

Tri-Lakes Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Minutes_Approved

May 5th, 2026, at 10:00 am

Action Items:

I. Call To Order

Ms. Emmily called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

II. Introductions (*Quorum = 8 inc. 4 different jurisdictions/organizations*)

The following voting members or proxies were present:

1. Mr. Cole McCaskill - Hot Springs Metro Partnership - Vice President of Economic Development - Proxy for Mr. Gary Troutman
2. Mr. Donald Rowlett - City of Hot Springs - Airport Director - TAC Voting Member
3. Mr. James Patton - Hot Springs Village - Board Member - TAC Voting Member
4. Mr. Jeff Carr - Garland County - Garland County Resident - TAC Voting Member
5. Mr. Jesse Konstanzer - Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) - Resident Engineer - TAC Voting Member
6. Mr. Karl Lowry - Town of Fountain Lake - Alderman - TAC Voting Member
7. Ms. Kathy Sellman - City of Hot Springs - Planning Director - TAC Voting Member
8. Mr. Keith Jones - Hot Springs Intracity Transit - Resident Advisor - TAC Voting Member
9. Mr. Mike Hill - City of Hot Springs - Assistant City Engineer - Proxy for Mr. Gary Canahan
10. Mr. Ron Sievwright - City of Hot Springs - Public Works Director - TAC Voting Member
11. Mr. Ryan Richardson - Arkansas Midland Railroad - General Manager - TAC Voting Member

The following guests or non-voting persons were present:

1. Mr. Al Fleagle - City of Hot Springs - Transportation Advisory Committee Member - Guest
2. Mr. Dwayne Pratt - West Central Arkansas Planning & Development District (WCAPDD) - Executive Director - Staff
3. Ms. Emmily Tiampati - WCAPDD - MPO Coordinator - Staff
4. Mr. John Spears - Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) - Program Analyst - Ex-Officio/Non-Voting Member
5. Mr. Lance Spicer - City of Hot Springs - Deputy City Manager - Guest

III. Minutes

- Mr. Patton made the motion to approve minutes of the September 16th, 2025, TAC meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lowry. There were no comments or discussion on this item. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) - SFY 2027

- Mr. Patton made the motion to recommend the July 1st, 2026 - June 30th, 2027 (SFY 2027) UPWP for adoption by the Policy Board. Ms. Sellman seconded the motion. There were no comments or discussion on this item. The motion passed unanimously.

Informational Items:

I. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) FFY 2025 - 2028

- Ms. Emmily notified the TAC that the MPO had coordinated with the City of Hot Springs' (CHS) Intracity Transit and ARDOT to do an Administrative Modification #3 in the current FFY 2025-2028 TIP, to add FFY 2024 HSIT 01 (Operating Assistance) and HSIT 02 (Capital Preventative Maintenance) funds to FFY 2026 TIP/STIP; per CHS request.

II. Safe Streets For All (SS4A) FFY 2026 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- Ms. Emmily reminded the TAC that the FFY 2026 SS4A grant application is slated to close on May 26th, 2026. She encouraged any interested agencies to apply and offered full MPO support as needed. Mr. Hill mentioned that CHS plans to reach out to the MPO soon with more information, in regard to obtaining a letter of support.

III. Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) Announcements

- Mr. Konstanzer provided a list of ARDOT projects that have been let for construction and those that are scheduled to be let in calendar year 2026 and 2027, within our Metropolitan Planning Area. He responded to various questions posed by the meeting attendees.
- Mr. Sievwright asked about the status of the interchange projects, particularly the U.S. 270/MLK Expressway at AR 88/Higdon Ferry Rd. He mentioned that the City has tried several timing plans for that intersection, which runs smoothly until the turn lanes backup into the thru lanes; because the capacity is not enough on the left turn lanes. Mr. Konstanzer responded that the interchange projects have likely been scheduled in the future construction years starting in 2028.
- Mr. Fleagle stated that he has written to ARDOT about an experimental timing for the U.S. 270/MLK Expressway at AR 88/Higdon Ferry Rd intersection. He said that the experiment is about treating both sides of the bypass and the intersection North of that (McAuley Ct/Werner St) as one big intersection; thereby eliminating left-turn backups. He added that congestion would increase due to the upcoming Home Depot store.

- Mr. Patton inquired whether Home Depot made a contribution to the traffic changes that would occur at the intersection. Mr. Sievwright mentioned that Home Depot's traffic study stated that it wouldn't cause an impact.
- Mr. Patton mentioned that Hwy 7 at Desoto Blvd is becoming a nightmare. He said that he is not aware of any design yet, in regard to widening lanes and making the northbound right turn lane safer; since currently there's a drop off adjacent to the lane, which some people have driven down the drop off. He added that Hot Springs Village (HSV) is growing, thereby increasing traffic backup particularly during morning and afternoon rush hours; including during Summertime due to the new HSV pay and play golf program.
- Mr. Carr noted that the U.S. 270/MLK Expressway at U.S. 70/Airport Rd intersection wasn't on the list that Mr. Konstanzer provided at the meeting. Mr. Konstanzer responded that the project list that he provided only includes construction projects scheduled in the current year (2026) and the following year (2027), for conciseness, albeit the fact that there are more construction projects scheduled beyond 2027. Therefore, the interchange projects were not on that list since they are not scheduled for construction in the year 2026 or 2027.
- Mr. Hill mentioned that the Airport Rd bypass project (U.S. 270/MLK Expressway at U.S. 70/Airport Rd) is on track. He mentioned that about 6 months ago, they met with property owners who had some major concerns; therefore, there have been some tweaks in the plans that are still being worked on.

IV. Federal Agencies Announcements

- Mr. Spears took the opportunity to introduce himself to the TAC. He mentioned that he has about 15 years of prior experience working with ARDOT; and is now working with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) AR Division, in the Program Management Team.

V. Public Comments

- There were no public comments.

VI. Any Other Business

- There was no other business from the meeting attendees.

VII. Next TAC Meeting

- Ms. Emmily provided a calendar showing TAC and PB meetings that are scheduled for the rest of the year. She reminded the meeting attendees that the next scheduled TAC meeting will be on August 4th, 2026, at 10:00 am.

Adjournment:

- Ms. Sellman made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Sievwright seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:21 am.