



NORTHWEST ARKANSAS
REGIONAL PLANNING
COMMISSION

MAY 2019

A large circular graphic composed of several concentric rings in various shades of teal and green. The text "ANNUAL REPORT 2018" is centered within the innermost, darkest teal ring.

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

This report was funded in part through grants from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S.DOT). The views and opinions of the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC) expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

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Welcome

The Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC) was formed in 1966. In 1983, NWARPC was designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) under U.S. DOT regulations for transportation planning purposes. In 2018, NWARPC had 44 members with 37 jurisdictions in Benton and Washington Counties in Arkansas and three jurisdictions in Missouri. The MPO has four permanent committees: the Regional Planning Commission/Policy Committee (RPC/Policy Committee), the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the Active Transportation Committee (ACT), and the Northwest Arkansas GIS Users Group. The RPC/ Policy Committee is the chief decision-making body for the MPO and consists of the jurisdictions' chief elected official and/or other appointed representatives. The TAC develops the technical aspects of plans and reports and makes recommendations to the RPC/ Policy Committee. The NWARPC is a multi-modal transportation planning agency for the region.



Participants at the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide Training in Springdale, AR

MEMBERSHIP

Avoca
 Bella Vista
 Benton County
 Bentonville
 Bethel Heights
 Cave Springs
 Centerton
 Decatur
 Elkins
 Elm Springs
 Farmington
 Fayetteville
 Garfield
 Gateway
 Gentry
 Goshen
 Gravette
 Greenland
 Highfill
 Hindsville
 Huntsville
 Johnson
 Lincoln
 Little Flock
 Lowell
 McDonald County, Missouri
 Pea Ridge
 City of Pineville, Missouri
 Prairie Grove
 Rogers
 Siloam Springs
 Springdale
 Springtown
 Sulphur Springs
 Tontitown
 Washington County
 West Fork
 ARDOT – Planning
 ARDOT Districts
 MODOT
 Beaver Water District
 Razorback Transit
 University of Arkansas
 Regional Airport Authority

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Mayor Peter Christie (Secretary)
 Judge Barry Moerhing, Josh Beam, Jay Frasier
 Mayor Stephanie Orman, Shelli Kerr
 Mayor Cynthia J. Black, Amanda Fenton
 Mayor Randy Noblett
Mayor Bill Edwards (Chair), Rick Hudson
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 Mayor Gary L. Blackburn
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 Mayor Shane Weber
 Mayor Paul Colvin, Jr., Courtney McNair
 Judge Joseph K. Wood, Carl Gale, Nathan Crouch
 Mayor S. Heith Caudle
 Jessie Jones
 Chad Adams (District 4)
 Frank Miller
 Lane Crider*
 Gary Smith, Adam Waddell
 Mike Johnson*
 Aaron Burke

*Non-voting on NARTS matters

Non-Voting Transportation Planning Partners:
 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – Amy Heflin
 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) – Lynn Hayes

Arkansas Highway Commission – Phillip Taldo
 Human Service Agencies
 Arkansas Missouri Railroad



A message from
 our chairman

BILL EDWARDS
 MAYOR OF CENTERTON

“

Growing and improving our region are critical in working towards improving our quality of life, which makes our region a great place to work, live and shop while enjoying our unique Northwest Arkansas natural environment.

”

Greetings and welcome to the 2018 Annual Report of the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission! It is my honor to serve as this year’s Chairman of the Regional Planning Commission as I look forward to our region’s continued growth.

The Northwest Arkansas region continues to grow at a rapid rate and, as the 2020 Census is rapidly approaching, we will see a significant increase in population as compared to the 2010 Census. Our region is gaining new residents every day and the Regional Planning Commission is working closely with its members to keep up with the continued growth.

As you will see in this year’s report, many projects are in the works and many exciting things are happening in our communities. With all the area jurisdictions working together wonderful things are happening to benefit all of our residents.

In closing, I want to say that we have seen a lot of new businesses and industries coming to our area these past several years, and we are all proud of our continued economic growth. Growing and improving our region are critical in working towards improving our quality of life which makes our region a great place to work, live and shop while enjoying our unique Northwest Arkansas natural environment.

Best Regards,
 Bill Edwards, Chairman

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

BUILD GRANT AWARD

I-49 Missouri-Arkansas Connector

In April 2018 the U. S. Department of Transportation (DOT) announced the availability of funds for nationally and regionally significant projects through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Discretionary Grant Program. NWARPC prepared a proposal and submitted it on July 18, 2018 to DOT for a \$25 million BUILD grant to be used solely on the I-49 Missouri-Arkansas Connector. Both the Missouri and Arkansas departments of transportation were listed as project parties, and both agreed to deliver I-49 projects, and to own and maintain the projects after completion. The entire BUILD grant award was intended for the Missouri project. Arkansas Senators Cotton and Boozman, as well as Missouri Senator Blunt urged DOT to support the funding.

The Secretary of Transportation announced in December 2018 that NWARPC's application was approved in the amount requested. The \$25 million grant will enable MODOT to construct 4.8 miles of I-49 in the McDonald County portion of NWARPC's MPA, and will allow ARDOT to complete the voter-approved 14.1-mile section in Benton County. Finally, both departments of transportation will have the necessary funding at the same time to complete the 18.9-mile missing link in the 270-mile segment of I-49 linking I-40/Fort Smith, Arkansas, I-44/Joplin, Missouri, and I-70/Kansas City, Missouri.

“Completing the interstate in the region, having so much of the already voter-approved half-cent sales tax money, (and) to be able to move forward with it, it’s great for the region. It’s great for the state of Arkansas. The voters said they wanted to see these projects built and we’re going to build them in Arkansas now. It’s a win for everybody, the state of Missouri, the state of Arkansas and the nation.” - Tim Conklin - Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission



HIGHWAY 612 OPENING

The first 4.5 miles of the future U.S. 412 bypass, which is known as State Highway 612 until it connects with Highway 112 on the west side of Tontitown, cost \$100.6 million and was completed a full year ahead of schedule. It connects to Interstate 49 near the J.B. Hunt Transport Services headquarters in Lowell and heads west to connect with Highway 112.



Photo credit: ARDOT- Scott Bennett, ARDOT Director in the middle, Commissioners Dick Trammel to the right and Phillip Taldo to the left.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony, led by Arkansas Department of Transportation Director Scott Bennett and all five Arkansas Highway Commission members, brought more than 150 people to the new Highway 612 on April 18, 2018. The new stretch of highway was open to traffic at the end of April 2018. The construction of Highway 612 was the most expensive of the 36 projects funded by a half-cent sales tax approved by Arkansas voters in 2012.

STBGP-A AND TAP PROJECTS

The following projects were awarded as part of the FFY 2018, beginning in October 2017, Surface Transportation Block Group Program - Attributable (STBGP-A) and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP).

County	Project	TAP - Federal	STBGP-A Federal
Benton	Wagon Wheel Road Design & Environmental		\$200,000
Washington	Hwy 170 (Farmington) ROW/Utilities		\$1,605,152
Washington	Rupple Road Construction (Fayetteville)		\$1,545,599
Benton	South Dixieland Extension Construction (Lowell)		\$4,240,000
Benton	E. Main St. Trail Extension (Siloam Springs)	\$118,000	
Benton	Walnut St. Sidewalks (Rogers)	\$228,000	
Washington	Cato Springs Trail Lighting (Fayetteville)	\$320,000	
Benton	Trail System (Gravette)	\$81,041	

NARTS FFY 2019-2022 TIP

A new TIP was developed, adopted and amended in 2018. The FFY 2019-2022 TIP identifies the projects planned and projected from FFY 2019 through FFY 2022 (October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2022). The projects that are contained in the FFY 2019-2022 TIP were selected by and coordinated with local units of government and transit agencies within the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) and with ARDOT and MoDOT. The projects were reviewed for consistency with the NWA 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), responsiveness to local and regional needs, and for the availability of Federal and non-Federal matching funds.

Additionally, this TIP continues MAP-21 and FAST Act overall performance management approach, within which states invest resources in projects that collectively make progress toward national goals. The TIP contains and supports ARDOT's and MoDOT's established performance targets for safety, pavement condition, bridge condition, and travel time reliability. The TIP also contains and supports the MPO-sponsored Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plans for ORT and Razorback Transit, and establishes one region-wide State of Good Repair (SGR) performance target for each transit asset type for the public transit providers in NWA.

Administrative modifications and amendments in 2018:

Administrative Modification #1 – MoDOT requested the modification to correct an error in project numbering.

Administrative Modification #2 – MoDOT requested the modification to correct a clerical error in an AC amount in FY 2021.

Amendment #1 – To include additional FY 2018 and FY 2019 Buses and Bus Facilities Infrastructure Investment Program funding for ORT to replace its administration and operations center in the amount of \$2.9 million federal and \$725,000 local match funding.

Amendment #2 – To incorporate and present the ARDOT and MoDOT established performance targets for safety, pavement condition, bridge condition, and travel time reliability as adopted by RPC/Policy Committee on September 26, 2018 by Resolution #2018-13; and incorporate and present the Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plans' performance targets as adopted by RPC/Policy Committee on September 26, 2018 by Resolution #2018-12.

NARTS FFY 2019-2022 TIP ADOPTION PER NWARPC PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN:

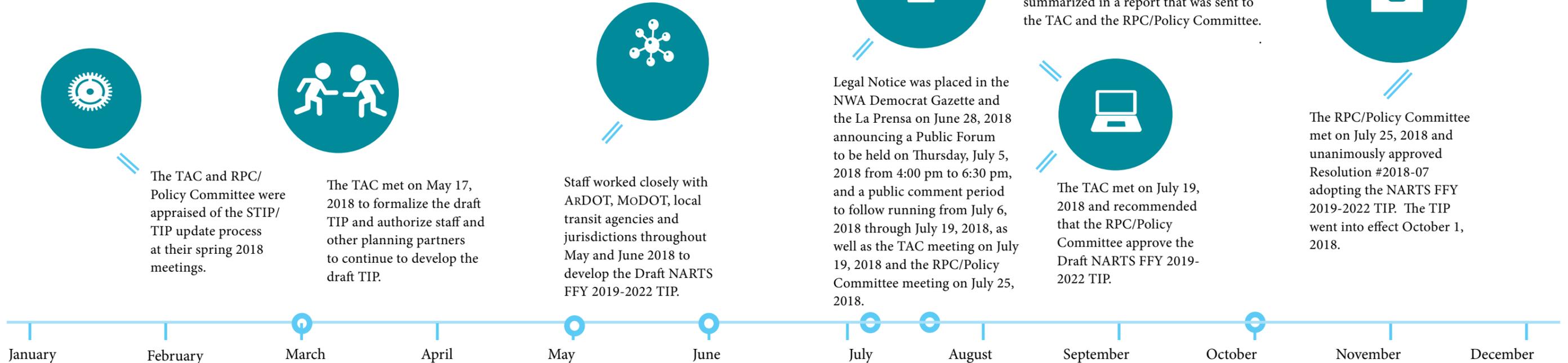


Photo credit: ARDOT

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

TRANSIT AGENCIES SUPPORT



Razorback Transit and Ozark Regional Transit (ORT) work closely together in the Fayetteville area to provide more transit options

The two transit agencies continue to work closely in the Fayetteville area to provide viable transit service for their mutual riders. In 2018, Razorback Transit and ORT began route modifications and allocation of resources in Fayetteville to meet the needs of the riders. In 2018 ORT buses in Fayetteville went to a free fare system and notably the fixed routes were updated and improved. The resulting 43% increase in ridership was significant. There were 22,479 passengers in December 2017 compared to 32,107 in December 2018.

43%

ORT was awarded federal grants in the amounts of \$3.6 million for new buses and \$2.9 million for a new building, totalling \$6.5 million

In April 2018 ORT was granted \$3.6 million to replace several buses that were destroyed in a January 2017 fire. The funds will purchase between 9-12 buses and the public will start seeing the buses sometime in 2019. In addition, ORT was awarded \$2.9 million through Federal Transit Administration Section 5339. The grant funds were earmarked for bus facilities infrastructure investment programs. Plans are in place to seek qualified bidders for construction of a new administrative building and parking renovation. Completion is expected by early 2020.

\$6.5M

The Northwest Arkansas region is interested in talking about better transit. NWARPC is listening to its citizens' ideas

Even though transit ridership has been declining nationwide over the past two years, in our region, there are signs that transit is one of the main topics of interest in terms of transportation. In 2018, ridership for Razorback Transit was 1,645,305 (for FY 2018) and for ORT fixed-route transit ridership reached 255,971. ADA paratransit was 12,896 and Demand Response 8,288. Between the two providers, there were 1,901,276 fixed-route riders on in the transit-provided area. The ongoing Transit Development Plan will sketch out a roadmap for delivering efficient transit in the region for the next 10 years.

1,901,276



Subrecipient Review

NWARPC, as the designated recipient for for the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers AR-MO Urbanized Area Formula Grants apportioned by FTA is also responsible for monitoring compliance with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements for the life of FTA Section 5339-funded projects that are maintained by subrecipients in the MPO area (Ozark Regional Transit and Razorback Transit).

In summer 2018 NWARPC conducted a subrecipient review with the two transit providers with the goal of identifying performance issues and addressing them in a timely manner and ensuring that all technical specifications and contract requirements were met by subrecipients. The final compliance reports were submitted to the two transit agencies in October 2018. There were no deficiencies noted in either report.



NWA Systemwide Origin and Destination Survey

The Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission System Wide Origin and Destination Survey was conducted in March 2018. The survey was completed for regional transit riders in the Northwest Arkansas area on both Ozark Regional Transit (ORT) and Razorback Transit systems. The survey accomplished the following objectives:

- Compilation of statistically accurate information about transit customers' use of transit services for planning purposes.
- Enhancing the NWARPC four-step travel demand forecasting model.
- Providing the understanding of differences in trip characteristics and ridership profiles from previous survey efforts.
- Assisting regional transit agencies in meeting Title VI Civil Rights Requirements and enhance Title VI programs.

The final survey report, completed in July 2018, will inform the Transit Development Plan and the travel demand model. The full report and more information can be found here:

<http://nwarpc.org/transit/transit-agencies-support/>



Connect Northwest Arkansas

Connect Northwest Arkansas is a 10-Year Transit Development Plan (TDP) that will create a "Blueprint" for improving and expanding transit in the Northwest Arkansas region. NWARPC, ORT and Razorback Transit are committed to ensuring this plan connects Northwest Arkansas at the regional and local level and that a robust public engagement process is used to inform the plan.

In December 2018 the NWARPC Selection Committee for the Transit Development Plan selected a qualified consultant to lead and conduct a 10-Year Urban Transit Development Plan for the region. The plan will include an analysis of the fixed route and ADA/demand transit response operations, future fixed route and complimentary ADA/demand response service, fixed route service concepts, ridership forecasting, strategic planning, a benchmarking transit survey, program and policy recommendations, funding analysis and policy, performance measures and targets, and an implementation plan. Extensive public engagement will occur throughout the duration of the project. The final report is expected to be completed by spring 2020. More information about this plan is at this link: <http://nwarpc.org/transit/connect-northwest-arkansas/>

GROWING MOBILITY FOR A GROWING REGION SPEAKER SERIES

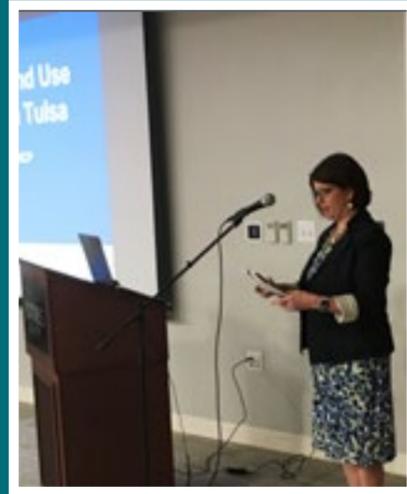
Staff worked with the local transit agencies to complete a Walton Family Foundation-sponsored ten-month, four-part speaker series titled “Growing Mobility in a Growing Region”. The educational series consisted of four large public events – three speaker lectures and one panel discussion with peer transit agencies. The first speaker in the series was Mr. Jarrett Walker, author of *Human Transit: How Clearer Thinking about Public Transit Can Enrich Our Communities and Our Lives*. Mr. Walker spoke on Monday, November 13, 2017. Mr. Walker also conducted a workshop on Tuesday, November 14, 2017. The workshop focused on a hands-on exercise on transit routes design where the participants had the opportunity to design and plan transit routes in a fictional city based on a series of given conditions and scenarios. In 2018, the series continued with three more events. For more information, videos of all the events’ speaker presentations and interviews visit <http://nwarpc.org/transit/mobility-speaker-series/>.



The second speaker in the series was Mr. Jeff Speck, author of “Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step at a Time”. This event took place on January 31, 2018 at the Fayetteville Town Center. Over 180 people attended. Mr. Speck met with a smaller group on February 1, 2018 at Fayetteville City Hall where he gave a short lecture and answered questions. The workshop was attended by 33 people.



The third event featured Joe Milazzo, Executive Director, Regional Transportation Alliance Raleigh-Durham, and Mark Fisher, Chief Policy Officer, Indy Chamber, Indianapolis. The guest speakers’ presentations emphasized the business case for transit. The event was entitled “How and Why the Raleigh-Durham and Indianapolis Business Communities Support Transit” and occurred on Thursday, April 18, 2018 at the NWA Board of Realtors in Lowell, and was attended by over 80 people.



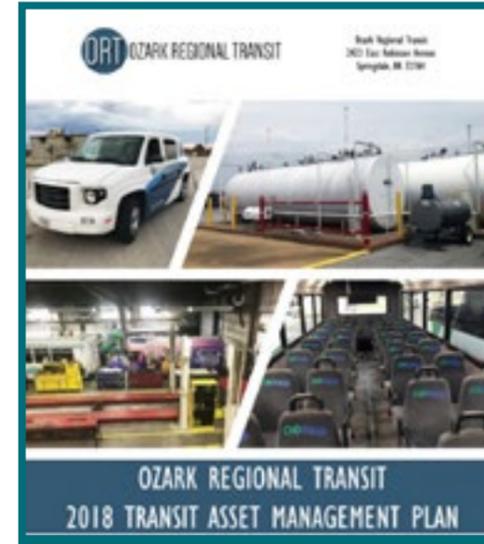
The fourth event: “Our Next-Door Neighbors’ Transit Initiatives” took place on August 8, 2018 at the Jones Center in Springdale. Speakers from Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KC, MO), Mid-America Regional Council (KC, MO), Tulsa Transit (Tulsa, OK), EMBARK Transit (Oklahoma City, OK), and the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (Oklahoma City, OK) joined in a panel discussion of their respective transit systems. Pictured above is Dawn Warrick, City of Tulsa Planning Director.



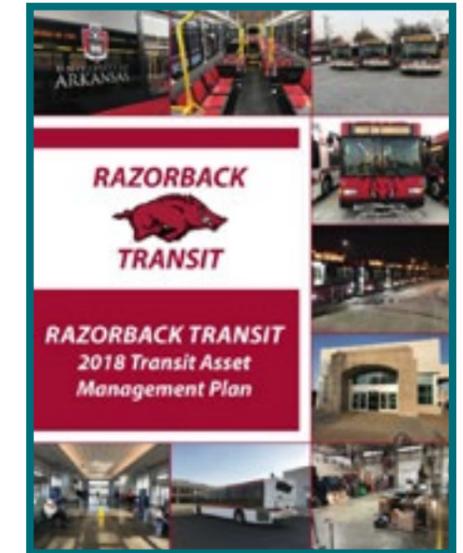
Left: Joe Milazzo, Executive Director, Regional Transportation Alliance Raleigh-Durham, and Mark Fisher, Chief Policy Officer, Indy Chamber, Indianapolis at the third event in the mobility speaker series. Right: Keith, M. Sanders, P.E. Chief Engineer/Project Manager for the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) in Kansas City, MO at the fourth mobility speakers event.



TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN – PHASE II OF THE TDP



On July 26, 2016, the FTA published Final Rule 49 CFR 625.25 for requirements on Transit Asset Management (TAM) that became effective October 1, 2016. TAM is a business model that uses the condition of assets to guide the optimal prioritization of funding at transit properties in order to keep transit networks in a State of Good Repair (SGR). NWARPC, as the Designated Recipient for FTA grant programs and as the MPO, is authorized to sponsor an MPO TAM Plan for the NWA region. Two individual TAM Plans for ORT and Razorback Transit were commissioned in Spring 2018, and completed in September 2018.



On Sept 26, 2018, the RPC/Policy Committee approved Resolution #2018-12 which adopted the MPO sponsored TAM Plans and established one region-wide SGR performance target for each transit asset type for public transit providers in NWA. While each agency has its own individual plan due to differences in services provided and replacement needs, the NWARPC has adopted performance targets that both agencies will seek to meet or exceed. These plans, measures and targets were amended into the NWA 2040 MTP and the FFY 2019-2022 TIP on December 6, 2018 by the RPC/Policy Committee.



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION



Razorback Regional Greenway Extension - Ribbon Cutting Event Blowing Springs, in Bella Vista

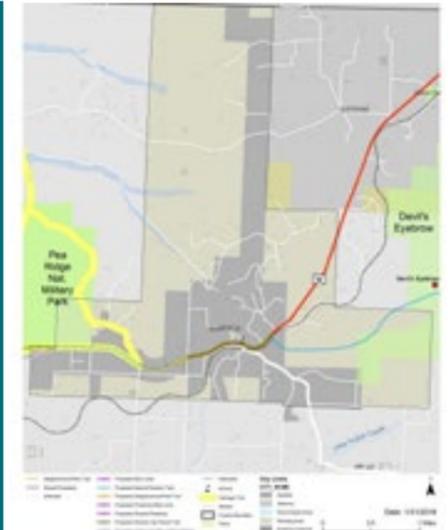
Active transportation, such as walking and bicycling, meets a critical need for safe and convenient travel in Northwest Arkansas. The region is committed to constructing additional miles of trails every year and 2018 was no exception. Including on-street and off-street trails, there are a total of 519 miles of trails in the region.

Type of Trail	2015	2016	2017	2018
Shared Use Paved Trails	45	108	142	154
Shared Roadway	5	14	60	62
Bike Lanes	7	18	20	20
Protected Bike Lanes	1	1	1	4
Neighbourhood Park Trails	9	22	24	26
Soft Surface Trails	55	143	218	253
Total	122	306	465	519

Total miles by type of trail and year

NWA Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan

In 2018 NWARPC continued the vision of a bicycle and pedestrian trail and roadway system to comfortably, safely and efficiently accommodate bicycle and pedestrian transportation. To further that vision, NWARPC partnered with the Walton Family Foundation to update the NWA Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan based upon NACTO Guidelines incorporating a targeted cycling infrastructure network plan that includes protected bike lanes and neighborhood greenway/bicycle boulevard infrastructure to create a strong and cohesive on- and off-street network. Additionally, NWARPC continued to assist communities with a population under 1,000 to develop and adopt Individual Community Action Plans. In 2018, the NWA Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was amended to include two new Individual Community Action Plans, those of the City of Garfield, Arkansas and the Village of Jane, Missouri. The NWA Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan has been, and will continue to be, a guide towards development and implementation of full connectivity of non-motorized transportation throughout NWA.



Garfield Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan Map



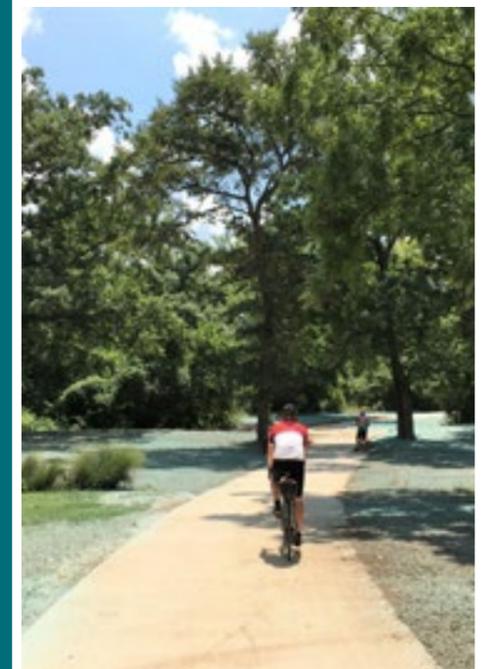
NACTO Training

The Walton Family Foundation has provided grant funding for NWARPC to provide National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide certified training. The NACTO training occurred November 6-8, 2018 with approximately 80 people attending daily. The training focused on key-concepts and practices of bicycle and pedestrian facilities planning and design. The attendees participated in design exercises and were presented information on desktop analysis, alternate alignments, conceptual designs, and data collection techniques. The group also participated in a guided bicycle ride on existing facilities in Springdale.

NWA Razorback Regional Greenway

The Razorback Regional Greenway continues to be an extremely popular attraction for locals and visitors alike. In 2018 improvements were made to the Greenway to enhance enjoyment of the facility. The NWA Trailblazers received several grants to widen, re-route, and extend the Greenway in Rogers, Bentonville, and Bella Vista respectively. A re-route in Village on the Creeks in Rogers dramatically increased the safety of the trail. Other improvements included additional wayfinding signs and thermoplastic mile markers to improve navigability.

NWARPC began conversations with the Adventure Cycling Association to extend the Greenway into Missouri as US Bicycle Route System, #51 (USBR51). The US Bicycle Route System is developing a national network of bicycle routes, and mapping them with the goal of connecting America through a network of numbered interstate bicycle routes. Routes are selected and maintained by state DOTs with input from local entities and organizations. NWARPC recommended the route follow the Razorback Regional Greenway to Bella Vista, then along new trails and Hwy 71B into Missouri. This conversation is ongoing.





New Bike Share Program in Fayetteville

In September 2018 the University of Arkansas launched a much-anticipated bike share system. The City of Fayetteville and the University jointly contracted with the bike share company VeoRide to provide service to the University Campus and the greater Fayetteville community.

The Bike Share system includes 290 customized seven-speed bikes and 150 electric-assist bikes. The University of Arkansas was the first VeoRide market in the country to incorporate electric-assist bikes and has already tripled its fleet of electric-assist bikes to meet demand.

The University of Arkansas Office for Sustainability worked closely with members of UA Transit & Parking in issuing the request for proposals, managing the selection process and negotiating the terms of the final contracts.

Usage determines success for bike share systems - the UA Fayetteville system attracted more than 7,000 riders who tallied more than 30,000 rides in just the first 8 weeks. With continued improvements in technology and operations VeoRide is expected to expand regionally in the coming years.



NWA Heritage Trail Partners

In 2018 the Heritage Trail Partners (HTP) worked with the University of Arkansas, the National Park Service and the Arkansas Chapter Trail of Tears Association (ARTOTA) to get two Trail of Tears interpretive panels installed at a small park on the south side of the University of Arkansas campus. They are in a location where the Benge Detachment camped while passing through Fayetteville, Arkansas.

Also, working with ARTOTA, the City of Fayetteville and the National Park Service, four pedestrian signs were installed on the Tsa La Gi Trail in Fayetteville, a 12-foot paved bicycle and pedestrian trail that connects the popular Razorback Greenway trail to the University of Arkansas Benge site park. Two additional Historical Route highway signs were also installed in south Fayetteville.

Heritage Trail Partners also continued work with the Shiloh Museum and the City of Springdale to protect, preserve, and interpret the Fitzgerald Farmstead property in Springdale. This site is important due to its connections to The Trail of Tears, the Butterfield Overland Mail route, and Civil War troop movements. The Fitzgerald Farmstead is part of a trailhead for the Fitzgerald Mountain trail system and will also be used to provide the public with an increased knowledge of and appreciation for the rich history of Northwest Arkansas.

OPEN SPACE PLAN



Since the adoption of the NWA Open Space Plan in 2016, over 2,000 acres have been conserved by individuals, non-profits, and local and state governments and agencies. In 2018 multiple properties were either donated, put in conservation easements, or purchased.

The list includes:

- In Fayetteville – 220 acres for the Centennial Open Space property (Mountain Ranch) and 65 acres on Kessler Mountain
- In Gentry – 15 acres near the high school
- In Greenland – 45 acres along the West Fork of the White River
- In Springdale – 2 acres for Fitzgerald Station and Trailhead
- In Rogers – 24 acres for the Pinnacle Open Space project, just west of I-49, next to Village on the Creeks

Additionally, the Ozark Off-Road Cyclists contributed 20 acres on Kessler Mountain and the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission partnered with the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission to preserve 128 acres throughout NWA.



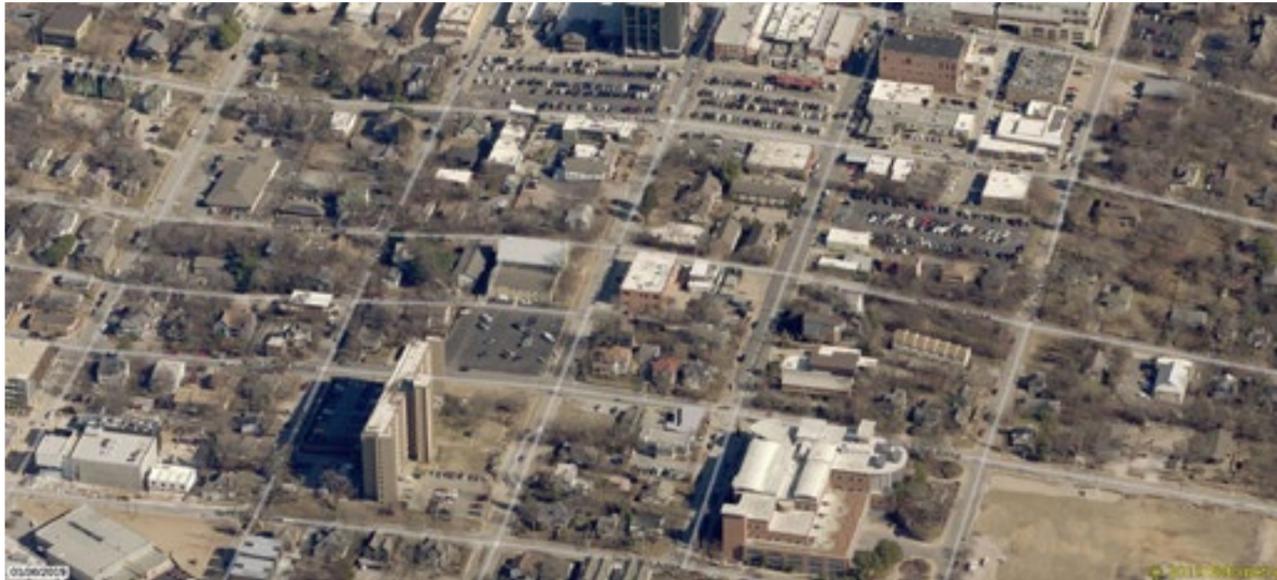
The Fitzgerald house (top) and Fitzgerald station barn

In addition, in 2018, a Conservation Feasibility Study for Benton and Washington Counties was completed that showed the most viable finance mechanisms for open space preservation were capital improvement bonds, sales tax, and property tax. The completed NWA Open Space Plan, with recommendations, options, and alternatives was given to the appropriate decision-makers at the county level, and their decision was not to move forward at this time on a dedicated funding source for open space preservation.

The NWA Open Space Committee continued to meet throughout 2018. In December, it recommended that there be a collaborative effort among individuals and organizations going forward with the NWA Land Trust leading the way, with continuing involvement and support from NWARPC. The RPC/Policy Committee approved the recommendation at their December 5, 2018 meeting.

GIS & MAPPING

NWARPC continues to provide GIS and mapping assistance to its members and develop and publish GIS data and mapping products for the counties and local jurisdictions in the region. It also supports both transit agencies with both data development and publishing and software licensing share. In 2018 NWARPC facilitated acquiring Remix, a transit planning software platform, that both agencies are now using in their day-to-day operations.



Oblique aerial imagery - Fayetteville

Section Corner Restoration Project

In 2018 NWARPC worked with Benton and Washington Counties and the Arkansas State GIS office completing the collection of 40 corner survey control points to enhance the current survey points datasets. The project was part of the state-wide Public Land Survey System corner restoration project and was accomplished by hiring a professional surveyor who collected 20 points in Benton County and 20 points in Washington

County and also filed and submitted the corner restoration certificate to the Arkansas State Surveyor. The data will be used by the counties and others in the region and will also assist the region in quality assurance for future aerial imagery projects. These points will also be used to enhance and improve the quality of the Public Land Survey System in the two counties.



Survey Monument

Aerial Imagery Support

NWARPC continues the support of the two counties for the Benton and Washington aerial photography acquisition projects, as well as making the data available to its members through the subscription to the Pictometry Connect online account. This year marks the continuous support to the imagery collection project for 18 consecutive years. The imagery has been utilized by countless organizations and individuals in the region and has proven to be of great benefit to many users.

Support for the 2020 US Census

In 2018 NWARPC worked with the Chicago office of the US Census Bureau to complete the Local Update of the Census Addresses (LUCA) for nine jurisdictions in Benton and Washington counties. Staff at NWARPC worked with the nine jurisdictions in updating and verifying new addresses within their city limits and also submitted all the changes to the Census Bureau. In addition, in February 2018, NWARPC hosted two free 2020 LUCA training workshops. Both sessions covered the Census Bureau's process for updating the data, review, and submitting the edits. The training sessions were attended by 46 participants.

NWARPC has also responded to the Census Bureau's invitation to participate in the Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP), which enables participants to review and update selected statistical area boundaries for 2020 Census data tabulation following Census Bureau guidelines and criteria. The Census Bureau will use these statistical areas for the annual American Community Survey (ACS) estimates and the Economic Census.



THE NORTHWEST ARKANSAS HOUSING REPORT



NWARPC received a grant from the Walton Family Foundation in early fall 2018 to partner with the UA Center for Business and Economic Research and the consulting firm Enterprise Community Partners, to conduct a housing study within the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers Urbanized Area. The purpose of the study was to assist the region's planning partners to better understand how high performing regions like NWA can plan for and develop housing strategies that can leverage housing with future investments in alternative transportation, education, arts, and open space. NWARPC, the UA Center of Business and Economic Research, and Enterprise Community Partners worked together to provide public outreach and community engagement, data collection, and coordination with NWARPC member jurisdictions and the public.



Regional Housing Report Meeting in Bentonville

The Draft Regional Housing Report was released in December 2018. The final report is due in Spring 2019.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Nineteen Northwest Arkansas cities, Benton and Washington counties, and the University of Arkansas are partnering with the U of A Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service and NWARPC on a regional approach to storm water management. The 15 year partnership creates the Northwest Arkansas Urban Stormwater Education Program and is responsible for the educational components that are required through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. Each year the program lays out a topical emphasis.

In 2018, the emphasis was litter management and prevention to protect water quality. Among the activities to support this emphasis was a new program called "TOSSED" that used collected litter found near waterways to create art sculptures. In its inaugural year, the program had 113 participants and collaborated with regional partners such as Farm Bureau and the Scott Family Amazeum interactive museum.



Art display made of recycled materials at the Scott Family Amazeum interactive museum

The message of litter prevention was also spread through trash cart and dumpster stickers that reminded users to close lids to keep trash from blowing out. Car litter bags were disseminated at staffed educational booths to help people remember not to throw litter from their cars and out of the beds of trucks. The program coordinated with partners on 15 litter clean-ups involving 784 participants which removed over 10,500 lbs. of trash from area waterways.

system showing viewers how floatable pollutants, like litter, make their way from city streets to nearby creeks from the pollutant's view.

The program emphasis topic is in addition to the ongoing efforts of the NWA Urban Stormwater Education Program which include regular compliance group meetings of participating jurisdictions, adult and youth programs, storm drain awareness programs, Low Impact Development education, conferences and workshops, and erosion control for construction sites.

The Pollutant Pathways video series used a GoPro mounted camera that went on a journey through the storm drain



Clean-up Team in Little Flock, AR

FHWA CERTIFICATION REVIEW

Staff from NWARPC, ARDOT, MoDOT, ORT and Razorback Transit met with FHWA and FTA officials on June 19 & 20, 2018 for a Transportation Planning Certification Review of the planning process used by NWARPC. FHWA is required by law to do a planning review of MPOs that are Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). This was NWARPC's second Certification Review, with the initial one taking place in June 2014. A wide range of topics were covered, including transit, agreement and contracts,

the MTP, the TIP, the Public Participation Plan, and performance-based planning. In wrapping up the two-day Certification Review session, the FHWA reviewer indicated that NWARPC would receive a full certification letter after the reviewers completed their report and NWARPC reviewed and commented on the report. The next Certification Review will take place in the summer of 2021.

CIVIL RIGHTS

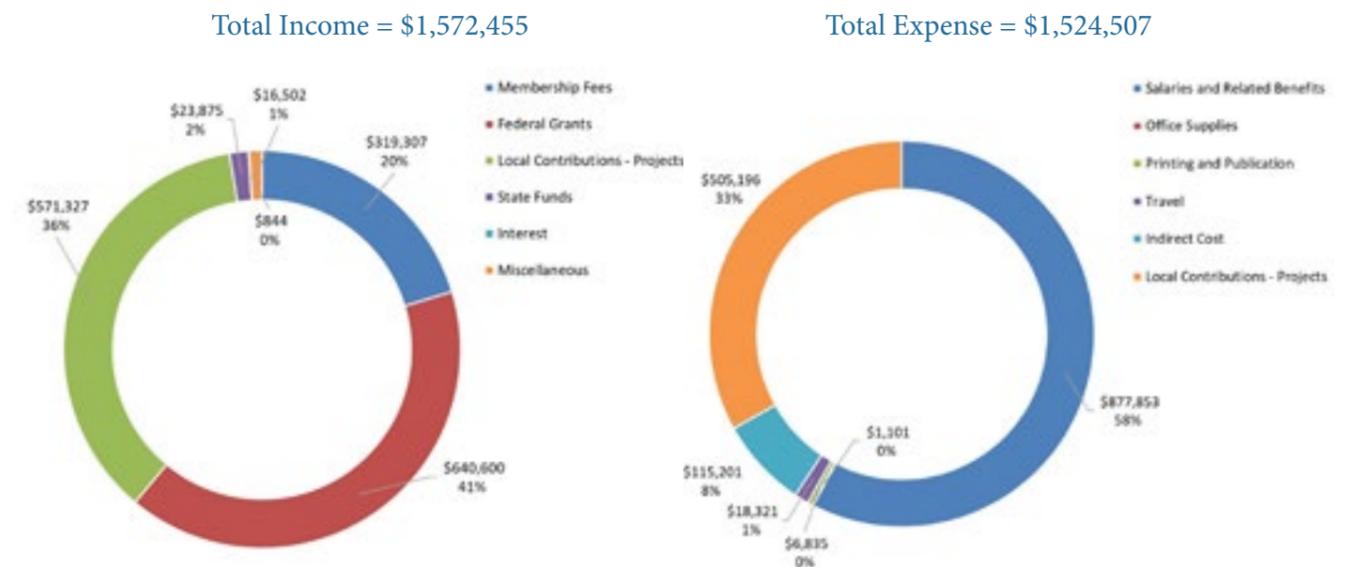
NWARPC complies with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. In January 2017 the FTA-appointed Triennial Reviewer notified NWARPC that its Title VI Program was set to expire in March 2018. In January 2018 staff developed a draft Title VI Program, and asked for comments from FTA, FHWA, MoDOT and ARDOT. A legal notice was published in the Democrat Gazette on January 17, 2018 and the La Prensa Libre on January 18, 2018 announcing a Public Hearing regarding the Draft Title VI Program to be held on Wednesday, January 24, 2018 from noon until 6:00 pm at the

NWARPC office. The public was urged to attend and provide comments. Additionally, notices were posted on the NWARPC web site, and letters were sent to human service agencies and Spanish speaking churches. A Public Comment period ran from January 25, 2018 through February 7, 2018. The RPC/Policy Committee, at its January 24, 2018 meeting, approved the Draft Title VI Program, contingent upon no adverse comments during the public comment period. No comments were received. Staff submitted the 2018 NWARPC Title VI Program into TrAMS on February 7, 2018.

FINANCIAL REPORT

2018 Income and Expenses

The following charts illustrate the income and expenses summary for the Fiscal Year 2018 (July 1 2017 to June 30 2018).



2018 CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

ATTENDED BY STAFF

- GIS for Transportation Symposium - March 19-23 in Little Rock, AR
- ARDOT Transportation Alternatives Program and Recreational Trails Program Training - April 4 in Springdale, AR
- 5 Es Workshops - April 4 in Springdale, AR
- Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism Grant Workshop - April 12 in Springdale, AR
- Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) Conference - May 9-11 in Little Rock, AR
- ESRI User Conference - July 9-13 in San Diego, CA
- Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO)- September 26-28 in San Antonio, TX
- American Planning Association (APA) NWA Chapter Meeting - September 27-28 in Siloam Springs, AR
- Urban Land Institute (ULI) Conference - October 8-12 in Boston, MA
- Southwest Missouri GIS Workshop - November 1 in Carthage, MO
- Arkansas GIS Users Forum & OPENGATE Outreach Partnership Conference - November 2 in Little Rock, AR
- National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Training - November 6-8 in Springdale, AR



NACTO Training Participants in Springdale



ULI Conference NWA Participants Bike Ride in Boston, MA



ARDOT TAP Workshop in Springdale

2018 CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW

NWARPC is the federally designated review agency and Clearinghouse for Washington and Benton County portion of the Fayetteville/Springdale/Rogers, Arkansas, Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The MSA includes the counties of Washington, Benton and Madison County in Arkansas.

The purpose of this designation, which is made pursuant to Executive Order #12372, is to insure that requests for

federal funding are reviewed to determine compatibility with local and regional plans, and that such funding will not be used for duplicative purposes.

In 2018, federal-aid grants with a total value of \$147,316,237 were submitted and were cleared in order to insure that proposed uses were consistent with, and in furtherance of, the goals, objectives and planned development for the MSA.

RECOGNITION

ALAN FORTENBERRY - BEAVER WATER DISTRICT



Alan Fortenberry - Photo credit: Beaver Water District

After a distinguished 28-year career with Beaver Water District (BWD), Alan D. Fortenberry, P.E. is retiring. A resident of Springdale, Fortenberry joined BWD in 1991, as Plant Engineer, and in 2001, he was named CEO. During his tenure with the District, he led the expansion of the District's facilities from 50 MGD to 140 MGD, including the completion of a nationally-recognized raw water intake facility on Beaver Lake, construction of a new solids handling facility, and renovation of the original Joe M. Steele Water Treatment Plant. Additionally, Fortenberry oversaw the development and construction of the current Administration and Water Education Center, on-site at the District's campus, which earned LEED Gold certification from the US Green Building Council.

Over his many years with the District, Mr. Fortenberry led efforts toward, and advocated for, the protection of Beaver Lake and the surrounding watershed. He was involved with the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission representing the Beaver Water District for more than 15 years and was also an active member with many other organizations that bolstered watershed protection goals, including the Beaver Watershed Alliance, Ozarks Water Watch, the Northwest Arkansas Council, Northwest Arkansas Land Trust, the Audubon Society. We thank Mr. Fortenberry for his service and support throughout the years and we wish him a happy retirement.

DICK TRAMMEL - ARKANSAS STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER



Dick Trammel - Photo credit: ARDOT

Dick Trammel ended his 10-year term on the Arkansas State Highway Commission at the end of 2018. In the decade he served on the Commission, Dick Trammel was one of the biggest supporters of transportation projects in Northwest Arkansas. Mr. Trammel worked as a public servant for the citizens of Northwest Arkansas and, among other projects he cheered for, he was one of the biggest supporters of the Bella Vista bypass construction. We are grateful for his service, encouragement and enthusiasm he expressed at every NWARPC/Policy Commission meeting he attended. His cheerful and insightful comments will be missed, along with all his support for NWARPC and its work.

We truly appreciate Mr. Trammel's work on the Arkansas Highway Commission and his efforts to make the lives of the Northwest Arkansas' citizens better, safer and more prosperous. His love for his community will be remembered and appreciated for years to come. We wish him happy retirement and hope to see him around the region for a long time.

NWARPC STAFF

Jeff Hawkins - Executive Director
Tim Conklin, AICP - Assistant Director/NARTS Study Director
Donna Lange - Office Manager
Celia Scott-Silkwood, AICP - Regional Planner
Cristina Scarlet - GIS Coordinator/Travel Demand Modeler
Elizabeth Bowen - Project Manager
Stephanie Shaw - Transportation GIS Analyst
Brandon Ives - IT/GIS Specialist



NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The NWARPC complies with all civil rights provisions of federal statutes and related authorities that prohibit discrimination in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Therefore, the NWARPC does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, age, national origin, religion or disability, in the admission, access to and treatment in NWARPC's programs and activities, as well as the NWARPC's hiring or employment practices. Complaints of alleged discrimination and inquiries regarding the NWARPC's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to Celia Scott-Silkwood, AICP, Regional Planner – EEO/DBE (ADA/504/Title VI Coordinator), 1311 Clayton, Springdale, AR 72762, (479) 751-7125, (Voice/TTY 7-1-1 or 1-800-285-1131); Para llamadas en español, marque el 866-656-1842; para llamadas en inglés, marque el 711 o directamente al 800-285-1131 or the following email address: cscott-silkwood@nwarpc.org. If information is needed in another language, contact Celia Scott-Silkwood. Si necesita información en otro idioma, comuníquese con Celia Scott-Silkwood, 479-751-7125, cuando menos 48 horas antes de la junta. This notice is available from the ADA/504/Title VI Coordinator in large print, on audiotape and in Braille.

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All photos are by NWARPC staff except where noted. Front cover photo by ARDOT.