

**RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES**  
**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2025 AT 1:30 PM; *DRAFT***

ENTITY	MEMBER	ATTENDING	PROXY
AVOCA	MAYOR ROBERT WHITEHORN		
BELLA VISTA	MAYOR JOHN FLYNN TAYLOR ROBERTSON	X X	
BENTON COUNTY	<b>JUDGE BARRY MOEHRING (TREASURER)</b> JOSH BEAM JAY FRASIER	X X	
BENTONVILLE	MAYOR STEPHANIE ORMAN SHELLI KERR	X X	
CAVE SPRINGS	MAYOR RANDALL NOBLETT		
CENTERTON	<b>MAYOR BILL EDWARDS (VICE CHAIR)</b> LORENE BURNS	X	
DECATUR	MAYOR BOB THARP		
ELKINS	MAYOR TROY REED		
ELM SPRINGS	MAYOR HAROLD DOUTHIT		
FARMINGTON	MAYOR ERNIE PENN		Melissa McCarville
FAYETTEVILLE	MAYOR MOLLY RAWN CHRIS BROWN JONATHAN CURTH	X X X	
GARFIELD	MAYOR GARY L BLACKBURN		
GATEWAY	MAYOR CHERYL TILLMAN		
GENTRY	MAYOR KEVIN JOHNSTON		
GOSHEN	MAYOR RUSSELL STROUD		
GRAVETTE	MAYOR KURT MADDOX		X Ami Murray
GREENLAND	MAYOR JIM RENFROW		
HIGHFILL	CASSIE ELLIOT	X	
HINDSVILLE	MAYOR STEPHANIE CASEY		
HUNTSVILLE	MAYOR TRAVIS DOTSON		
JOHNSON	<b>MAYOR CHRIS KEENEY (SECRETARY)</b>	X	
LINCOLN	MAYOR DOUG HUTCHENS		
LITTLE FLOCK	MAYOR JEFF VAN SICKLER	X	
LOWELL	MAYOR CHRIS MOORE		
PEA RIDGE	MAYOR NATHAN SEE		X Keegan Stanton
PRAIRIE GROVE	MAYOR DAVID FAULK	X	
ROGERS	LANCE JOBE JOHN McCURDY QUNITON HARRIS	X	
SILOAM SPRINGS	MAYOR JUDY NATION CHRISTINA PETRICHES (INTERIM ADMIN.)		X Ben Rhoads
SPRINGDALE	<b>MAYOR DOUG SPROUSE (CHAIR)</b> BEN PETERS 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 BRIDGETT RUSSELL SAM ATA		X
WEST FORK	MAYOR HEITH CAUDLE		
WINSLOW	ANN MALKIE		
ARDOT PLANNING + DISTRICTS	TRAVIS BROOKS JASON HUGHEY (DISTRICT 4)		X Sunny Farmahan
BEAVER H2O DISTRICT	LANE CRIDER	X	
McDONALD COUNTY	COMMISSIONER BRIAN HALL		
MoDOT	AMANDA BARCH (FRANK MILLER)	X	
NAT. AIRPORT AUTH.	AARON BURKES	X	
PINEVILLE, MO	MAYOR GREG SWEETEN		
RAZORBACK TRANSIT	GARY K. SMITH (ADAM WADDELL)		X
U OF A	MIKE OESTEREICHER (DIANE MEEK)	X	
OZARK REG. TRANSIT	JOEL GARDNER (NON-VOTING)	X	
ARDOT TRANSIT	GREG NATION (NON-VOTING)		
HWY COMMISSION	PHILLIP TALDO (NON-VOTING)		

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**NWARPC STAFF:** Tim Conklin, Nicole Gibbs, Tim Reavis, Cristina Scarlat, Luke Aitken, Shimon Beazer, Madison Kienzle, and Stephanie Marpe.

**OTHERS:** Doug Thompson (NWADG), Rob Smith (NWA Council), Aaron Benzing (Hawkins Weir), Dan Weese (Bentonville), Phillip Patterson (ARML), Jared Gulbranson (WSP), Tyse Hipps, Kristifer Paxton (Siloam Springs).

***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 Mayor Doug Sprouse at 1:30p.m. Members attending in person and virtually were welcomed.

**(2) ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

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

**(3) APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2025, RPC/POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Chair Mayor Doug Sprouse asked for any revisions to the September 24th meeting minutes, and none were heard. He requested a motion for approval.

**MOTION: Judge Barry Moehring made a motion to approve the RPC/Policy Committee Meeting Minutes from September 24, 2025. Seconded by Mayor Chris Keeney. Motion carried unanimously.**

**(4) DIRECTOR REPORT & CLEARINGHOUSE REPORT**

Chair Mayor Doug Sprouse introduced the item, and Executive Director Tim Conklin provided his Director's Report. NWARPC is monitoring the government shutdown and Conklin said so far, the Commission has been unaffected and hopeful we will not experience any major disruptions in daily operations due to the shutdown. ARDOT has confirmed that there will not be any federal funds distributed to current grants or reimbursements made to grantees during the shutdown. Conklin mentioned that the NWARPC has been awarded a grant from the Walton Family Foundation for the Razorback Greenway Alliance to fund updates to all wayfinding signage across the 40-mile Greenway as well as conduct a feasibility study for adding lighting to the Greenway corridor. Conklin said that the Highway 112 improvement projects are moving forward, with bids recently opened for the first segment in Fayetteville. Conklin concluded his remarks by providing attendees with the details of the most recent federal aid clearinghouse report.

**(5) REGIONAL WASTEWATER STRATEGY PROJECT UPDATE**

Chair Mayor Doug Sprouse introduced the item and Aaron Benzing of Hawkins-Weir Engineers provided an update on the Regional Wastewater Strategy Project. He stated that the project is eight weeks into its 18-month timeline, with the data collection phase lasting a little longer than anticipated, but the project is otherwise on track. He said the study will last one year, with six months of communicating the study across all partners, gathering feedback and revising based on feedback.

**(6) 2026 ARDOT & MODOT PERFORMANCE TARGETS FOR SAFETY**

Chair Mayor Doug Sprouse introduced the item and Nicole Gibbs introduced the item to support the Arkansas and Missouri Departments of Transportation CY 2026 Safety Performance Targets. She said NWARPC is required to establish annual safety targets by either supporting the statewide targets, including for fatalities, serious injuries, and non-motorized fatalities, or by establishing regional targets. Gibbs stated that NWARPC has historically supported ARDOTs and MODOTs targets, which is what is being proposed today.

**A. RESOLUTION #2025-19 – Supporting the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) and Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Established Performance Targets for Safety**

Chair Mayor Doug Sprouse asked whether there were any questions and hearing none, requested a motion to approve Resolution #2025-19 Supporting the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) and Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Established Performance Targets for Safety.

**MOTION: Jim Ulmer made a motion to approve Resolution #2025-19 Supporting the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) and Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) Established Performance Targets for Safety. Seconded by Mayor Chris Keeney. Motion carried unanimously.**

**(7) RAZORBACK TRANSIT & ORT BUS STOP ENHANCEMENT PLANS ENDORSEMENT**

Mayor Sprouse introduced the item and Tim Reavis presented resolution #2025-20 endorsing both the Razorback Transit and Ozark Regional Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plans. The plans assess existing bus stops, identify improvement priorities, and align with Connect NWA. Recent 2025 grant investments totaled over \$945,000 for bus stop improvements regionwide.

**A. RESOLUTION #2025-20 – Endorsing the Razorback Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plan and the Ozark Regional Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plan**

Chair Mayor Doug Sprouse asked whether there were any questions and hearing none, requested a motion to approve Resolution #2025-20 Endorsing the Razorback Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plan and the Ozark Regional Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plan.

**MOTION: Bridget Russell made a motion to approve Resolution #2025-20 Endorsing the Razorback Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plan and the Ozark Regional Transit Bus Stop Enhancement Plan. Seconded by Lane Crider. Motion carried unanimously.**

**(8) REQUEST FOR ARDOT TO INITIATE AN UPDATE TO THE 2006 I-49 IMPROVEMENT STUDY**

Mayor Sprouse introduced the item, and Tim Conklin presented the item to requesting ARDOT update the 2006 I-49 Improvement Study. He noted that regional traffic volumes now exceed 110,000 ADT, twice the 2006 counts, with projections indicating they may double again by 2050. He said the update would evaluate managed lanes, potential new interchanges, and congestion-mitigation needs through 2050.

**A. RESOLUTION #2025-21 – Requesting that the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) Update the 2006 Interstate 49 Improvement Study**

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Chair Mayor Doug Sprouse called for a motion to approve Resolution #2025-21 Requesting that the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) Update the 2006 Interstate 49 Improvement Study.

**MOTION: Lane Crider made a motion to approve resolution #2025-21 Requesting that the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) Update the 2006 Interstate 49 Improvement Study. Seconded by Jim Ulmer. Motion carried unanimously.**

**(9) PROJECT AND OTHER UPDATES**

**A. NWARPC Funding Programs (STBGP-A/TAP/CRP)**

Nicole Gibbs reviewed funding program obligations, noting that \$24.5 million was obligated in FFY 2025. Nicole also noted that FFY2026 award letters have been sent out and agreements have been received and signed. Nicole also presented a timeline for FFY2027 projects as follows:

- Call for Projects: **Early January 2026**
- Application Deadline: **Early April 2026** (with required City Council/Quorum Court resolutions)
- TAC Presentations: **April 2026**
- Site Visits & Scoring: **April–May 2026**
- TAC & RPC Recommendations: **May 2026**

Staff noted that funding levels for FFY 2027 are dependent upon the Congressional reauthorization process, as IIJA is set to expire on September 30, 2026.

**B. Forward2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Transit Alternatives Study (TAS) and Travel Demand Model (TDM) Updates**

Staff reported significant progress on **Forward 2050**, including continued development of the 2050 Regional Network and refinement of population and development projections. Staff reviewed Forward 2050's six-chapter structure, which includes needs assessment, strategies, funding, impacts, and an implementation framework.

Staff also reviewed upcoming milestones:

- Early November: Stakeholder Meetings #4
- November: Full Draft to TAC
- December: Public Open House events and public comment period
- February–March 2026: Final adoption

Tim Reavis summarized findings from the Transit Alternatives Study (TAS), which evaluated BRT, Light Rail, and Commuter Rail. He said following the analysis, BRT is being proposed as the regionally preferred alternative, with a \$210M capital cost and significantly lower operating costs compared to rail. Meetings this week included ORT and the University of Arkansas to review next steps.

**C. Other Ongoing Project Updates**

Tim Reavis provided an update on the Razorback Greenway Corridor Plan, mentioning that Field Operations was in town in October and completed one-on-one meetings with city stakeholders. Next steps are City Resolutions demonstrating support for Phase Two.

Madison Kienzle shared an update on the CPRG Implementation Grant, mainly that Procurement is underway for the Tri-Region E-Bike Incentive Program implementation with contract negotiations to start soon with the top select consultant.

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**D. Other Grant Opportunity Updates**

Tim Conklin provided an overview of current IJA grant opportunities with open application windows and noted the region's recent success in securing over \$3 million in ARDOT TAP and RTP awards. Awardees included multiple cities receiving funding for trail projects, sidewalks, and tunnels—plus the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission's War Eagle Creek campsite project.

**(10) COMMITTEE AND GROUP UPDATES**

**A. Active Transportation Committee (ACT)**

Luke Aitken stated ACT meets every other first Thursday with the next meeting scheduled virtually on December 4, 2025 at 1:30pm.

**B. NWA Open Space Coalition**

Luke Aitken stated that the NWA Open Space Coalition meets every other second Wednesday with the last meeting being held October 21<sup>st</sup> at Wilson Springs Preserve in Fayetteville and the next meeting happening December 10, 2025 at 11:00 am at the NWARPC office.

**C. MS4 Stormwater Compliance Group**

Tim Conklin said the MS4 Compliance Group met October 15, 2025 and USACE presented on the Illinois River Flood Study PH2. He said the next meeting is scheduled for December 17, 2025 at 10:30am in person at NWARPC's office.

**D. NWA GIS User Group**

Tim Conklin stated that in lieu of the October 14, 2025 meeting, the NWA group members met at the Arkansas GIS Symposium in Eureka Springs. The next meeting will be November 19, 2025 for GIS Day with location and details coming soon.

**(11) PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mayor Doug Sprouse stated that no public comment was received prior to the meeting. He asked whether there were any other public comments in the room to be heard for consideration, and none were heard.

**(12) OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. Future Meeting Dates:**

Chair Sprouse noted upcoming meeting dates:

- **TAC Meeting** – Thursday, November 20, 2025 @ 10:30 AM
- **RPC/Policy Committee Meeting** – Wednesday, December 3, 2025 @ 1:30 PM
- **TAC Meeting** – Thursday, December 18, 2025 @ 10:30am (*TBD may be cancelled*)

**B. Other Dates to Note:**

- CNU Save the Date: May 12-16, 2026, held in NWA
- ARDOT Arkansas Transportation Summit: Oct. 27 –30, 2025, Jonesboro,
- ULI NWA Place Summit: Nov. 12 –14, 2025, Fayetteville, AR

The last note of business presented by Tim Conklin is that the BUILD NOFO Grants applications may be delayed due to the government shutdown.

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**(13) ADJOURN**

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:10 PM.

**PASSED AND APPROVED ON THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_ 2025.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Doug Sprouse, Chair, NWARPC

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_