Established 2024 Performance Targets for Safety.

MOTION: Mayor Ernie Penn made a motion to approve Resolution #2023-20 – Supporting the ARDOT and MoDOT Established 2024 Performance Targets for Safety. Jim Ulmer provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024

(7) NWARPC FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2024 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) AMENDMENT #1 – Various Studies and Projects

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that this item and the following two items are amending our official work products that we utilize here at NWARPC. He said in accordance with our Public Participation Plan, we held a public comment period from October 10, 2023 to October 24, 2023 and he explained that we have several items being recommended to amend into our Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and he showed and summarized the following additions:

- EPA CPRG Energy & Environment Innovation (EEI) Plan
- Air Quality Planning/Monitoring
- FTA Areas of Persistent Poverty (AoPP) Enhancing Equitable Transit Connections in NWA Project and Plans
- Provide Support as needed for ongoing Projects:
 - ARDOT Highway 412 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study
 - ARDOT Highway 59 & Highway 72 Corridor Study
 - Fayetteville/Springdale Northwest Arkansas Rail Corridor Safety Study

Conklin said the UPWP documents the work we do here at the Commission with ARDOT and MoDOT and is a requirement for federal transportation funds. He said we met with ARDOT and ADEE regarding our ozone monitoring station in Springdale at the airport being above the EPA limit for ground level ozone for this 2023 season. He said we have included air quality planning and the Energy & Environment Innovation (EEI) Plan in the work program at the suggestion of ARDOT. He said anything that reduces transportation emissions also reduces nitrogen oxides that form with VOCs to create ground level ozone.

Conklin said with the amendment we are showing \$440,000 (100% federal) coming from the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) through the state of Arkansas Department of Energy & Environment to the Commission; and \$180,000 (90% federal/10% local match) coming from Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to the commission, with the local match being split by Ozark Regional Transit (ORT) and Razorback Transit.

- A. **RESOLUTION #2023-18** – Amending the Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study (NARTS) FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Chair Judge Moehring asked if there were any questions and hearing none called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-18 – Amending the Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study (NARTS) FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

MOTION: Mayor Doug Sprouse made a motion to approve Resolution #2023-18 – Amending the Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study (NARTS) FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Jim Ulmer provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(8) NARTS FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR (FFY) 2023-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENT #3 – FTA Areas of Persistent Poverty (AoPP) Grant Project

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that in addition to the UPWP Amendment as discussed prior, we must also amend the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to include the Areas of Persistent Poverty (AoPP) Grant, as follows:

**RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024**

2023-2026 NARTS TIP - AMENDMENT #3 PROPOSED CHANGES

JOB	COUNTY	ROUTE	TERMINI	LENGTH	TYPE WORK	ESTIMATED COST		AGENCY CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT	FFY	MPO
						Funding Breakdown (in thousands)				
ADD:										
NARTS17			FTA Areas of Persistent Poverty Project - Enhancing Equitable Transit Connections in NWA	-	Transit	200 - TOTAL	180 - FTA AoPP	Local-MPO	2023	NARTS
						20 - Local				

A. RESOLUTION #2023-19 – Amending the Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study (NARTS) FFY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Chair Judge Moehring asked if there were any questions and hearing none called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-19 – Amending the Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study (NARTS) FFY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

MOTION: Jim Ulmer made a motion to approve Resolution #2023-19 – Amending the Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study (NARTS) FFY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mayor Ernie Penn provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(9) NARTS FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR (FFY) 2021 AND 2022 PROGRAM OF PROJECTS (POP) AMENDMENTS APPROVAL

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that another document we produce for FTA through our planning processes is the Program of Projects (POP), which is how we show the federal transit money being spent in the region. He said Razorback Transit requested to amend the 2021 and 2022 POPs. He said both transit agencies received significant transit funding through the Covid Relief Bills passed by Congress. He said Razorback Transit is now ready to spend FFY 2021 and 2022 Section 5307 money in FFY 2024 and they are changing how they plan to spend the money allocated to them between operating assistance, preventative maintenance, bus procurement, and ADA paratransit service. He said the amendment does not change the split between the transit agencies, with ORT currently receiving 55% of the 5307 funds and Razorback Transit receiving 45% of the funds. He said Razorback Transit believes they need to have these changes documented to match their FTA grant requests.

Chair Judge Moehring asked if there were any questions and hearing none called for a motion to amend the FY 2021 and 2022 Program of Projects (POP) for Razorback Transit projects.

MOTION: Bridget Russell made a motion to amend the FY 2021 and 2022 Program of Projects (POP) for Razorback Transit projects. Mayor Doug Sprouse provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(10) PROJECTS AND OTHER UPDATES

A. FY 2024 STBGP-A/TAP/CRP Project Development

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Nicole Gibbs explained that in August the Commission awarded \$14 million in FFY 2024 Surface Transportation Block Grant Program-Attributable (STBGP-A), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), and Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funding suballocated to the region. She said award letters were sent in August to ARDOT and

RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024

Local Public Agencies (LPAs) to initiate the process. She said we are hoping to start seeing agreements from ARDOT in the coming weeks. David Siskowski said some of the agreements are at his level being reviewed now. Gibbs thanked those who were able to attend the LPA Workshop on September 12, 2023, which provided an overview of the process. She thanked ARDOT for putting the workshop together and for their work getting the agreements out. She said as a reminder, we are now under tri-party agreements between the LPA, NWARPC, and ARDOT and to please include NWARPC in your quarterly status reports. She said there is a very specific process you must follow with federal funding and asked awardees to review ARDOT's Local Public Agency (LPA) Manual to ensure the requirements are being met. Conklin said the ARDOT procurement process is a requirement to select consultants when federal funds are being used on the project.

Gibbs said we will be moving up our FFY 2025 funding cycle to accommodate the obligation of federal funds in the Fall, so please be thinking about projects now.

FFY 2025 Programs Timeline:

- Call for Projects Jan 2024
- Application Deadline (Resolution Required) Mar 2024
- Project Sponsor Presentation to TAC Committee Mar 2024
- Selection Committee Site Visits/Scoring/Rec Mar/April
- Selection Committee Recommendation to TAC April 2024
- TAC Recommendation to RPC/Policy April 2024

B. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Implementation Grant Update

Tim Conklin explained that we adopted the Regional Safety Action Plan in June 2023 and Huntsville now has a draft plan. He said several communities have already adopted Vision Zero Goals and three communities were able to apply for around \$75 million for SS4A Implementation Grants in July 2023.

Conklin said the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has agreed to allow us to use the \$300,000 that was awarded back in January of this year to do additional supplemental Vision Zero work. He said he signed the grant agreement with FHWA and it has expanded scope with a supplemental agreement. He said we intend to do a supplemental agreement to complete the following Phase 2 scope of work with Toole Design Group, who is currently under contract. He said this will free up about \$130,000 of STBGP-A funds that can be awarded to projects in the next funding cycle.

- Street Design Principles and Types
- Complete Streets Design Guidelines
- Individual Community Comprehensive Safety Action Plans
- Systemic Safety Webinars (2)
- Compelling Video and Storytelling on Safety
- Safety Demonstration Projects (2)
- Local Community Engagement Strategies
- Develop Action Plan Communication Materials

Conklin thanked FHWA and the local district for helping to make that happen.

C. Other Grant Opportunity Updates

Tim Conklin said we continue to monitor the Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) and there is a lot out there. He said if you have any questions, just let us know.

RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024

He said the RAISE Grant program is supposed to be announced before the end of the year. He said there is potential in communities outside our Urban Area to receive 100% federal funding through this program. He congratulated Springdale for applying for \$1.2 million in Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Planning Grant for about two-miles of 71B/Thompson Street.

Conklin said we resubmitted the *Highway 112: Complete Streets. Connecting Communities.* project for a \$25 million Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant (MPDG) as well as \$160 million MPDG application for *Highway 612: Connecting a Region.* to extend Highway 612 from I-49 to Highway 265. He said USDOT contacted us asking for additional information, so they are looking at this grant application. He thanked ARDOT for helping us provide additional documentation to USDOT.

Tim Reavis explained that NWARPC was awarded \$180,000 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Areas of Persistent Poverty (AoPP) Grant in July 2023 for design and environmental work for bus stop improvements. He said we originally applied for \$540,000, so the scope of the work had to be significantly reduced. He said the Walton Family Foundation (WFF) has proposed a challenge grant for up to \$200,000 to supplement the FTA award. He said the program would require a one-to-one match with communities that wish to participate. He said we will be receiving the FTA funds and starting the improvement project regardless of the voluntary participation in the challenge grant.

Reavis said additionally, the WFF is helping to fund a Razorback Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plan, similar to the plan ORT adopted in October 2022, through NWARPC, that will inventory existing bus stops, evaluate the feasibility of infrastructure improvements, and make recommendations for implementation (\$108,800 WFF + \$27,200 City of Fayetteville = \$136,000 total project cost).

(11) COMMITTEE AND GROUP UPDATES

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item. In the interest of time, this item was skipped, with slides being shared in the follow up email to the Board.

- A. Active Transportation Committee (ACT)**
- B. NWA Open Space Coalition**
- C. MS4 Stormwater Compliance Group**
- D. NWA GIS User Group**

(12) PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Judge Moehring asked whether there were any comments and Nicole Gibbs said there were two comments received prior to the meeting that were distributed in the meeting packets. Moehring asked whether there were any other comments and there were none.

(13) OTHER BUSINESS

A. Future Meeting Dates:

Chair Judge Moehring announced upcoming meetings as follows:

- **TAC Meeting** – Thursday, November 16, 2023 @ 10:30 AM
- **RPC/Policy Committee Meeting** – Wednesday, December 6, 2023 @ 1:30 PM
- **TAC Meeting** – Thursday, January 18, 2024 @ 10:30 AM

B. Energy and Environment Innovation Plan Public Open Houses –

- **Meeting #2 (Springdale)** – Thursday, October 26, 2023 @ 4:00-7:00 PM, The Jones Center, Room 226, 922 E. Emma Avenue, Springdale, Arkansas 72764

RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2024

- C. **NWA ULI Place Summit/APA Arkansas Joint Conference** – Wednesday, November 8 – Thursday, November 9, 2023, Fayetteville Public Library | Register here: placesummit.uli.org/

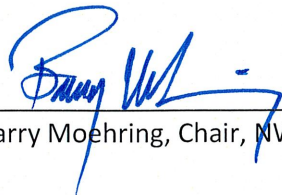
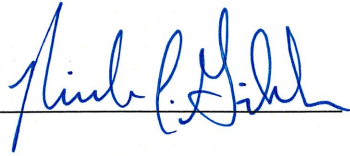
Chair Judge Moehring asked whether there was any other business.

(14) ADJOURN

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:38 p.m.

PASSED AND APPROVED ON THIS 24TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2024.

ATTEST:



Judge Barry Moehring, Chair, NWARPC