

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR  
COOPERATIVE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

**This Memorandum of Understanding is made between the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC), and public transit system operators in the Northwest Arkansas Transportation Study Area, namely Ozark Regional Transit Authority (d.b.a. Ozark Regional Transit) and the University of Arkansas (d.b.a. Razorback Transit), for the purpose of carrying out continuing, comprehensive and cooperative transportation planning.**

WHEREAS, NWARPC has been designated by the Governor of the State of Arkansas, acting through the Arkansas Highway & Transportation Department (AHTD), as the federally required Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), for the Fayetteville—Springdale Urbanized Area; and

WHEREAS, NWARPC, as the MPO, is responsible for the direction, coordination, and administration of the continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process in the Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study (NARTS) Area under Title 23 U.S.C. Section 134 and Title 49 U.S.C. Section 1601, et. seq., as amended; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Policy Committee of the Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study (NARTS) has been designated as the NWARPC committee responsible for transportation planning policy and programming matters, and adopting necessary plans required to meet federal guidelines; and

WHEREAS, Ozark Regional Transit and Razorback Transit, respectively, are established pursuant to law, for the purpose of providing public mass transit service; are independent of each other; and have different, but complimentary service areas within the NARTS area; and

WHEREAS, federally mandated metropolitan planning rules and regulations state in 23 CFR 450.310(b) that there shall be an agreement between the MPO and operators of publicly owned transit services which specifies cooperative procedures for carrying out transportation planning and programming; and

WHEREAS, 23 CFR 450.312(a) requires that the MPO in cooperation with the State and with operators of publicly owned transit services shall be responsible for carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. Further, that the MPO, the State and transit operator(s) shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in the conduct of the planning process, and shall cooperatively develop the unified planning work program, transportation plan, and transportation improvement program; and

WHEREAS, the objectives of this Memorandum of Understanding are to: (1) formalize the current cooperative efforts between NWARPC and the public transit operators for the production and execution of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Long-Range Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the

ongoing transportation planning process in general; as well as (2) comply with the requirements of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), all successors of this Act and subsequent regulations, and all other applicable law and regulations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that NWARPC and the public transit operators, Ozark Regional Transit and Razorback Transit respectively, do hereby mutually agree to the following roles and responsibilities:

NWARPC Roles and Responsibilities:

1. It is in the public interest that NWARPC continue the transportation planning process for the public transit operators, in cooperation with the AHTD, the FHWA, the FTA, and other federal, state, and local agencies as may be or become involved in the process.
2. NWARPC will prepare and keep current the Unified Planning Work Program that specifies the planning goals and responsibilities of all agencies in the Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study area in transportation planning, including the planning activities of the public transit operators. The UPWP will be updated annually.
3. NWARPC will prepare and keep current the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that lists all major transportation projects to be funded and implemented in the NARTS area during the subsequent three fiscal years, in accordance with federal guidelines. With input, and mutual agreement if possible, from the public transit operators, the TIP will include a full listing of proposed public transit equipment and improvements, as well as operating assistance. The TIP will be updated annually.
4. NWARPC will prepare and keep current the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRP) for the NARTS area that specifies all major transportation improvements planned and considered financially feasible in a period covering at least 20 years, in accordance with federal guidelines. Said transportation plan will be a balanced inter-modal plan that will incorporate both the long-range and short-range strategies and actions of the public transit operators. The LRP will be updated every 3-5 years, and amended from time-to-time as necessary and appropriate.
5. NWARPC will prepare and keep current a public involvement process document that details the means and procedures by which the public will be afforded involvement in the NARTS planning process.
6. NWARPC will comply with all federal guidelines including the certification of the planning process, and will act upon requests from the FHWA and FTA in this regard. As needed, NWARPC will participate in triennial reviews and similar federal reviews conducted regarding the public transit operators.

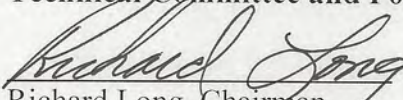
7. NWARPC will assist the public transit operators as needed and to the extent time and funding permit, in carrying out other planning and programming work as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and other appropriate federal and state laws and regulations, and duly constituted amendments thereto.
8. The NWARPC transportation planning process will include all federal required planning factors in developing plans and programs.
9. To the extent time and funding permits, the transportation planning process will provide for technical services to area units of government including the public transit operators as an ongoing part of the planning process.
10. NWARPC will work with units of local government authorities, including the public transit operators, on refining and implementing the priorities established in the LRP and in the TIP.
11. NWARPC will prepare appropriate publications suitable to technical and public use that communicate significant findings and recommendation coming from the planning process.
12. NWARPC will periodically report to the units of local government and authorities participating in the planning process, including the public transit operators on the status of transportation planning in the NARTS area.
13. NWARPC will provide a voice on the NARTS Technical Advisory Committee for the public transit operators. This will include full voting status for both public transit operators.
14. NWARPC staff, the NARTS Technical Advisory Committee, and the NARTS Policy Committee, in that order, will to the extent possible, facilitate dialog and arbitrate among the public transit operators with regard to disputes over planning activities, funding priorities, and the future roles and goals of the public transit systems individually and/or collectively.

Public Transit Operators Roles and Responsibilities:

1. The public transit operators will participate on a regular basis in the activities and meetings of the NARTS Technical Advisory Committee. Said operators will have full voting status on the NARTS Technical Advisory Committee. The public transit operators will assist the NWARPC staff and the NARTS Technical Committee in their respective transportation planning duties, responsibilities, and assignments. Additionally, efforts will be made to keep the NARTS Policy Committee informed and advised on the status of public transit in Northwest Arkansas.

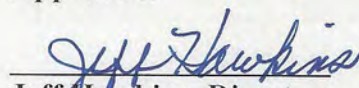
2. The public transit operators will annually provide NWARPC with a budget and work program of proposed transit planning activities. Said information will be provided in a timely manner so as to be considered for inclusion in the UPWP.
3. The public transit operators will provide NWARPC with an annual operating budget, an annual list of proposed equipment and other capital projects, and a forecast and funding prospectus covering the next three years, including intended requests for federal grants. Said information will be provided annually in a timely manner so as to be considered for inclusion in the TIP.
4. The public transit operators will meet, upon request by NWARPC staff, individually and/or jointly for the purpose of discussing transportation planning priorities, transportation project funding priorities and levels of funding, and long-range roles and goals of public transit in the NARTS area.
5. The public transit operators will provide NWARPC with information needed in conjunction with Title VI, as well as other federally required assessments.
6. The public transit operators will assist and participate with NWARPC in the preparation and maintenance of the transit related components of the short and long-range overall transportation plans for the NARTS area.
7. The public transit operators will make every effort to coordinate their efforts among themselves, as well as with NWARPC, so as to minimize duplications of effort, and provide the maximum amount of efficient, cost-effective public transit service possible for the NARTS area.


**Endorsed by both the Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study  
Technical Committee and Policy Committee**

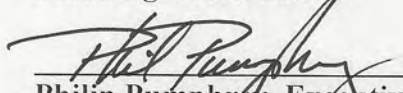
  
Richard Long, Chairman  
NARTS Technical Advisory Committee

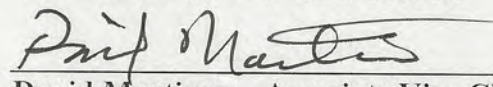
  
Bob H. Crafton, Chairman  
NARTS Policy Committee

**Approved:**

  
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