

# Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission 2012 Annual Report

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**From the Director:**

To the People of Northwest Arkansas:

I am pleased to present the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission Annual Report.

Our organization continues to provide leadership and vision for issues of regional significance, and strives to serve as a model for the cooperative spirit that drives our region's advancement.

Increasingly, quality of life, infrastructure, and development issues are transcending individual political boundaries. As such, it is more important than ever that local governments work together regionally to address the problems and meet the challenges confronting our rapidly growing region. Regional cooperation is key, and the involvement and participation of all is imperative.

The year ahead will be no different than years' past. Our staff will face the challenges posed by the demand for services, and our commission will remain committed to the partnership that defines us as an organization. With continued hard work and diligence, and with the support of our members, we will be better prepared for the future.

Thank you for your participation in, and support of, Commission efforts and initiatives.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Hawkins  
Executive Director

*Jeff Hawkins*

## **About Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission**

The Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (NWARPC) is a regional planning organization that serves local units of government in Benton, Madison and Washington Counties, Arkansas.

The organization is also the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation planning in the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and has recently been designated a Transportation Management Area (TMA).

Since its formation in 1966, NWARPC has been working toward making Northwest Arkansas a more desirable place to live and work. Act 26 of 1955 (which provided for the formation of NWARPC) states as its purpose, "... to make those studies and plans for the metropolitan area or region that will guide the unified development of the area, that will eliminate planning duplication and promote economy and efficiency in the coordinated development of the area and the general welfare and prosperity of its people."

Contents of the 2012 Report are listed below:

- 1. Transportation Management Area Designation for NWARPC**
- 2. The Northwest Arkansas Regional Razorback Greenway**
- 3. Northwest Arkansas Transportation Alternatives Analysis**
- 4. The Heritage Trail Plan**
- 5. Planning, Mapping and GIS Assistance**
- 6. Socio-Economic Data Analysis and Distribution**
- 7. Northwest Arkansas Transit**
- 8. Stormwater Management**
- 9. Congestion Management Process**
- 10. Northwest Arkansas Livability Partners**
- 11. The Northwest Arkansas Regional Mobility Authority**
- 12. NWARPC Awards and Media**

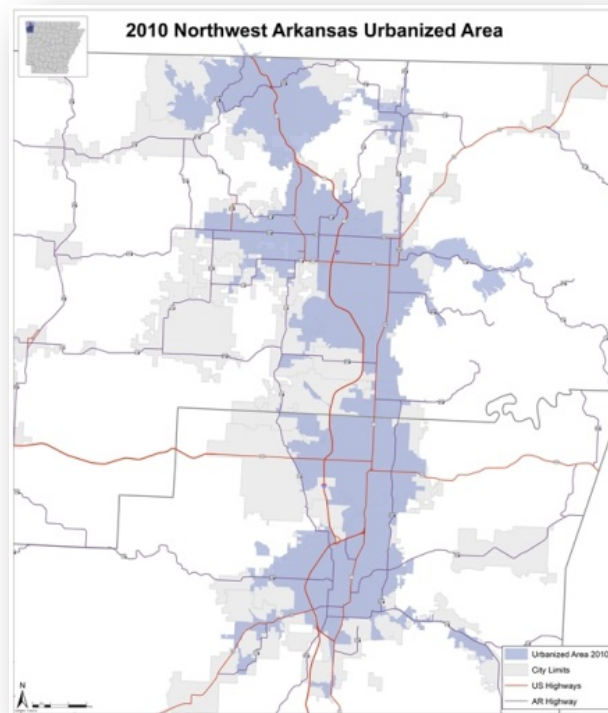
2013 Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission Membership

AVOCA	Tommy O’Dell
BEAVER WATER DISTRICT	Alan Fortenberry
BELLA VISTA	<b>Frank Anderson*</b>
BENTON COUNTY	<b>Bob Clinard*</b>
BENTONVILLE	Bob McCaslin, <b>Shelli Rushing*</b> , Troy Galloway
BETHEL HEIGHTS	<b>Amanda Fenton*</b>
CAVE SPRINGS	Larry Smith
CENTERTON	Bill Edwards
DECATUR	Charles Linam
ELKINS	<b>Bruce Ledford*</b>
ELM SPRINGS	Ben Wall
FARMINGTON	Ernie Penn
FAYETTEVILLE	<b>Lioneld Jordan*</b> , Jeremy Pate, Matthew Petty, Kevin Santos
GARFIELD	Laura Hamilton
GATEWAY	David White
GENTRY	<b>Kevin Johnston*- Treasurer</b>
GOSHEN	Joe Benson
GRAVETTE	Byron Warren
GREENLAND	Bill Groom
HIGHFILL	Stacie Williamson
HINDSVILLE	X Dotson
HUNTSVILLE	Kevin Hatfield
JOHNSON	<b>Buddy Curry*</b>
LINCOLN	Chuck Wood
LITTLE FLOCK	Buddy Blue
LOWELL	<b>Eldon Long*- Vice Chair</b>
PEA RIDGE	<b>Jackie Crabtree*</b>
PRAIRIE GROVE	<b>Sonny Hudson*- Secretary</b>
ROGERS	<b>Greg Hines*</b> , <b>Steve Glass*</b> , Bob Crafton
SILOAM SPRINGS	<b>Ben Rhoads*</b> , John Turner
SPRINGDALE	<b>Doug Sprouse*- Chair</b> , <b>Patsy Christie*</b> , Jim Ulmer
SPRINGTOWN	Paul Lemke
SULPHUR SPRINGS	Bobby Simon
TONTITOWN	Jack Beckford
WASHINGTON COUNTY	<b>Marilyn Edwards*</b> , <b>Juliet Richey*</b> , Shawn Shrum, Dan Short
WEST FORK	<b>Butch Bartholomew*</b>
AHTD	Alan Meadors, Joe Shipman
UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS	Mike Johnson

\* Executive Committee Member

## NWARPC – Transportation Management Area (TMA) Designation

A Transportation Management Area (TMA) is an urbanized area with a population over 200,000 (as determined by the latest decennial census) and therefore designated by the Secretary of Transportation as a TMA.



Based on the 2010 Census, the urbanized area of Northwest Arkansas had a population of **295,083** resulting in NWARPC being designated as the region’s Transportation Management Area (TMA). Some of the new planning responsibilities associated with this designation include:

- Surface Transportation Program-Attributable funding oversight and allocation
- Transportation Alternatives Program funding oversight and allocation
- Establishing a Congestion Management Process
- Establishing a Performance-based Approach to metropolitan transportation planning

NWARPC continues its traditional transportation planning functions of developing the Regional Transportation Plan, approving the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and assisting the cities, counties, and citizens of Northwest Arkansas in their participation in the transportation planning process.

## Northwest Arkansas Razorback Regional Greenway



The **Razorback Regional Greenway** will connect six cities in the region: Bentonville, Rogers, Lowell, Springdale, Johnson and Fayetteville. The TIGER II funded trail project has made significant progress in 2012. The Groundbreaking Ceremony took place on June 12, 2012 in Rogers. The first Ribbon Cutting Event took place on October 26, 2012, also in Rogers.

The Greenway, when completed, will be a 36-mile, primarily off-road, shared use trail that will extend from the Lake Bella Vista Trail in northern Bentonville south to the Frisco Trail in southern Fayetteville.

The trail will link together dozens of popular community destinations including: six downtown areas, three major hospitals, 23 schools, the University of Arkansas campus, corporate headquarters of WalMart, JB Hunt and Tyson Foods, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, shopping areas, historic sites, parks, playgrounds, arts and entertainment venues and residential communities. More information about the Razorback Regional Greenway can be found at: [www.razorbackgreenway.com](http://www.razorbackgreenway.com).



Victor Mendez from the Federal Highway Administration speaking at the Groundbreaking Ceremony in Rogers



Officials from Northwest Arkansas Cities and the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department at the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in Rogers



Razorback Regional Greenway construction

## The Northwest Arkansas Transportation Alternatives Analysis



In 2012, NWARPC started work on a grant funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to carry out a transportation alternatives analysis. The transportation alternatives analysis is the first step in the “New Starts” project development process. This process includes the evaluation of costs, benefits, and impacts of a range of transportation alternatives

designed to address mobility problems and other locally-identified objectives in a defined transportation corridor, and for determining which particular investment strategy should be advanced for more focused study and development.



Train Depots in Rogers and Fayetteville

Alternatives that may be considered include a no-build decision, a Transportation Systems Management (TSM) process, or some type of fixed guideway system. Fixed guideways can include commuter rail, light rail, streetcar, bus rapid transit (BRT), and other fixed guideway systems such as group or personal rapid transit elevated rail. The conclusion of the analysis will include a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA).

### The Heritage Trail Plan



Heritage Trail Partners marker dedication at Pea Ridge National Military Park

**The Heritage Trail Plan** involves a regional network of existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities within Northwest Arkansas primarily utilizing the roadways associated with the historic Butterfield Overland Mail route, and the Trail of Tears and Civil War routes in Benton and Washington Counties.

The Heritage Trail Plan will connect Northwest Arkansas citizens and visitors to the area's rich heritage, recreational and cultural assets, a healthier lifestyle, and to each other. The entire network can be seen, at a minimum, as a bicycle route with improvements along the route providing safety for bicyclists. Within the more populated areas, where pedestrian traffic is anticipated, the improvements will also accommodate safe pedestrian travel.



2012 Trail of Tears Association Conference event  
in Norman, OK

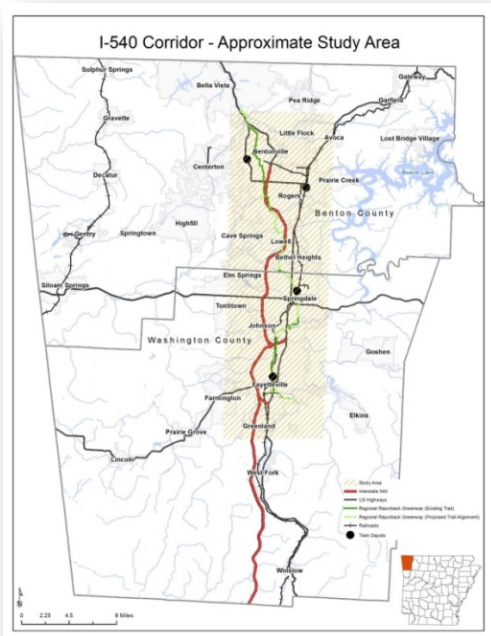
The Butterfield Overland Mail route is a major “backbone” component of the Heritage Trail Plan. In addition, Trail of Tears routes and Civil War routes have been identified on the Heritage Trail Plan. These facilities are marked by unique signage and promoted with an informational brochure. As such, the Heritage Trail system can double as an auto tour guiding

citizens and visitors to the region’s attractions and points of interest. Research is underway to add additional Civil War routes to the Plan. A National Park Service study is also underway to consider the feasibility of designating the Butterfield Overland Mail route as a National Historic Trail.

## Planning, Mapping and GIS Assistance

NWARPC continues to provide technical assistance designed to help member governments with planning and development issues, as well as problem solving on a wide range of other

local governmental affairs. This assistance is particularly important to smaller cities, which have neither the staff, nor the budget to provide these services themselves. It is equally important to other members to have additional professional planning staff available for projects.



Transportation Alternatives Project  
Study Area

During 2012, NWARPC staff assisted many other agencies, organizations, and individuals, including the media, school districts, banks, developers, churches, chambers of commerce, non-profits, boards and commissions. Services involved in the technical assistance program included:

1. Assistance in establishing and implementing the planning process
2. General administrative assistance
3. Researching grants opportunities and preparing grant applications
4. Mapping assistance
5. Special studies
6. Significant planning/land-use development and regulation initiatives for the region
7. Zoning ordinance and subdivision regulation development and updates
8. New and updated comprehensive land use plans
9. Updated Master Street plans
10. Efforts to reconcile territorial jurisdiction and planning area boundary overlaps and inconsistencies
11. Annexation analysis and assistance
12. 2010 Census boundary and annexation surveys and map updates

NWARPC has continued to utilize and upgrade its GIS and cartographic capabilities to better serve its member communities. NWARPC hosted meetings to aid and facilitate coordination in the annual acquisition of aerial imagery in Washington County and Benton Counties, as well as organized meetings with the NWA GIS Users and task force.

NWARPC staff assisted with the 2012 aerial imagery projects resulting in the distribution of valuable data sets to cities, the two counties, AHTD, utility companies, consultants, engineers, and the general public. It also disseminated relevant information that resulted from the Travel Demand Model to city planners, engineers and various other organizations and offices. Staff also assisted consultants with GIS data gathering, distribution and analysis for the various projects NWARPC developed throughout the year. Staff also participated in GIS conferences and workshops.

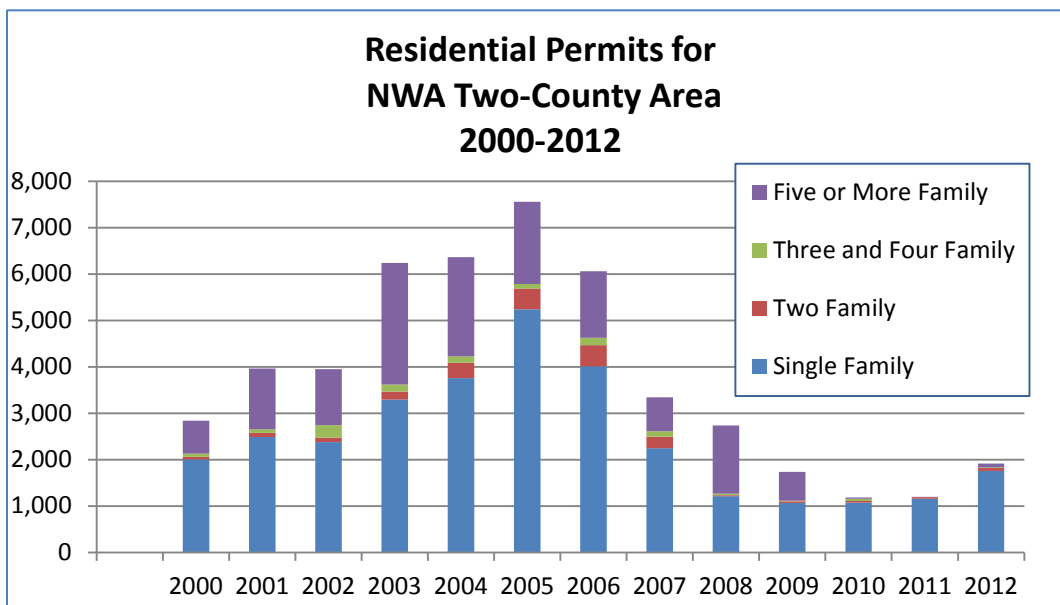


2012 Aerial Oblique Image of the Fayetteville  
Public Library

## Socio-Economic Data Analysis and Distribution

NWARPC surveys jurisdictions in the region in order to gather building permit information on residential, commercial, and industrial construction. This information is published in the **Regional Development Report**. The Regional Development Report features population estimates and projection tables for the region and a single family cost comparison table. The population capacity table uses housing unit information to estimate the current and future population of area cities and the region. The latest version of the population table, which also presents population trend projections, is available online at <http://nwarpc.org/> under Regional Data.

Building permit data is also used to help create a more accurate travel demand model by estimating population in Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZ).



NWARPC continues its work as part of the Census State Data Center network. The Census State Data Center (CSDC) is an established network of 40 Arkansas agencies and organizations working through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Bureau of the Census to improve delivery and use of census and other data to the public. The CSDC houses all Arkansas information provided to the state from the U.S. Census Bureau.

The information is disseminated to government agencies, businesses, and individuals. As part of the Census State Data Center network, NWARPC disseminates information from the U.S. Census, Bureau of Economic Analysis Data, and the United States Economic Census and provides information from the State Data Center including the Arkansas Statistical Abstract, the Arkansas Kids Count Data Book, and Risk Factors for Adolescent Drug and Alcohol Abuse.

## Northwest Arkansas Transit

The Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission works with two transit agencies in the region, **Ozark Regional Transit (ORT)** and the University of Arkansas **Razorback Transit**. Both agencies have a voting seat on the Regional Planning Commission Technical Advisory Committee. The recommendations of the NWA Transit Development Plan are incorporated into the Northwest Arkansas Transportation Plan.

### Ozark Regional Transit

Between October 1, 2011 and September 30, 2012, Ozark Regional Transit, Inc. provided 269,356 fixed route trips and 27,050 paratransit trips for a total of 296,406 passenger trips.



This number was 32,578 passenger trips greater than the previous year. ORT operates 8 fixed routes with 10 buses and 8 paratransit routes in Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers, and Bentonville.

### Razorback Transit

In its latest fiscal year (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012), Razorback Transit provided 1,989,087 passenger trips which was a significant 17.6 percent increase from the previous year's



number of 1,691,450. This passenger trip number included 8,804 paratransit trips to the University of Arkansas and the City of Fayetteville.

Razorback Transit has a fleet of 25 buses and 6 paratransit vans. Razorback Transit operates 19 buses and 4 paratransit vans in peak service on 11 routes. Full transit service is provided from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday during the Fall and Spring University of Arkansas semesters. Saturday service is provided from 7:00 AM to 10:30 PM with 5 buses on 5 routes during the Fall and Spring semesters, as well. Reduced service is provided with 5 buses on 5 routes from 6:00 PM to 10:30 PM Monday through Friday during the Fall and Spring semesters. Summer service is provided from mid-May to mid-August with 5 buses on 5 routes Monday through Friday. Approximately 457,025 passengers or 23% of the total ridership was generated by non-students in FY 2012.

## Stormwater Management

***In 2012 the Northwest Arkansas MS4s included:***

Bentonville  
Bethel Heights  
Elkins  
Elm Springs  
Farmington  
Fayetteville  
Greenland  
Johnson  
Little Flock  
Lowell  
Rogers  
Springdale  
Benton County  
Washington County  
University of Arkansas

### **The Clean Air Act and MS4s**

In 1972, the U.S. Congress passed the Clean Water Act to keep the Nation's water bodies fishable and swimmable. The Environmental Protection Agency issued the "Stormwater Phase II Final Rule" in 1999 [CFR 122.26(b)(15)], in order to protect streams from polluted runoff.

This rule addresses stormwater runoff from "small" Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) within designated urbanized areas, and also, from construction activities disturbing one or more acres of land. The MS4s are under a federal mandate to obtain a NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit and develop a Stormwater Management Program.

As the statewide permitting authority, the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) issued a General Permit to cover stormwater discharges from regulated MS4s in the state. The original General Permit was issued on December 31, 2003, with an effective date of February 1, 2004. This permit expired in February 2009. ADEQ extended that initial 5-year General Permit to cover the MS4s while ADEQ developed a new three-year permit. ADEQ issued a new final General Permit on August 1, 2009. All MS4s in the state are obliged to apply for permit coverage using the Notice of Intent (NOI).

All regulated MS4s permitted under the General Permit are required to develop and implement a Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) to address each of the six Minimum Control Measures that are contained in the federal regulations and the ADEQ General Permit. Additionally, the SWMP must include Best Management Practices (BMPs) for each of the six Minimum Control Measures. The Phase II Rule Minimum Control Measures include:



1. Public Education/Outreach
2. Public Participation/Involvement
3. Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
4. Construction Site Runoff Control
5. Post-Construction Site Runoff Control
6. Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping



Stormwater flooding in Benton County

**New Northwest Arkansas MS4 Boundary**

As a result of the 2010 Census count, the Census Bureau updated the Urbanized Areas nationally using the 2010 Census data. According to this latest Census count, additional jurisdictions in Northwest Arkansas now fall either partially or completely within an Urbanized Area, requiring these communities to obtain coverage for stormwater discharges under the MS4 General Permit. The General Permit requires these new MS4s to submit an application for coverage within 180 days of notification from ADEQ.

The six new communities, notified by letter from ADEQ in November 2012, that are now considered MS4s include Bella Vista, Cave Springs, Prairie Grove, Centerton, Pea Ridge, and Tontitown.

**Urbanized area population of the 21 Jurisdictions in Northwest Arkansas in the 2010 US Census**

Jurisdiction	Urbanized Area Population	% Urbanized Area Population
Bella Vista	22,841	7.74%
Benton County	5,339	1.81%
Bentonville	33,801	11.45%
Bethel Heights	2,359	0.80%
Cave Springs	969	0.33%
Centerton	9,135	3.10%
Elkins	1,991	0.67%
Elm Springs	973	0.33%
Farmington	4,964	0.68%
Fayetteville	65,457	22.18%
Greenland	721	0.24%
Johnson	3,123	1.06%
Little Flock	1,742	0.59%
Lowell	6,574	2.23%
Pea Ridge	4,298	1.46%

Prairie Grove	69	0.02%
Rogers	54,897	18.60%
Springdale	68,088	23.07%
Tontitown	71	0.02%
U of A	5,801	1.97%
Washington County	1,868	0.63%

### Stormwater Education Program



Jane Maginot conducts a stormwater runoff pollution prevention education program for 5th graders at T.G. Smith Elementary in Springdale

NWARPC coordinated several meetings in 2003 and 2004 in an effort to determine whether certain Permit components could be addressed collectively, rather than by each jurisdiction individually. It was determined that a cost effective, regional approach to several of the six Minimum Control Measures was appropriate.

Through a Memorandum of Understanding involving each MS4, the NWARPC entered into a contract with the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service (UACES) to implement three of the Minimum Control Measures: 1) Public Education/Outreach, 2) Public Involvement/Participation, and

#### 6) Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping.

The NWARPC and UACES renewed the Memorandum of Agreement to run through December 2012. The NWARPC and the individual MS4 jurisdictions complete a new Memorandum of Understanding each year, to receive the services of UACES for the Stormwater Education Program.

The most recent Memorandum of Understanding covered the 2012 calendar year.



Sediment and erosion BMP education at a pre-construction meeting

The UACES has done an excellent job of increasing the public’s awareness of stormwater runoff, including development of stormwater fact sheets, brochures, posters and displays,



Stormwater flooding in Benton County

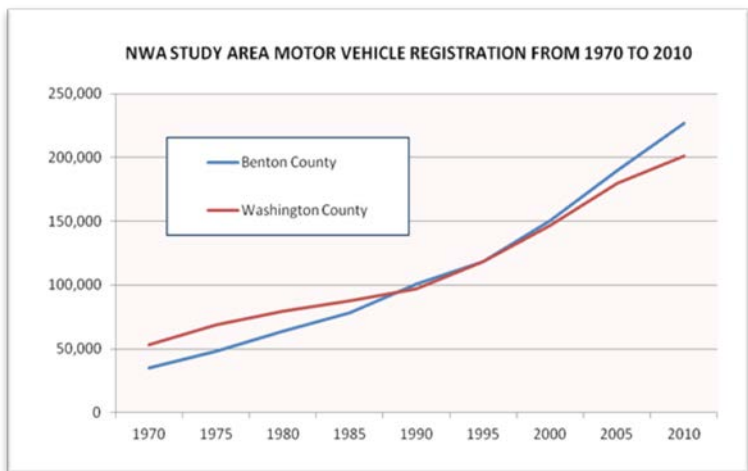
numerous staff displays at local fairs and festivals, mass media promotion, including newspaper columns and stormwater information included in utility bills, partnering with other groups for TV spots, and conducting workshops and conferences for the public, developers, contractors, municipal employees, and government officials.

The MS4 Representatives Group continues to be an excellent model for other MS4s in Arkansas, as well as the nation. The NWARPC will continue with the work of assisting the NWA MS4s, as well as others, in the development of their stormwater management programs and meeting the EPA Phase II requirements.

The MS4 Representatives Group continues to be an excellent model for other MS4s in

## Congestion Management Process

As Northwest Arkansas continues to experience population and automobile growth, traffic congestion remains an important concern to the NWARPC. In 2012 the NWARPC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) established a subcommittee to carry out the development of a regional Congestion Management Process (CMP). A CMP is a systematic and regionally accepted approach for managing congestion that provides up-to-date information on transportation system performance and assesses alternative strategies for congestion management that meet state and local needs.



The CMP is a federal requirement for all MPOs that have an urbanized area population over 200,000.

The CMP follows an eight-step process that includes:

1. Develop Congestion Management Objectives
2. Identify Area of Application
3. Define System or Network of Interest
4. Develop Performance Measures
5. Institute System Performance Monitoring Plan
6. Identify and Evaluate Strategies
7. Implement Selected Strategies and Manage Transportation System
8. Monitor Strategy Effectiveness



In 2012 the CMP Committee addressed steps 1 to 4 of the outlined steps and will continue developing the CMP in 2013.

## **The Northwest Arkansas Regional Mobility Authority**

- established on September 15, 2008

Act 389 of 2007, as amended, allows a region to establish a Regional Mobility Authority (RMA) to help address transportation needs throughout the region.

A RMA may:

- Build, operate, maintain, expand, fund or own transportation projects
- Enter into typical study, design, engineering and construction contracts
- Acquire property through eminent domain – strictly limited to public purposes
- Issue revenue bonds backed by tolls, charges, or fees
- Receive earmarks and grants

Authorized funding sources for RMA projects include:

- County and/or city sales taxes, which can then be levied and bonded on behalf of the RMA – must be approved by voters
- Motor vehicle registration fees – must be approved by voters
- Tolls – must be approved by voters
- Turnback funds – from member cities and counties

**The following are 2012 members of the Northwest Arkansas RMA:**

**Chair Mayor Bob McCaslin,** Bentonville  
**Vice Chair Mayor Doug Sprouse,** Springdale  
**Sec/Treasurer Mayor Sonny Hudson,** Prairie Grove  
**Judge Bob Clinard,** Benton County  
**Judge Marilyn Edwards,** Washington County  
**Mayor Frank Anderson,** Bella Vista  
**Mayor Bill Edwards,** Centerton  
**Mayor Ernie Penn,** Farmington  
**Mayor Lioneld Jordan,** Fayetteville  
**Mayor Kevin Johnston,** Gentry  
**Mayor Rob Hulse,** Lincoln  
**Mayor Eldon Long,** Lowell  
**Mayor Jackie Crabtree,** Pea Ridge  
**Mayor Greg Hines,** Rogers  
**ML Van Poucke,** Siloam Springs  
**David Jones,** West Fork

- State funding – from AHTD or Legislature
- Bus and parking fares.
- Federal earmarks.  
Projects chosen by an RMA must demonstrate consistency of planning:
- An RMA may develop funding plans for transportation projects.
- The plans shall be consistent with state implementation plans, statewide transportation improvement programs if federal aid funds are involved, statewide long-range plans, city and county master street plans, and metropolitan transportation plans in metropolitan areas. The 2035 Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Plan, adopted April 7, 2011 is the region’s metropolitan transportation plan, and all projects the Northwest Arkansas RMA chooses to support must be listed in the 2035 Plan.
- An RMA shall not interfere with the responsibility and authority of a metropolitan planning organization to perform transportation systems planning.
- An RMA shall not interfere with the responsibility and authority of AHTD and the Highway Commission to perform transportation systems planning. Under the state law that allows the establishment of RMAs, it is set forth that the Board of Directors shall be made up of the County Judges (or their designees) and the Mayors (or their designees) of all Cities of the First Class who pass an ordinance to join the RMA.

The Regional Planning Commission is functioning as the staff for the Northwest Arkansas RMA. The meetings of the Northwest Arkansas RMA Board of Directors are held in the conference room at the NWARPC. All meetings are open to the public and provide a time for public comment. The Board of Directors met on January 31, 2012.

### **Northwest Arkansas Livability Partners**

In the fall of 2011, NWARPC created an informal network of people and organizations that want to help create a region based on the six “Livability Principles” as set forth by the HUD-EPA-DOT Partnership for Sustainable Communities. These principles include:

- Provide more transportation choices
- Promote equitable, affordable housing
- Enhance economic competitiveness
- Support existing communities
- Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment.
- Value communities and neighborhoods



Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville

In 2012 staff formed a Steering Committee of partner volunteers to help provide direction and keep track of potential sustainability grants. The Steering Committee helped establish a website that contains useful grant information as well as a means of sharing relevant events and activities in Northwest Arkansas. The website is located at [www.nwalivabilitypartners.org](http://www.nwalivabilitypartners.org).

The Livability Partners members and NWARPC staff were involved in activities including attending webinars on sustainability grants hosted by the University of Arkansas Applied Sustainability Center and assisting with planning for the Sustainable Communities Leadership Conference also hosted by the Applied Sustainability Center.

## NWARPC Awards and Media



The Northwest Arkansas Business Journal awarded NWARPC the “Collaboration Award” at the Journal’s yearly award ceremony for the Razorback Regional Greenway Project



Chuck Flink, President of Alta/Greenways accepts a 2012 Golden Paddle from Congressman Steve Womack, 3<sup>rd</sup> District U.S. House of Representatives as the Razorback Regional Greenway is recognized for Environmental Stewardship by the Illinois River Watershed Association

# Regional Planners Get Input

RESIDENTS GIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES

**By Ron Wood**  
RWOOD@NWAONLINE.COM

**8/1/2012**

A couple dozen Northwest Arkansas residents were on hand Tuesday to give regional planners their thoughts about transportation priorities for the next four years.

Isma Pollock of Fayetteville dropped in to share her concerns and thoughts about alternative forms of transportation, including public transit, trails, sidewalks, bike lanes and shuttles.

"I think it's important to a region to support ways to get people out of their cars more," said Pollock, who moved to Fayetteville from Chicago. "We have to be careful about putting all our money in highways. There are more options than cars."

Pollock said she doesn't expect the region to immediately develop a public transit system like the one in Chicago, where she didn't own a car.

"I really care a lot about developing a transportation plan," Pollock said. "I think we could do better than we have."

**AT A GLANCE**  
**BIDS OPENED FOR LOCAL PROJECTS**

The Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department recently opened bids for two projects in Benton and Washington counties. About 17 miles of Arkansas 102 is being widened in Benton County. The \$6.6 million project is part of overall improvements to the highway. The project will include widening from two to three lanes, new curbs and gutters and sidewalks. Two culverts will be replaced. Low bidder was APC-Central of Fayetteville. Construction could start in two to four weeks. Completion is expected in spring 2015.

Washington County 78, south of Goshen, will be resurfaced at a cost of \$151,478. Construction is expected to start in two to four weeks. Completion is expected in late summer.

**SOURCE: HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**

The Northwest Arkansas Regional Transportation Study public forum in Springdale was required to get input on the region's draft fiscal 2013-16 Transportation Improvement Program.

The draft program includes all federally funded transportation and transit projects in the two counties.

"If it's not on that list, it won't qualify for federal funding," said Jeff Hawkins, executive director of the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission. "That is the listing of priority projects for which federal funds will be used. Transit, highways, all modes of transportation are in there. We've got a lot of needs and some of them are big ones."

Some projects are new. Others, such as an access road to the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport, improvements to Interstate 540, a U.S. 412 bypass around Springdale and the Bella Vista bypass have been in development for years, Hawkins said.

Projects on the list include a bypass in Fayetteville to get traffic from U.S. 71B to I-540;

a couple of bridges in Elkins; the Prairie Grove bypass; widening Ditzel Road on Rogers; the I-540 interchange at Don Tyson Expressway in Springdale; the eastern north-south corridor along Arkansas 265; widening U.S. 62 near Avoca and Garfield; Cherry Street Improvements in Siloam Springs; and Maple and Lafayette Street bridges in Fayetteville. Altogether, 32 projects are on the list.

"Being responsible for planning is serious. We value the input of the public," Hawkins said. "Who better knows the issues and the needs than the traveling public?"

A public comment period begins today and runs through Aug. 14.

The documents are posted at [nwarpc.org](http://nwarpc.org) and available for review at the regional planning commission office. Copies can be mailed upon request. Written comments are encouraged.

Residents are encouraged to view the transportation program document and corresponding map as well as ask questions and submit comments to regional planning staff members.

ARLWATIMES 7/20/2012

## Regional Planners Divvy Transportation Money

**By Ron Wood**  
RWOOD@NWAONLINE.COM

**SPRINGDALE** — Regional planners are looking to pare a wish list of projects for a new pot of 2013 federal transportation money.

Cities and counties submitted requests for \$72 million in federal money available to the region. The money will be available for the first time because the urbanized area of Northwest Arkansas reached 200,000 population.

The region is now designated as a transportation management area and local officials will determine how the federal money will be spent.

"The bottom line is we have two or three times more projects than we have money for," said Patsy Christie, Springdale planning director and chairwoman of a regional planning committee studying the issue. "We need to rank the projects."

The Surface Transportation Program provides flexible money that may be used by states and localities for projects on any road eligible for federal highway money. Projects can include roads, bridges, transit projects and facilities.

Ranking the projects will begin in earnest at a July 31 work session. Several entities named the most sought-after projects on their lists Thursday.

Springdale officials would like money for the proposed Don Tyson Parkway and Interstate 540 interchanges. Benton County officials want to replace the Fisher Field bridge.

Fayetteville wants money for improvements to Garland Avenue on the University of Arkansas campus to extend Ruggie Road, and to extend Joyce Boulevard to an interchange with I-540.

Rogers officials would like money for two trail heads, Mercy and Baptist Church, and improvements to 28th Place.

Lovell officials want to improve McClure Avenue and do engineering work at the Maize Avenue and I-540 interchange.

Cave Springs officials want to improve Oak Creek Drive.

Razorback Transit and Ozark Regional Transit officials want to replace buses.

**SEE MONEY PAGE 2A**

## MONEY: Planners To Rank Projects

**COMMONLY REQUESTED IN AREA: 7/20/2012**

get this money where we'll see the most impact."

Christie urged the group to look closely at north-south and east-west corridor projects aimed at relieving traffic congestion.

The Surface Transportation Program provides flexible money that may be used by states and localities for projects on any road eligible for federal highway money. Projects can include roads, bridges, transit projects and facilities.

Ranking the projects will begin in earnest at a July 31 work session. Several entities named the most sought-after projects on their lists Thursday.

Springdale officials would like money for the proposed Don Tyson Parkway and Interstate 540 interchanges. Benton County officials want to replace the Fisher Field bridge.

Fayetteville wants money for improvements to Garland Avenue on the University of Arkansas campus to extend Ruggie Road, and to extend Joyce Boulevard to an interchange with I-540.

Rogers officials would like money for two trail heads, Mercy and Baptist Church, and improvements to 28th Place.

Lovell officials want to improve McClure Avenue and do engineering work at the Maize Avenue and I-540 interchange.

Cave Springs officials want to improve Oak Creek Drive.

Razorback Transit and Ozark Regional Transit officials want to replace buses.

# Greenway Support Evolves

TRAIL WILL CONNECT CITIES WITH PATH FOR PEDESTRIANS

**By Ron Wood**  
RWOOD@NWAONLINE.COM

**SPRINGDALE** — Interest has turned from curiosity and skepticism to heavy public support for the Northwest Arkansas Razorback Greenway trail project.

"I've turned 180 degrees on it. I used to poo-poo it," William Kimbrough, a Fayetteville resident, said Wednesday during an open house and workshop aimed at updating the public on the project.

What changed Kimbrough into an avid supporter of trails was seeing how many people, including his fellow baby boomers, are using the existing parts of the trail system in Fayetteville. Kimbrough figures things can only get better as the central spine connecting the cities' individual trails is completed.

"It really is unique," Kimbrough said. "Tying this thing together will be a big draw for



STAFF PHOTO ANDY SHUP

Kent Hirsch, left, president of the Downtown Springdale Alliance and chairman of Historic Springdale, looks over plans for a section of the Northwest Arkansas Razorback Greenway on Wednesday with Patsy Christie, planning director for Springdale, Jessi McQueen, project engineer, and Josh Beem, civil engineer, both with USI Consulting Engineers.

Northwest Arkansas. "The trail will connect Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers and Bentonville with a path for pedestrians and bicyclists. The 36-mile trail will be 12 feet wide and paved with asphalt or concrete.

Kimbrough was one of about 40 people who

input. Participants were encouraged to ask questions, share ideas, write and draw on maps and learn about opportunities to stay involved.

Volva Grigg was on hand to keep track of the project, which runs past her Springdale home. Grigg was initially concerned some of her property would be taken for right-of-way but that has not been the case. Grigg suggested the trail system should be lighted because many people use it at night.

Natalie Becknell, her husband, Nathan, and daughter, Clara, all of Fayetteville, live five minutes from the Mud Creek trail and often use the system to travel downtown or to Lake Fayetteville.

"My husband uses it every day, he's training for a marathon," Becknell said, while holding two-year-old Clara. "We go to Walmart sometimes or go

## CROSSWALK CONSTRUCTION

**Tim Burton**, concrete supervisor with the City of Springdale, digs up about 880-square feet of the road Monday to make way for a crosswalk going through East Meadow Avenue in Springdale between Horrobb Street and North Commercial Street. The crosswalk, which will be raised 2 inches above street level with 3-foot transitions and feature LED lights along the path, will be made with red concrete to signify its association with the Razorback Greenway. Similar projects to add the crosswalks are scheduled on West Johnson Avenue and West Emma Avenue in upcoming weeks.

**STAFF PHOTO SAMANTHA BAKER**

**TODAY'S WEATHER**

**84/54**  
**BEAVER LAKE**  
1,125.4 FEET

**SPRINGDALE**  
**MORNING NEWS**

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# Census Data Shows Region's Growth Spikes

## AREA ELIGIBLE FOR MORE FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION MONEY FOR PROJECTS, TRANSIT

**By Ron Wood**  
RWOOD@NWAONLINE.COM

The area of Northwest Arkansas considered urbanized grew significantly in 10 years, making the region eligible for more federal transportation money for local highway projects and public transit.

Expectations were that the region's urban population, based on population per square mile, would be just more than 200,000 and instead it was nearly 300,000, according to U.S. Census Bureau data released this week.

The Census Bureau says 295,083 people lived in the urbanized area of Northwest Arkansas in 2010. The area includes six additional cities and two people in McDonald County, Mo. That is a 71 percent increase from 172,585 in 2000.

The Census Bureau designation is not the total population for the four-county, metropolitan, statistical area, which is estimated at 463,200 in 2010. The final Census population for the region will be released in 2013.

The 200,000 urbanized population threshold also marks the first time Northwest Arkansas will be a Transportation Management Area. The designation, expected this summer, means there will be more local control of how the federal transportation money sent to Northwest Arkansas is prioritized and spent.

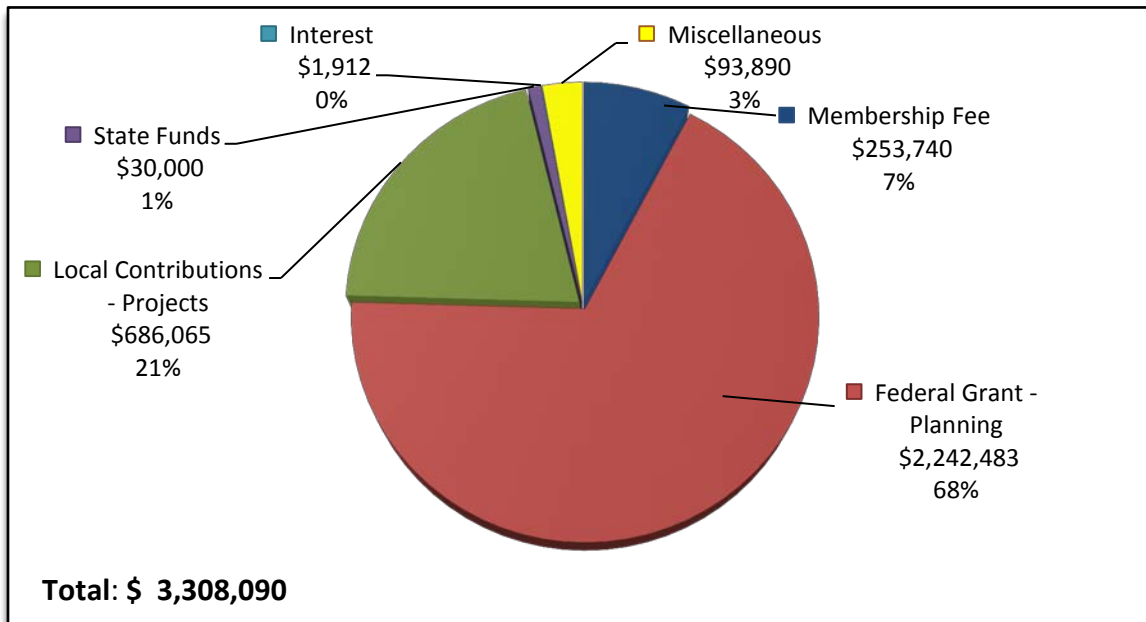
"It looks like additional funding," said Jeff Hawkins, executive director for the Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission. "There's a set-aside specifically for this area."

**SEE MONEY PAGE 2A**

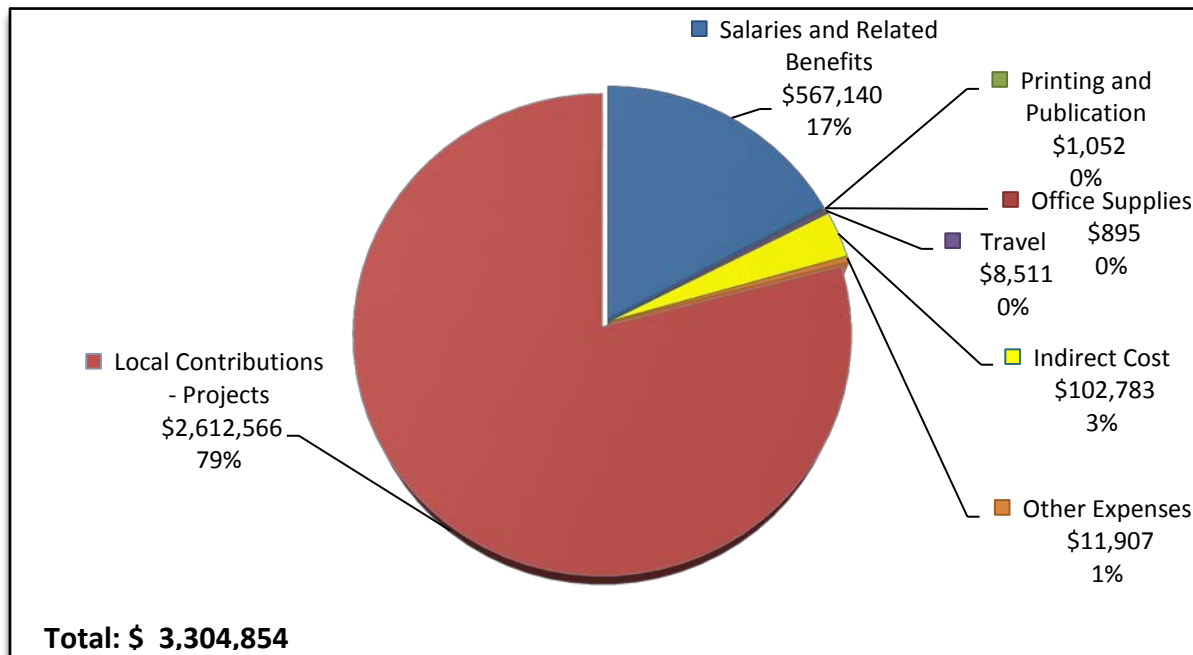
Selected Articles from the local press

## Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission Fiscal Summary

### Revenue in 2012:



### Expenses in 2012:



## **Conferences and Workshops attended by staff in 2012**

- ✓ March 2012: Spring Conference of the Arkansas Chapter of the American Planning Association, Bentonville, AR
- ✓ April 2012: American Planning Association National Conference, Los Angeles , CA
- ✓ May 2012: Northwest Arkansas 2012 Development Conference, Rogers, AR
- ✓ September 2012: Fall Conference of the Arkansas Chapter of the American Planning Association, Bentonville, AR
- ✓ October 2012: Sustainable Communities Leadership Summit , Fayetteville, AR
- ✓ October 2012: Trail of Tears Association National Conference, Norman, OK
- ✓ October 2012: Blue Pathways Workshop, Fayetteville, AR
- ✓ November 2012: University of Arkansas Center for Business and Research Quarterly Economic Trends Presentation, Fayetteville, AR

## **Clearinghouse Reviews**

The NWARPC is the federally designated regional clearinghouse for the Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The MSA covers a four county area including Benton, Madison, and Washington Counties in Arkansas and McDonald County in Missouri. 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. During the year, 92 grant applications for federal-aid totaling \$61,836,583 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.

## **NWARPC Notice of Nondiscrimination**

The Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission complies with all civil rights provisions of federal statues 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) or the following email address: [cscott-silkwood@nwarpc.org](mailto:cscott-silkwood@nwarpc.org). This notice is available from the ADA/504/Title VI Coordinator in large print, on audiotape and in Braille.

## **Acknowledgement:**

The pictures in this report are credited to the Stormwater Group, ALTA/Greenways, Endeavor Foundation, and The Heritage Trail partners. The NWARPC appreciates their input and help in developing this report.

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