Tri - Lakes MPO

2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

TRI-LAKES
Metropolitan Planning Organization

Contents

TRI-LAKES MPO DISCLAIMER: This notice is in accordance with the Tri-Lakes MPO 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (soon to be 2050), the Federal Transportation Act (BIL/IIJA) in cooperation with local agencies, the Arkansas Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration. Documents are funded in part through grant(s) from the FHWA, FTA, and/or the U.S. Department of Transportation.

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MPO Structure

The **11 member MPO Policy Board** (with representation from **Hot Springs**, **Mountain Pine**, **Fountain Lake**, **Hot Springs Village**, **Hot Spring County**, **Garland County**, and **Hot Springs Metro Partnership**

The MPO is supported by a **15 member Technical Advisory Committee** of planners, realtors, economic development specialists, and engineers who provide analysis for all MPO related projects.

All MPO meetings are open to the public, reflecting a commitment to transparency and public involvement as required by federal regulations.

The **Tri-Lakes Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)** is guided by two committees:

1. The **Policy Board (PB)** which makes final decisions on transportation priorities and policies.
2. The **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** which provides technical recommendations.

Administration:

The MPO is housed within the **West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District (WCAPDD)**, which oversees financial management.

A full-time **MPO Director** manages daily operations and ensures compliance with all federal planning requirements.

Policy Board

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board – The MPO board is the final level of review and decision-making body in the MPO organizational structure. Recommendations from MPO staff and the committee substructure are reviewed, discussed, and then either approved or rejected through a one member one vote process. The MPO Board is guided by bylaws, adopted in 2003, amended in 2008, 2013, 2017, 2018, and 2019.

The MPO Board voting membership is comprised of:

- **City of Hot Springs** (2)
- **Garland County** (2)
- **Hot Spring County** (1)
- **Fountain Lake** (1)
- **Mountain Pine** (1)
- **Hot Springs Village Property Owners Association** (1)
- **Hot Springs Metro Partnership** (1)
- **Arkansas Department of Transportation** (2)

The MPO Board typically meets quarterly on the 3rd Thursday, at 10:00 a.m. in the West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District's (WCAPDD) Conference room, located at 1000 Central Avenue in Hot Springs. All meetings are open to the public.

Mike Lipton – Hot Springs Metro Partnership – Chair
Jeremy Brown – Garland County - Vice Chair
Darryl Mahoney – Garland County
Karen Garcia – City of Hot Springs
Pat McCabe – City of Hot Springs
Dennis Thornton – Hot Spring County
Jack Fields – Town of Fountain Lake
Bruce Caverly – Hot Springs Village
Malinda Henson – Town of Mountain Pine
Sunny Farmahan – ARDOT
Hunter Lake – ARDOT

Technical Committee

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) – The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is comprised of professional planners, engineers, technicians, and other professionals representing local government agencies and transit providers. This group is responsible for reviewing transportation plans, programs, projects, and policy guidance. They review and provide feedback to MPO staff from a more technical standpoint, based on their professional expertise. Ultimately, the TAC makes recommendations on the plans and projects placed before to the MPO Board.

The **TAC** is comprised of the following membership:

- **City of Hot Springs** (2)
- **Garland County** (2)
- **Hot Spring County** (1)
- **Chamber of Commerce** (1)
- **Hot Springs Metro Partnership** (1)
- **Hot Springs Village POA** (1)
- **Railroad Representative** (1)
- **Fountain Lake** (1)
- **Mountain Pine** (1)
- **Intracity Transit** (1)
- **Airport Director** (1)
- **Arkansas Department of Transportation** (2)

Dennis Thornton – Hot Spring County
Anthony Hunter – ARDOT
Jesse Konstanzer – ARDOT
Ron Sievwright – Public Works Director – City of Hot Springs
Gary Carnahan – Engineer – City of Hot Springs
Gary Troutman – Hot Springs Metro Partnership
Donald Rowlett – Airport Director – City of Hot Springs
James Patton – Hot Springs Village POA
Jeffrey Carr – Garland County
John Rogers – Garland County
Karl Lowry – Town of Fountain Lake
Kathy Sellman – Planning Director – City of Hot Springs
Keith Jones – Intracity Transit Director – City of Hot Springs
Ryan Richardson – Railroad Representative
Chris Polychron – Chamber of Commerce

The TAC typically meets quarterly on the 1st Tuesday, at 10:00 a.m. in the West Central Arkansas Planning and Development District's (WCAPDD) Conference room, located at 1000 Central Avenue in Hot Springs. All meetings are open to the public.

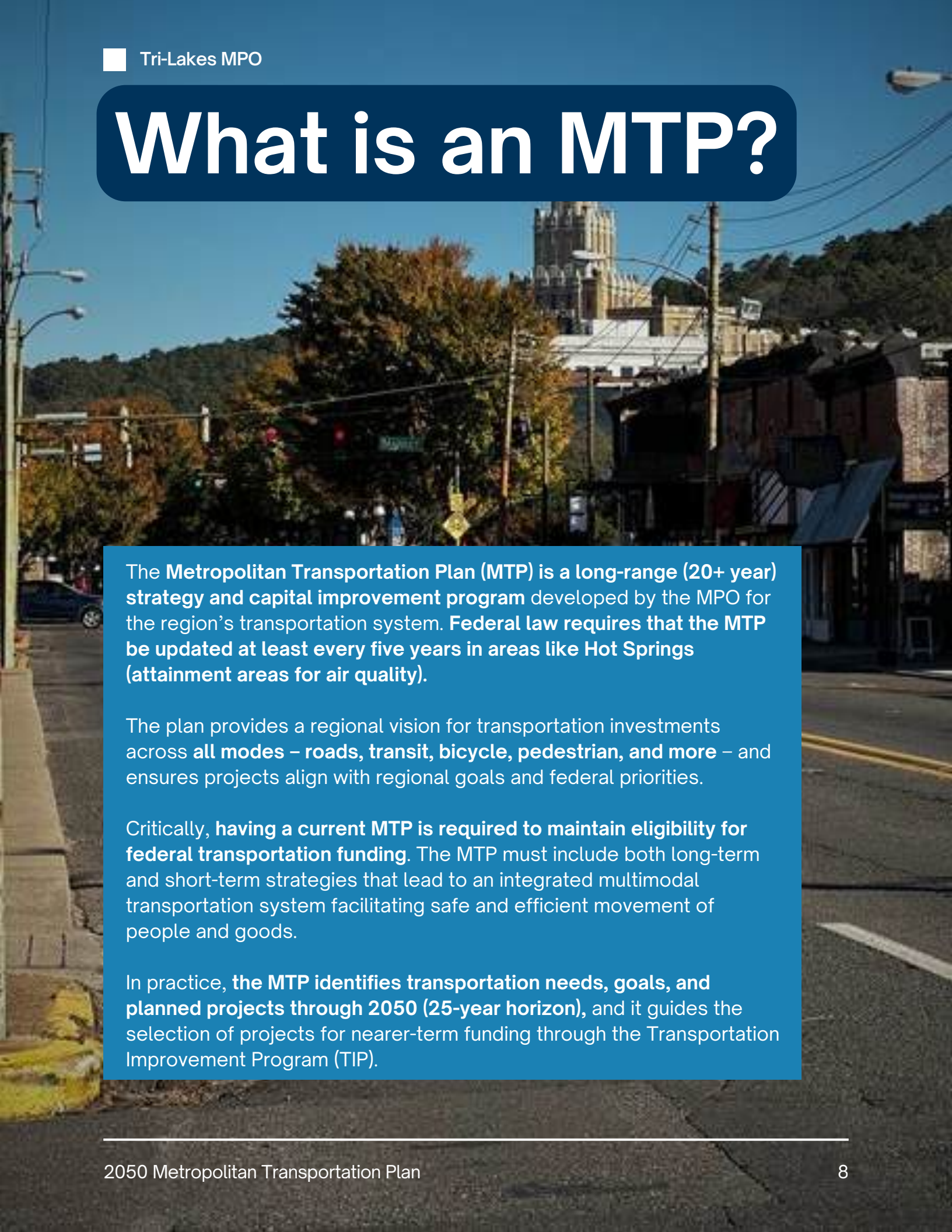
Director's Report

As Director of the Tri-Lakes Metropolitan Planning Organization, I am proud to present the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan—a forward-looking strategy that reflects the resilience, progress, and promise of the Hot Springs region. This plan is the product of meaningful collaboration across local governments, community members, technical experts, and state and federal partners. It outlines not only the infrastructure needs of today, but also the strategic vision that will shape our future—one that is safer, more connected, and increasingly responsive to the evolving needs of residents and visitors alike. From modernizing aging corridors and addressing long-standing safety concerns to expanding access to public transit and multimodal pathways, the MTP is grounded in data, driven by community input, and aligned with national priorities for sustainable, equitable transportation.

The momentum in the Hot Springs region is unmistakable. Whether it's the continued expansion of key thoroughfares like Highway 270 West, the ongoing investment in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, or innovative plans to improve event traffic and transit accessibility, our region is stepping confidently into the future. With our growing population, strong tourism economy, and commitment to environmental preservation, the Tri-Lakes MPO is embracing the opportunity to build a transportation system that supports economic vitality, enhances quality of life, and connects every corner of our community. I remain optimistic that, through continued collaboration and responsible planning, we will deliver on this vision—building not just roads and bridges, but a future that works for everyone.

Derrick Harris
MPO Director

What is an MTP?



The **Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a long-range (20+ year) strategy and capital improvement program** developed by the MPO for the region's transportation system. **Federal law requires that the MTP be updated at least every five years in areas like Hot Springs (attainment areas for air quality).**

The plan provides a regional vision for transportation investments across **all modes – roads, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and more** – and ensures projects align with regional goals and federal priorities.

Critically, **having a current MTP is required to maintain eligibility for federal transportation funding**. The MTP must include both long-term and short-term strategies that lead to an integrated multimodal transportation system facilitating safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

In practice, **the MTP identifies transportation needs, goals, and planned projects through 2050 (25-year horizon),** and it guides the selection of projects for nearer-term funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Framework for Federal Policy

Guided by: federal requirements

The development of this MTP is guided by federal requirements and planning factors. The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (2015) and subsequent Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (2021) emphasize performance-driven, outcome-based planning and require MPOs to set targets for specific performance measures (e.g. safety, infrastructure condition). MPOs must produce core documents including a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the long-range MTP, a short-range TIP, and a Public Participation Plan (PPP). The planning process must address ten federal planning factors ranging from economic vitality and safety to environmental protection and system reliability. (These federal planning factors and other requirements are summarized in **Appendix A.**)

MPOs must produce core documents including a **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**, the **long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)**, a **short-range Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**, and a **Public Participation Plan (PPP)**. The planning process must address ten federal planning factors ranging from economic vitality and safety to environmental protection and system reliability.

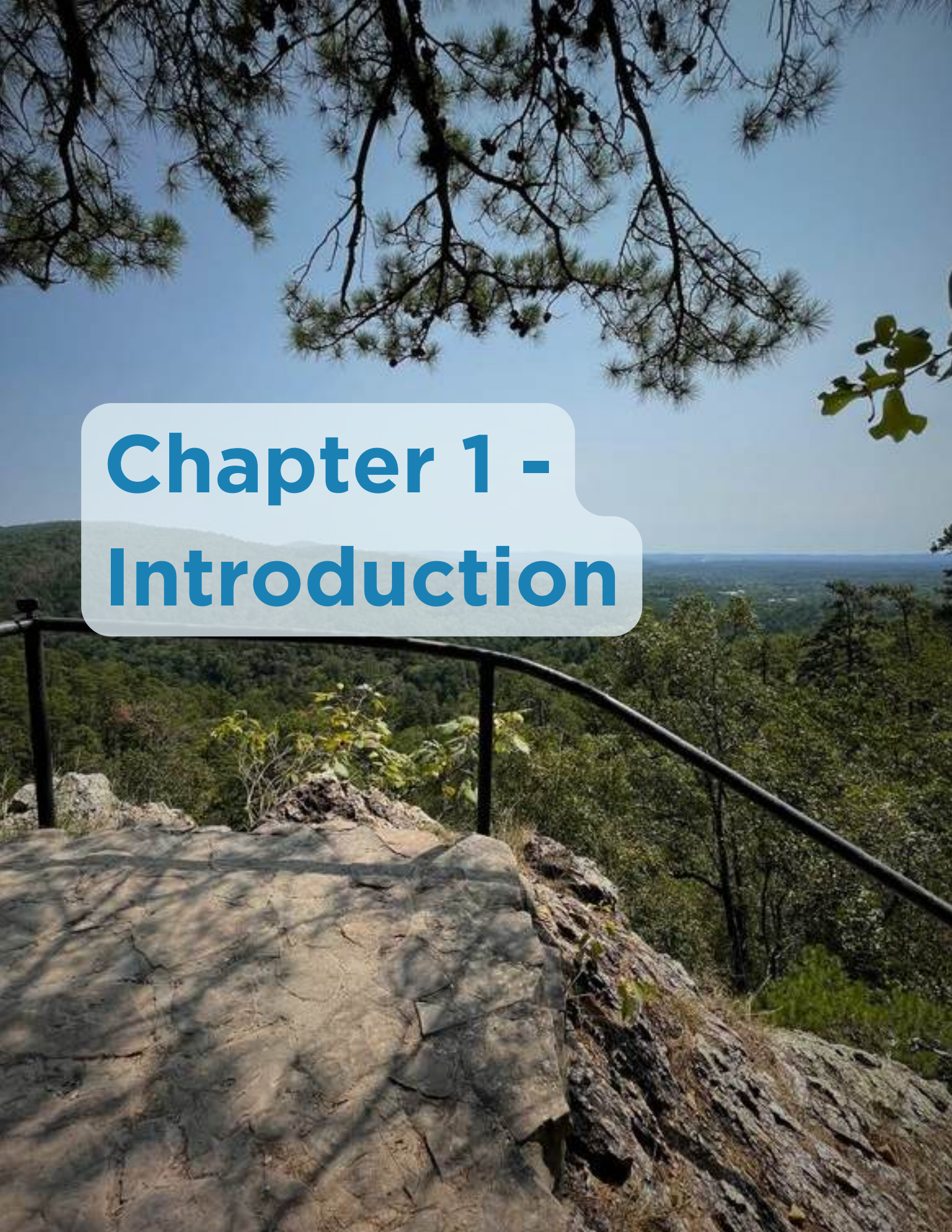
01 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

02 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

03 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

04 Public Participation Plan (PPP)

We will now introduce the 2050 MTP ...



Chapter 1 - Introduction

Introduction

Beginnings

Established in 2003 for the Hot Springs Area Transportation Study (HSATS) and later renamed Tri-Lakes Metropolitan Planning Organization (TLMPO) in 2013, the MPO facilitates cooperative decision-making among local governments and transportation agencies.

The TLMPO is the federally designated transportation planning body for the Hot Springs urbanized area of Arkansas.

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Federal law mandates that any urbanized area with population over 50,000 must have an MPO to oversee a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) transportation planning process. This “3C” process means planning is ongoing (continuing), done in collaboration among federal, state, local, and public stakeholders (cooperative), and considers all transportation modes and related factors (comprehensive) .

Continuing

Cooperative

Comprehensive

Introduction

Beginnings Cont...

Nestled in the heart of the Ouachita Mountains, Hot Springs, Arkansas is a place where natural beauty, rich history, and vibrant culture collide to create an experience unlike anywhere else. Whether you're looking to relocate, launch a business, explore the outdoors, or simply find your next unforgettable getaway, Hot Springs offers something for everyone—wrapped in Southern hospitality and set against the backdrop of one of America's most charming small cities.

At the heart of it all is Hot Springs National Park, the oldest federally protected area in the United States. Here, visitors can soak in the same thermal spring waters that once drew Native American tribes, early settlers, and even mobsters in search of healing and leisure. Historic Bathhouse Row, with its beautifully preserved architecture and modern spas, continues to serve as a living tribute to that legacy—offering both relaxation and a glimpse into the past.

Beyond the baths, Hot Springs pulses with excitement and energy. Just minutes from downtown, the Oaklawn Racing Resort and Casino stands as a world-class entertainment destination. Every spring, the city comes alive during horse racing season, culminating in the famed Arkansas Derby. Whether you're placing a bet or just soaking in the atmosphere, Oaklawn is an essential stop for fun-seekers and racing fans alike.

Nature lovers will find paradise in the trio of shimmering lakes that surround the area—Lake Hamilton, Lake Ouachita, and Lake Catherine—offering endless opportunities for boating, fishing, hiking, and lakeside living. Garvan Woodland Gardens, a 210-acre botanical wonder along the shores of Lake Hamilton, showcases the region's seasonal beauty with awe-inspiring trails, architectural masterpieces, and family-friendly spaces.

Hot Springs is also a city that knows how to celebrate. From quirky local traditions like the World's Shortest St. Patrick's Day Parade and the hilarious Running of the Tubs in June, to internationally recognized events like the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival each October, the calendar is always full of reasons to visit. Art, film, music, food, and culture—it's all here, in a town that truly embraces its creative spirit.

What sets Hot Springs apart isn't just its attractions, but the way it blends small-town charm with big-time experiences. People come here to relax, but they often stay to reinvent themselves. Entrepreneurs, artists, remote workers, and retirees alike are discovering the benefits of life in a city that values community, connection, and quality of life.

Whether you're looking to work, play, or stay, Hot Springs is more than a destination—it's a lifestyle. And once you experience it for yourself, you'll understand why so many people from around the world have fallen in love with this unforgettable city in the mountains.

What Makes us Unique

Garvan Gardens

Tucked along the shores of Lake Hamilton, Garvan Woodland Gardens is a 210-acre botanical masterpiece managed by the University of Arkansas. As one of the state's premier public gardens, it offers a peaceful escape into nature year-round. Visitors stroll through winding trails under towering pines, past cascading streams, and among seasonal floral displays ranging from vibrant tulips in spring to dazzling lights during the acclaimed Holiday Lights festival in winter.

Architectural highlights like the awe-inspiring Anthony Chapel—with its soaring glass walls framed by timber columns—make the gardens not just a place of natural beauty but also a popular venue for weddings and events. Families enjoy the Children's Adventure Garden, featuring interactive exhibits and whimsical play areas, while photographers and artists are drawn to its endless visual inspiration. It's a place where serenity and creativity flourish together.

What Makes us Unique

Great Outdoors

Ouachita Mountains

Hot Springs is cradled by the Ouachita Mountains, one of the few east-west mountain ranges in North America. Their forested peaks and ridgelines offer stunning views, rugged beauty, and endless adventure. These mountains are home to hiking and biking trails, scenic overlooks, and diverse wildlife, making the region a favorite for outdoor enthusiasts.

Whether you're exploring the Sunset Trail through Hot Springs National Park or venturing into the broader Ouachita National Forest, you'll find opportunities for solitude and exploration year-round. The terrain also supports excellent rockhounding and mountain biking, and it's not uncommon to stumble across quiet spots perfect for a picnic or a moment of reflection. The mountains are more than just scenery—they're a playground for discovery.

The Lakes

Hot Springs wouldn't be the same without its trio of sparkling lakes. Lake Hamilton, just minutes from downtown, is the city's backyard playground, dotted with lakeside restaurants, boat rentals, and luxury homes. It's a hub of summer activity, where water skiing, wakeboarding, and pontoon cruising reign supreme.

Just west of town, Lake Ouachita offers a more pristine experience. Known for its crystal-clear waters and undeveloped shoreline, it's a favorite for scuba diving, fishing, and paddling among its 200+ islands. Meanwhile, Lake Catherine State Park provides a quieter retreat, complete with hiking trails, waterfalls, and cabin rentals that are perfect for families and weekend getaways. Together, these lakes offer a variety of aquatic adventures and tranquil escapes that define the Hot Springs lifestyle.

What Makes us Unique

Bathouse Row

Located within the boundaries of the National Park, Bathhouse Row is a living monument to Hot Springs' golden age. These eight grand bathhouses—built between 1892 and 1923—reflect styles from neoclassical to Spanish Revival, and have been beautifully preserved and repurposed for modern use. The Fordyce Bathhouse, now the park's visitor center, offers an immersive glimpse into early 20th-century spa culture, complete with antique tubs, massage rooms, and stained-glass skylights.

Other bathhouses remain operational, offering modern spa services while still tapping into the original hot springs below. The Buckstaff Bathhouse, for example, maintains a traditional bathing experience, while the Quapaw Baths & Spa features contemporary amenities and communal soaking pools. As a destination, Bathhouse Row is equal parts history, health, and heritage—an iconic must-see for any visitor.

What Makes us Unique

National Park

As America's oldest federally protected area—predating even Yellowstone—Hot Springs National Park is a national treasure. Encompassing 5,500 acres of forested mountain slopes, natural springs, and historic architecture, the park blends the tranquility of nature with the charm of urban accessibility. You can hike its scenic trails during the day and soak in the spring waters by night, all within walking distance of downtown.

The famed thermal waters, long celebrated for their supposed healing properties, emerge at a steamy 143°F and are piped directly into modern bathhouses. More than just a wellness destination, the park is an educational and environmental resource, offering ranger programs, historic exhibits, and geologic wonders. It's a place where history, health, and natural beauty converge.

What Makes us Unique

Oaklawn Casino

Few places combine tradition and modern entertainment like Oaklawn Racing Resort and Casino. Founded in 1904, Oaklawn is one of the most storied thoroughbred racetracks in the country and home to the Arkansas Derby, a key stop on the road to the Kentucky Derby. During racing season—from late winter through early spring—the grandstands buzz with excitement, drawing fans from across the nation.

But Oaklawn is more than just racing. Following a major expansion in recent years, it now features a luxury hotel, a full-service spa, world-class restaurants, and an upscale casino floor with live table games and slots. Whether you're here for the thrill of the track, a weekend of relaxation, or lively nightlife, Oaklawn delivers a high-end resort experience in the heart of Hot Springs.

What Makes us Unique

Annual Events

There's always something happening in Hot Springs, and the calendar is packed with uniquely local traditions that keep visitors coming back year after year.

- In March, the city celebrates the World's Shortest St. Patrick's Day Parade, a quirky event held on Bridge Street—officially the shortest street in the world. With celebrity guests, outrageous costumes, and a whole lot of green beer, it's an unforgettable kickoff to spring.

- Spring brings in racing fans from all over the World, culminating in one of Arkansas's premier events, the Arkansas Derby!

What Makes us Unique

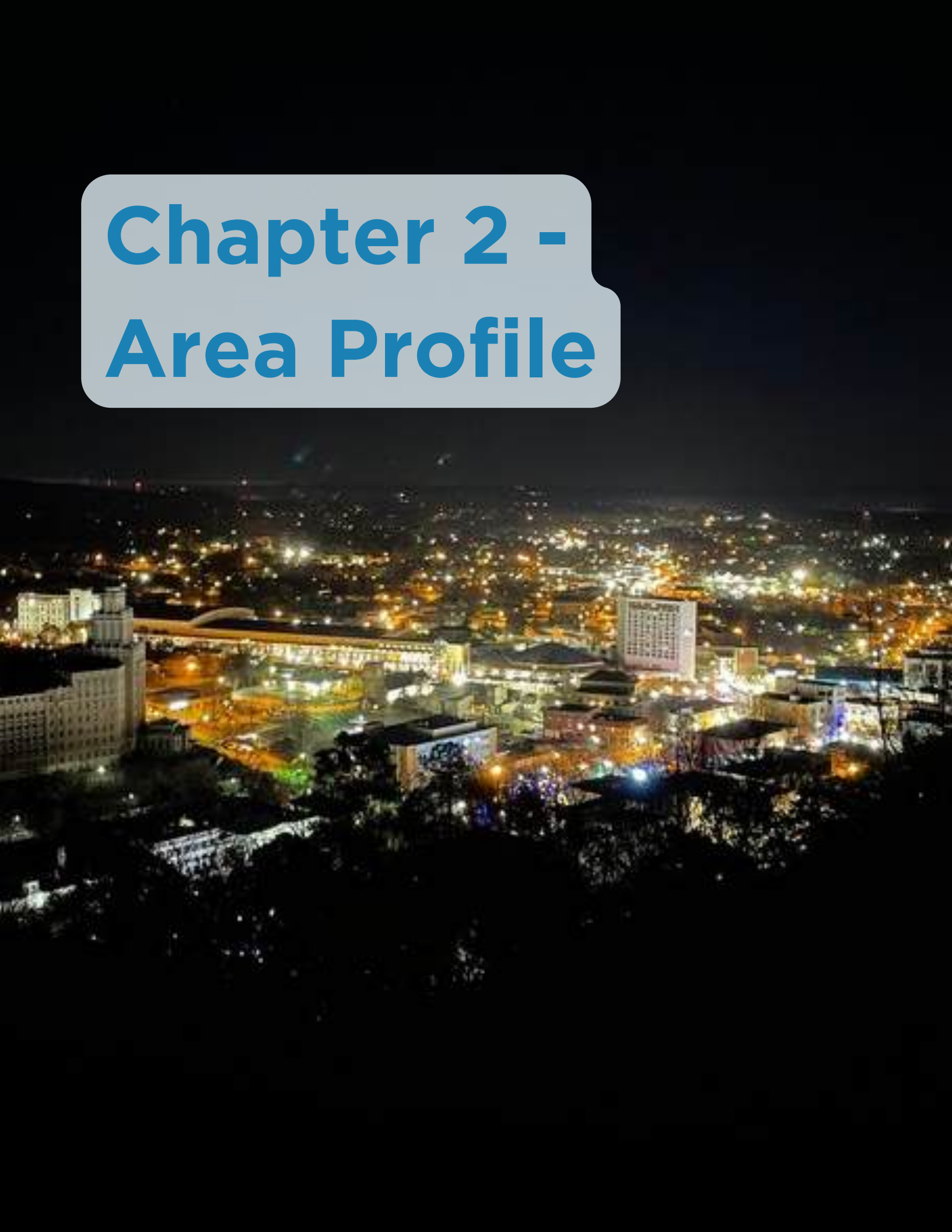
Annual Events

- Summer brings the hilarity of the Running of the Tubs, where costumed teams race down Bathhouse Row pushing actual bathtubs filled with water. It's equal parts competition and community fun.

- Come October, film buffs from around the globe gather for the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival, one of the longest-running festivals of its kind in North America.

These events, alongside seasonal concerts, food truck festivals, art walks, and holiday celebrations, contribute to a vibrant cultural scene that punches far above its weight. In Hot Springs, there's always a reason to celebrate.

Chapter 2 - Area Profile



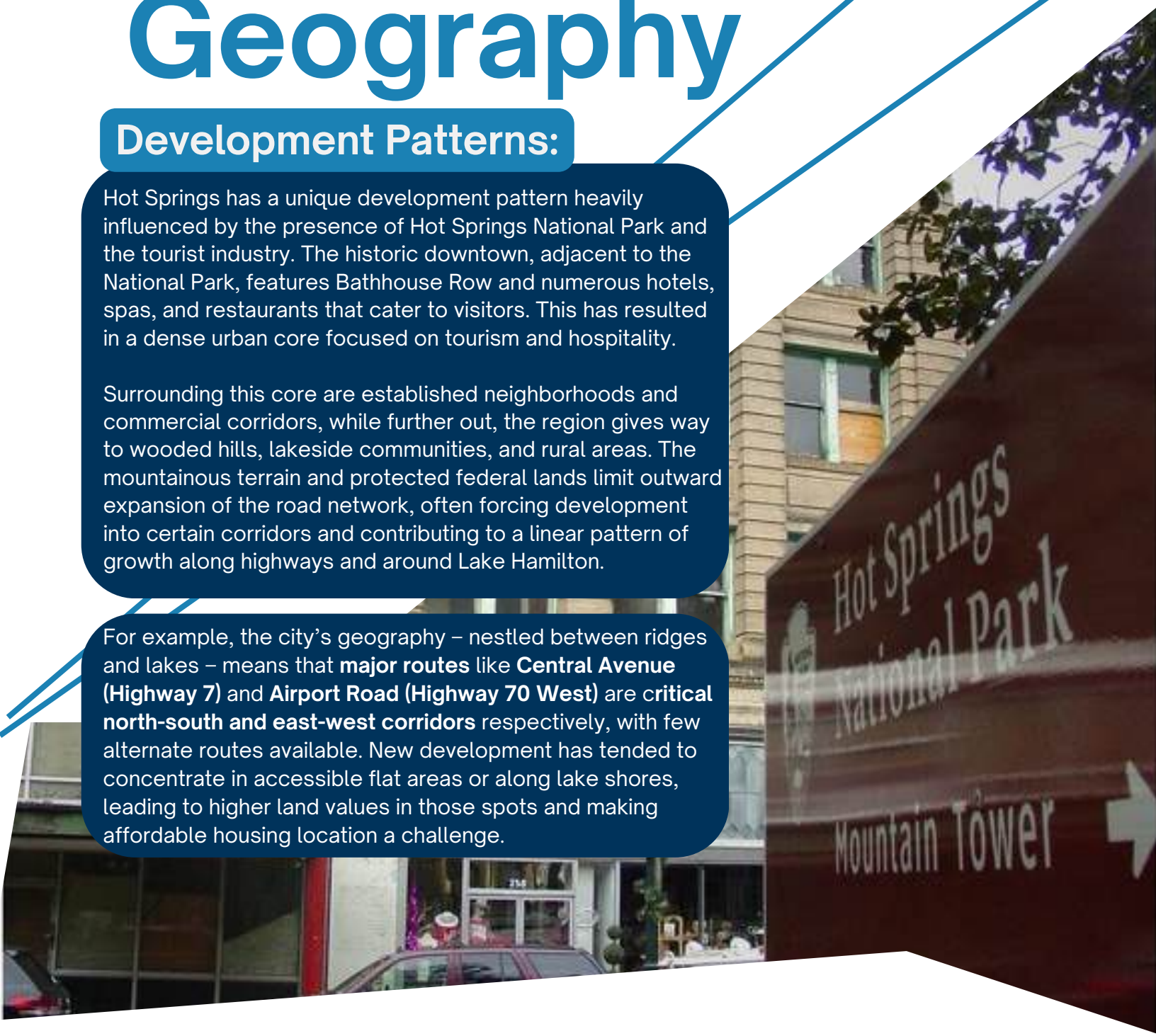
Land Use & Geography

Development Patterns:

Hot Springs has a unique development pattern heavily influenced by the presence of Hot Springs National Park and the tourist industry. The historic downtown, adjacent to the National Park, features Bathhouse Row and numerous hotels, spas, and restaurants that cater to visitors. This has resulted in a dense urban core focused on tourism and hospitality.

Surrounding this core are established neighborhoods and commercial corridors, while further out, the region gives way to wooded hills, lakeside communities, and rural areas. The mountainous terrain and protected federal lands limit outward expansion of the road network, often forcing development into certain corridors and contributing to a linear pattern of growth along highways and around Lake Hamilton.

For example, the city's geography – nestled between ridges and lakes – means that **major routes** like **Central Avenue (Highway 7)** and **Airport Road (Highway 70 West)** are c**ritical north-south and east-west corridors** respectively, with few alternate routes available. New development has tended to concentrate in accessible flat areas or along lake shores, leading to higher land values in those spots and making affordable housing location a challenge.



Land Use

The Hot Springs zoning code organizes land into a spectrum of districts—from **residential (R-R, R-S, RN-1 through RN-6)** to **commercial (C-TR, C-N, C-MU, C-G, C-R, CBD)**, **industrial (I-L, I-H, I-MU)**, and *special-purpose or overlay zones* like **Historic Districts**, **Institutional**, **Airport**, and **Malvern Avenue Overlay**. This structured framework enables the city to tailor land uses and development intensity to each area's character—e.g., the CBD promotes dense, pedestrian-oriented mixed uses ideal for transit-friendly environments, while Regional Commercial (C-R) zones cater to auto-oriented, large-scale retail development. The zoning code also includes off-street parking standards and build-to-zone requirements that directly shape transportation choices and street-level activity by influencing how closely buildings front streets and how much space is allocated for vehicles versus pedestrians.

Several specific areas merit strategic attention.
First, the CBD presents a clear opportunity to bolster multimodal transit and walkability—its dense, mixed-use development and build-to frontage support efficient use of transit services like Intracity Transit. Enhancing pedestrian infrastructure and transit shelters here could maximize this potential.

Conversely, C-R (Regional Commercial) districts—often located along arterial highways—pose potential conflict with pedestrian and transit networks unless countermeasures (e.g., interconnected sidewalks, cross-access) are imposed.

The C-TR (Commercial Transitional) district, sitting at the edge of residential neighborhoods, could generate friction if taller or more intense commercial buildings disrupt local street flow—height limits and design standards within 100 feet of residential zones help, but transportation planning must reinforce these with compatible road designs and traffic calming.

Finally, overlay zones—such as the Airport Zoning District or Malvern Avenue Overlay—influence transportation by imposing height, signage, or design constraints that affect roadway visibility, pedestrian crossings, or vehicle flow in adjacent areas.

Policy Recommendations

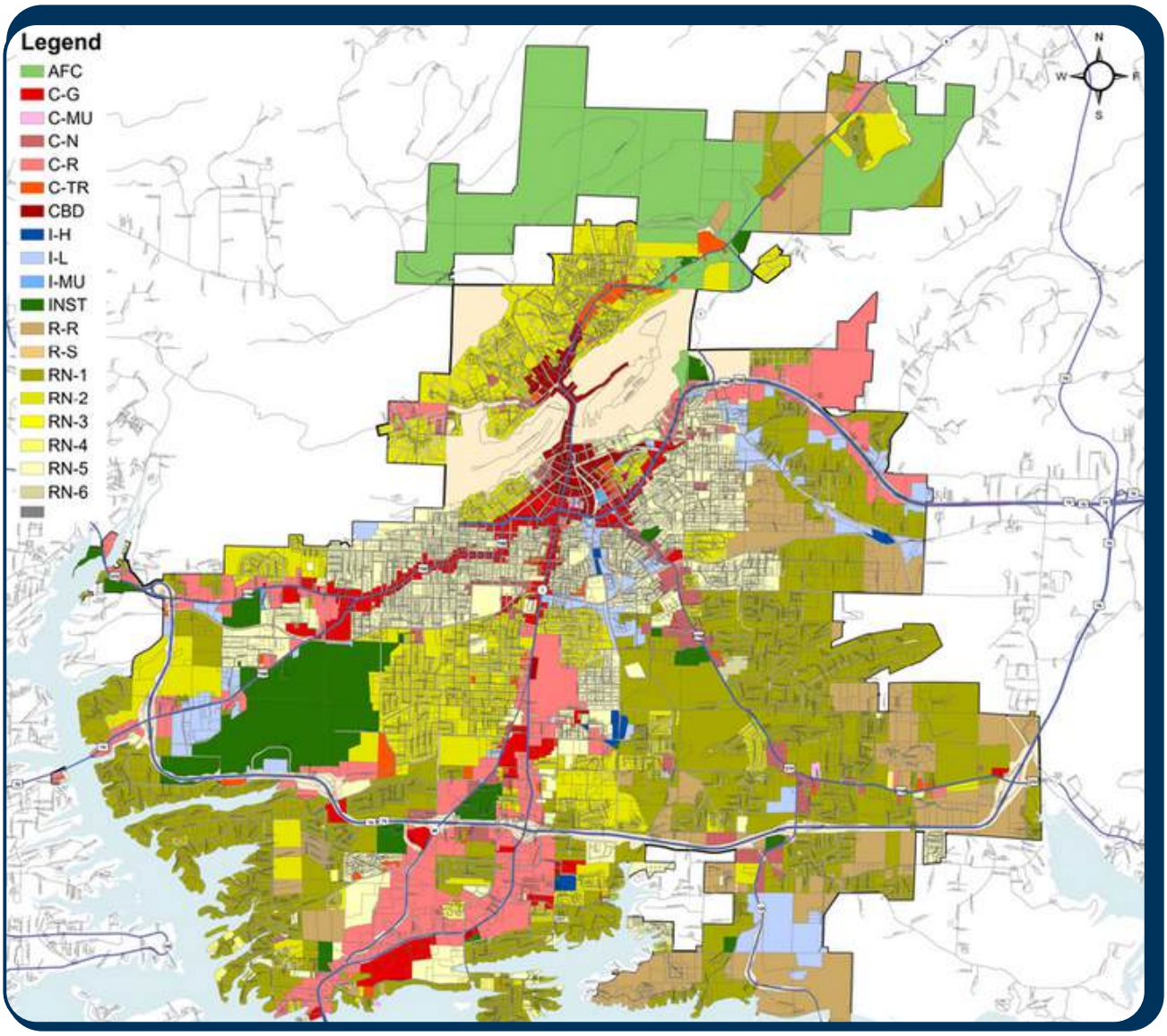
1. Integrate land use and transit planning through zoning incentives in the CBD and C-MU districts.
2. Encourage pedestrian infrastructure investment in C-R zones, including sidewalks, mid-block crossings, and lighting.
3. Revise parking minimums in transit-priority areas to reduce barriers to compact, walkable development.
4. Apply context-sensitive street designs in C-TR zones to manage traffic speeds and support neighborhood compatibility.
5. Adopt form-based code overlays or design guidelines in transitional zones and corridors with high multimodal potential.

Strategic Locations to Monitor

- **Central Business District (CBD)**: Ideal for transit infrastructure upgrades and walkability improvements.
- **C-R corridors along US 70 and AR 7**: Targeted for multimodal conflict mitigation and land-use coordination.
- **C-TR zones adjacent to RN-3/RN-4** districts: Focus for cross-access, buffering, and context-sensitive roadway enhancements.

Zoning

Hot Springs' zoning code is the city's adventurous rule book for shaping the built environment, recently refreshed with a fresh map and regulations adopted on November 19, 2024, and rolled out on March 1, 2025 . Housed in Title 16, Chapter 2, the code outlines everything from what buildings can go where and how close they must sit to property lines, to what kinds of uses—like homes, shops, or light industry—are welcomed in each district . It's a tapestry of residential, commercial, industrial, and special-purpose districts —each tailored with its own rules to protect the character and functionality of places across the city . This code isn't just a static map: It supports thoughtful development, safe transitions between land uses, and sensible design that nudges buildings into harmony with their surroundings.



Population & Demographics

Aging Population

The Hot Springs region's population is characterized by a significant number of retirees and older adults. Attractive amenities (mild climate, recreation, healthcare facilities) draw retirees to settle permanently, and seasonal residents increase during peak times. As noted, the city has a higher percentage of residents aged 65+ than the national average. This aging demographic means a greater need for accessible transportation (e.g. sidewalks with curb ramps, transit for those who do not drive) and services like paratransit.

Seasonal Population

At the same time, tourism brings an influx of transient population – on any given weekend, "thousands of visitors" swell the city's population to enjoy the national park, lakes, and events. The population fluctuates seasonally: summers and special event weekends see large upticks in people, whereas off-season periods are quieter.

Permanent Residents

The permanent population of the greater Hot Springs area has been gradually growing, but not at an explosive rate – growth is steady as retirees move in and some younger families relocate here for quality of life. There is also an emerging cohort of remote workers and new residents drawn by lower costs and natural amenities (a trend accelerated in recent years), which could spur future growth.

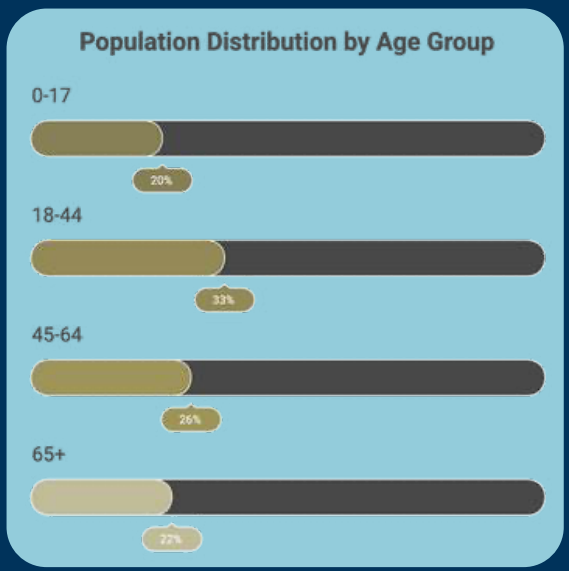
Population & Demographics

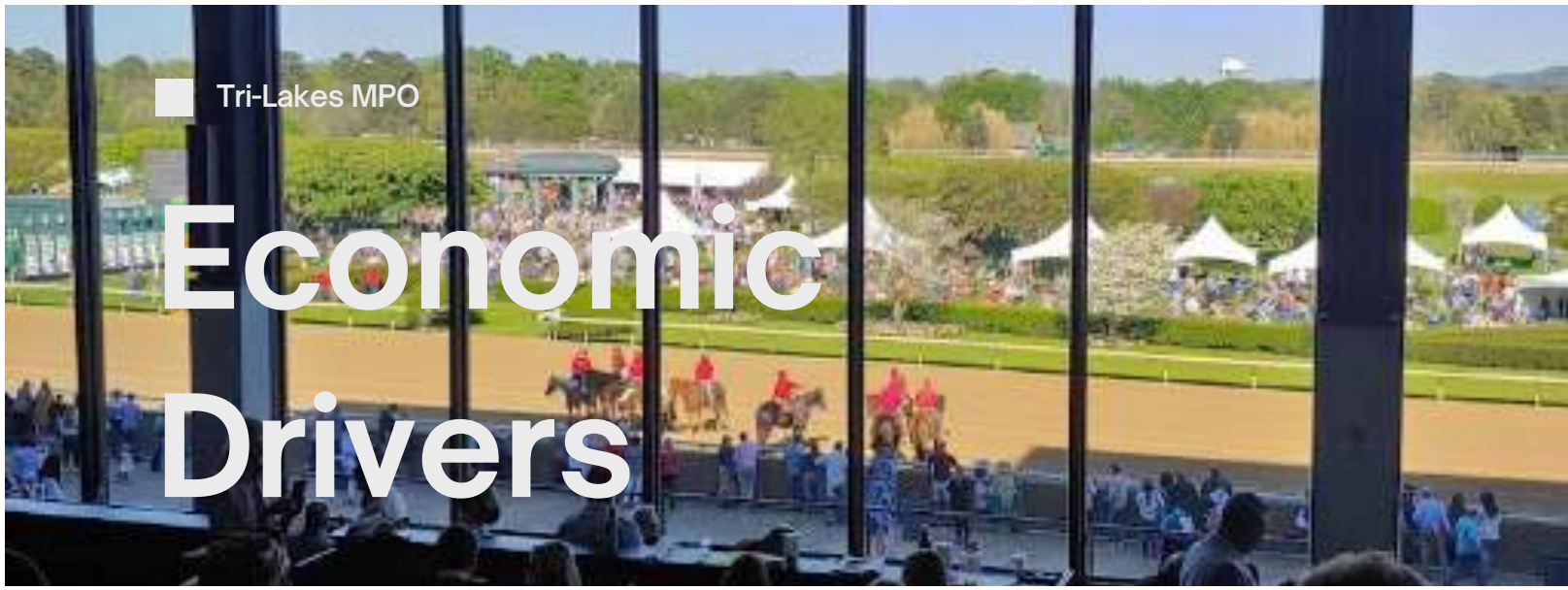
The Hot Springs, AR Urban Area has a population of 58,598, with a slightly higher proportion of females (52.5%) than males (47.5%). The community is predominantly Not Hispanic or Latino (90%), with White residents making up 72% of the population, followed by Black or African American residents at 12%. Hispanic or Latino residents account for nearly 10% of the population.

Population Statistics

Category	Population	Percent
Not Hispanic or Latino	52,775	90%
White alone	41,941	72%
Black or African American alone	7,290	12%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	295	1%
Asian alone	614	1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	95	0%
Some other race alone	23	0%
Two or more races	2,517	4%
Hispanic or Latino	5,823	10%
Total	58,598	100%

The age distribution shows a balanced spread, with 20% under 18, 33% between 18 and 44, 26% between 45 and 64, and 22% aged 65 and older—reflecting a significant senior population that shapes the area's community needs and services.





Economic Drivers

Tourism and hospitality are the cornerstone of the Hot Springs regional economy. The city's identity as a spa and resort destination dates back centuries, and today it continues with attractions like Oaklawn Racing Casino Resort, Lake Hamilton water recreation, and numerous festivals (e.g. the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival). This economy means many jobs are in hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues, and parks. The workforce includes many low to moderate income service workers, as well as professionals in healthcare and education (Hot Springs is also a regional medical center).

The commuting patterns in the region reflect these economic realities: many residents commute from suburban/rural outskirts into the city for work in the service sector, and their commutes are relatively short (the urban area is compact).

Average commute times in Hot Springs are shorter than national averages, suggesting that a significant portion of residents live close to their workplace. This can be advantageous – shorter trips are easier to shift to walking or biking, and it indicates a somewhat self-contained community.

However, the influx of tourists introduces a different travel pattern: on weekends and event days, traffic is dominated by visitor movement between hotels, downtown attractions, the lakes, and Oaklawn, often at different times than typical weekday commuter peaks.

Housing Trends & Transportation

Growth in retirees and second-home owners has affected the housing market. There is strong demand for both upscale homes in scenic areas and for moderate housing that is affordable to local workers. The housing availability has struggled to keep pace – many new developments trend toward retirement communities, condos, or lakefront homes catering to wealthier buyers.

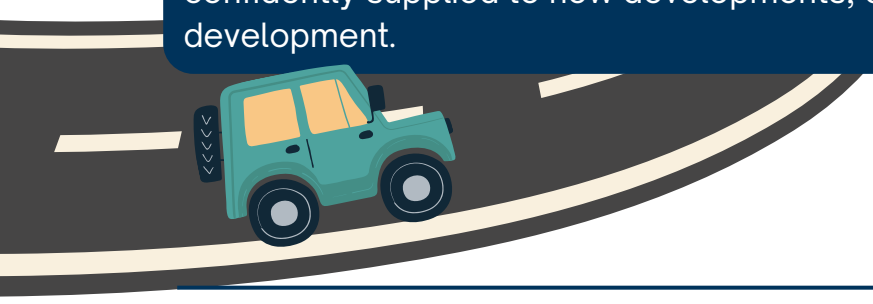
Meanwhile, the rise of **short-term rentals** (vacation rentals for tourists) can r**educe long-term housing stock and drive-up rents**. These factors contribute to affordability challenges for residents and can push lower-income households to outlying areas with cheaper housing.

In turn, this **affects** transportation for l**ower-income and carless residents** living farther out (where transit service is sparse) f**ace greater mobility hurdles**.

The MPO must consider these land use and socio-economic trends, as transportation and land use are closely interconnected.

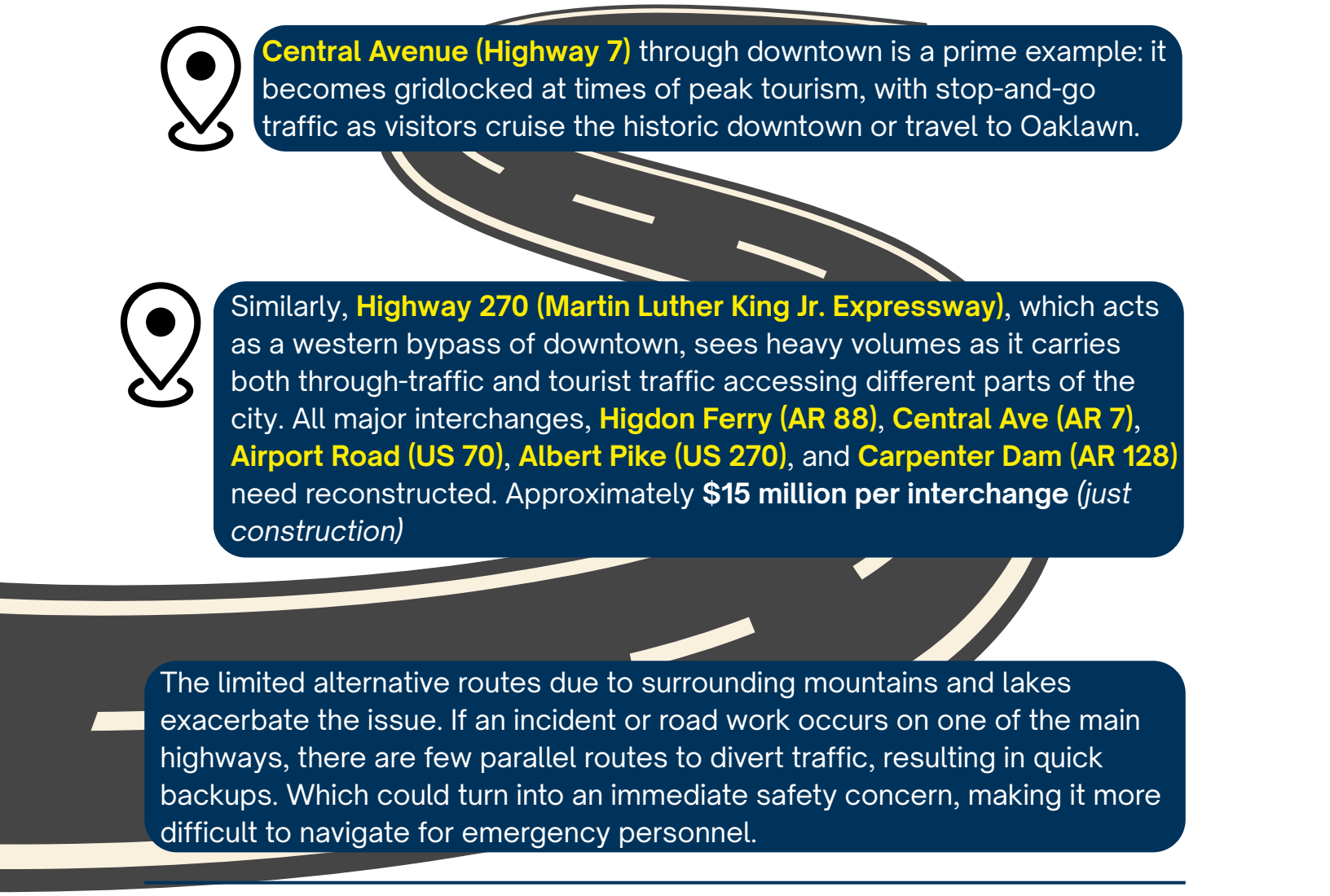
For instance, if new subdivisions are being built in areas without existing road capacity, that will necessitate road improvements or new transit options; if downtown continues to thrive as a tourist hub, managing parking and walkability there becomes even more crucial.

Additional investments, like the City of Hot Springs recent monumental water project, which should allow development to flourish, as water can now be confidently supplied to new developments, encouraging growth and economic development.



Network Constraints & Congestion

Hot Springs' transportation network is under notable strain during peak tourist seasons and special events. The city's road system was designed primarily for a small-city residential population, and it relies on a few principal corridors. During major visitor influxes – for example, summer holiday weekends, the Oaklawn racing season, or festival events – these corridors experience severe congestion as they handle far more traffic than usual.



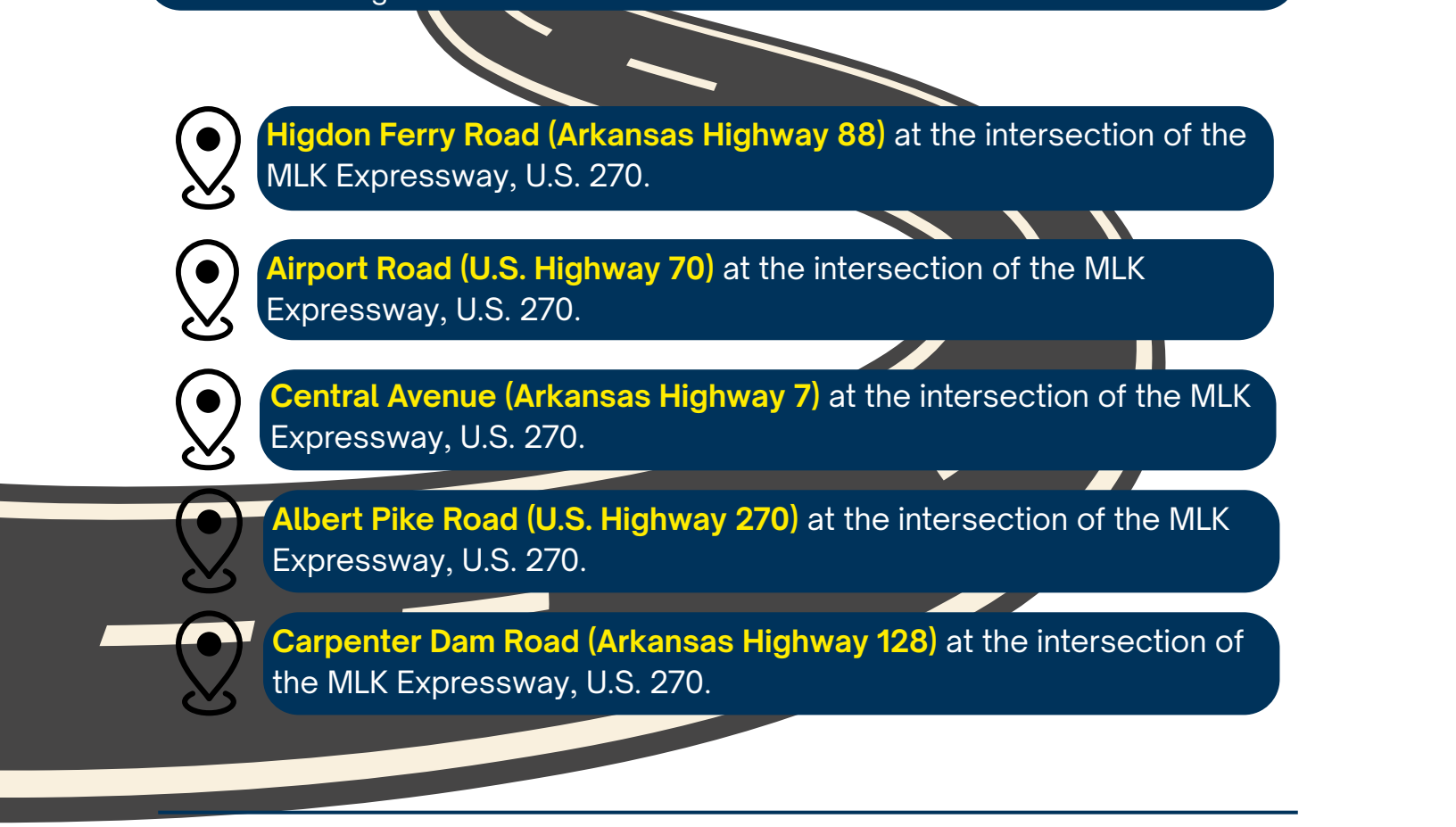
Central Avenue (Highway 7) through downtown is a prime example: it becomes gridlocked at times of peak tourism, with stop-and-go traffic as visitors cruise the historic downtown or travel to Oaklawn.

Similarly, **Highway 270 (Martin Luther King Jr. Expressway)**, which acts as a western bypass of downtown, sees heavy volumes as it carries both through-traffic and tourist traffic accessing different parts of the city. All major interchanges, **Higdon Ferry (AR 88)**, **Central Ave (AR 7)**, **Airport Road (US 70)**, **Albert Pike (US 270)**, and **Carpenter Dam (AR 128)** need reconstructed. Approximately **$15 million per interchange** *(just construction)*

The limited alternative routes due to surrounding mountains and lakes exacerbate the issue. If an incident or road work occurs on one of the main highways, there are few parallel routes to divert traffic, resulting in quick backups. Which could turn into an immediate safety concern, making it more difficult to navigate for emergency personnel.

Network Constraints & Congestion

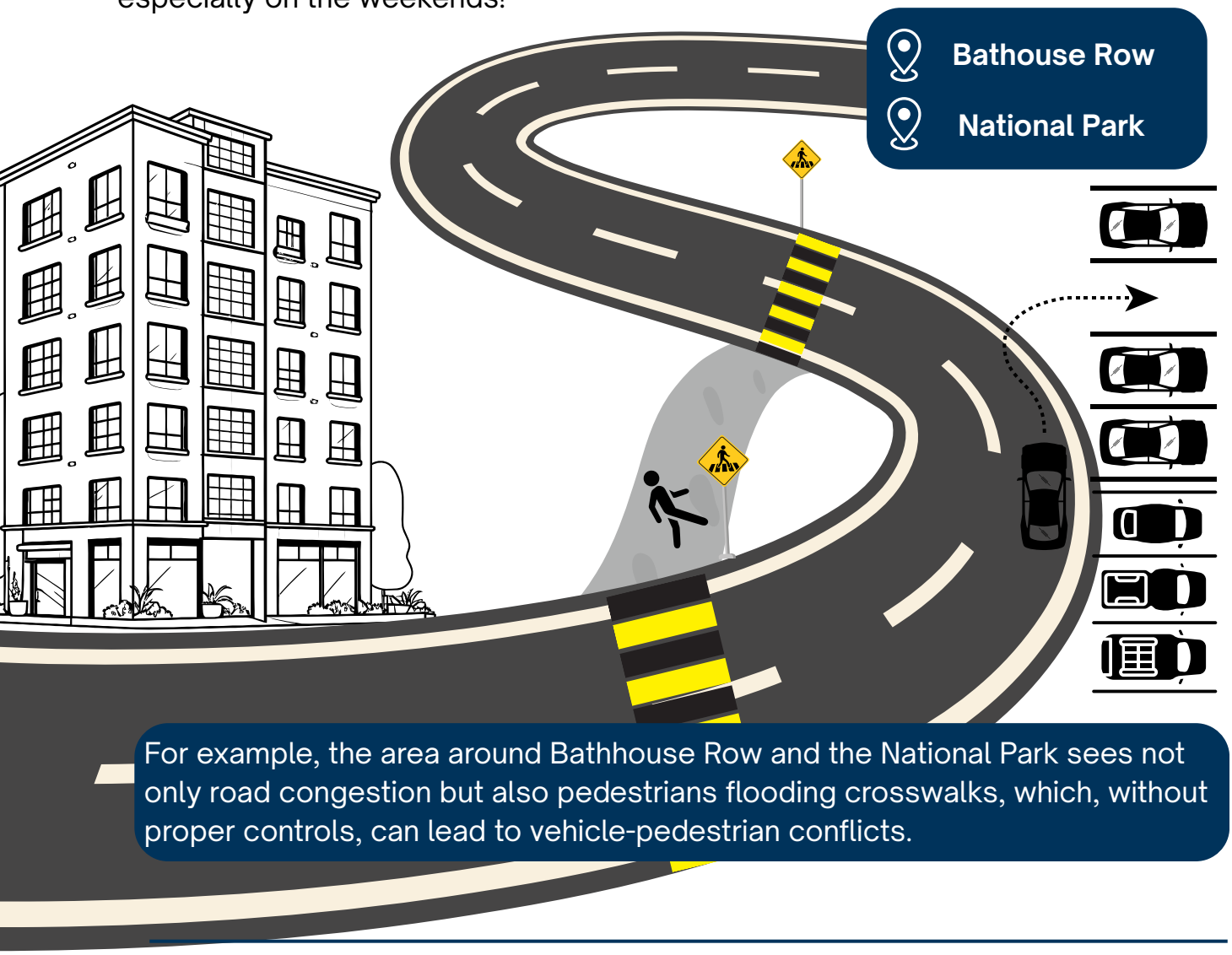
Replacing five aging interchanges along the US 270/MLK Expressway is critical to relieve recurring bottlenecks, improve safety, and support Hot Springs' growth in tourism, healthcare, and logistics. Priority locations—Higdon Ferry Rd/AR 88, Airport Rd/US 70, Central Ave/AR 7, Albert Pike/US 270, and Carpenter Dam Rd/AR 128—routinely experience high turning volumes, outdated geometrics, and limited pedestrian accommodation, creating crash risks and delays that ripple across the network. Modern interchange reconstructions will add adequate turn lanes and storage, lengthen ramps, correct sight-distance deficiencies, and integrate sidewalks/paths where feasible to connect jobs, retail, and neighborhoods. In today's dollars, construction alone is estimated at nearly $15 million per interchange, underscoring the need for phased implementation aligned with the priority order and available funding.



- **Higdon Ferry Road (Arkansas Highway 88)** at the intersection of the MLK Expressway, U.S. 270.
- **Airport Road (U.S. Highway 70)** at the intersection of the MLK Expressway, U.S. 270.
- **Central Avenue (Arkansas Highway 7)** at the intersection of the MLK Expressway, U.S. 270.
- **Albert Pike Road (U.S. Highway 270)** at the intersection of the MLK Expressway, U.S. 270.
- **Carpenter Dam Road (Arkansas Highway 128)** at the intersection of the MLK Expressway, U.S. 270.

Network Constraints & Congestion

Balancing local and tourist travel is a challenge. Weekday traffic is moderate, but weekends bring an influx of tourists unfamiliar with local streets, slowing traffic and raising safety concerns. Neighborhoods near attractions face spillover traffic and parking shortages, prompting the City of Hot Springs to adopt a new parking manual and kiosk system to improve the experience for visitors and residents. The Hot Spots are along the Historic Bathouse Row and Hot Springs National Park, especially on the weekends!



Chapter 3 - Challenges & Opportunities

Challenges & Opportunities

Infrastructure Limitations & Maintenance

The mountainous terrain of the region creates natural constraints on infrastructure expansion. Steep grades and rocky ground make it costly to widen existing roads or construct new routes, as cutting through hillsides or bridging ravines involves significant expense and potential environmental impacts. The landscape's numerous creek valleys and lake inlets add to this complexity, requiring many small bridges and culverts—some of which are aging and in need of replacement or rehabilitation.

Much of the roadway network is built on historic alignments established decades ago. While these corridors, such as Central Avenue through downtown, contribute to the area's character, they often feature tight curves, narrow rights-of-way, and limited space for expansion. For local agencies operating with constrained budgets, maintaining these older assets is an ongoing challenge.

Through this plan, the MPO must focus on critical maintenance priorities, including bridge replacements identified in Chapter 5, to safeguard safety and reliability. Pavement preservation projects—particularly in coordination with ARDOT on key routes such as Malvern Avenue, Airport Road, Albert Pike, Central Avenue, and the MLK Expressway—are equally vital. Because funding for these state routes is largely determined, maintained, and matched by ARDOT, it is essential for the local planning body to advocate for sustained investment. Keeping the transportation system in peak condition will help ensure a safe, efficient, and welcoming experience for both residents and visitors.

Challenges & Opportunities

Safety

While not a large metropolitan area, Hot Springs has its share of safety issues on the transportation system. Certain intersections and roadway segments experience higher crash rates, often where high volumes meet outdated designs. For example, the interchanges where the MLK Expressway meets major arteries (**Central Ave**, **Airport Road**, **Albert Pike**, **Higdon Ferry**, etc.) were built decades ago and now handle more traffic than intended, leading to weaving and merging issues. These locations appear in the MPO's list of needs (***see Chapter 4***) as candidates for reconfiguration to improve safety and throughput.

In addition, arterial roads like **Central Avenue** have stretches with numerous driveways and turning movements amid heavy traffic, contributing to rear-end and angle crashes. Pedestrian safety is a concern downtown and in certain neighborhoods – there have been incidents of ***pedestrians struck crossing Central Ave or Albert Pike where crosswalks or signals were insufficient***.

The MPO's planning process utilizes data (such as the state's eCrash database) to pinpoint high-crash locations. A safety analysis of recent crash data (2019–2024) shows clustering of incidents along the primary corridors in the urban area, which reinforces the need for targeted improvements (e.g., better signal timing, access management, crosswalk upgrades).

Addressing safety is not only a state and federal priority (**Safety is the first National Goal for transportation**) but also critical for public confidence in the transportation system.

Challenges & Opportunities

Central Ped Crossings

Roads like **Central Avenue, Albert Pike, Airport Road, and Malvern Avenue** have a higher proportion of safety incidents when compared to other roads throughout the Tri-Lakes region.

Central Avenue - Pedestrian Crossing Issue Areas:

Oakwood Ave. - Best Western

Henderson St. - Rocky's Corner

Bell Pl. - Crosswalk Bar & Club

Higdon Ferry & Central Intersection

Challenges & Opportunities

Central Ped Crossings

Roads like Central Avenue, especially in the downtown, national park, bathhouse row corridor, there is significant pedestrian conflict areas. These are continuously monitored for what can be done to improve safety.

Central Avenue - Pedestrian Crossing Issue Areas:

Challenges & Opportunities

Environmental & Cultural Management

A major challenge in transportation planning here is adding capacity or new facilities without harming the very natural and historic resources that draw people to Hot Springs. The MPO is committed to context-sensitive solutions (CSS) and rigorous environmental review for all projects. This means whenever a new roadway or widening is proposed, the design process will involve evaluating impacts on parks, wetlands, wildlife, and historic sites. For example, if a new connector road were considered, studies would determine if it would run afoul of National Park property or require large-scale tree clearing, and alternatives would be sought to avoid those. Where impacts are unavoidable, mitigation (like building wildlife underpasses, noise buffers, or replanting trees) would be implemented.

Additionally, since tourism and quality of life are linked to the area's historic charm and natural beauty, transportation projects must avoid aesthetic or cultural degradation. The community has expressed that widening roads through park areas or historic neighborhoods is undesirable. Thus, the MPO's strategy is to focus on modernizing existing corridors (e.g., adding turn lanes, improving intersections, using ITS for better flow) rather than carving new highways through untouched land. An example is favoring the widening of Highway 270 West which follows an existing alignment out of Hot Springs, over any notion of building a completely new bypass through the national forest – the former improves capacity where development already exists, whereas the latter would disrupt pristine areas. This approach aligns with federal planning factors emphasizing environmental protection and consistency with local growth plans.

The MTP supports preservation of green corridors along roads. Given Hot Springs' location in a sensitive watershed and the prevalence of flash flooding in narrow valleys, these considerations are vital. Transportation improvements should enhance resilience, which is what we aim to do within the Tri-Lakes region!

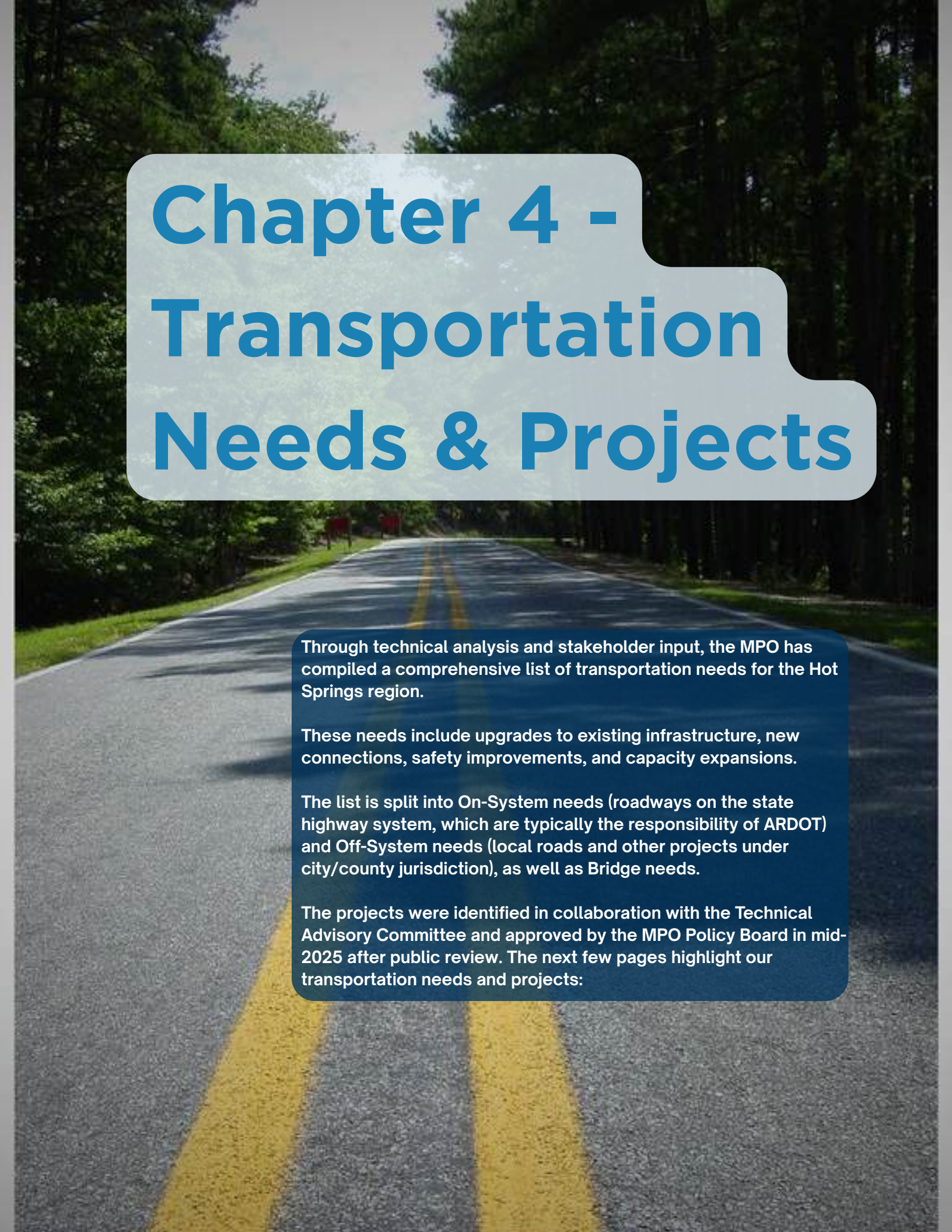
Challenges & Opportunities

Multi-Modal Future

Despite the challenges, Hot Springs has opportunities to improve mobility in sustainable ways. The relatively compact urban form means public transit improvements could have a meaningful impact. Hot Springs Intracity Transit, the local bus service, currently operates a handful of fixed routes. As identified in the plan, expanding coverage to underserved neighborhoods (especially those with many low-income or senior residents) and increasing frequency on busy routes can make transit more viable. The MPO advocates for exploring demand-response transit (dial-a-ride or micro transit shuttles) to reach low-density areas and mobility-limited residents. Such services can be lifelines for older adults who no longer drive, providing door-to-door trips to medical appointments or shopping. Partnerships with non-profits and human service agencies are continuously monitored to see where collaboration is possible.

Active transportation (biking and walking) is another area of focus. Hot Springs' mild climate and scenic environment are conducive to walking and cycling, yet infrastructure for those modes is limited outside downtown. Short commutes and tourist exploration both could generate more walking/cycling trips if proper facilities existed. The city has begun adding bike lanes (for example, recent resurfacing of a section of Malvern Avenue included bike lanes) and constructing sidewalks in gaps. The Greenway trail, once extended, will form a backbone for non-motorized travel through town. The MTP identifies key bike/ped projects, such as sidewalk and bike lane additions on Park Avenue (AR 7 north of downtown) to improve safety and access to parks. Enhancing walkability in the tourist core – better crosswalks, pedestrian signals, benches, lighting – not only improves safety but also bolsters the local economy by encouraging visitors to stroll and explore on foot. In residential areas, traffic calming and safe routes to school are priorities to encourage children to walk or bike safely.

In summary, the Hot Springs metropolitan area's transportation challenges – congestion during peak periods, limited network redundancy, safety hotspots, and infrastructure aging – are counterbalanced by opportunities to enhance transit, embrace active transportation, and carefully plan expansions. The following chapter will detail how the MPO proposes to address the identified needs and take advantage of these opportunities through specific projects and initiatives.



Chapter 4 - Transportation Needs & Projects

Through technical analysis and stakeholder input, the MPO has compiled a comprehensive list of transportation needs for the Hot Springs region.

These needs include upgrades to existing infrastructure, new connections, safety improvements, and capacity expansions.

The list is split into On-System needs (roadways on the state highway system, which are typically the responsibility of ARDOT) and Off-System needs (local roads and other projects under city/county jurisdiction), as well as Bridge needs.

The projects were identified in collaboration with the Technical Advisory Committee and approved by the MPO Policy Board in mid-2025 after public review. The next few pages highlight our transportation needs and projects:

Transportation Needs & Priority Projects

These needs were submitted with the understanding that funding will be pursued through multiple channels – federal highway funds (STBGP, Safety funds, etc.), state programs, and local capital improvements. The MTP includes a financial plan (Chapter 6) which outlines expected revenues and spending by category. Not all identified needs can be funded within the 20-year horizon with reasonably expected funds (especially large widenings like Hwy 7 South); therefore, the MPO will prioritize projects for inclusion in the constrained plan versus illustrative future projects. Prioritization criteria center on factors such as safety benefits, congestion relief, community support, environmental impact, and consistency with regional goals. For example, a project like the MLK interchange improvements might score high due to clear safety and congestion issues, whereas a more expansionary project like Hwy 7 South widening might be phased later due to cost and environmental hurdles.

The identified projects also reflect an emphasis on maintenance and optimization of the existing system. Roughly half of the listed needs are about fixing or improving what's already there – intersections, signals, bridges – which aligns with federal performance goals to maintain infrastructure condition and improve system reliability. The inclusion of bike/pedestrian elements in several projects underscores the MPO's commitment to multimodal planning: whenever a road is widened or improved, complete streets principles are considered (meaning adding sidewalks, etc., not just lanes for cars).

Public input played a role in shaping this list. In community surveys and meetings, citizens frequently mentioned concerns about congestion on Highway 270 West and Central Avenue, safety at specific intersections (like those near Oaklawn and on Airport Road), and the lack of sidewalks in parts of the city. The projects below directly respond to those concerns. By addressing these needs, the plan aims to improve safety (through intersection upgrades and bridge fixes), efficiency (through added lanes and better traffic control), and accessibility (through new connectors and sidewalks/bikeways).

Moving forward, each of these projects will undergo further development including engineering design, environmental review, and securing of funding. The MPO will coordinate with ARDOT on state route projects to ensure they enter the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) when ready. Local officials will champion off-system projects through city/county budgets and seek grants where available (e.g., a state TAP grant or federal RAISE/FLAP grant for the Greenway or other trail connectors).

The MTP serves as the blueprint to justify those funding requests by demonstrating regional consensus and performance-based need for each improvement.

On-System Projects

NEW Interchanges

MLK Expressway

Reconfigure the major interchanges where the MLK Expressway (US 270 Bypass) meets local arteries:

- Hwy 88 (Higdon Ferry Rd)
- Hwy 70 West (Airport Rd)
- Hwy 7 South (Central Ave)
- Hwy 270 West (Albert Pike Rd)
- Hwy 128 (Carpenter Dam Rd).

These five interchange areas are critical nodes that experience congestion and have higher crash rates. Reconfiguration (such as new ramp designs, added turn lanes, or improved signalization) will improve safety and traffic flow. These projects align with the MPO's safety emphasis and will require coordination with ARDOT.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Hwy 88 (Higdon Ferry Rd)	$24,000,000.00
Hwy 70 West (Airport Rd)	$24,000,000.00
Hwy 7 South (Central Ave)	$24,000,000.00
Hwy 270 West (Albert Pike Rd)	$24,000,000.00
Hwy 128 (Carpenter Dam Rd)	$24,000,000.00
Total Cost:	**$120,000,000.00**

**$14,200,000.00 per new interchange (when existing interchange needs replaced, rather than a new location); however, based on the figures for Airport Road in the TIP/STIP $30 million ($24 million federal) i used it*

Widening Projects

Carpenter Dam Rd.

Widen Hwy 128 from the MLK Expressway north to Hwy 270 (Malvern Avenue). This segment currently is a two-lane road connecting the expressway to the fast-growing south side of Hot Springs (Malvern Ave is a commercial corridor toward Hot Spring County). Widening would likely create a 4- or 5-lane urban section with sidewalks/bike lanes, improving capacity and safety for a route that sees increasing traffic.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Carpenter Dam Road	**$3,200,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$3,200,000.00**

**$8,000,000.00 per mile for widening 2 to 4 lanes - 0.4 miles approximately*

Widening Projects

AR 7 & 5 North

Expand Highway 7 North to four lanes from the junction of Hwy 7 and Hwy 5 up to the entrance of Hot Springs Village and similarly expand Highway 5 from the Hwy 5/7 roundabout to the east gate of Hot Springs Village. Hot Springs Village is a large retirement community; these highways are key links carrying commuter and visitor traffic between it and Hot Springs. As the Village grows, these routes need added capacity and possibly turn lanes for safety. The widening will also enhance regional connectivity toward the northwest. This project would build on recent investments in the New Bypass Extension to the Village.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
AR 7 North from roundabout at 5/7 Junction to Desoto Blvd.	**$61,840,000.00**
AR 5 North from Deerpark to Desoto Blvd.	**$70,400,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$132,240,000.00**

**$8,000,000.00 per mile for widening 2 to 4 lanes - 7.73 and 8.8 miles respectively*

Widening Projects

AR 7 South

Widen Highway 7 South toward the Lake Hamilton area. Ideally the plan would widen most or all of Hwy 7 South (Central Ave extended) to four lanes to better handle the immense amount of tourism and resident travel from Texas and Louisiana into Hot Springs. This southward route is a popular approach to Hot Springs (via Hwy 7 Scenic Byway) and widening it would alleviate a major bottleneck. This is a longer-term project and would be done in phases due to cost and environmental considerations of widening a scenic byway. Additionally, this will build off of the work already being done on Hwy 7 South towards Bismark, maximizing the investment already contributed towards a growing area as well.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
AR 7 South from Albright Rd. to Hot Spring County Line.	**$18,400,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$18,400,000.00**

**$8,000,000.00 per mile for widening 2 to 4 lanes - 2.3 miles approximately*

Widening Projects

270 West

Continue widening US 270 West from the MLK Expressway terminus westward towards Mount Ida/Montgomery County. Portions of this corridor are already being addressed: the first phase (AR 227 to Fleetwood Drive) was completed, adding lanes and improving intersections, and the second phase (Fleetwood to the Ouachita River) is beginning soon. Ultimately, expanding Highway 270 westward will provide a continuous four/five-lane facility from Hot Springs to accommodate growing traffic and improve safety on this heavily traveled route out of the city. This would also provide a future extension with the planned I-49 route from Fort Smith to Texarkana. Adding an additional East/West thoroughfare connection between two major interstates in the state, I-30 and the future I-49 Extension.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
270 West - Ouachita River to Montgomery County Line	**$122,400,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$122,400,000.00**

**$8,000,000.00 per mile for widening 2 to 4 lanes - 15.3 miles approximately*

Intersection Projects

Higdon & Central

Reconfigure the intersection near Oaklawn Racing Casino Resort where AR 88 (Higdon Ferry) meets AR 7 (Central Ave). This is a high-crash intersection especially during racing seasons with heavy traffic and numerous turning movements. Improvements could include additional turn lanes, better signal coordination, and pedestrian crossing features to handle event crowds. Oaklawn's continued expansion makes this a priority for both traffic management and safety. This is a high conflict area with pedestrians and is one of the highest safety concerns.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Higdon Ferry (AR 88) and Central Ave (AR 7) in front of Oaklawn	**$1,900,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$1,900,000.00**

**$1,900,000.00 per traffic signal upgrade (with intersection capacity improvements)*

Intersection Projects

Central Ave.

Several busy intersections along Central Avenue (AR 7) within the city need upgrades. Specific intersections cited include **Cornerstone Boulevard**, **Buena Vista Road**, **Mehta Court**, and **Higdon Ferry Road**. These are locations with significant turning traffic into commercial areas where adding turn lanes, and improving signal timing could reduce delays and crashes. Given Central Ave is the main arterial through town, improving these junctions will have a broad impact on traffic flow. These projects have a high rating for improving traffic flow in a high traffic count area, bound to see more traffic in the future as development continues to blossom.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Cornerstone Boulevard	**$480,000.00**
Buena Vista Road	**$480,000.00**
Mehta Court	**$480,000.00**
Higdon Ferry Road (Southern End)	**$1,900,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$3,340,000.00**

**$1,900,000.00 per traffic signal upgrade (with intersection capacity improvements)*
***$480,000.00 per traffic signal*

Safety Projects

Adcock & Majestic

One noted project is a potential safety project to reconfigure the intersections on US 70 (Airport Road) at Adcock Road and Majestic Lodge Road. This stretch of Airport Road has multiple closely spaced access points and has seen accidents as drivers turn across fast-moving traffic. The improvement might involve adding a center turn lane, better signage, or consolidating access points to make left turns safer. We had several dozen comments regarding the safety concerns and congestion as no dedicated turn lanes in either direction for vehicles approaching the intersection from the North/South. Therefore, this project could improve efficiency, reduce congestion, and minimize safety potential conflicts.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
US 70 (Airport Road) at Adcock and Majestic - Intersection Reconfiguration	**$1,900,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$1,900,000.00**

**$1,900,000.00 per traffic signal upgrade (with intersection capacity improvements)*

Safety Projects

Albright & AR 290

Similar safety-driven project on the south side: reconfigure the intersection of AR 7 (Central) with AR 290 and Albright Road. This is near the south end of Lake Hamilton, where through-traffic mixes with local turning traffic to lake neighborhoods. A possible solution could be a roundabout or turn lanes to channel movements more safely. This project has been recently taken on as a study area, and should receive feedback/guidance from ARDOT regarding their findings on next steps.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
AR 7 (Central Ave) at AR 290 and Albright Road - Intersection Configuration	**$1,900,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$1,900,000.00**

**$1,900,000.00 per traffic signal upgrade (with intersection capacity improvements)*

Pavement Preservation

Central Ave.

The proposed project involves repaving Central Avenue (Arkansas Highway 7), a key corridor within the National Highway System and one of the most heavily traveled roadways in Hot Springs. The project limits extend from Buena Vista Road to Whittington Street, encompassing the heart of downtown. This stretch includes the historic Bathhouse Row, a nationally significant landmark and major tourism destination. Repaving will not only improve pavement quality and extend the life of the roadway but also enhance safety, rideability, and the visitor experience in one of Arkansas's most iconic corridors. Given Central Avenue's dual role as both a vital transportation link and a cultural gateway, this investment supports regional mobility while preserving the character of Hot Springs' historic downtown.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
AR 7 (Central Ave) Repaving from Buena Vista to South of Fox Pass (Select Sections)	**$4,720,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$4,720,000.00**

**$230,000.00 per lane mile ($170,000 for 2inch overlay, additional $60,000 per lane mile for milling)*

Pavement Preservation

Various

The proposed project involves repaving the following corridors:

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
AR 171 from Malvern to Lake Catherine	**$3,280,000.00**
AR 128 (Carpenter Dam) from AR 290 to Malvern Ave	**$1,120,000.00**
AR 227 from National Park College to Mountain Pine (Lake Ouachita Cutoff)	**$2,240,000.00**
US 270 Expressway from Central to Airport	**$2,800,000.00**
Albert Pike from Expressway to Airport Rd Junction	**$880,000.00**
Malvern Ave from Grand to Hollywood	**$720,000.00**
AR Hwy 290 (Southern part of Lake Hamilton) from AR 7 South to AR Hwy 171	**$6,640,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$17,680,000.00**

**$230,000.00 per lane mile ($170,000 for 2inch overlay, additional $60,000 per lane mile for milling)*

Multimodal Improvements

Park Ave.

Multimodal Improvements on State Routes: adding **sidewalks**, **curbs**, and **bike lanes** on **Park Avenue** (AR 7 north) **from Bailey Place to Fox Pass Cutoff**.

Park Avenue, a state highway providing a key northern approach into downtown, traverses a mix of residential areas and motels but lacks continuous, adequate pedestrian infrastructure. The proposed improvements would substantially enhance safety, walkability, and accessibility along this corridor, which also serves as a transit route. This project would build on recent investments in the surrounding area, particularly along Highway 7 from the roundabout at the Highway 5/7 junction. Over the past year, that segment has undergone significant upgrades—including new lane configurations, sidewalks, bike lanes, and curbs—and this effort would extend those enhancements the remainder of the way into the downtown and historic Bathhouse Row district.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Park Ave. - Add sidewalks, curbs, and bike lanes	**$591,500.00**
Total Cost:	**$591,500.00**

**$350,000.00 per mile for sidewalk and curbs - 1.69 miles approximately*

Traffic Signal Upgrades

Various

Traffic Signal System Upgrades: Upgrading traffic signals and controller cabinets “anywhere and everywhere applicable, especially along major arterials”. This need recognizes that many signal systems in Hot Springs are outdated. Modern signal controllers coordinated timing plans, and possibly interconnected signals (with central management or adaptive control) can greatly improve traffic progression along corridors like Hwy 7 and Hwy 70. It also can reduce congestion with relatively low-cost technology improvements compared to widening roads. One approach would be to submit annually, or with every TIP/STIP project requests from ARDOT to upgrade various signals. This would require taking an inventory of the signals in most need, and tackling those first.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Central Ave - Various	**$480,000.00**
Airport Road - Various	**$480,000.00**
Various	**$960,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$1,920,000.00**

**$480,000.00 per traffic signal*

Off-System Projects

Local Connector Projects

Belding Street Connector

A new connection linking Belding Street to Malvern Avenue, including bike lanes and sidewalks. This project would create an important secondary route in an area with limited connectivity, relieving some pressure from the Malvern Avenue corridor and providing better access for a neighborhood currently somewhat isolated. The inclusion of bike/ped facilities would tie into the Hot Springs Creek Greenway and serve a nearby park.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Belding Street Connector	**$280,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$280,000.00**

**$2,000,000.00 per mile for new road collector (2 lane) - 0.14 miles approximately*

Local Connector Projects

Yorkshire Drive Connector

A short connector road to link these two local streets. This would improve circulation in a developing residential area (likely in the uptown or Lake Hamilton area) by providing an alternate route for residents and emergency services. It helps create a grid network where currently a dead-end might exist.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Yorkshire Drive - Grandview Drive Connector	**$200,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$200,000.00**

**$2,000,000.00 per mile for new road collector (2 lane) 0.1 connection approximately*

Local Widening Projects

Glazypeau Rd.

Widen Glazypeau Road from AR 227 (Mountain Pine Road) to AR 7 Scenic Byway. Glazypeau is a county road that serves as a northern connector; widening (and improving its pavement) would support rural residents and potentially provide a better route for folks traveling between Mountain Pine area and Hot Springs Village (it intersects the scenic AR 7 north of the village). This is likely an economic development opportunity for the rural part of the region. Especially considering the new development from Mountain Valley Water near the east end of Glazypeau Rd. near the intersection with AR 7. This would build off of an on-system project, widening AR 7 from roundabout at the AR 7/5 junction to the entrance of Hot Springs Village. A constant theme of this plan, is to maximize what we have, build off what's there, and better connect those resources and infrastructure to one another. Therefore, this project could likely be included for other state and federal grant resources.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Glazypeau Rd. - Widening	**$15,720,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$15,720,000.00**

**$2,000,000.00 per mile for new road collector (2 lane) 7.86 miles approximately*

Local Widening Projects

Golf Links Rd.

Widen Golf Links Road from AR 7 (Central Ave) to the Hot Springs Creek Greenway bridge, including bike lanes and sidewalks. Golf Links is an important east-west local road on the south side of town, running through commercial areas. Widening it (likely to 3 lanes with turn lanes) and adding walk/bike facilities will improve access to commercial centers and link into the trail system. This also provides a better alternative route parallel to busy portions of Central Ave. An example of a multi-modal project as well, that could qualify for state and federal grant opportunities.

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Golf Links Rd. - Widening	**$3,420,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$3,420,000.00**

**$4,500,000.00 per mile for minor widening - 0.76 miles approximately*

Local Widening Projects

Twin Points Rd.

Widen Twin Points Road from AR 88 (Higdon Ferry Rd) to Forest Lakes Boulevard, with bike lanes and sidewalks. This is in the southwestern part of the city near Lake Hamilton. Twin Points is a two-lane road serving a growing residential zone and a quickly expanding commercial zone; upgrading it will improve safety (especially with curves on that road) and provide non-car travel options in an area with increasing development. The intersection connection with the newly developed apartment/condo complex is a key component of this widening, up until the intersection with Higdon Ferry Rd. This project could qualify for state and federal assistance as it directly benefits the neighboring Arkansas State Highway 88 (Higdon Ferry Rd.).

Project	Cost (Construction Only)
Twin Points Rd. - Widening	**$2,205,000.00**
Total Cost:	**$2,205,000.00**

**$4,500,000.00 per mile for minor widening - 0.49 miles approximately*

Bridge Projects

Bridge Projects

Strawberry Rd.

Strawberry Road @ AR 192 Bridge: Replaces two bridges on Strawberry Rd over Little Glazypeau Creek at AR 192. Replacing it will ensure reliable connectivity for that local route. This project has been and continues to be in the current version of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP/TIP). So, is a short-term, high priority project because of the likelihood of receiving funding in the near future.

Project	Deck Area	Cost (Construction Only)
Strawberry Rd. & AR 192 Bridge Replace	639	**$1,400,000.00**
Strawberry Rd. & AR 192 Bridge Replace	427	**$1,400,000.00**
Total Cost:		**$2,800,000.00**

**Per the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP/STIP)*

Local Bridge Projects

Honeycutt, Richard, & Woodlawn

Honeycutt Street Bridge: Replace this bridge in downtown/north Hot Springs. Gulpha Creek runs through town and some older bridges over it need upgrading for flood resilience and structural safety. Honeycutt St is a local street, but the bridge is vital for neighborhood access.

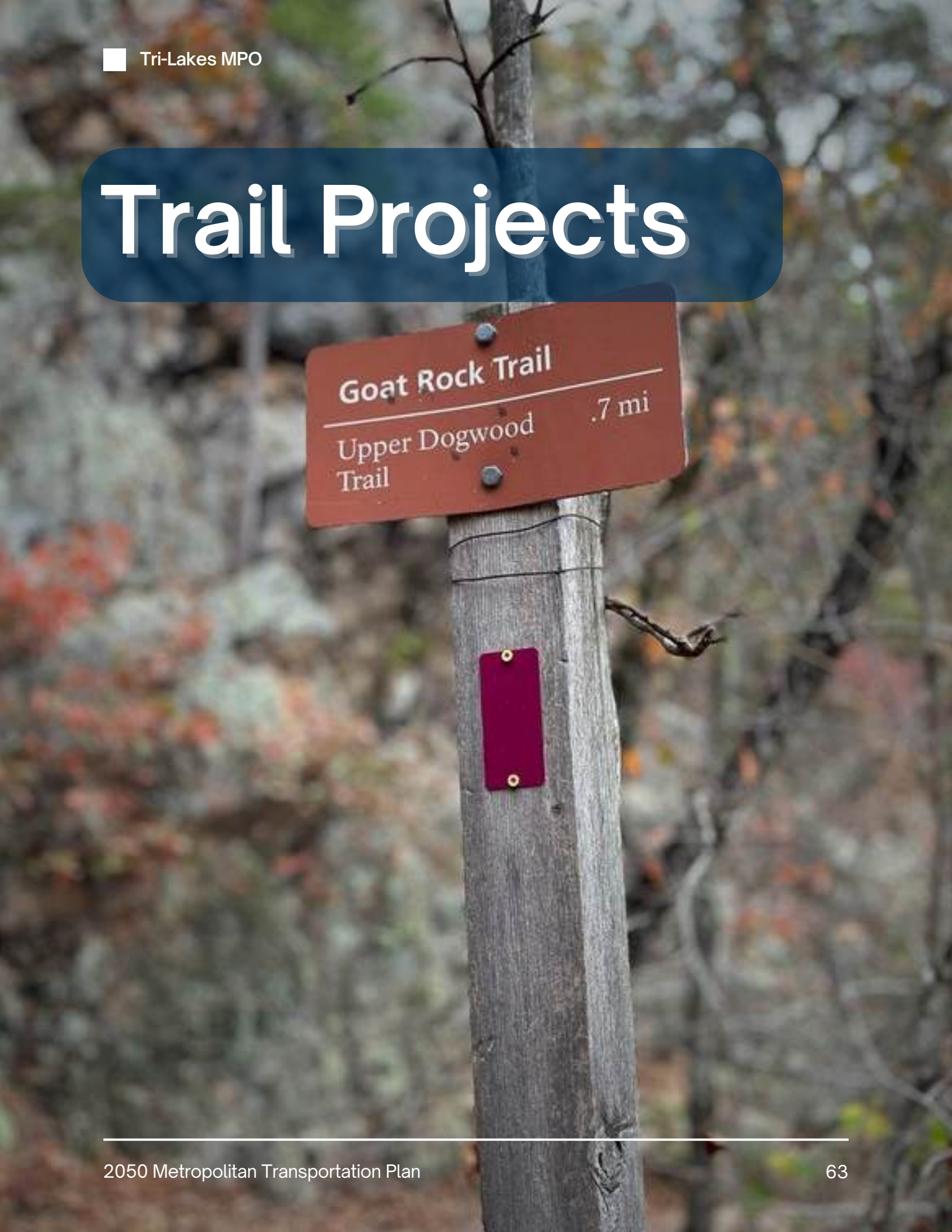
Woodlawn Avenue Bridge: Replace the bridge on Woodlawn. Woodlawn is a local street with an old small bridge (over Hot Springs Creek) that needs attention.

Richard Street Bridge: Replace the bridge on Richard Street near Leonard Street. Similarly, this is a local bridge in a neighborhood that likely has deteriorated. Bridge replacements are often funded through a combination of federal bridge programs and local match – including them in the MTP ensures they are eligible for such funding.

Project	Deck Area	Cost (Construction Only)
Honeycutt Street	827	**$248,100.00**
Woodlawn Bridge	630	**$189,000.00**
Richard Street	803	**$240,900.00**
Total Cost:		**$678,000.00**

**$300 per square foot deck area for new bridges (Off-NHS Roadways) / DOES NOT Include Approaches*

Trail Projects



Transportation Needs

Regionally Significant Trails

Trail Project Context:

- In the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), some project categories considered “not regionally significant” are grouped under a single statewide entry rather than being listed individually.
- This includes off-road trail facilities, which are generally shown as one line item with a total funding amount for the entire state.
- As a result, individual trail projects in the MPO area may not appear in the STIP, even though they are important for local mobility, recreation, and connectivity.
- Including these projects in the MTP helps ensure they are documented in the regional vision, prioritized for potential funding, and available for public review.

Project	Miles	Cost (Construction Only)
Southwest Trail - City Portion	3.0	**$ 3,375,000.00**
Southwest Trail - County Portion	14.0	**$ 15,750,000.00**
Total Cost:		**$ 19,125,000.00**

Planning-Level Trail Cost Estimates

- *Paved multi-use trails (10–12 feet wide, asphalt or concrete) typically range from $750,000 to $1.5 million per mile in most contexts. ($1.125 million my estimate)*
- *Costs can be higher in challenging terrain, where bridges, boardwalks, or significant grading are required.*
- *Estimates are for planning purposes only; actual costs will be refined through engineering and design.*

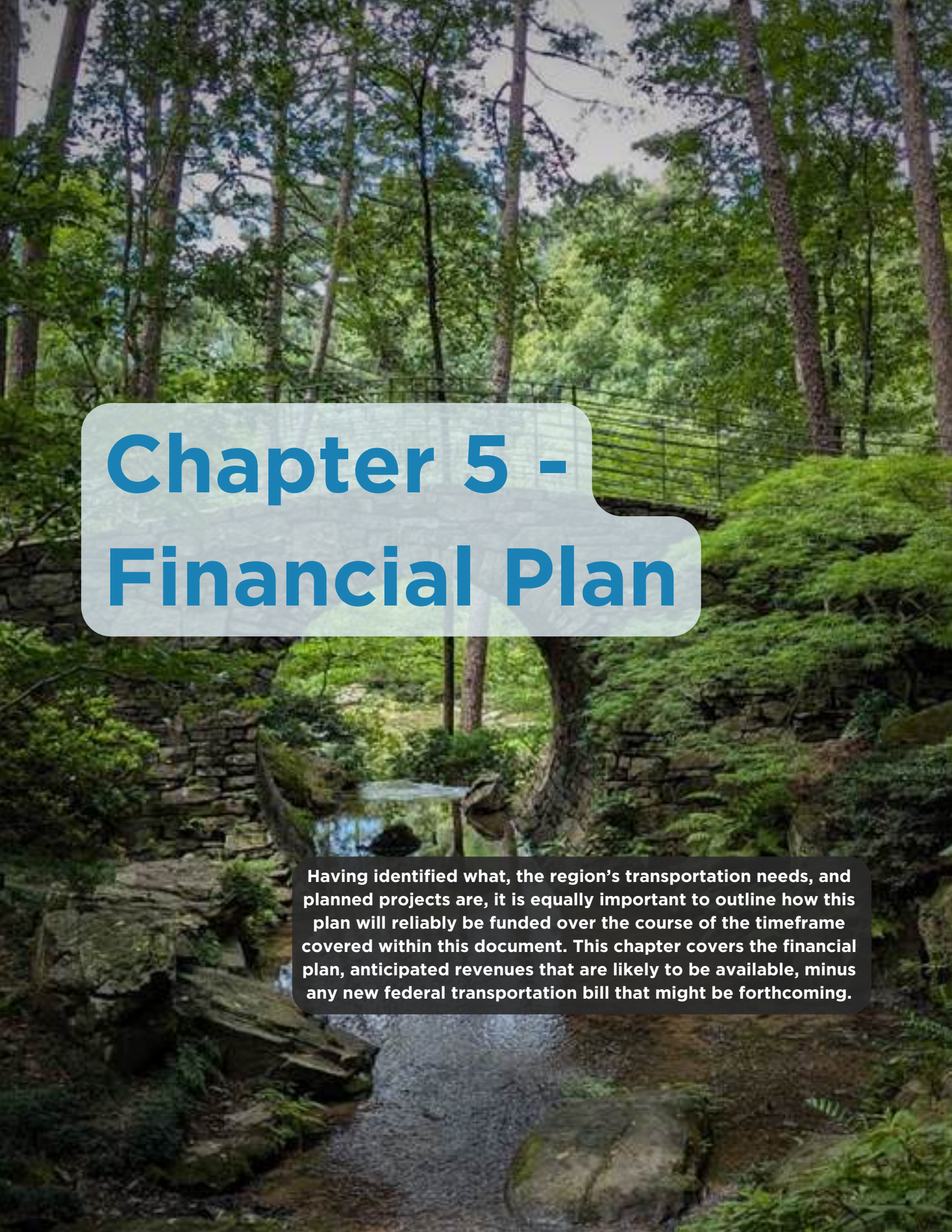
FTA Projects

Transportation Needs

Transit & MPO

Annual federal transit funds play a critical role in supporting both the local transit agency and the Tri-Lakes Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). These funds —allocated through programs such as 5307 (Urbanized Area Formula), 5339 (Bus and Bus Facilities), and 5305 (Planning)—are essential to the daily operations and long-term stability of our region's transportation system. For the transit agency, they cover everything from operating assistance, preventative maintenance, and paratransit service to capital investments in buses, rolling stock, and transit enhancements. For the MPO, the Consolidated Planning Grant ensures continued coordination of regional planning efforts, public engagement, and federal compliance. Together, these annual resources form the backbone of a safe, reliable, and accessible transportation network—vital to the livelihood of both the transit agency and the MPO, and by extension, the communities they serve.

Transit Projects				
County Located	Owned By:	Project Type	Description	Grant
Garland	City	Transit	Operating Assistance	5307
Garland	City	Transit	Capital - Preventative Maintenance	5307
Garland	City	Transit	Capital - Paratransit Service	5307
Garland	City	Transit	Capital - Rolling Stock/Support Equipment	5339
Garland	MPO	Planning	Consolidated Planning Grant (MPO)	5305
Garland	City	Transit	Bus Associated Transit Enhancements	5307
Garland	City	Transit	Capital - Rolling Stock - Conway Funds	5307



Chapter 5 - Financial Plan

Having identified what, the region's transportation needs, and planned projects are, it is equally important to outline how this plan will reliably be funded over the course of the timeframe covered within this document. This chapter covers the financial plan, anticipated revenues that are likely to be available, minus any new federal transportation bill that might be forthcoming.

Funding Outlook & Financial Plan

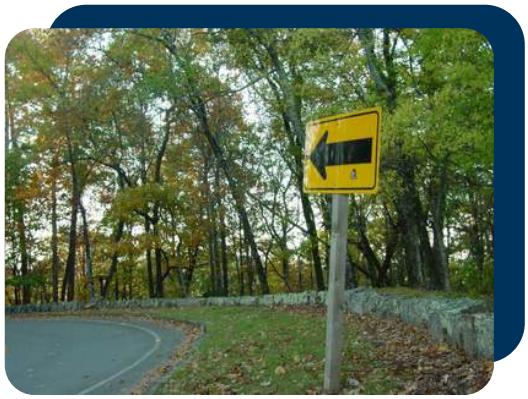
Federal law requires the MTP to include a financially constrained plan – essentially a budget that shows expected funding sources and ensures that projects in the plan have reasonable funding expectations. The Tri-Lakes MPO coordinated with ARDOT and local governments to forecast transportation revenues through 2050. Anticipated funding includes federal allocations (Surface Transportation Block Grant, National Highway Performance Program funds for eligible highways, Highway Safety Improvement Program funds, Transit Section 5307 and 5310 funds for urban transit, etc.), state highway funds (fuel tax revenue and Arkansas's half-cent sales tax for highways, which was extended by voters), and local contributions (city street budgets, county road funds, and possible bond issues for big projects).

Percent

Over 20 years, the total expected revenue for the MPO area's transportation projects is on the order of just over six hundred million dollars, with the majority dedicated to maintenance and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure, and the remainder for capacity expansions and enhancements (like bike/ped facilities and transit). The plan identifies that while routine maintenance (resurfacing, minor rehab) is mostly covered by state and local programs, there is a shortfall for major projects – meaning not all desired widenings or new roads can be built unless new funding sources are found.

Over Next 20yrs

$ 600 million dollars



Funding Outlook & Financial Plan

To address this, the MPO will pursue discretionary grants and encourage innovative financing. For example, the Connecting Arkansas Program (CAP) – a statewide initiative funded by a sales tax – is already contributing to projects like the Highway 270 widening. Continuation or renewal of such programs could fund future phases. The MPO will also evaluate the potential for public-private partnerships. The financial plan in the MTP details year-of-expenditure cost estimates for each major project and matches them against likely funding by time period (2026-2030, 2031-2040, etc.). Fiscal constraint is maintained by prioritizing a set of projects that fit within the projected budget, while additional lower-priority projects are listed as illustrative (if more funds become available). This approach is necessary to comply with federal requirements and to ensure the plan is realistic.

Funding Sources

NHPP

The National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) is one of the core federal-aid highway programs administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), primarily funded through the Highway Trust Fund and authorized under federal surface transportation laws like the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law).

The National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) is one of the largest federal-aid highway programs in the U.S., and it funds projects that support and improve the National Highway System (NHS). That system includes the Interstate Highway System and other key roads important to the nation's economy, defense, and mobility.

Federal	National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)1		
	Pavement Preservation2	Bridge3	System Reliability4
Years	Time Bands		
2026-2030	$28,474,682.75	$9,725,293.14	$4,615,703.39
2031-2040	$66,148,829.98	$22,592,587.54	$10,722,626.19
2041-2050	$80,635,055	$27,540,238	$13,070,821
Total:	*$175,258,567*	*$59,858,119*	*$28,409,151*

Total: $263,525,837

Funding Sources

NHPP

NHPP funds can be used for:

1. Construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation
- Interstate highways
- National Highway System (NHS) routes (includes Interstates and key urban/rural arterials)
- Bridges on the NHS

2. Bridge and tunnel improvements
- Inspection and evaluation
- Rehabilitation or replacement (including off-system NHS bridges)
- Seismic retrofitting, scour countermeasures, etc.

3. Operational improvements
- Intelligent transportation systems (ITS)
- Traffic control systems
- Incident management systems

4. Resilience and safety enhancements
- Projects that improve system performance under current and future conditions
- Evacuation route improvements
- Flood mitigation (including culverts, drainage)

5. Asset management and performance-based planning
- Development and implementation of Transportation Asset Management Plans (TAMPs)
- Projects that help meet state performance targets (like pavement and bridge conditions)

6. Project development
- Preliminary engineering
- Environmental reviews
- Right-of-way acquisition
- Design and permitting

7. Preventive maintenance
- Pavement and bridge preservation work (not just major reconstruction)
- Crack sealing, overlay, joint repair, etc.

Key Conditions:
- Eligible roads must be on the NHS, unless specifically allowed (e.g., NHS bridges).
- Projects must support achieving performance targets set by the state for pavement and bridge condition, system performance, and freight movement.

Funding Sources

STBG

The Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program is one of the most flexible and widely used federal funding sources for transportation infrastructure in the United States. Administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the STBG provides funds to states and localities for a broad range of transportation projects.

Federal	Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)	
	STBG Flex, City, Town and CMAQ Flex 5,6,7	Off-System Bridge8
Years	Time Bands	
2026-2030	$15,731,195.18	$530,470.54
2031-2040	$36,544,749.75	$1,232,322.96
2041-2050	$44,547,846	$1,502,195
Total:	*$96,823,791*	*$3,264,988*

Total: $100,088,779

Funding Sources

STBG

STBG funds can be used for:

What STBG Funds Can Be Used For:

1. Highways and Roads
   - Construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of:
     - Federal-aid highways (including Interstate and non-Interstate roads)
     - Bridges and tunnels on public roads
     - High-risk rural roads and safety improvements
2. Bridge Projects on Public Roads
   - Replacement or rehabilitation of bridges (including those not on federal-aid highways)
   - Seismic retrofit, scour protection, and safety enhancements
3. Public Transportation
   - Capital costs for transit systems (including bus purchases and facility upgrades)
   - Transit vehicle-related equipment for traffic monitoring and control
4. Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure
   - Sidewalks, bike lanes, shared-use paths, pedestrian bridges, and accessibility improvements
   - Safe Routes to School (SRTS) infrastructure
5. Planning and Studies Percent
   - Transportation planning, corridor studies, and environmental mitigation efforts
   - State and MPO planning support
6. Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside
   - A portion of STBG funds is set aside for TA, supporting:
     - Recreational trails
     - Historic transportation facilities
     - Wildlife crossings and habitat connectivity
     - Scenic turnouts, overlooks, and rest areas
7. Carpooling, Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ)
   - Park-and-ride lots, rideshare programs, and congestion management strategies (if eligible)
8. Resiliency and Climate Adaptation
   - Infrastructure hardening to address flooding, erosion, extreme weather events, and sea-level rise
9. Technological Improvements
   - ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems), V2I communications, traffic signal upgrades, and incident management systems
10. Local Road and Rural Investment
    - Localities can apply funds toward local roads and rural infrastructure, especially in coordination with state or MPO planning

Key Notes:

- **STBG is apportioned to states based on federal formulas, with suballocation to urbanized areas, rural areas, and local governments.**
- **It's flexible—allowing transfer of funds between eligible modes (highways, transit, bike/ped).**
- **Must generally meet federal-aid project requirements (design, NEPA, Buy America, etc.).**

Funding Sources

STBG-TA

STBG-TA refers to the Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside from the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program. This set-aside specifically supports smaller-scale transportation projects that enhance mobility, safety, and environmental quality—particularly for non-motorized users.

Federal	Surface Transportation Block Grant Transportation Alternatives (STBG-TA)	
	STBG Flex, City and Town 9,10	Recreational Trails11
Years	Time Bands	
2026-2030	$993,870.08	$213,407.69
2031-2040	$2,308,834.96	$495,762.11
2041-2050	$2,814,457	$604,331
Total:	*$6,117,162*	*$1,313,501*

Total: $7,430,663

Funding Sources

STBG-TA

STBG-TA funds can be used for:

These projects typically fall under active transportation, safety, and community connectivity. Eligible uses include:

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure
   - Sidewalks, bike lanes, shared-use paths, and trails
   - Safe crossings (pedestrian refuge islands, curb extensions, signals)
   - Lighting and signage to enhance safety

2. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Projects
   - Infrastructure that improves the ability of students to walk or bike to school safely
   - Examples: sidewalks near schools, speed calming features, signage

3. Historic and Scenic Enhancements
   - Restoration of historic transportation facilities (e.g., train depots, bridges)
   - Construction of scenic overlooks and turnouts
   - Landscaping and streetscape improvements

4. Recreational Trails
   - Trail development and maintenance (shared with the Recreational Trails Program in some states)

5. Environmental Mitigation
   - Stormwater management projects related to transportation (e.g., bioswales, permeable surfaces)
   - Wildlife crossings and habitat connectivity structures

6. Accessibility Improvements
   - ADA-compliant curb ramps, sidewalks, and facilities to increase equitable access

Key STBG-TA Features

- **Set-Aside Requirement: States must set aside a portion of their STBG funding (roughly 10%) specifically for TA projects.**
- **Local Control: Many states suballocate TA funds to Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) for decision-making in urbanized areas >200,000 population.**
- **Competitive Selection: Projects are typically selected through a competitive grant process, often with criteria around connectivity, safety, access, equity, and cost-effectiveness.**
- **Federal Share: Typically 80%, with a 20% local match required (some flexibility exists for in-kind match or waivers for underserved areas).**

Funding Sources

HSIP

The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) is a federally funded, state-administered program designed to significantly reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads—whether state, county, or local.

Federal	Highway Safety Improvement Plan (HSIP)12
Years	Time Bands
2026-2030	$7,926,571.21
2031-2040	$18,414,021.19
2041-2050	$22,446,589
Total:	***$48,787,181***

Funding Sources

HSIP

HSIP funds can be used for:

Infrastructure & Engineering Improvements

Roadway Safety Features
- Guardrails and barrier systems
- Rumble strips and rumble stripes
- Median barriers and crash cushions
- Breakaway sign supports

Intersection & Lane Safety
- Roundabouts and traffic signal upgrades
- Left-turn and right-turn lanes
- Flashing yellow arrows or dynamic signal timing
- All-way stop conversions

Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety
- Enhanced crosswalks and pedestrian refuge islands
- Pedestrian hybrid beacons (HAWK signals)
- Lighting and signage for pedestrian zones
- Sidewalk gap closures and bike lane separation (if tied to crash data)

Lane Departure Prevention
- Curve realignment or widening
- Enhanced pavement markings and raised markers
- High-friction surface treatments
- Edge line and center line rumble strips

Railroad Grade Crossing Improvements
- Gates, lights, signage, and advance warnings
- Crossing surface upgrades

Data and Systemic Approaches

- Road Safety Audits (RSAs)
- Safety Action Plans (especially for rural areas or vulnerable road users)
- Traffic records systems and data collection enhancements
- Systemic safety improvements (e.g., targeting high-risk curve segments regionwide)

Requirements for HSIP Eligibility

- **Projects must be identified through a data-driven process (e.g., crash history, safety performance functions, risk-based analysis)**
- **Must be included in the State Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)**
- **Focus must be on reducing fatal and serious injury crashes (not just general congestion relief or non-safety purposes)**

Funding Sources

NHFP

The National Highway Freight Program (NHFP) provides federal funding to improve the efficient movement of freight on the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN). Its goal is to strengthen the U.S. supply chain, reduce bottlenecks, improve safety, and support economic competitiveness. The NHFP specifically supports freight-focused infrastructure projects, with an emphasis on highways, but can include multimodal connections under certain conditions.

Federal	National Highway Freight Program (NFP)13
Years	Time Bands
2026-2030	$1,749,943.03
2031-2040	$4,065,249.29
2041-2050	$4,955,516
Total:	*$10,770,709*

Funding Sources

NHFP

NHFP funds can be used for:

Eligible Project Types

1. Highway Freight Infrastructure
   - Construction, reconstruction, and operational improvements on designated NHFN segments (Primary Highway Freight System + critical rural/urban corridors)
   - Projects that reduce congestion or improve freight reliability
2. Bridge and Pavement Improvements
   - Upgrades to structurally deficient freight bridges
   - Pavement reconstruction on heavily used freight corridors
3. Truck Parking Facilities
   - Construction or expansion of safe truck parking/rest areas along freight corridors
4. Freight Intermodal or Rail Projects (Limited)
   - Up to 30% of a state's NHFP funds may be used for:
     - Intermodal transfer facilities
     - Grade separation projects
     - Access roads to ports, rail yards, or freight intermodal hubs
5. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
   - Technologies to optimize freight flow (e.g., weigh-in-motion sensors, truck platooning systems, electronic tolling for freight lanes)
6. Freight Bottleneck Mitigation
   - Projects that relieve chokepoints in urban areas or on major truck corridors
   - Examples: interchange reconstructions, lane additions, ramp improvements
7. Safety Projects
   - Targeted upgrades to reduce freight-related crashes (e.g., improved turning radii, enhanced signage, better signal timing at freight intersections)
8. Freight Planning
   - Development of state freight plans or data collection systems related to freight operations

Program Requirements

- Projects must be located on the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) or support its function
- Must be aligned with a state's freight investment plan, as outlined in its State Freight Plan
- Require performance-based goals, such as improving:
  - Truck travel time reliability
  - Safety on freight routes
  - Infrastructure condition

Funding Sources

FTA

Federal transit funds serve distinct but complementary purposes. Section 5307 supports the transit agency with operating assistance, maintenance, paratransit service, and bus improvements—keeping daily service reliable. Section 5305 funds the MPO's planning work, ensuring coordinated regional transportation

Years	*5305/MPO	5307			****5339	Total:
		**Operating	***Capital/PM	***Paratransit		
2026	$117,000	$546,000	$100,000	$79,000	$133,000	*$975,000*
2027	$119,000	$557,000	$102,000	$81,000	$135,000	*$994,000*
2028	$121,000	$568,000	$104,000	$82,000	$138,000	*$1,013,000*
2029	$123,000	$579,000	$106,000	$83,667	$140,333	*$1,032,000*
2030	$125,000	$590,000	$108,000	$85,167	$142,833	*$1,051,000*
2031	$127,000	$601,000	$110,000	$86,667	$145,333	*$1,070,000*
2032	$129,000	$612,000	$112,000	$88,167	$147,833	*$1,089,000*
2033	$131,000	$623,000	$114,000	$89,667	$150,333	*$1,108,000*
2034	$133,000	$634,000	$116,000	$91,167	$152,833	*$1,127,000*
2035	$135,000	$645,000	$118,000	$92,667	$155,333	*$1,146,000*
2036	$137,000	$656,000	$120,000	$94,167	$157,833	*$1,165,000*
2037	$139,000	$667,000	$122,000	$95,667	$160,333	*$1,184,000*
2038	$141,000	$678,000	$124,000	$97,167	$162,833	*$1,203,000*
2039	$143,000	$689,000	$126,000	$98,667	$165,333	*$1,222,000*
2040	$145,000	$700,000	$128,000	$100,167	$167,833	*$1,241,000*
2041	$147,000	$711,000	$130,000	$101,667	$170,333	*$1,260,000*
2042	$149,000	$722,000	$132,000	$103,167	$172,833	*$1,279,000*
2043	$151,000	$733,000	$134,000	$104,667	$175,333	*$1,298,000*
2044	$153,000	$744,000	$136,000	$106,167	$177,833	*$1,317,000*
2045	$155,000	$755,000	$138,000	$107,667	$180,333	*$1,336,000*
2046	$157,000	$766,000	$140,000	$109,167	$182,833	*$1,355,000*
2047	$159,000	$777,000	$142,000	$110,667	$185,333	*$1,374,000*
2048	$161,000	$788,000	$144,000	$112,167	$187,833	*$1,393,000*
2049	$163,000	$799,000	$146,000	$113,667	$190,333	*$1,412,000*
2050	$165,000	$810,000	$148,000	$115,167	$192,833	*$1,431,000*
Total:	*$3,525,000*	*$16,950,000*	*$3,100,000*	*$2,429,167*	*$4,070,833*	*$30,075,000*

*MPO is a 80/20 match, federal/local
**Operating is a 50/50 match, federal/local
***Capital or Preventative Maintenance is a 80/20 match, federal/local
****Rolling Stock/Support Equipment

Funding Sources

FTA

Federal transit funding comes through several key programs, each with a distinct purpose.

Section 5307 Urbanized Area Formula Grants provide the backbone of support for our local transit agency, covering vital needs such as operating assistance, preventative maintenance, paratransit service, and bus-related capital improvements. These funds ensure that daily service remains reliable, accessible, and safe for riders.

Section 5305 Metropolitan Planning Grants are directed to the MPO, enabling staff to carry out long-range transportation planning, coordinate with local governments, and engage the public in shaping future transit and roadway investments.

Finally, **Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Grants** provide targeted capital funding to replace aging vehicles and purchase support equipment, helping to modernize the fleet and maintain efficient service. Together, these programs sustain both the day-to-day operations of the transit system and the forward-looking planning needed to guide regional growth.

Funding Sources

Local Turnback

Local turnback funds are one of the most important tools available to Garland County and its municipalities for maintaining and improving the transportation system. These dollars—generated through state-collected revenues like the transportation sales tax, motor fuel taxes, and vehicle registrations—flow directly back into our community to repair streets, upgrade infrastructure, and keep people moving safely. Without them, many local projects would struggle to find consistent funding, delaying improvements that residents and businesses depend on every day .

Because these funds are distributed annually and based on factors such as population, vehicle registrations, and land area, they provide a predictable and equitable stream of support for local governments. For Garland County, Hot Springs, Mountain Pine, and other municipalities, this means having the ability to not only maintain existing roads but also to plan strategically for growth, tourism, and economic development. In short, turnback funds are not just numbers on a balance sheet—they are the lifeline that ensures safe, reliable, and modern transportation for our region's future .

Local	Local Turnback Funds				
	Garland County	Fountain Lake	Hot Springs	Lonsdale	Mountain Pine
Years	Time Bands				
2026-2030	$19,567,280	$199,745	$13,975,425	$37,330	$305,775
2031-2040	$39,134,560	$399,490	$27,950,850	$74,660	$611,550
2041-2050	$39,134,560	$399,490	$27,950,850	$74,660	$611,550
Total:	*$97,836,400*	*$998,725*	*$69,877,125*	*$186,650*	*$1,528,875*

Total: $170,427,775

Funding Sources

Total Funding

Over the next 25 years, the Hot Springs area is projected to receive significant transportation funding through multiple federal and state programs. These investments will enhance safety, improve mobility, and ensure the long-term preservation of critical infrastructure.

National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) will provide more than $263 million to the region, targeting pavement preservation, bridge rehabilitation, and system reliability. These funds will allow for resurfacing highways, strengthening bridges, and addressing congestion on critical corridors that connect Hot Springs with the wider state and national highway system.

Local Turnback Funds will generate nearly $170 million across Garland County and its municipalities, including Hot Springs, Fountain Lake, Mountain Pine, and Lonsdale. These flexible funds will empower local governments to invest directly in streets, drainage improvements, safety projects, and community-level infrastructure needs.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) will dedicate nearly $49 million to projects focused on reducing crashes, addressing roadway hazards, and improving intersections and corridors where serious injuries and fatalities have occurred.

National Highway Freight Program (NHFP) will contribute over $10 million to ensure the efficient movement of goods, supporting freight corridors and industrial access routes that strengthen the local economy.

Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Transportation Alternatives (STBG-TA) programs together will bring more than $107 million, supporting city and county road projects, bridge improvements, and multimodal investments such as sidewalks, bike facilities, and recreational trails. These investments will make Hot Springs' network more connected and accessible for all users.

Funding Sources

Big Picture Impact

In total, these funding streams represent hundreds of millions of dollars flowing into the Hot Springs region over the planning horizon. The impact will be seen in smoother highways, safer intersections, modernized bridges, expanded trail networks, and more resilient infrastructure for both residents and visitors. This investment ensures that Hot Springs can continue to thrive as both a regional hub and a nationally recognized tourist destination, while meeting the long-term transportation needs of its growing population.

Transportation Investments

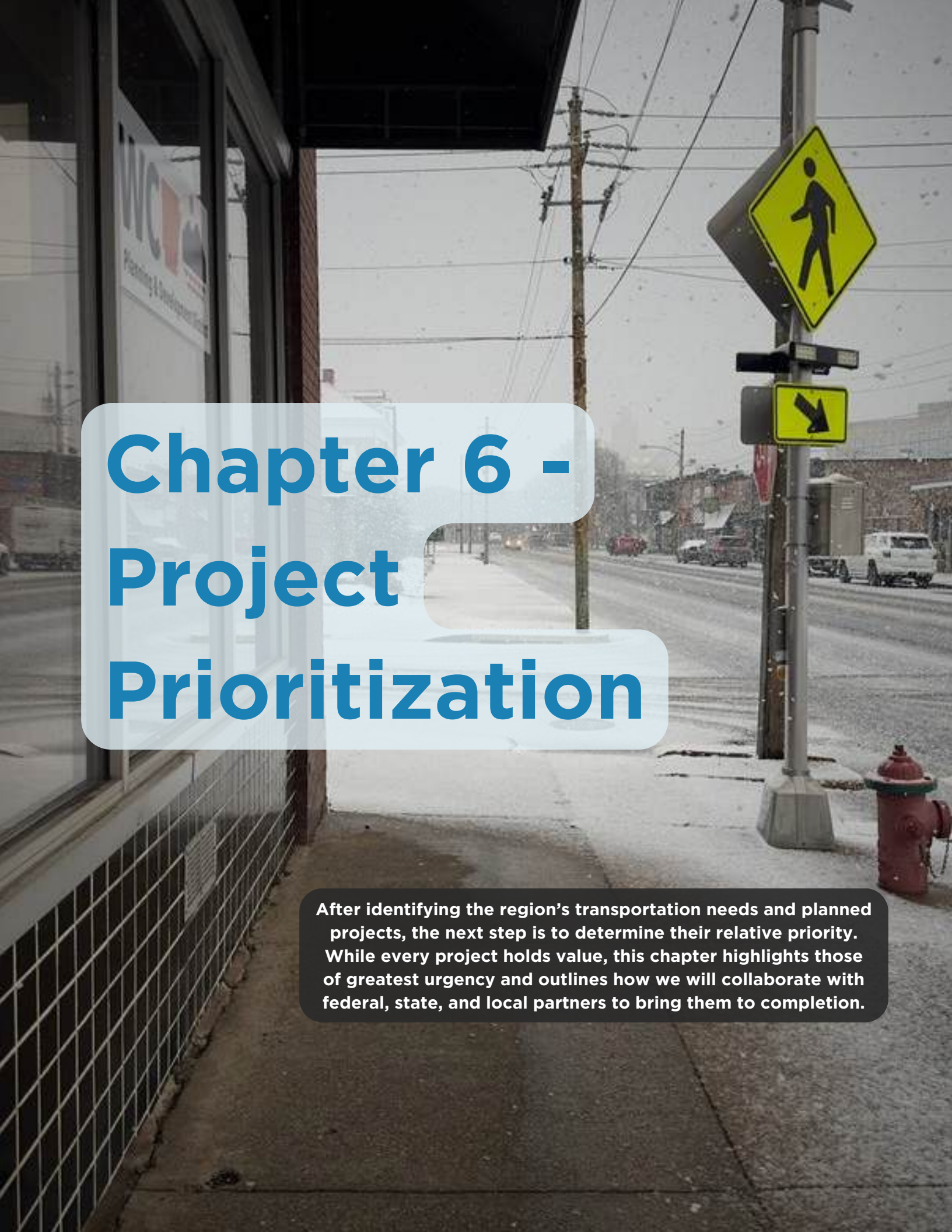
Funding Sources

Summary

Over the life of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, an estimated $631 million in transportation funding is anticipated for the region. Of this total, about $430.6 million will come from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to support roadway and highway improvements, while the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will provide roughly $30.1 million for transit operations and capital needs. Local governments are expected to contribute approximately $170.4 million in matching funds, ensuring federal projects can move forward. These figures do not include any additional state match that the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) may provide, which would further increase available resources. Together, this framework outlines the core funding picture that will guide regional transportation priorities through 2050.

	Federal (FHWA)	Federal (FTA)	Local
Years	Time Bands	Time Bands	Time Bands
2026-2030	$69,961,137	$5,065,000	$34,085,555
2031-2040	$162,524,984	$11,555,000	$68,171,110
2041-2050	$198,117,049	$13,455,000	$68,171,110
Total:	*$430,603,170*	*$30,075,000*	*$170,427,775*
$631,105,945			

Total Transportation Dollars: $631,105,945



Chapter 6 - Project Prioritization

After identifying the region's transportation needs and planned projects, the next step is to determine their relative priority. While every project holds value, this chapter highlights those of greatest urgency and outlines how we will collaborate with federal, state, and local partners to bring them to completion.

Project Phasing & Prioritization

Guided by: federal requirements

Implementation of the MTP will be phased. Near-term priorities (next 5 years) will focus on projects that address urgent safety issues and maintenance – for example, the interchange reconfigurations and bridge replacements are high on the list. These are likely to appear in the upcoming Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for funding in the near term. Medium-term projects (5-15 years) include some of the capacity expansions that require longer lead times, such as segments of highway widenings and major new connectivity projects. Long-term projects (15-20+ years) are ones that depend on growth and funding materializing, like completely new corridors if ever needed. The MPO developed a project scoring system to aid in prioritization.

This scoring considers:

- **Safety Benefits:** Does the project reduce crashes or address a high-crash location? (Projects like intersection reconfigurations scored very high here.)
- **Congestion Relief/Mobility: Will the project significantly improve traffic flow or travel time on a key route? (Widenings and signal upgrades score well on this.)**
- **Accessibility and Equity: Does it improve access for underserved communities or provide modal options like transit/bike/ped? (Sidewalk projects, transit expansion, connectors in low-income areas get points here.)**
- **State of Good Repair: Does it fix aging infrastructure (bridge, pavement) that, if not addressed, could fail? (Bridge projects, reconstruction get credit.)**
- **Environmental Impact: Does the project have minimal environmental footprint or include mitigation measures? Projects were not penalized heavily here unless they potentially affect sensitive lands, in which case mitigation plans are required.**
- **Economic Development: Will it support job growth or access to key economic drivers (e.g., improve routes to tourist sites, industrial parks, etc.)**

Project Phasing & Prioritization

Using this scoring and extensive interagency consultation, the MPO identified the top-tier projects to move forward first.

For instance, the Highway 270 West widening phases were already underway (Phase 1 done, Phase 2 funded), so completing that corridor is a priority in the short term, given its high usage and safety improvement for travelers. The Central Ave intersection improvements might be tackled incrementally with each intersection as a separate project, potentially using Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds due to documented crash history. Meanwhile, transit improvements such as route expansion and new vehicles have been incorporated into the short-term program, leveraging FTA funding and City of Hot Springs match.

The MPO will publish an annual listing of obligated projects and track progress. If a project stalls or if cost estimates balloon beyond available funds, the MPO will reassess priorities in each MTP update (or amendment). Flexibility is maintained – the plan provides a roadmap, but it can adapt if, for example, a new employer brings jobs to the area requiring a roadway extension, or if an economic downturn reduces funding.

Projects	Type	System	2026-2030		2031-2040		2041-2050		Total:	
			Revenue	Costs	Revenue	Costs	Revenue	Costs	Revenue	Costs
Federal (Construction Only & Highway Projects Only)			$69,961,137		$162,524,984		$198,117,049		$430,603,170	
MLK Expressway at Airport Rd	NEW Interchange	On-System		*$24,000,000*						*$24,000,000*
MLK Expressway at Higdon Ferry	NEW Interchange	On-System		*$100,000*		*$23,900,000*				*$24,000,000*
MLK Expressway at Central Ave	NEW Interchange	On-System		*$100,000*		*$23,900,000*				*$24,000,000*
MLK Expressway at Carpenter Dam	NEW Interchange	On-System		*$100,000*		*$23,900,000*				*$24,000,000*
MLK Expressway at Albert Pike	NEW Interchange	On-System		*$100,000*		*$23,900,000*				*$24,000,000*
Central Ave and Higdon Ferry	Intersection Improvement	On-System		*$1,900,000*						*$1,900,000*
AR 192 Bridges (Strawberry Rd)	Bridges	On-System		*$2,240,000*						*$2,240,000*
Central Ave Repaving (Buena Vista to S. of Fox Pass Cutoff - Select Sections	Pavement Preservation	On-System		*$4,720,000*						*$4,720,000*
AR Hwy 171 - Malvern to Lake Catherine	Pavement Preservation	On-System		*$3,280,000*						*$3,280,000*
AR Hwy 128 (Carpenter Dam Rd from 290 to Malvern Ave)	Pavement Preservation	On-System		*$1,120,000*						*$1,120,000*
AR Hwy 227 from National Park College to Mountain Pine	Pavement Preservation	On-System		*$2,240,000*						*$2,240,000*
US 270 Expressway from Central to Airport	Pavement Preservation	On-System		*$2,800,000*						*$2,800,000*
Albert Pike from Expressway to Airport Rd Junction	Pavement Preservation	On-System		*$880,000*						*$880,000*
Malvern Ave from Maurice to Hollywood	Pavement Preservation	On-System		*$720,000*						*$720,000*
AR Hwy 290 (Southern part of Lake Hamilton) from AR 7 South to AR Hwy 171	Pavement Preservation	On-System		*$6,640,000*						*$6,640,000*
U.S. 270 West from Ouachita River to Fleetwood Dr	Major Widening	On-System		*$13,840,000*						*$13,840,000*
AR 5 North from Roundabout to Deerpark Rd	Safety Improvements	On-System		*$574,000*						*$574,000*
Carpenter Dam Rd. from Malvern to Expressway	Widening	On-System				*$3,200,000*				*$3,200,000*
AR 7 North from Roundabout to Desoto Blvd	Major Widening	On-System				*$61,840,000*				*$61,840,000*
AR 7 South from Hwy 290 to Hot Spring Co Line	Major Widening	On-System						*$18,400,000*		*$18,400,000*
AR 5 from Deerpark Rd. to East Gate at HS Vlllage	Major Widening	On-System						*$70,400,000*		*$70,400,000*
AR 7 South at Hwy 290 and Albright Rd	Safety Improvements	On-System		*$1,900,000*						*$1,900,000*
Central Ave at Cornerstone	Traffic Signal Upgrade	On-System				*$480,000*				*$480,000*
Central Ave at Buena Vista	Traffic Signal Upgrade	On-System				*$480,000*				*$480,000*
Central Ave at Mehta Ct	Traffic Signal Upgrade	On-System						*$480,000*		*$480,000*
Central Ave at Higdon Ferry Rd (South)	Traffic Signal Upgrade	On-System						*$1,900,000*		*$1,900,000*
Airport Rd./ U.S. 70 at Adcock/Majestic	Safety Improvements	On-System		*$1,900,000*						*$1,900,000*
Park Ave./ AR 7 to South of Fox Pass	Sidwalks, Curbs, and Bike Lanes	On-System				*$591,500*				*$591,500*
Various	Traffic Signal Upgrade	On-System		*$480,000*		*$480,000*		*$960,000*		*$1,920,000*
		Total Revenue:	$69,961,137		$162,524,984		$198,117,049		$430,603,170	
		Total Project Costs:		*$69,634,000*		*$162,671,500*		*$92,140,000*		*$324,445,500*
		Remaining:	$327,137		-$146,516		$105,977,049		$106,157,670	
		4% Increases = Costs in Year of Expenditure (YOE):				*$240,793,558*		*$201,890,086*		*$512,317,645*
		Likely Remaining After Factoring YOE:	$327,137		-$78,268,574		-$3,773,038		-$81,714,475	

Unfunded Projects	Type	System	Costs
U.S. 270 West from Ouachita River to Montgomery Co Line (potential STATE CAP project in future)	Major Widening	On-System	*$122,400,000*
Honeycutt St.	Bridges	Off-System	*$248,100*
Woodlawn	Bridges	Off-System	*$189,000*
Richard St.	Bridges	Off-System	*$240,900*
CR 88/Spring Street Extended	Bridges	Off-System	*$1,422,300*
Southwest Trail - City	NEW Trail	Trail	*$3,375,000*
Southwest Trail - Garland County	NEW Trail	Trail	*$15,750,000*
East Belding St. - New Connector	New Road	Off-System	*$280,000*
Yorkshire Dr. - New Connector	New Road	Off-System	*$200,000*
West Glazypeau Rd. from AR 227 to AR 7	Widening	Off-System	*$15,720,000*
Golf Links Rd. from Central to Hot Springs Creek Greenway	Minor Widening	Off-System	*$3,420,000*
Twin Points Rd from Higdon Ferry to Forest Lakes	Minor Widening	Off-System	*$2,205,000*
		Unfunded Total Project Costs:	***$165,450,300***

Coordination & Implementation

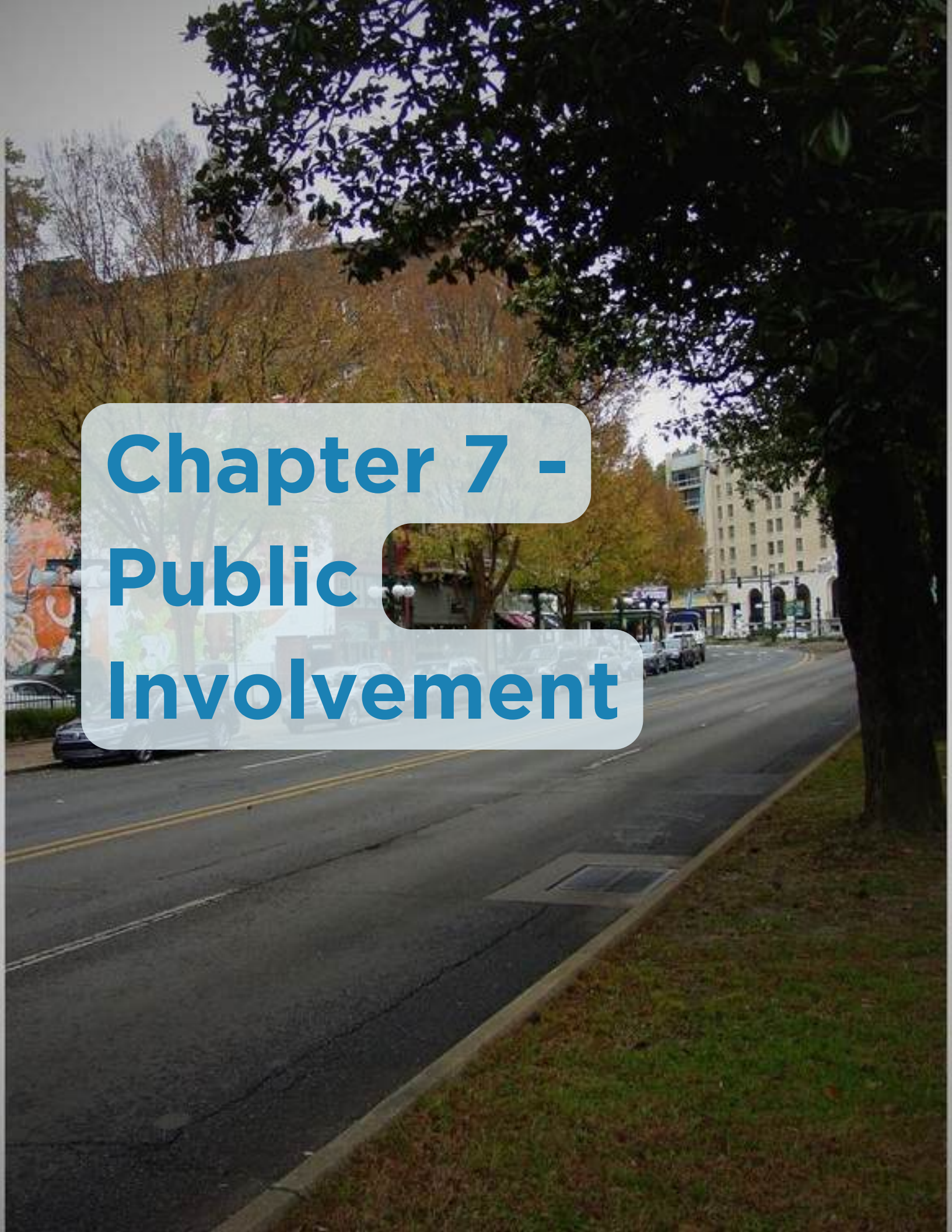
Implementation will be a cooperative effort. The MPO will continue to convene its Technical and Policy committees regularly to oversee progress. Many projects will be led by ARDOT (for state highways), so the MPO will ensure local priorities are communicated in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program development.

For off-system projects, the city and county governments will take lead roles, with MPO providing support in seeking federal grants and ensuring projects align with the regional plan.

Public engagement does not stop with the plan's adoption – as individual projects move forward, there will be public meetings, environmental hearings (for big projects), and feedback opportunities.

The MPO's role is to champion the integrated vision – reminding all players that, for example, when ARDOT is designing that next widening, it should include the bike/ped elements promised in the plan, or when the city pursues a development, that it considers the impacts on the transportation network.

Another aspect of implementation is periodic plan updates and amendments. The MPO will amend the MTP if new significant projects arise (such as a major employer locating in the area requiring a road extension not previously listed) or if funding changes substantially (for instance, if a new federal infrastructure bill injects more funding that could advance additional projects, or conversely if revenues fall short). At minimum, a comprehensive update will occur by 2030 (five years from now) in line with federal law, ensuring the plan remains current with trends and community needs.



Chapter 7 - Public Involvement

Public Involvement
Feedback

Public involvement has been at the heart of the Tri-Lakes Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) work in developing the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Since adopting the most recent Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in 2023, the MPO has remained committed to engaging residents and stakeholders in every major planning effort. Over the past two years, feedback has been collected through public meetings, committee workshops, and online comment forms related to the TIP, Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and previous MTP amendments. These voices have been carefully considered and integrated into this long-range plan.

The MPO's goal is to ensure that transportation planning reflects the priorities and concerns of the people who live, work, and travel throughout the Hot Springs metropolitan area.

This draft 2050 MTP will first be presented to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) on August 19 and to the Policy Board on August 21 for review and feedback. On the evening of August 21, the MPO Director will also share the plan with the Forest Lakes Property Owner's Association, helping ensure neighborhood perspectives are included early in the review process.

Following these meetings, the MPO will host a kickoff public hearing on Saturday, August 23, from 9:00–11:00 a.m. at the Garland County Library. The event will include a formal presentation of the plan's highlights and recommendations, with opportunities for attendees to ask questions and provide comments in person.

Beginning August 24, 2025, the draft plan will be open for a 30-day public comment period. All residents, business owners, and community stakeholders are invited to review the plan and share their input.

All comments received will be documented and addressed in the final plan. The MPO anticipates finalizing the 2050 MTP with the Policy Board on September 25, 2025, following review by both the Technical Advisory Committee and the Policy Board. This process reflects the MPO's ongoing commitment to transparency, accountability, and meaningful public involvement in shaping the future of transportation across the Tri-Lakes region.

Public Involvement

Public Notice

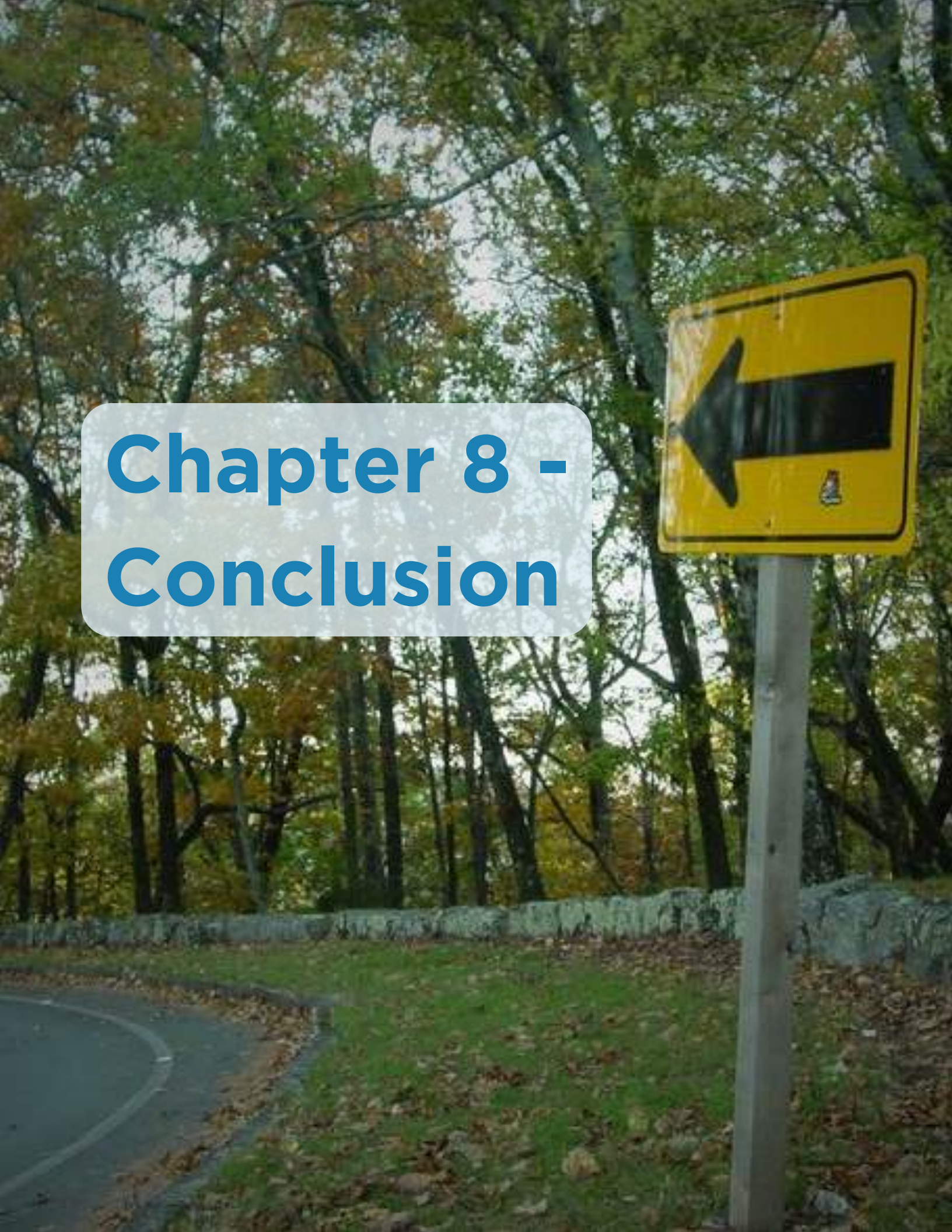
🚦 **Help Shape the Future of Transportation!** 🚦

Public Hearing:
🗓️ Saturday, August 23, 2025
🕘 9:00 – 11:00 AM
📍 Garland County Library

Join the Tri-Lakes MPO for the kickoff presentation of the DRAFT 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan before the public comment period begins. Learn about the plan's vision, major projects, and recommendations — and be among the first to ask questions and share your thoughts in person.

The official 30-day public comment period will open **Sunday, August 24, 2025**. Starting that date, you can:
💻 Submit online at trilakesmpo.org
📧 Email comments to info@trilakesmpo.org

All feedback received during the public hearing will be documented and considered in the final version of the MTP. The final plan will be presented in September to both the Technical Committee and the Policy Board. Meeting dates and times will be announced on the MPO's website and in The Sentinel-Record as the date approaches. Your input will help shape transportation priorities in the Tri-Lakes region for the next 25 years.



Chapter 8 - Conclusion

Concluding Thoughts

The 2025 Tri-Lakes Metropolitan Transportation Plan provides a comprehensive roadmap for the Hot Springs region's transportation future. Developed with extensive input from the public, local leaders, and agency partners, it balances immediate needs (like fixing dangerous intersections and replacing old bridges) with long-range goals (like supporting growth corridors and expanding transit options). Throughout the plan, key federal priorities – safety, infrastructure condition, congestion reduction, environmental sustainability, and equity – are interwoven with local priorities – tourism access, economic development, and quality of life enhancements.

One of the central themes of this MTP is resiliency: resiliency in our transportation network's ability to handle seasonal surges, resiliency against environmental challenges (floods, etc.), and the community's resiliency in adapting to changing demographics and technologies. By investing in a mix of projects, from modernizing highways to building sidewalks and bike trails, the region will be better equipped to provide safe and efficient mobility for residents and visitors alike. The plan also recognizes that transportation is not an end, but a means to broader community goals – connecting people to jobs, schools, healthcare, recreation, and connecting a city's neighborhoods to one another.

Local policymakers on the MPO board, who represent the cities, county, and other stakeholders, have a critical role in championing this plan. Their leadership will be needed to secure funding and push projects forward, as well as to make tough choices when trade-offs arise. The general public, too, has a stake in this plan's success – whether it's a commuter enjoying a quicker trip to work because of a new turn lane, a business seeing increased customers due to streetscape improvements, or a family feeling safer crossing the street after a crosswalk upgrade, the benefits of this plan will be tangible in daily life.

Concluding Thoughts

Of course, plans must remain adaptable. As we look to 2050 and beyond, unforeseen developments – economic shifts, new tourism trends, technological breakthroughs like autonomous vehicles – could alter transportation demands. The MPO is committed to continuous planning (honoring the "continuing" aspect of the 3C process), meaning this MTP will be revisited and refined as needed. However, the vision and goals set forth here provide a strong foundation that transcends individual projects: a vision of a connected Tri-Lakes region where transportation supports a thriving economy, sustains a healthy environment, and improves the lives of all who live and visit here.

By following this plan, the Hot Springs area can look forward to improved roads and bridges, better transit and mobility services, safer streets for walking and biking, and a transportation system that truly reflects the character and needs of the community. The journey toward that future is ongoing, but with the collaborative spirit that established the MPO and guided this planning effort, the region is well positioned to achieve its transportation goals. The Tri-Lakes MPO will continue to lead and coordinate these efforts, tracking progress every step of the way. Together, the community moves forward – toward a more accessible, efficient, and vibrant transportation future for the Heart of Hot Springs.

Appendix A: Federal Requirements for MPOs & MTPs

Summary: The federal framework ensures that the MTP is not just a local wish list, but a coordinated plan developed through a transparent process, grounded in data and aligned with national goals. By adhering to these requirements – from updating the plan on schedule to incorporating performance metrics and engaging the public – the Tri-Lakes MPO maintains access to federal funding and delivers a plan that is both compliant and responsive to community needs. This Appendix serves as a handy reference for MPO board members, officials, and the public to understand the “rules of the road” that govern how we plan our region’s transportation future.

Federal Requirements for MPOs and MTPs

Summary

This appendix provides a brief overview of key federal requirements and guidelines that govern the metropolitan transportation planning process and the development of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP):

- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Mandate: Federal law (Highway Act of 1962, strengthened by subsequent legislation) requires that any urbanized area with population 50,000 or more must have an MPO to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3C) transportation planning process as a condition for receiving federal transportation funds. MPOs are designated by the Governor and typically include local elected officials, state DOT, and transit operators.

- Core Planning Products: MPOs must develop and regularly update several key documents: the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) (annual or biennial work program and budget for planning activities), the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) (long-range plan, minimum 20-year horizon), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (short-range program of projects, typically 4 years), and a Public Participation Plan (PPP) . Additionally, MPOs prepare other plans as needed (e.g., Congestion Management Process for large MPOs, Bicycle/Pedestrian plans, etc.).

- MTP Time Horizon and Update Cycle: The MTP must look at least 20 years into the future and include both long-term and short-term strategies for an integrated multimodal system. It must be updated every 5 years in air quality attainment areas (like Hot Springs) or every 4 years in non-attainment areas. This regular update ensures the plan remains valid and reflects current conditions and forecasts.

Federal Requirements Cont...

Planning Factors: Federal regulations enumerate 10 planning factors that the metropolitan planning process must consider:

- **Economic Vitality** – support the economic vitality of the metro area, enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
- **Safety** – increase the safety of the transportation system for all users (motorized and non-motorized).
- **Security** – increase the security of the transportation system for all users.
- **Accessibility/Mobility** – increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight.
- **Environmental Protection & Quality of Life** – protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life, coordinate transportation with planned growth and economic development.
- **Integration/Connectivity** – enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.
- **Efficient Management & Operations** – promote efficient system management and operation.
- **Preservation** – emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
- **Resiliency & Reliability** – improve the resiliency and reliability of the system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation. (Resiliency was added as a factor by the FAST Act.)
- **Travel and Tourism** – enhance travel and tourism. (Added by the FAST Act, recognizing areas like Hot Springs benefit from tourism planning.)

The MTP must demonstrate consideration of these factors throughout (e.g., by aligning plan goals with them and including projects that address them).

Federal Requirements Cont...

- Performance-Based Planning: MAP-21 (2012) and the FAST Act (2015) instituted requirements for performance-based planning and programming. MPOs must use a performance-driven approach, which includes setting performance targets in coordination with state DOT and transit agencies for national performance measures (safety, infrastructure condition, congestion, system reliability, emissions, transit asset management, transit safety) and integrating those targets and performance measures into the MTP. The MTP must include a description of the performance measures and targets used and a System Performance Report evaluating progress toward targets. In practice, this means the plan should link investment priorities to expected performance outcomes (e.g., how a set of safety projects will help achieve the target of X% reduction in crashes).

- Air Quality Conformity (if applicable): In areas that do not meet national air quality standards (non-attainment or maintenance areas), the MTP and TIP must conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality. This involves a technical analysis to ensure projected vehicle emissions under the plan do not exceed budgets. Hot Springs is currently in attainment, so this is not applicable, but the requirement is noted for context.

- Fiscal Constraint: The MTP (and TIP) must be fiscally constrained – meaning it can only include projects that have identifiable funding reasonably expected to be available. It should outline expected revenue sources (federal, state, local, private) and project costs. If the plan includes illustrative projects beyond funding, those must be clearly noted as unfunded. Fiscal constraint demonstrates to the public and decision-makers that the plan is not just a “wish list” but a viable program of projects.

Federal Requirements Cont...

- Public Participation: Federal regulations stress the importance of public involvement in developing the MTP and TIP. The MPO must have a formal Public Participation Plan (PPP) that provides opportunities for the public (including underserved groups, business community, etc.) to comment at key stages. Techniques can include public workshops, comment periods, visualization techniques (maps, charts), and using the MPO website to share information. The MPO is required to respond to significant public input and include a summary of public comments when the plan is adopted.

- Intergovernmental Consultation: The MPO must consult with state and local agencies on various areas: e.g., environmental resource agencies (parks, wildlife, historic preservation) must be consulted to compare the MTP with conservation plans and maps to identify potential conflicts. Likewise, if the area has Indian Tribal governments or other federal land managers (Hot Springs National Park in this case), they should be part of the consultation process.

- Title VI and Environmental Justice: MPOs must ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice. In short, the MTP should avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations. It should also seek to provide equitable benefits. Practically, MPOs conduct an Environmental Justice analysis of the plan's investments and engagement efforts to include those communities in decision-making.

- Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Planning: For certain transit funds (like elderly and disabled transit funds), federal rules require a locally developed coordinated plan. The MPO often helps prepare this or incorporate its strategies into the MTP to ensure transit needs of seniors and individuals with disabilities are addressed.

Federal Requirements Cont...

- Congestion Management Process (CMP): MPOs in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs, over 200,000 population) must maintain a CMP to manage congestion through non-single-occupant vehicle strategies and operational management. Hot Springs is not a TMA, but the spirit of CMP (prioritizing multimodal and low-cost strategies to manage congestion) is reflected in this MTP's recommendations. Should the urban area grow to TMA status in the future, a formal CMP would be required.

- MTP Adoption and Update Procedures: The MPO Policy Board must formally adopt the MTP. Before adoption, a draft is made available for public review (usually 30 days). Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) review the MTP for compliance and linkage to the Statewide Long-Range Plan. Once adopted, copies of the MTP are provided to the Governor, ARDOT, FHWA, and FTA. The MPO must document the adoption process, including public involvement and any agency comments.

- Relation to TIP and Project Selection: After MTP adoption, the shorter-term TIP must be consistent with the MTP. Projects cannot generally appear in the TIP if they are not in the MTP (at least in generic form). The MPO, in cooperation with state and transit operators, selects projects from the TIP for implementation. FHWA/FTA then approve the TIP as part of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The MTP thus guides the flow of projects into the TIP. Amendments to the TIP or MTP are processed when needed (with opportunities for public review for major changes).

Appendix B: State Turnback & Local Funds

This will detail the current details regarding how much money the state provides back to the local governments for transportation purposes, apart of the 2020 Amendment 1 Sales Tax Initiative.

State Turnback & Local Funds

Understanding how transportation dollars are distributed is critical for fostering transparency and building trust with the public. This appendix explains how 'turnback funds'—often referred to as 'kickback funds'—are allocated by the State of Arkansas to local governments, including Garland County and its municipalities. These funds are a significant source of revenue for maintaining and improving local roadways and transportation infrastructure.

What Are Turnback Funds?

Turnback funds are state-distributed revenues allocated to Arkansas cities and counties for the maintenance and development of local transportation infrastructure. These funds come from various sources including motor fuel taxes, vehicle registration fees, and most notably, the state's 0.5% transportation sales tax.

The 70/15/15 Formula

Revenue collected through Arkansas's transportation taxes is split according to the following formula:

- 70% – Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) for state highways
- 15% – Distributed among counties (County Turnback)
- 15% – Distributed among municipalities (City Turnback)

Impact of Issue 1 (Sales Tax)

Originally approved in 2012 and made permanent by voters in 2020, this sales tax generates approximately $293.7 million annually for transportation needs statewide. Of this total, about $44.1 million is distributed to counties and another $44.1 million to cities each year.

State Turnback & Local Funds

Distribution Criteria

Turnback funds are distributed based on specific criteria:
• County Turnback: Factors include total and rural population, land area, vehicle registrations, and a flat share.
• City Turnback: Based on each city's proportion of the state's total incorporated population.

Estimated Annual Turnback for Garland County

While exact figures may vary from year to year, the following provides a general layout for understanding the distribution of transportation turnback funds to Garland County and its municipalities. These estimates are based on recent Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) and Arkansas Counties Association reports.

County

$3,913,456/year

Cities

Fountain Lake: $39,949/year
Hot Springs: $2,795,085/year
Lonsdale: $7,466/year
Mountain Pine: $61,155/year

Where to Find Official Numbers

Annual turnbac tions are published by ARDOT and the Arkansas Association of Counties. For the most current and accurate figures, citizens and stakeholders may refer to the following sources:

• ARDOT Turnback Reports: www.ardot.gov
• Arkansas Association of Counties: www.arcounties.org
• Garland County Treasurer's Office: www.garlandcounty.org

Garland County and its cities rely on turnback funds to maintain streets, improve transportation infrastructure, and support safe mobility for all residents. These dollars, collected through fuel taxes and the statewide 0.5% transportation sales tax, are an essential part of the region's transportation funding strategy.

Appendix C: Acronyms & Glossary

Acryonym	Name	Definition
3C	Continuing, Cooperative and Comprehensive	A Continuing, Cooperative and Comprehensive (3C) process is required for all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) to be eligible for Federal transportation funding.
AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic	Average daily traffic on a roadway segment for all days of the week during a period of one year expressed in vehicles per day.
ACS	American Community Survey	The American Community Survey is an ongoing survey that provides vital information on a yearly bais about our nation and it's people.
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accomodation, communications, and governmental activities.
ARDOT	Arkansas Deparment of Transportation	Act 192 of 1977 created the Arkansas Department of Transportation (Department), adding responsibilities for coordinating public and private transportation activities and implementing a safe and efficient intermodal transportation system.
ASHC	Arkansas State Highway Commission	The first Arkansas State Highway Commission was appointed in 1913. Amendment 42 of the Constitution of Arkansas, adopted in 1952, established the five-member State Highway Commission. Under this authority, the State Highway Commission is vested with powers and duties for administering Arkansas' State Highway System.
ATMS	Automated Traffic Management System	ATMS is used to improve the efficiency of the transportation network. ATMS utilizes data-analysis and communication technology to reduce congestion in real-time due to crashes and other traffic problems.
BEA	Bureau of Economic Anaylsis	Federal agency within the Department of Commerce that provides economic data and projections.
BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics	Federal agency within the Department of Labor that tracks federal employment data.

BTS	Bureau of Transportation Statistics	The Bureau of Transportation Statistics was established as a statistical agency in 1992. The Intermodal Surface Transporation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 created BTS to administer data collection, analysis, and reporting and to ensure the most cost-effective use of transportation monitoring resources.
CAAA	Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990	The original Clean Air Act was passed in 1963, but the national air pollution control program is actually based on the 1970 revision of the law. The Clean Air Act as amended in 1990 made major changes and contains the most far reaching revision of the 1970 law.
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations	The codification of the rules published in the Federal Register by the executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government. These are the administrative rules and regulations that clarify the impact of the United States Code (USC) or the law.
CMAQ	Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program	The CMAQ program funds transportation projects and programs in air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas that reduce traffic congestion and transportation related emissions
DBE	Disadvantaged Business Enterprise	The DBE program ensures that federally-assisted contracts for transportation projects are made available for small businesses owned/controlled by socially and economically disadvanted individuals.
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	Report developed as part of the National Environmental Policy Act requirements, which details any adverse economic, social, and environmental effects of a proposed transportation project for which Federal funding is part of the project.
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	The federal regulatory agency responsible for administering and enforcing federal environmental laws, including the Clean Air Act, The Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, and others.

FAA	Federal Aviation Administration	FAA provides a safe, secure, and efficient global aerospace system that contributes to national security and the promotion of US aerospace safety.
FAST Act	Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act	The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act is a five-year legislation that was enacted into law on December 4th, 2015. The main focus of the legislation is to improve the Nation's surface transportation infrastructure, including our roads, bridges, transit systems, and rail transportation network.
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration	A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers the federal-aid highway program, providing financial assistance to states to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads, and bridges.
FLAP	Federal Lands Access Program	A federal funding program that bridges the gap for individuals and communities having better access and options to access federal lands.
FTA	Federal Transit Administration	A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers the federal funding to transportation authorities, local governments, and states to support a variety of locally planned, constructed, and operated public transportation systems throughout the U.S., including buses, subways, light rail, commuter rail, streetcars, monorail, passenger ferry boats, inclined railways, and people movers.
FY/FFY	Fiscal Year/Federal Fiscal Year	The MPO's Fiscal Year is from July 1st to June 30th. The Federal Fiscal Year is from October 1st to September 30th
GIS	Geographic Information Systems	Computerized data management system, designed to capture, store, retrieve, analyze, and display geographically referenced information. Typically presented in the form of maps and databases.
HSIP	Highway Safety Improvement Program	The goal of the HSIP program is to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads, including non-State-owned public roads, and roads on tribal lands.
HSIT	Hot Springs Intracity Transit	The City of Hot Springs Transit Department, responsbile for all fixed route transit routes in the Hot Springs Urbanized Area.

HSNP	Hot Springs National Park	The only National Park in the Hot Springs Urbanized Area, and the only National Park in a Census Designated Urban Area within the United States of America.
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development	HUD's mission is to increase homeownership, support community development and increase access to affordable housing free from discrimination. HUD's Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) is a program with many resources that are used to help address a wide array of community development needs, including sidewalks and other transportation infrastructure.
IIJA	Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act	Commonly referred to as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, IIJA was signed into law by President Bien on November 15th, 2021. IIJA included $550 billion in new funding for transportation infrastructure. IIJA authroizes $1.2 trillion in total spending.
ITS	Intelligent Transportation Systems	Electronics, photonics, communications, or information processing to improve the efficiency or safety of the surface transportation system.
LOS	Level of Service	Level of Service (LOS) is a term that describes the operating conditions a driver, transit user, bicyclist, or pedestrian will esperience while traveling on a particular street, highway or transit vehicle. LOS is used in transportation planning as a data friendly tool to help aid in the decision making process regarding road capacity. LOS data allows planners to make more informed decisions regarding transportation projects.
LRTP/MTP	Long-Range Transportation Plan (or Metropolitan Transportation Plan)	A document that serves as the defining vision for the region's transportation systems and services. The LRTP addresses a planning horizon of no less than 20 years. It is developed, and updated every five years by the MPO. The most recent LRTP was adopted in September 2020, with the next update scheduled for September 2025. The plan can be viewed on the MPO website at: https://trilakesmpo.org/plans

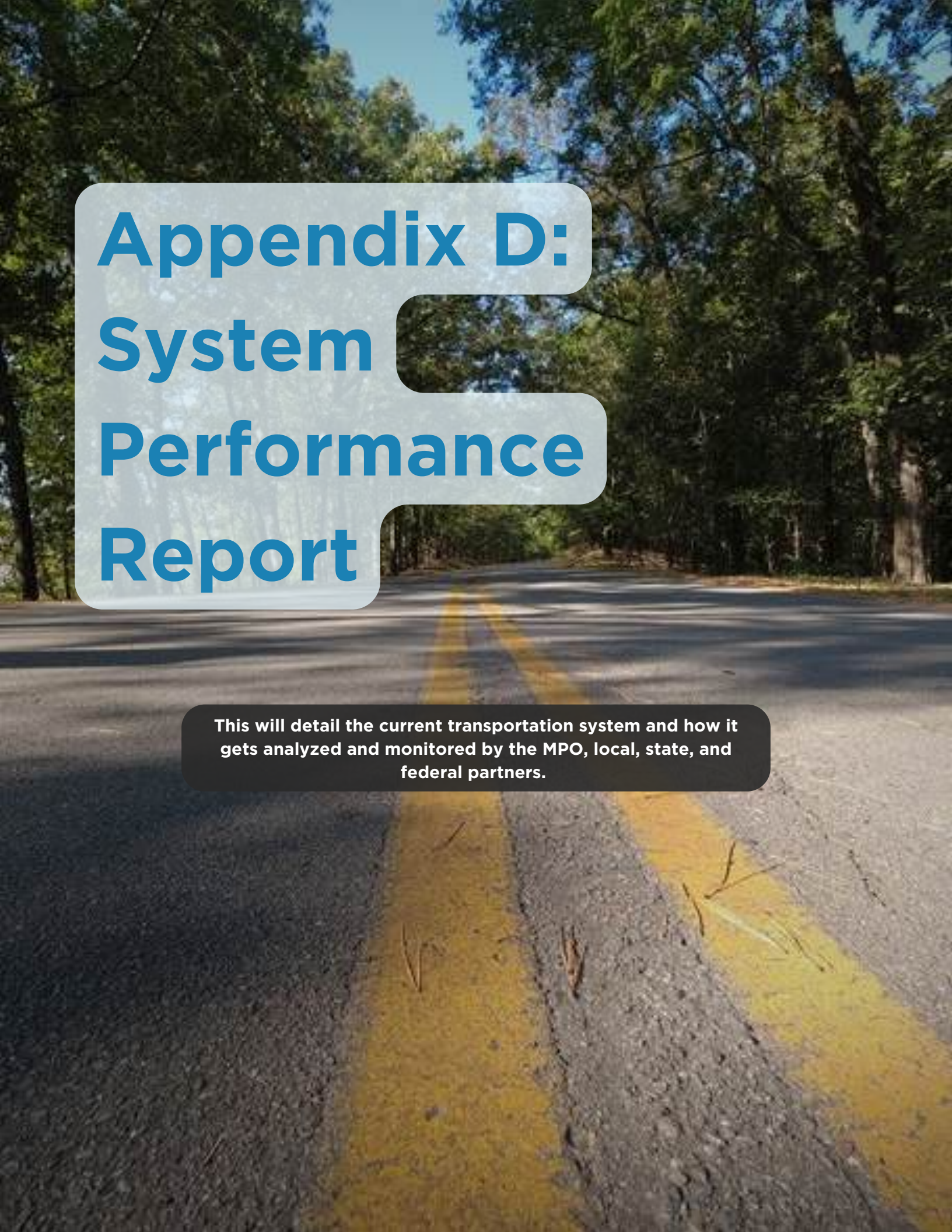
LOTTR	Level of Travel Time Reliability	The Level of Travel Time Reliability (LOTTR) is the ratio of the 80th percentile travel time to the normal travel time (50th percentile) throughout a full calendar year. Data for this measure is derived from the FHWA National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS).
MAP-21	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century	The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act was signed into law in 2012. Funding surface transportation programs at over $105 billion for fiscal years (FY) 2013 and 2014. MAP 21 was the first long-term highway authroization enacted since 2005.
MPA	Metropolitan Planning Area	The geographic area determined by agreement between the metropolitan planning orgization (MPO) for the area and the Governor, in which the metropolitan transportation planning process is carried out.
MPO	Metropolitan Pllanning Organization	An MPO, is a forum for cooperative transportation decision-making for metropolian planning areas. In order for a MPO to be designated as an MPO, an urban area must have a population of at least 50,000 as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau.
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area	A Core Based Statistical Areas associated with at least one urbanized area that has a population of at least 50,000. The metropolitan statistical area comprises the central county or counties or equivalent entities containing the core, plus adjacent outlying counties having a high degree of social and economic integration with the central county or counties as measured through commuting.
NTD	National Transit Database	The National Transit Database (NTD) is the repository of data for the financial, operating, and asset conditions of the nation's transit system.

NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969	Established requirments that any project using federal funding or requring federal approval, including transportation projects, examine the effects of proposed and alternative choices on the environment before a federal decision is made.
NHPP	National Highway Performance Program	The NHPP provides support for the condition and performance of the National Highway System (NHS), for the construction of new facilities on the NHS.
NHPP (Bridge)	National Highway Performance Program Bridge	Reconstuction, resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, or preservation of a bridge on a non-NHS Federal-aid highway (if Interstate System and NHS Bridge Condition provision requirements are satisfied) [23 U.S.C. 119(i)].
NHS	National Highway System	This system of highways designated and approved in accordance with the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 103(b) (23CFR500)
PD&E	Project Development & Environmental Study	A study conducted to determine feasible building alternative for transportation projects and their social, economic and environmental impacts. PD&E studies are required per the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
PM	Performance Management	Performance Management (PM) serves as federally required strategic approach that uses system data and information guide investment and policies to achieve national goals.
PPP	Public Participation Plan	The Public Participation Plan documents the goals, objectives and stategies for ensure all individuals have every opportunity to be involved in transportation planning decisions. The plan is designed to provide a transparent planning process that is free from any cultural, social, racial, or economic barriers and offers multiple opportunities for public participation and input.
PTASP	Public Transportation Agency Safety Action Plan	A plan that is developed by transit agencies to identify responsibilities for safety and day to day implrementation of a safety management system.

SHSP	Strategic Highway Safety Plan	This is a statewide and coordinated safety plan that provides a comprehensive framework for eliminating highway fatalities and reducing serious injuries on all public roads.
STBG	Surface Transportation Block Grant Program	The STBG federal funding promotes flexibility in State and local transportation decisions and provides flexible funding to best address State and local transportation needs.
STIP	Statewide Transportation Improvement Program	The STIP is a statewide prioritized listing/program of transportation projects covering a period of four years that is consistent with the long-range statewide transportation plan, metropolitan transportation plans, and TIPs, and required for projects to be eligible for funding under 23 U.S.C and title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53
STP	Surface Transportation Program	Federal-aid highway funding program that supports a broad range of surface transportation capital needs, including many roads, transit, sea and airport access, vanpool, bike, and pedestrian facilities.
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee	The Technical Advisory Committee provides technical expertise to the MPO by reviewing transportatoin plans, programs, and projects, primarily from a technical standpoint. The TAC is comprised of professional planners, engineers, and other state/local professionals from varying industries throughout the region.
TAM	Transit Asset Management	The strategic and systematic practice of procuring, operating, inspecting, maintaining, rehabilitating, and replacing transit capital assets to manage their performance, risks, and costs over their life cycles, for the purpose of providing safe, cost-effective, and reliable public transportation.
TAMP	Transit Asset Management Plan	A plan that includes an inventory of capital assets, a condition assessment of inventoried assets, a decision support tool, and a prioritization of investments.

TAZ	Traffic Analysis Zones	A defined geographic area used to tabulate traffic-related land use data and forecast travel demand. Traffic Analysis Zones typically consist of one or more Census blocks/tracts or block groups.
TD	Transportation Disadvantaged	Transportation Disadvantaged includes individuals with physical and economic challenges and senior citizens facing mobility issues.
TIP	Transportation Improvement Program	A TIP is a prioritized listing/program of transportation projects covering a period of five years that is developed and formally adopted by a MPO as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process, consistent with the metropolitan transportation plan, and required for projects to be eligible for funding under title 23 U.S.C. and title 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53.
TMA	Transportation Management Area	An urbanized area with a population over 200,000 (as determined by the latest decennial census) or other area when TMA designation is requested by the Gobvernor and the MPO (or affected local officials), and officially designated by the Administrators of the FHWA and FTA. The TMA designation applies to the entire metropolitan planning area.
TOD	Transit Oriented Development	Transit-oriented development, or TOD, is a type of community development that includes a mixture of housing, office, retail and/or other amenities integrated into a walkable neighborhood and located within a half-mile of quality public transportation
TPM	Transportation Performance Management	FHWA defines Transportation Performance Management as a strategic approach that uses system information to make investment and policy decisions to achieve national performance goals.
TRB	Transportation Research Board	The mission of theTransportation Research Board (TRB) is to promote innovation and progress in transportation through research.

TTTR	Truck Travel Time Reliability	The Truck Travel Time Relability (TTTR) is definted as the ratio of longer truck travel times (95th percentile) compared to normal truck travel times (50th) percentile on the interstate system.
UA	Urban Area	A statistical geography entity delineated by the Census Bureau, consisting of densely settled census tracts and blocks and adjacent densely settled territory that together contain at least 50,000 people.
ULB	Useful Life Benchmark	The expected lifecycle or the acceptable period of use in service for a transit capital asset, as determined by the transit agency or by a default benchmark provided by the Federal Transit Administration
UPWP	Unified Planning Work Program	UPWP means a scope or services identifying the planning priorities and activities to be carried out within a metropolitan planning area. At a minimum, a UPWP includes a description of planning work and resulting products, who will perform the work, time frames for completing the work, the cost of the work, and the source(s) of funds.
USC	United States Code	The codification by subject matter of the general and permanent laws of the United States of America.
USDOT	United States Department of Transportation	When used alone, indictes the U.S. Department of Transportation. In conjuction with a place name, indicates state, city, or county transportation agency.
YOE	Year of Expenditure	The current dollar in the year (adjusted for inflation) during which an expenditure is made or benefit realized, such as a project being constructed.
VMT	Vehicle Miles Travelled	A measurement of miles travled by vehicles within a specified region for specified time period.



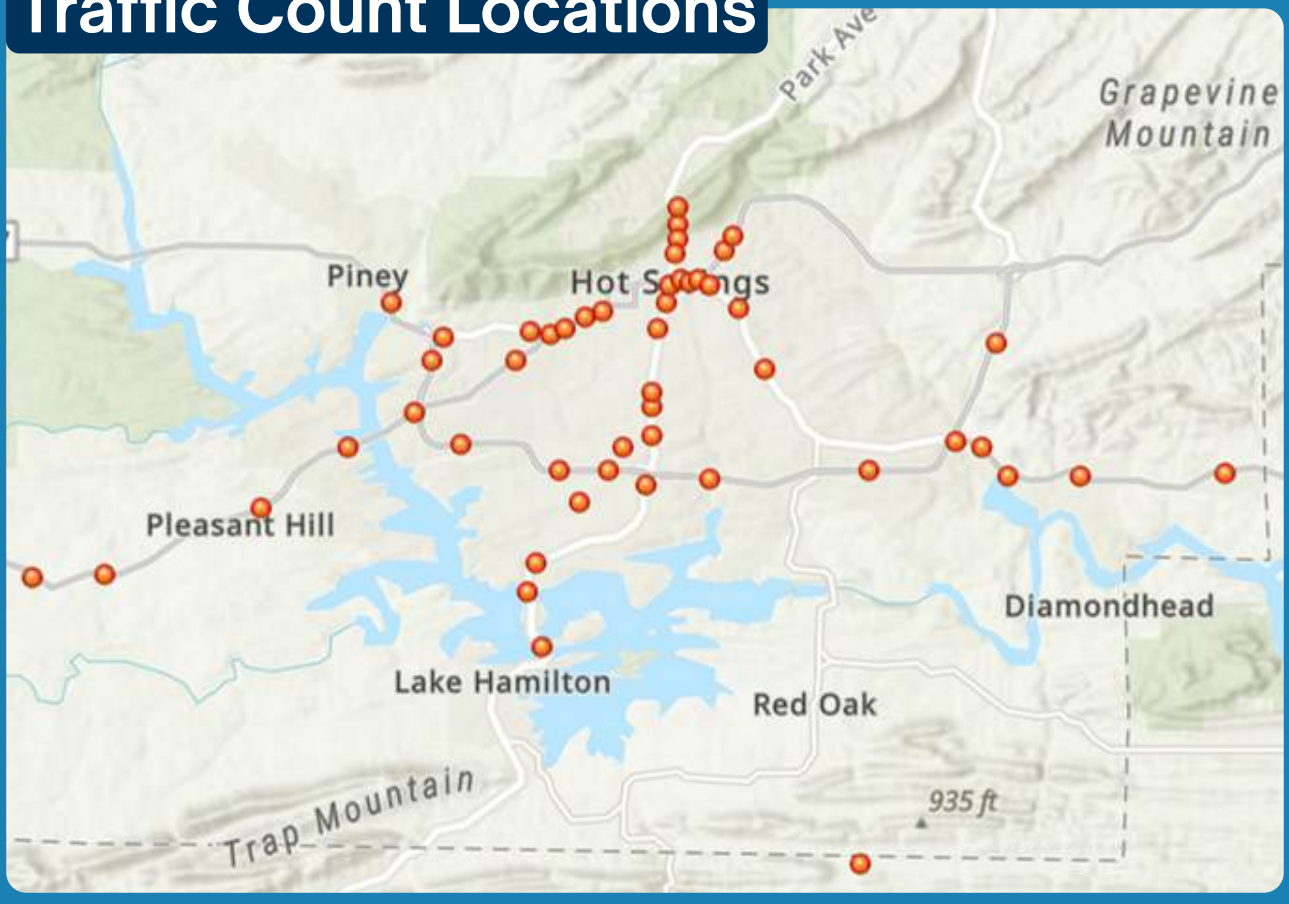
Appendix D: System Performance Report

This will detail the current transportation system and how it gets analyzed and monitored by the MPO, local, state, and federal partners.

Traffic Counts

Regularly collecting and monitoring traffic counts is essential for understanding how people and goods move through the transportation network. These counts provide objective data on traffic volumes, peak travel times, seasonal fluctuations, and growth trends. Planners and engineers use this information to identify congestion points, evaluate the effectiveness of roadway improvements, forecast future demand, and prioritize investments. Without accurate traffic count data, decisions about safety, capacity, and infrastructure funding would be based on assumptions rather than measurable evidence, increasing the risk of misallocating resources and missing emerging issues.

Traffic Count Locations



Rank	Location	Highest Recorded ADT	Change from 2019-2024
1	MLK Expressway (Between Higdon Ferry & Lakeshore)	44,075	19%
2	MLK Expressway (Between Lakeshore & Airport Rd.)	44,000	1%
3	MLK Expressway (Just past Central)	43,855	7%
4	US 70 Airport Rd at MLK Expressway	38,000	-2%
5	US 70 Airport Rd (Between Lake Hamilton Bridge & Adcock)	37,000	2%
6	MLK Expressway at Higdon Ferry Rd.	35,323	7%
7	US 270 Westbound at Bull Bayou Rd.	35,000	-4%
8	MLK Expressway (Between Carpenter Dam & Malvern)	33,825	35%
9	Central Ave (South) at Cornerstone Blvd.	32,000	-4%
10	Central Ave (South) at Greenwood Ave.	27,000	-15%
11	US 270 Eastbound (Just past Albert Pike On Ramp to MLK Expressway)	27,000	-10%
12	US 70 Airport Rd. at Hobby Hill Terrace.	26,000	2%
13	Central Ave (South) just past the southern Higdon Ferry Intersection	26,000	6%
14	Malvern Ave. at Essex Golf Club	25,040	25%
15	Albert Pike in front of new 7brew	25,032	0%
16	Albert Pike at Gardener St.	24,000	-6%
17	Central Ave at Barker St.	23,000	-12%
18	Albert Pike at Avery St.	23,000	-11%
19	Central at Wrights St.	23,000	-4%
20	Malvern Ave. at Catherine Heights Rd.	22,841	9%
21	MLK Expressway just North of Bald Mountain Rd.	22,623	51%
22	Central Ave (South) in front of Doubletree at Lake Hamilton	22,000	11%
23	Central Ave just north of Golf Links Rd.	22,000	-22%
24	Central Ave at W Maurice St.	22,000	-5%
25	Higdon Ferry Rd. at Twin Points Rd.	22,000	-6%
26	US 70 Airport Rd. at Ross Maddox Rd.	21,000	3%
27	Albert Pike at Centerview St.	21,000	-1%

Rank	Location	Highest Recorded ADT	Change from 2019-2024
28	Grand Ave at Rugg St.	21,000	4%
29	Sundown Mountain Rd. just past County Road 825 in Hot Spring County	21,000	0%
30	Grand Ave at Broadway St.	21,000	-2%
31	Grand Ave at Malvern Ave.	21,000	-1%
32	Albert Pike at MLK Expressway	21,000	-11%
33	US 70 Airport Rd at Aldridge Rd	21,000	-42%
34	Malvern Ave. at Indian Springs Rd.	20,775	15%
35	Central Ave (South) at Long Island Dr	20,000	0%
36	Central Ave (Downtown) at Mountain St.	20,000	-16%
37	Central Ave at Woodlawn Ave	20,000	-13%
38	Central Ave (Downtown) in front of the Arlington Resort Hotel & Spa	20,000	-21%
39	Malvern Ave. at Parkshores Rd.	19,139	6%
40	Central Ave (Downtown) at Spring St.	19,000	-11%
41	Albert Pike at Mission St.	18,000	-2%
42	Airport Rd. at Molly Springs Rd.	18,000	-11%
43	Malvern Ave. in front of Library (Overton St.)	17,000	-3%
44	Grand Ave at Grove St	16,000	-8%
45	Malvern Ave at Silver St	16,000	0%
46	Malvern Ave at National Park Medical Center	16,000	0%
47	Central Ave (Downtown) at Ouachita Ave	16,000	-11%
48	Grand Ave at Convention Blvd	16,000	-15%
49	US 270 Eastbound at Garland County Fairgrounds	15,354	18%
50	Higdon Ferry Rd. at Lakeshore Dr.	15,000	-11%

PM's

Safety (PM 1)

Targets for annual reductions in fatalities and serious injuries (per FHWA's five-year rolling average measures). The region will track crashes and aim to support Arkansas' Highway Safety Plan goal of reducing these figures. Success of projects like intersection improvements will be measured by subsequent crash data. The MPO supports ARDOT's targets towards reducing fatalities and serious injury crashes. This is revisited annually, typically in January or February.

Pavement & Bridge Condition (PM 2)

Targets related to percent of pavements and bridges on the National Highway System in good or poor condition. While the MPO area has a limited NHS mileage (mainly the MLK Expressway and a few US highways), maintaining those segments in good condition is a priority. The MPO supports ARDOT's targets to keep poor condition mileage under a certain threshold. Projects in the MTP such as Highway 70 improvements will contribute to preventing deterioration.

Travel Time Reliability (PM 3)

Measures like Travel Time Reliability on the NHS and Truck Travel Time Reliability index. Given the modest size of the network here, the region generally has good reliability except during incidents or peak tourist congestion. The MPO will monitor these reliability metrics; for instance, one target is to maintain a peak hour Travel Time Reliability above 90% on the MLK Expressway corridor. Additionally, while the truck percentages are relatively low on most routes (typically under 5%), the plan acknowledges freight movement needs. Any project on a primary highway (like US 270 or US 70) will consider freight (e.g., designing for truck turn radius).

Transit Asset Management (PM 4)

Intracity Transit has a Transit Asset Management (TAM) plan with targets for keeping buses and facilities in a state of good repair. The MTP incorporates those by planning for periodic vehicle replacements (e.g., replacing buses after 12 years).

Transit Safety (PM 5)

New FTA rules require transit agencies to set safety performance targets (occurrences of injuries, etc.). The MPO will support IT in meeting those through investments in driver training, technology (cameras, etc.), and safe bus stop designs or any other metric/process/policy Hot Springs Intracity Transit chooses to implement.

PM #1 - Safety

ARDOT 2025 Safety Performance Targets

The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) sets annual safety performance targets as part of the Federal Highway Administration's Safety Performance Management framework. This framework measures roadway safety using fatalities and serious injuries, both in raw counts and normalized by vehicle miles traveled. ARDOT uses these targets to guide investments through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), ensuring that strategies are data-driven and performance-based. The 2025 safety targets continue the state's focus on reducing deaths and serious injuries, while also aligning with national reporting requirements for transparency and accountability.

Performance Measure	Target
Number of Fatilities	700
Rate of Fatalities per 100M VMT	1.75
Number of Serious Injuries	3,000
Rate of Serious Injuries per 100M VMT	7.4
Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities/Serious Injuries	130

PM #2 & 3

ARDOT 2024 Biennial Performance Report

The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) submitted its 2024 Biennial Performance Report, which outlines progress toward federally required performance targets for pavement, bridge conditions, travel time reliability, freight reliability, and congestion/air quality measures. These targets are established under the Federal Highway Administration's performance management framework and are coordinated with MPOs to ensure consistency across the state. ARDOT's 2024 report reflects updated conditions, mid-period adjustments, and realistic forecasts that balance system needs with available resources. While performance varies across categories, ARDOT remains committed to improving pavement and bridge conditions, maintaining reliable travel, supporting efficient freight movement, and mitigating congestion and emissions.

Performance Measure	Current (2023)	4-Year Target (2025)
Interstate Pavements – Good Condition	57.8%	45.0%
Interstate Pavements – Poor Condition	0.6%	5.0%
Non-Interstate NHS Pavements – Good	40.5%	35.0%
Non-Interstate NHS Pavements – Poor	4.6%	6.0%
NHS Bridges – Good (by deck area)	43.4%	40.0%
NHS Bridges – Poor (by deck area)	3.1%	8.0%
Interstate Travel Reliability	97.6%	93.0%
Non-Interstate NHS Travel Reliability	96.2%	92.0%
Truck Travel Time Reliability Index	1.18	1.35
Peak Hour Excessive Delay (hours/capita)	9.2	10.8
Non-SOV Travel Share	19.7%	16.2%

PM #4 - Transit

Asset Category		Current	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026
Revenue Vehicles							
Age - % of revenue vehicles within a particular asset class that have exceeded their age ULB	*BU - Bus*	0%	50%	50%	25%	25%	25%
	CU - Cutaway Bus	16.7%	0%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Mileage - % of revenue vehicles within a particular asset class that have exceeded their mileage ULB	*BU - Bus*	0%	25%	25%	0%	0%	25%
	CU - Cutaway Bus	16.7%	0%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Cumulative Condition Score - % of revenue vehicles within a particular asset class that score below 2.0 on the TERM Scale	*BU - Bus*	0%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
	CU - Cutaway Bus	0%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Equipment							
Cumulative Condition Score - % of non-revenue vehicles within a particular asset class that score below 2.0 on the TERM Scale	*Non-Revenue/ Service Vehicle*	0%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Facilities							
Condition Score - % of Facilities that score below 2.0 on the TERM Scale	*Administration*	0%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
	Maintenance	0%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
	Passenger Facilities	0%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%

PM #5 - Transit

Hot Springs Intracity Transit

Agency Safety Plan

Table 5: Baseline 2019 Safety Performance Measures

Mode	Fatalities	Rate of Fatalities*	Injuries	Rate of Injuries*	Safety Events	Rate of Safety Events*	Mean Distance Between Major Mechanical Failure
Fixed Route (Bus)	0	0	1.5	0.0000075	0	0	20,000
Demand Response	0	0	0	0	0	0	27,000

*rate = total number for the year/total revenue vehicle miles traveled

While safety has always been a major component of the Hot Springs Intracity Transit operation, the adoption of this ASP will result in changes across all aspects of the organization. The SPTs set in Table 6 and Table 7 reflect an acknowledgement that SMS implementation will produce new information that will be needed to accurately set meaningful SPTs. We will set our targets at the current NTD reported three-year average as we begin the process of fully implementing our SMS and developing our targeted safety improvements. This will ensure that we do no worse than our baseline performance over the last three years.

Table 6: Fixed Route (Bus) Safety Performance Targets

Mode	Baseline	Target
Fatalities	0	0
Rate of Fatalities*	0	0
Injuries	1.5	1.5
Rate of Injuries*	0.0000075	0.0000075
Safety Events	0	0
Rate of Safety Events*	0	0
Mean Distance Between Major Mechanical Failure	20,000	20,000

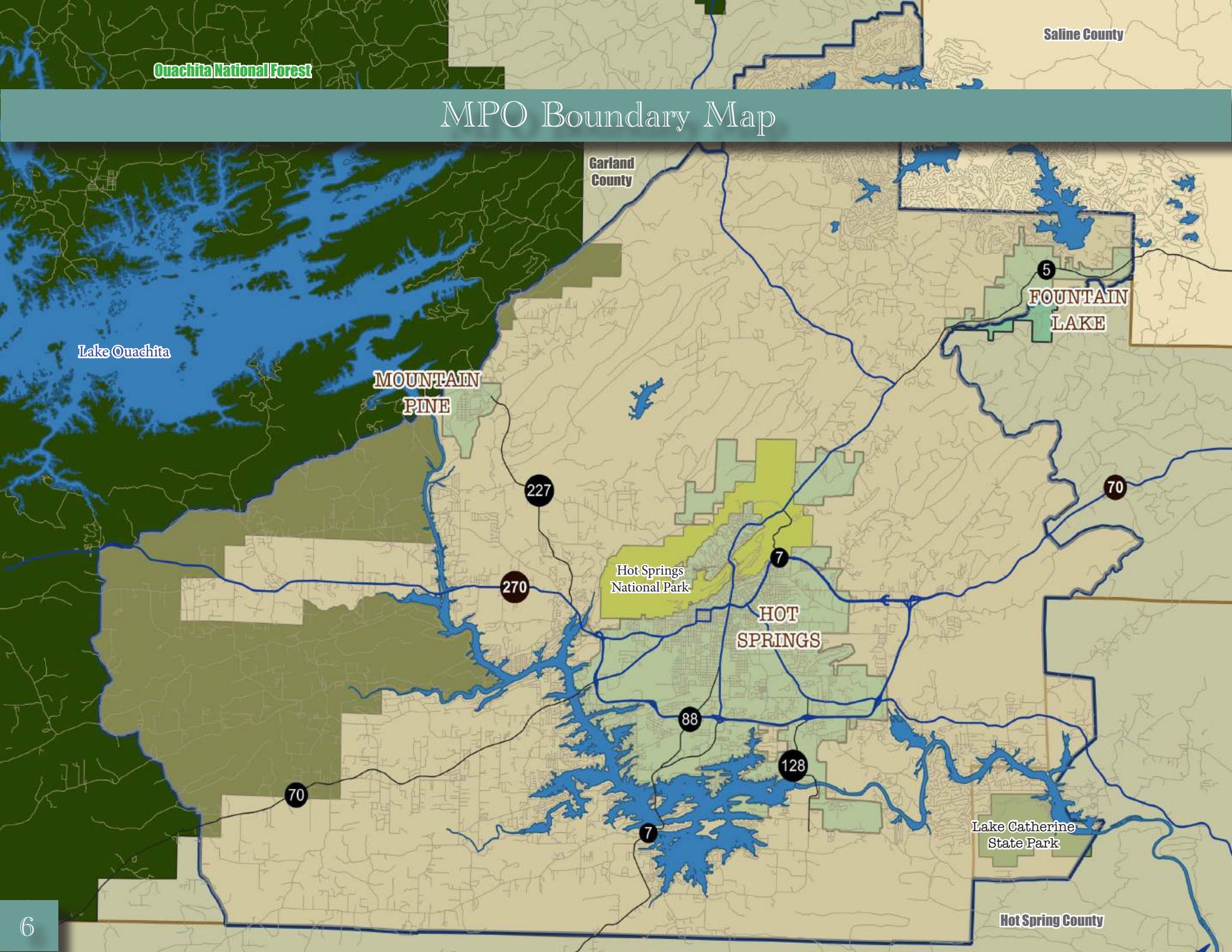
*rate = total number for the year/total revenue vehicle miles traveled

Table 7: Demand Response Safety Performance Targets

Mode	Baseline	Target
Fatalities	0	0
Rate of Fatalities*	0	0
Injuries	0	0
Rate of Injuries*	0	0
Safety Events	0	0
Rate of Safety Events*	0	0
Mean Distance Between Major Mechanical Failure	27,000	27,000
Other	N/A	N/A

*rate = total number for the year/total revenue vehicle miles traveled

MPO Boundary Map



Thank You

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