

RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; *DRAFT*

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)		
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	X	
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	X	
ROGERS	LANCE JOBE JOHN McCURDY SHAWN GRISNDSTAFF	X	
SILAM SPRINGS	MAYOR JUDY NATION ALLAN GILBERT	X	Ben Rhoads
SPRINGDALE	MAYOR DOUG SPROUSE PATSY CHRISTIE JIM ULMER	X X X	
SPRINGTOWN	MAYOR TERRI GLENN		
SULPHUR SPRINGS	MAYOR SHANE WEBER		
TONTITOWN	MAYOR ANGELA RUSSELL	X	Mark Latham
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	Sunny Farmahan
BEAVER H2O DISTRICT	LANE CRIDER	X	
MCDONALD COUNTY	COMMISSIONER BRIAN HALL		
MoDOT	DAVE TAYLOR (BRITNI O'CONNOR)	X	
NAT. AIRPORT AUTH.	AARON BURKES		
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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NWARPC STAFF: Tim Conklin; Nicole Gibbs; Tim Reavis; and Cristina Scarlat

OTHERS: Dennis Birge (Bentonville); Madison Kienzel (Benton County); Nicola Hoofard (Centerton); Ami Murray (Gravette); Holly Wren (Beaver Water District); Adam Waddell (Razorback Transit); Leif Kindberg (IRWP); Katie Teague, Jane Maginot, Kristen Crawley (UADA|CES); Meredith Bergstrom (WFF); Nick Steinke, Eric Fuselier, and Andy Brewer (Olsson); and Elizabeth Bowen.

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 & OCTOBER 25, 2023 RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Nicole Gibbs explained that the approval of the October meeting minutes will be deferred until the next meeting. Judge Moehring asked whether there were any additions or corrections to the August 23, 2023 RPC/Policy Committee Meeting Minutes and hearing none, requested a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

MOTION: Mayor Doug Sprouse made a motion to approve the August 23, 2023 RPC/Policy Committee Meeting Minutes as presented. Lane Crider provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(4) DIRECTOR'S REPORT/CLEARINGHOUSE REPORT

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin summarized the Clearinghouse Report. He said he would make his report quickly as we have a large agenda for today. He thanked ARDOT and David Siskowski and his team for preparing and distributing the Agreements of Understanding and Supplemental Agreements for the \$14 million the Commission awarded in August. He said this is a significant improvement to project development.

Conklin said ARDOT has also provided us with the estimated FFY 2024 federal funding, including STBGP-A, TAP, and CRP, that are apportioned to the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers AR-MO Urban Area, based on the new urban area population. He said the numbers are a 19% increase over the 2023 levels and we anticipate about \$15 million per year that this body awards to our member jurisdictions.

Conklin thanked the Walton Family Foundation (WFF) for the continued support of our Vision Zero Safety Action Plan. He said the WFF provided an additional \$45,000 in supplemental grant funding to match the \$300,000 USDOT SS4A Phase 2 Vision Zero work. He said this grant brings the total non-federal match from the WFF to \$145,000 and requires no local/community dollars to continue this important work for safety in the region. He said by using the SS4A Planning Grant and the WFF local grant, about \$130,000 is freed up in STBGP-A funding that will flow back to our member jurisdictions.

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Conklin said this past week the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced a finalized performance measure for greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). He said State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) will now be required to set GHG targets. He said our continued work with the NWA Energy and Environment Innovation (EEI) Plan, along with our STBGP-A, TAP, and CRP funding programs support this new requirement and has co-benefits related to ground level ozone.

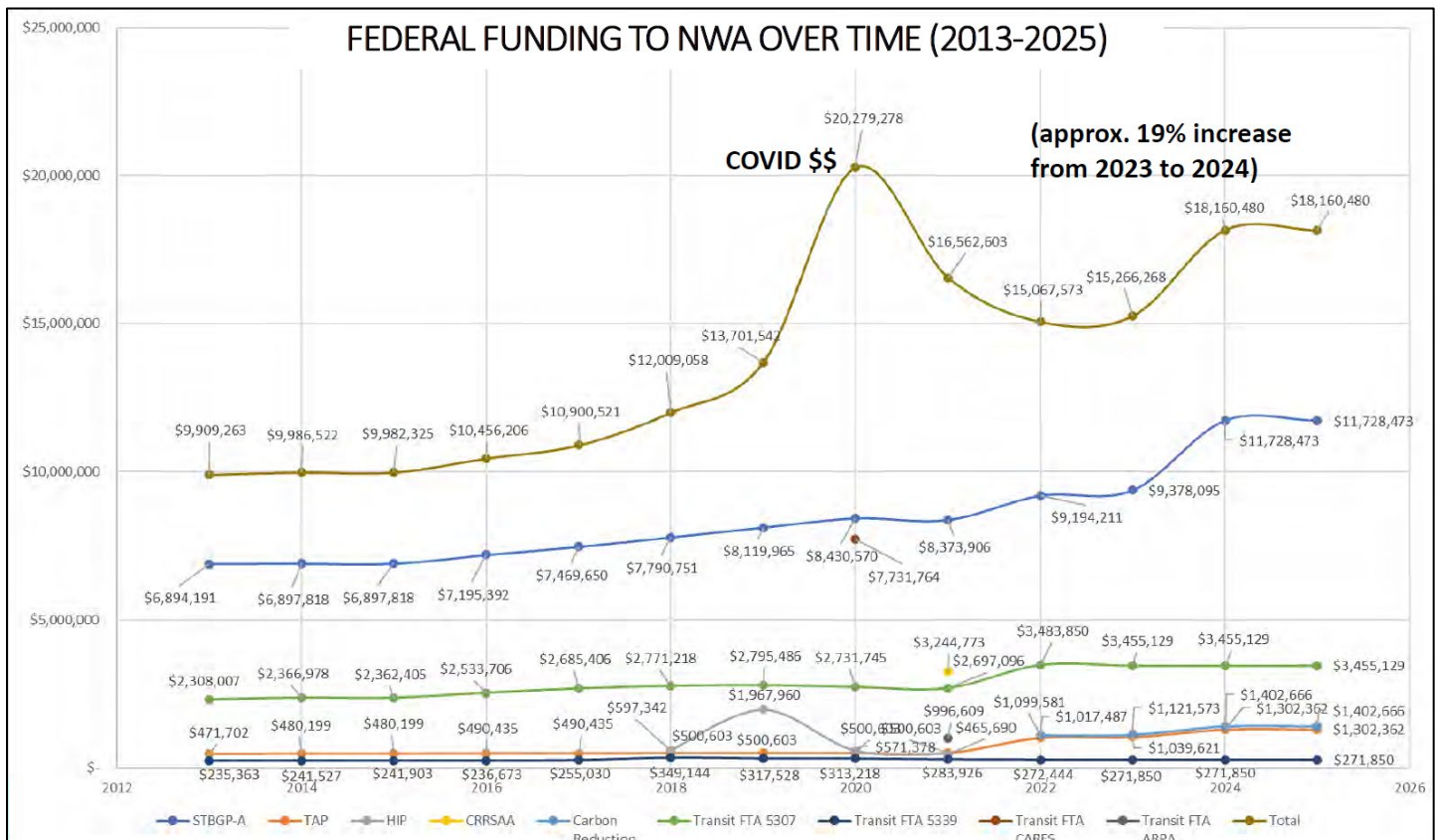
Conklin thanked RPC staff for meeting deadlines and requirements. He said it has been a very busy few months at the Commission. He asked whether there were any questions and there were none.

(5) FFY 2025 FUNDING PROGRAMS TIMELINE & CALL FOR PROJECT AUTHORIZATION

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that we are moving up our funding cycle and are asking the Board to authorize sending out the Call for Projects on January 7, 2024. He summarized the following timeline:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| • Call for Projects (Applications open) | Sunday, January 7, 2024 |
| • Application Deadline (<i>Resolution Required</i>) | Thursday, April 4, 2024 @Midnight |
| • Project Sponsor Presentation to TAC Committee | Thursday, April 18, 2024 |
| • Selection Committee Site Visits/Scoring/Rec | April/May |
| • Selection Committee Recommendation to TAC | Thursday, May 16, 2024 |
| • TAC Recommendation to RPC/Policy | Wednesday, May 22, 2024 |

Conklin showed and summarized the following funding history from 2013 to present:



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Conklin showed and summarized a breakdown of funds that we anticipate coming to the region by program, saying these are all contingent on Congress funding these programs at full levels:

FFY 2025 Estimated Federal Funding (Based on FFY 2024) (100% Obligation Authority)		Additional Not Awarded (2024)	Total Estimated
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program	\$ 11,728,473	\$ 228,473	\$ 11,956,946
Transportation Alternatives Program	\$ 1,302,362	\$ 102,362	\$ 1,404,724
Carbon Reduction Program	\$ 1,402,666	\$ 102,666	\$ 1,505,332
Total (ARDOT FFY2024 Est, 100% Obligation Limitation)	\$ 14,433,501		\$ 14,867,002
Returned STBGP-A/Federal (Now USDOT SS4A Federal)	\$ 129,246		\$ 129,246
Grand Total	\$ 14,562,747		\$ 14,996,248

Conklin asked if there were any questions. The timeline was requested to be distributed and Conklin said we also mail copies of the call for projects to Chief Elected Officials with all this information, as well as emails to the committees.

Chair Judge Moehring asked if there were any questions and hearing none called for a motion to authorize a Call for Projects for FY 2025 NWARPC Funding Programs.

MOTION: Jim Ulmer made a motion to authorize giving notice for a Call for Projects for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2025 NWARPC Funding Programs, including STBGP-A, TAP and CRP. Bridget Russell provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(6) ENHANCING EQUITABLE TRANSIT CONNECTIONS IN NWA PROJECT – RAZORBACK TRANSIT BUS STOP INVENTORY GRANT & MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and 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, which would require a one-to-one match with communities that wish to participate. He said the challenge grant is completely optional and would supplement the AoPP grant.

There was discussion regarding the AoPP and WFF matching grants being for design and environmental clearance only, with the idea that projects would be environmentally cleared and ready to apply for construction dollars down the road. There was discussion regarding the process to select bus stops, using the Bus Stop Enhancement Plans as tools. There was discussion regarding procurement being run through Regional Planning, utilizing one consultant for the whole project. There was discussion regarding whether we will be required to complete the project or be required to pay back federal funds if they are not carried through to construction. Conklin said we will request clarification from FTA on the requirements, but hopefully whatever areas are selected are areas that need improvement and said there will be future opportunities through FTA discretionary

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grants or other funding opportunities to take the project through to construction. He said the project is also about access to the transit stops, including sidewalk connections.

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

A. RESOLUTION #2023-22 – Accepting the Walton Family Foundation Grant for the Razorback Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plan & Matching Grant Program for the Enhancing Equitable Transit Connections in NWA Project

Chair Judge Moehring asked if there were any questions and hearing none called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-22 Accepting the Walton Family Foundation Grant for the Razorback Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plan & Matching Grant Program for the Enhancing Equitable Transit Connections in NWA Project.

MOTION: Gary Smith made a motion to approve Resolution #2023-22 Accepting the Walton Family Foundation Grant for the Razorback Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plan & Matching Grant Program for the Enhancing Equitable Transit Connections in NWA Project. Mark Latham provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(7) COMMUNICATIONS GRANT AUTHORIZATION

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that this is another potential grant for the Commission to help us communicate mobility choice in the region. He said we have many plans adopted and currently being worked on, including the NWA Bike Ped Plan, Connect NWA, NWA Vision Zero Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, and we will be updating our Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2050 MTP). He said the work will help us to bring awareness to transportation issues within our region as we continue planning for one million people by 2050. He said the deliverables include a Public Messaging Guide and a Strategic Communications Plan, as well as tools to incorporate into our federally required NWARPC Public Participation Plan. He said this is a \$165,000 grant from the WFF (100% grant funds, no match required) to assist us over this next year in our communication capacity and provide resources to the agency and to our planning partners. He said we will be using our regular procurement process to select a consultant to work with staff and member jurisdictions to formulate and guide the plan. There was discussion regarding the project including graphics, messaging, multimedia, and multi-language messaging, and the funding being all inclusive of media costs.

A. RESOLUTION #2023-23 – Accepting the Walton Family Foundation Grant for Communications

Chair Judge Moehring asked if there were any questions and hearing none called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-23 Accepting the Walton Family Foundation Grant for Communications.

MOTION: Mayor Doug Sprouse made a motion to approve Resolution #2023-23 Accepting the Walton Family Foundation Grant for Communications. Sunny Farmahan provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(8) METROPOLITAN PLANNING AREA (MPA) BOUNDARY – MCDONALD COUNTY, MO ADJUSTMENTS

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that there is a very small portion of the new 2020 Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO Urban Area Boundary that extended

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beyond our current Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) in McDonald County, Missouri. He said federal law requires that the MPA must include the entire Urban Area Boundary, which has prompted this adjustment. He said he met with the McDonald County Commission and Mayor Sweeten of Pineville to discuss the amendment and they are in support of the changes to include the current city limits of Pineville. He said if this is approved today, we will send it to MoDOT for the Governor's approval.

A. RESOLUTION #2023-24 – Approving the Metropolitan Planning Area for the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO Urbanized Area for MPO Transportation Planning Purposes

Chair Judge Moehring asked if there were any questions and hearing none called for a motion to approve Resolution #2023-24 Approving the Metropolitan Planning Area for the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO Urbanized Area for MPO Transportation Planning Purposes.

MOTION: Sunny Farmahan made a motion to approve Resolution #2023-24 Approving the Metropolitan Planning Area for the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR-MO Urbanized Area for MPO Transportation Planning Purposes. Patsy Christie provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

(9) MS4 STORMWATER COMPLIANCE & EDUCATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW – Presentation by UA Cooperative Extension Service (UACES)

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin introduce Katie Teague from the UA Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Services (UADA|CES) to give an overview of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Stormwater Compliance Program. Conklin said the program has been in place for many years (2003), but we have new members and a general overview would be helpful to understand this partnership that we have all undertaken to ensure we are complying with the EPA requirements and permitting through the state.

Teague gave an overview of the MS4 program, including annual training for employees, tracking, reporting, and resources. She said the MS4 reflects the jurisdictions that are required to manage their stormwater and to have a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit through the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). She said there are 20 MS4s in the region, including 17 cities, the University of Arkansas, and Benton and Washington Counties. She said these MS4s have five-year NPDES permits that allow them to discharge stormwater leaving their jurisdictions.

Teague said the region has pooled resources to contract the UADA|CES to help meet some of the requirements of the NPDES permit, including educational programming. She said NWARPC manages the Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) between all the cities and contracts with UADA|CES for the program, acting as a unifier for communities. She showed and summarized the following:

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20 MS4s

- Permit holders
- Policies
- Construction/post-construction runoff control
- Infrastructure/illicit discharges
- Municipal operations
- Annual reports/audits

NWA Regional Planning Commission

- Unifying regional framework
- Coordinate bi-monthly meetings of *NWA Stormwater Compliance Group*
- Contracts with MS4s and UA Cooperative Extension Service

**UA System Division of Agriculture
Cooperative Extension Service**

- Urban stormwater & pollution prevention outreach campaigns
- Develop and conduct stormwater education programming
- Facilitate public engagement programs
- Annually train MS4 employees
- Annual reports/audits
- DEQ Liaison
- Garner additional funding to support outreach/education efforts



Teague gave additional information on the program.

Teague said a survey went out recently to gauge perception on stormwater and flood management in Northwest Arkansas in partnership with NWARPC, Beaver Watershed Alliance, and the Illinois River Watershed Partnership (IRWP). She said the survey just closed and thanked those who contributed, saying we received great participation. She shared background on the survey saying it was an update to a 2017 survey on the same subject and we look forward to sharing more results with you once the data has been reviewed. She asked whether there were any questions.

Patsy Christie thanked Katie and her team for their work and said they have done an excellent job over the years. She said we probably have the best education program in the state, if not a wider area, because they have worked hard at it for many years. Conklin thanked Katie as well for her work. Katie acknowledged it as a team effort.

Conklin said we have been discussing possibilities for a regional stormwater assessment for some time and this past fall, we pulled together the different stormwater groups in the region to coordinate efforts. He said the group brought up the 2017 survey and decided to update the survey to see how perceptions and attitudes may have changed. He said we will continue to have those discussions with our regional partners and with the Arkansas Natural Resources Division (ANRD).

Chair Judge Moehring asked whether there were any other questions and there were none.

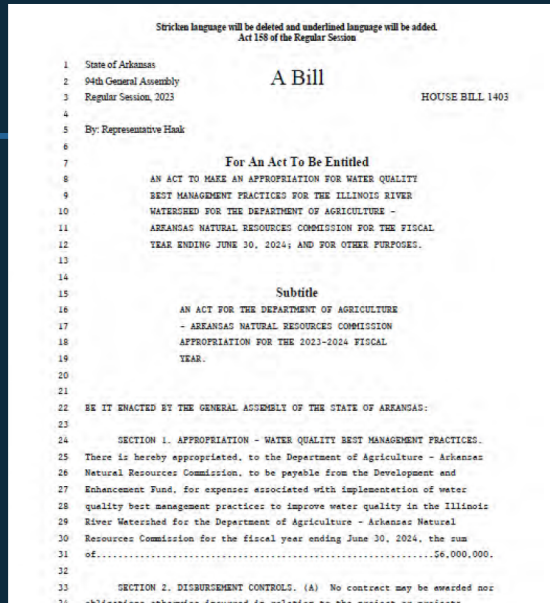
(10) WATER QUALITY BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR THE ILLINOIS RIVER WATERSHED (ACT 158) – Information and Discussion with Illinois River Watershed Partnership (IRWP)

Tim Conklin introduced Leif Kindberg, Executive Director of the Illinois River Watershed Partnership (IRWP) and explained that he asked for a few minutes to share information regarding what was passed in the State Legislature, ACT 158, with the Policy Committee.

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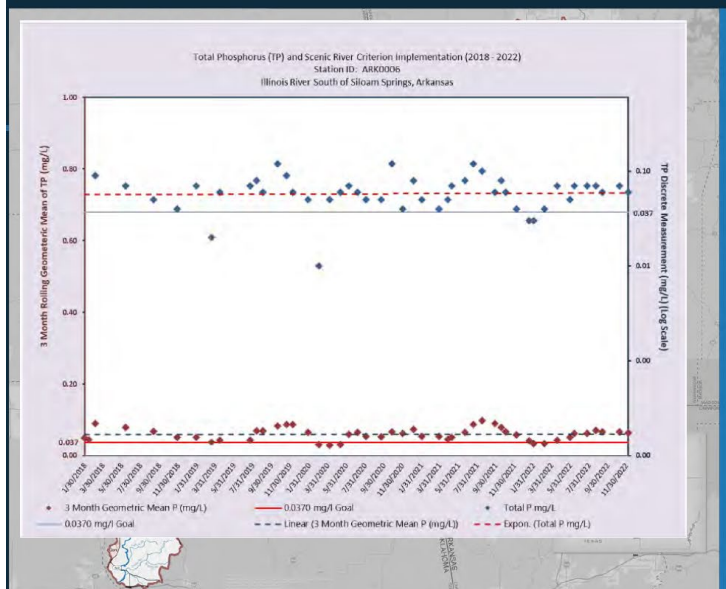
Kindberg thanked everyone for the opportunity to talk with the group. He gave an overview of the IRWP mission and programs. He gave an overview of ACT 158, summarizing and showing the following:

WHAT IS IT?



- Introduced by Representative Haak
- Act 158 - An act to make an appropriation for water quality best management practices for the Illinois river watershed for the Department of Agriculture - Arkansas Natural Resources Commission for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024; and for other purposes.
- \$6 million in water quality best management practices
- Funds go to Department of Agriculture - NRD
- Passed House: 91 yeas, 2 nays, 7 non-voting
- Passed Senate: 35 yeas, 0 nays
- This is an unfunded appropriation

WHY IS IT NEEDED?



- Ongoing litigation in the watershed
- Two ongoing legal disputes over point source nutrient limits
- 1 Million people by 2045
- Ecologically important and karst topography in much of the watershed
- In the process of developing watershed management plans – funding this plan is critical to make substantial progress on water quality
- Each of you is investing in preserving, protecting, or restoring the watershed
 - First major State budget investment in Illinois River water quality

Note: NWA represents 21% of the State's 6.5% sales tax, 18 percent of the population, and ~15k businesses.

Kindberg said this is an unfunded appropriation for a range of water quality best management practices for the watershed for the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (ANRD). He said Representative Haak assembled a letter of support from ten (10) house representatives located

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within the watershed, which has been delivered to the Governor. He said every month hearings are held to appropriate funding. He said he is asking for a letter of support from City Mayors and County Judges requesting the Governor to appropriate these funds. He said he wanted to bring this through Regional Planning because he feels it is the most appropriate venue for the discussion and to get your feedback and to answer any questions.

General support was expressed. There was discussion regarding distributing a copy of ACT 158 and a template support letter. There was discussion about whether individual letters or a group letter would be more efficient or effective. There was discussion regarding the Watershed Management Plan being developed, the funds going toward implementation of the plan, and the difficulty of implementing Watershed Management Plans without being highly coordinated with specific enforcement regulations. There was discussion of other IRWP programs.

Kindberg said he is grateful for the support and will distribute more information soon. Chair Judge Moehring asked whether there were any other questions or comments and there were none.

(11) ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT INNOVATION (EEI) REGIONAL PRIORITY ACTION PLAN MEASURES

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that every state, with the exception of four, received an EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Planning Grant to prepare a Priority Action Plan (PAP) and Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP). He said this work helps to support the plans we have in place and allows our members to be eligible to compete for \$4.6 billion in the EPA CRPG Implementation Grant program. He showed and summarized the following:

11. ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT INNOVATION (EEI) REGIONAL PRIORITY ACTION PLAN (PAP)

- ✓ Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment's Division of Air Quality (DEQ) - \$3 million planning grant through the EPA's Carbon Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG)
- ✓ Create an Arkansas Energy and Environment Innovation Plan to identify key carbon reduction/sequestration strategies across various sectors in the state
- ✓ The Arkansas Energy and Environment Innovation Plan will make state and local governments eligible for CPRG implementation grants, which will likely be due on or around **April 1, 2024** (AWARD ALL FUNDING IN FIRST YEAR)
- ✓ The EPA CPRG program will grant a total of \$4.6 billion nationwide in competitive implementation grants, with individual grants ranging from \$2 million to \$500 million
- ✓ DEQ has approached NWARPC to partner on the **Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers Metropolitan Statistical Area (Benton, Madison, & Washington County)** - Energy & Environment Innovation Plan
- ✓ NWARPC received \$440,000 suballocation to do regional planning for carbon reduction/sequestration – 4-year project



Source: www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/climate-pollution-reduction-grants

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Conklin summarized the following information about the CPRG Implementation Grant:

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.

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Conklin summarized the public outreach completed, including Public Open House meetings, public survey and idea box (in English, Spanish, and Marshallese), social media, and stakeholder meetings.

Conklin summarized the regional Priority Action Plan Measures that were sent to the state on December 1, 2023 and thanked those planning partners who reached out to help us tweak language for the measures. He said the PAP is structured with a broad overall measure for each sector, and more specific sub-measures in an effort to provide wide coverage for potential CPRG Implementation Grant(s). He showed and summarized the following measures:

PRIORITY ACTION PLAN MEASURES

✓ TRANSPORTATION SECTOR

Reduce automobile trips and incentivize more efficient and lower/no emission modes of transportation by:

- Expanding infrastructure such as bicycle facilities, transit stops, sidewalks, and other active transportation supporting infrastructure.
- Developing and implementing low/no emission ridesharing and e-bike programs, with priority given to LIDAC communities.
- Update/adopt building and zoning codes to encourage walkable, bikeable, and transit-oriented development.
- Upgrade vehicle fleets by replacing internal combustion engine vehicles with low/no emission vehicles.
- Incentivize eligible agencies and individual automobile owners to purchase low/no emission vehicles and associated infrastructure, with priority given to LIDAC communities.
- Expand supporting infrastructure for electric vehicles (EVs), including bus fleets.

29%



TRANSPORTATION

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PRIORITY ACTION PLAN MEASURES

✓ WASTE, RECYCLING, & SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS

Develop and implement a waste minimization and management program that reduces carbon emissions by:

- Providing incentives for community composting programs.
- Supporting development of biochar pyrolysis facility.
- Providing incentives for anaerobic digester facilities to be implemented/constructed to divert organic waste that is currently being landfilled and/or land applied into compost and other agricultural and environmentally beneficial products.
- Providing incentives or a voucher system to improve waste management for rural populations.
- Developing a regional Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) with end-market transparency.



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PRIORITY ACTION PLAN MEASURES

✓ CARBON REMOVAL MEASURES

Develop and implement a program(s) to improve or increase carbon sequestration on the landscape through nature-based solutions and natural infrastructure by:

- Planting native tree and plant species that provide optimal carbon sequestration benefits in publicly owned parks, trails, and rights-of-way and on privately owned lands.
- Restoring degraded prairies, forests, riparian buffers, streams, and wetlands in parks, trails, and rights-of-ways and private land.
- Identifying lands with high carbon sequestration value and create programs for the protection and restoration of these lands through fee-simple acquisition and/or conservation easements. Consider co-benefits.
- Developing conservation plans for new parks and recreation areas that include measures to improve or preserve areas with high carbon sequestration value.
- Incentivizing agricultural practices to reduce carbon emissions and create carbon capture.



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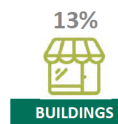


PRIORITY ACTION PLAN MEASURES

✓ BUILDINGS

Develop a residential/commercial energy efficiency and innovation program by:

- Establishing an incentive program for implementation of end-use energy efficiency measures and certified energy-efficient appliances, heating and cooling equipment, and lighting.
- Providing incentives for adoption and implementation of up-to-date building energy codes.
- Developing voluntary programs and policies that promote low and zero-emission options and vehicle charging, with a focus on buildings in rural and LIDAC areas; multi-family residential buildings; and commercial buildings.



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PRIORITY ACTION PLAN MEASURES

✓ ELECTRIC POWER SECTOR

Develop and implement a regional/statewide renewable energy innovation program by:

- Installing renewable energy and energy storage systems on municipal/government facilities.
- Developing distributed and community-scale renewable energy generation and storage, including in LIDAC and rural communities.
- Developing and implementing programs that support smart-grid and/or behind-the-meter technologies.



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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
Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting	November 16, 2023
NWARPC Priority Plan Supplement to ADEE	December 1, 2023
RPC/Policy Committee Meeting	December 6, 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

Conklin said we are trying to understand who is potentially interested in forming a coalition to prepare a CPRG Implementation Grant, due April 1, 2024. He said we have heard from several eligible entities, some of whom have expressed interest in trying to put together a green infrastructure or green network coalition and application for carbon sequestration and active transportation measures. He said there is another potential group forming to discuss an application for the diversion of waste. He said at Regional Planning, we are thinking if we are involved in a coalition, it will be in areas that can implement adopted plans, such as our Open Space Plan and BikePed Plan.

Conklin thanked Olsson for their work within a very tight timeline to prepare the regional PAP for the December 1, 2023 deadline. He asked whether there were any questions. There was discussion regarding the CRPG Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Conklin said the big takeaway with there being between 30-115 total grants nationwide is that you should be thinking about how to form coalitions to best compete against others in the U.S.

There was discussion regarding proposing a meeting to get interested parties together to begin discussing whether they want to move forward with a joint application. Conklin said we were

thinking about getting folks together next week, December 13, 2023, to start the discussion since the application deadline is quickly approaching, April 1, 2024. He asked whether the Board would be okay with staff beginning to facilitate these discussions. There was general agreement expressed.

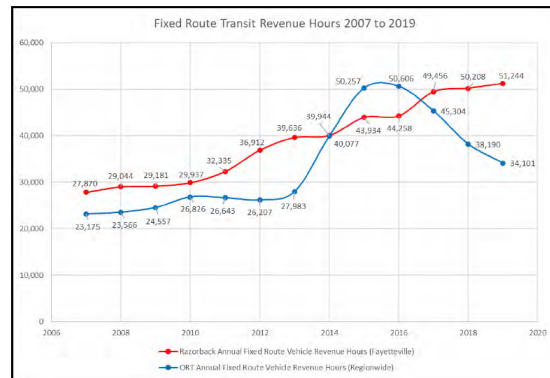
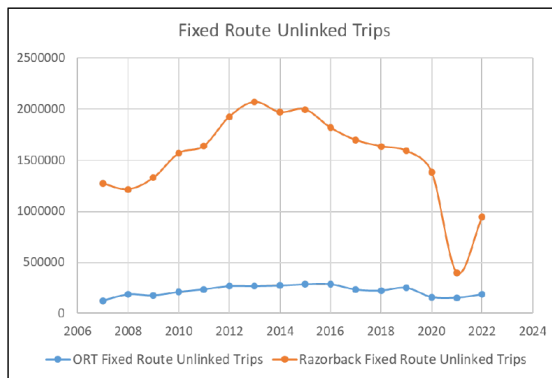
(12) FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) FUNDING DISCUSSION (as requested by Member Cities)

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Reavis explained that the City of Rogers requested to bring the item to the Board to consider Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 suballocated funding and how it is spent in the region. He said they have proposed the federal funding be considered for a regional, intercity, fixed route system. He said NWARPC is the designated recipient of FTA 5307 funding for the region and since 2005, the Board has split the funding 55% to ORT and 45% to Razorback Transit. He said the proposal would be a substantial shift in how the money is currently used in the region. He said prior to staff spending time doing analysis for the proposal, we wanted to bring this for discussion and receive direction from the Board.

Reavis said after the 2020 Census, due to significant population gains, the split was studied through the lens of performance, rather than a regional-system perspective. He shared the following:

Post 2020 Census Review

- After the 2020 Census, NWARPC reviewed the split with the four cities and the two providers.
- Reviewed transit operators' performance.



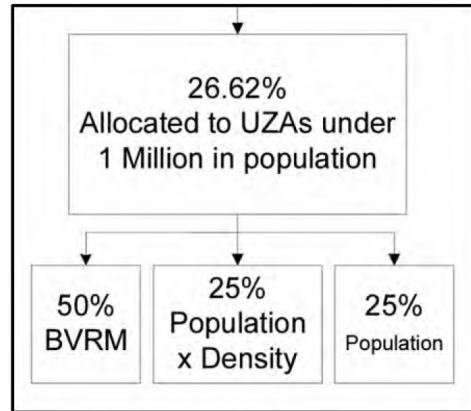
He said in addition, we contacted other regions with multiple transit operators to learn what they do with their federal dollars. He said many high performing regions questioned spending a lot of time on the federal split, which typically represents a small portion of funding compared to the local dollars. He said the FTA uses a formula that includes Urban Area Population and summarized the following:

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION 5307 FUNDING SPLIT

FTA determines the amount of the 5307 funds that flow to NWARPC based on a formula.

The allocation formula to UZA's less than one million people is based on bus **revenue vehicle miles (50%)**, **population (25%)**, and **population x density (25%)**.

2022		
	Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM)	Percent of Region's VRM
ORT	622,643	59.1%
Razorback	430,366	40.9%
Total	1,053,009	100%



55



Reavis said the FTA 5307 funds go further when they are used for capital expenditures rather than operating expenses (80-85% for capital and 50% for operating assistance). Conklin said any change that is made does have a budget impact on local government.

Reavis said regional corridors are identified for consideration in Phase 3 recommendations of the Connect NWA Transit Development Plan (TDP) and makes the case that they are plausible once a strong transit base is derived from the implementation of Phases 1 and 2. Staff feels this plan may need to be amended should the change move forward.

Reavis asked the Board if this is something they want staff to study and consider more in-depth. He said we are thinking about a four-month review with the four cities with transit and transit providers, and potentially bringing a recommendation to TAC and RPC for consideration. Conklin said we also want to make sure the transit agencies and cities with transit have an opportunity to provide their thoughts.

There was discussion regarding the methodology behind the current split; the potential effects on cities' contributions; the Connect NWA Plan and its recommendations; and the study being done initially by an internal working group with cities and transit agencies, acknowledging that the recommendation from the group may be to seek funding to have a more formal study done.

There was general agreement about it being worthwhile to consider criteria and alternate methodologies for the split.

Conklin said we will spend time on this with your staff and bring something back in the spring or early summer for consideration.

(13) PROJECTS AND OTHER UPDATES

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item and Tim Conklin explained that in an interest of time, he will skip though some of these updates and the slides will be provided after the meeting.

RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; *DRAFT*

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

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

Tim Conklin said we anticipate the announcement of SS4A Implementation Grant awards this month. He thanked the Walton Family Foundation again for providing additional local match funds for the \$300,000 FHWA SS4A Planning Grant we were awarded back in January of this year. He said we completed a supplemental agreement with Toole Design Group to carry out what we are now calling Phase 2 of that work, which will include a regional Complete Streets Guide, five individual Community Safety Action Plans, quick-build demonstration projects, and engagement strategies. He said all of this will happen in 2024 and will be presented to TAC in January.

A. Other Grant Opportunity Updates

Conklin said the next round of the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant program has been announced, with the deadline being February 28, 2024 at 11:59PM, ET.

(14) COMMITTEE AND GROUP UPDATES

In the interest of time, Tim Conklin briefly summarized the following:

- **Active Transportation Committee (ACT)**
Last Met: October 19, 2023
Next Meeting Scheduled: January 18, 2023 at 1:30 PM
- **NWA Open Space Coalition**
Last Met: November 29, 2023
- **MS4 Stormwater Compliance Group** (previous agenda item)
Next meeting scheduled: December 20, 2023 @ 10:30 am, in-person(every two months on the third Wednesday)
- **NWA GIS User Group**
Next meeting scheduled: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at 10:30am, virtual

A. Active Transportation Committee (ACT)

B. NWA Open Space Coalition

C. MS4 Stormwater Compliance Group

D. NWA GIS User Group

(15) PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Judge Moehring asked whether there were any comments. No comments were made or received prior to the meeting.

(16) OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Judge Moehring introduced the item.

A. CY 2024 Officer Elections – Re-Elect Current Officers or Form Nominating Committee

Nicole Gibbs explained that our Officers serve one-year terms and can serve up to two terms. She said the current officers served their first term this year and can be re-elected to a second term. The alternative would be to form a nominating committee to discuss a new slate of officers for the calendar year 2024.

MOTION: Mayor Doug Sprouse made a motion to re-elect the current NWARPC Officers to a second term for calendar year 2024. Patsy Christie provided the second. Motion passed unanimously.

RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2023 AT 1:30 PM; *DRAFT*

B. Future Meeting Dates:

Chair Judge Moehring announced upcoming meetings as follows:

- **TAC Meeting** – Thursday, January 18, 2023 @ 10:30 AM
- **RPC/Policy Committee Meeting** – Wednesday, January 24, 2023 @ 1:30 PM

C. ARDOT Public Involvement Meeting – Hwy 102 Improvements (Bentonville) – Thursday, December 14, 2023 @ 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM, Bentonville Community Center, 1101 SW Citizens Cir. Bentonville, AR 72712 www.ardot.gov/publicmeetings

Tim Conklin congratulated Mayor Doug Sprouse for his appointment to the National League of Cities Board of Directors. Others congratulated Mayor Sprouse.

Chair Judge Moehring asked whether there was any other business.

(17) ADJOURN

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:07 p.m.

PASSED AND APPROVED ON THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 2024

Judge Barry Moehring, Chair, NWARPC

ATTEST: _____