



Small Cities Council Meeting Summary

Wednesday, November 18, 2020
9:00 AM at Jacksonville Community Center
Approved January 27, 2021

Attending:

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|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Mayor Bernie Chamberlain | City of Austin |
| 2. Mayor Charles Gastineau | City of Ward |
| 3. Mayor Sammy Hartwick, President | City of Greenbrier |
| 4. Mayor Sam Higdon | City of Guy |
| 5. Ms. Jennifer Hill | City of Haskell |
| 6. Mayor Mike Kemp, Vice President | City of Shannon Hills |
| 7. Mayor Terry Mizer | City of Wrightsville |
| 8. Mayor Terry Don Robinson | City of Wooster |

Metroplan Staff:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 9. Mr. Casey Covington | Deputy Director |
| 10. Ms. Bernadette Rhodes | Community Planner |
| 11. Mr. Allen Skaggs | Planning Technician |
| 12. Ms. La'Kesha Stewart | Planner/Public Outreach |
| 13. Mr. Tab Townsell | Executive Director |

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Mayor Hartwick called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM. He welcomed the attendees and asked Ms. Rhodes to proceed with the agenda.

2. Summary of Previous Meeting

The summary of the September 30, 2020 meeting was previously emailed to the Council. Ms. Rhodes gave a brief overview of the summary.

MOTION by Ms. Hill, seconded by Mayor Gastineau,
"To approve the summary of September 30, 2020 as prepared."

PASSED

3. Nomination of Officers

Ms. Rhodes informed the Council that per the guidelines for Metroplan Board committees, it must nominate a President and Vice President once every two years. The Council's nominations will be presented to the full Metroplan Board of Directors

for a vote at its next meeting in December. The officers provide input on the Small Cities' Council agenda and operations and represent the Council on the Metroplan Board's Executive Committee.

MOTION by Mayor Gastineau, seconded by Mayor Chamberlain,
"To nominate Mayor Hartwick as President and Mayor Mike Kemp as Vice President of the Small Cities Council."

PASSED

4. Introductions and City Announcements

Ms. Rhodes invited attendees to introduce themselves and share news from their communities.

- Greenbrier: Mayor Hartwick noted that City Hall had received many messages regarding the shooting of a dog by law enforcement within city limits. He stated that the Greenbrier Police Department was not involved in the incident.
- Haskell: Ms. Hill, City Clerk, shared that the Haskell Police Department is now serving as a secure package delivery location. Residents may have their packages delivered to the Police Department and pick them up daily between 8:00 am–6:00 pm.
- Wooster: Mayor Robinson reported that developers were seeking approval for eight new subdivisions in the area covering over 400 acres. Two of the subdivisions are within city limits. The Mayor and his crews have laid approximately half of the five miles of planned sewer pipe so far this year. The plan also includes two new pump stations, with wastewater treatment being provided in partnership with the City of Greenbrier.
- Guy: Mayor Higdon shared that the City is expanding its water service outside of city limits to serve new subdivisions and is installing a new master meter. Work is continuing on the City's new community center/library, which are expected to open next month for small gatherings.
- Ward: Mayor Gastineau stated that the joint ARDOT/Metroplan project at the intersection of Highways 367 and 319 is proceeding and will provide the City with its first traffic light. The Mayor also commended Mayor Chamberlain for Austin's victory in the county's Census response challenge, with Austin achieving a 77% response rate, higher than any other city in Lenoire County. As a result, the mayors of Ward, Cabot, and Lenoire will wash the Austin Police and Fire chiefs' vehicles on Thursday, November 19th.
- Austin: Mayor Chamberlain echoed Mayor Gastineau's appreciation of the Census response efforts. She also shared that Austin is starting a sewer project, to be completed in 2022. The project will result in a rate increase.
- Wrightsville: Mayor Mizer shared that the City is trying to extend broadband access into city limits and is also awaiting approval for a new playground.

- Shannon Hills: Mayor Kemp announced that he recently signed an executive order that Santa WILL have access to homes in town. Shannon Hills will host a Christmas parade on December 12th at 10:00 am and encouraged surrounding towns to participate in the parade. There is no registration required.

Spotlight On: Shannon Hills

Ms. Rhodes invited Mayor Kemp to speak about Shannon Hills's recent sidewalk installation project and Southwest Trail connections. Mayor Kemp shared that:

- The sidewalk installation along Joan Drive is ARDOT-funded and connects two Metroplan-funded projects, completing an east-west pedestrian route through town, serving Davis Elementary along with other destinations.
- It is important to include new driveway aprons for residents along the new sidewalk route, as it creates a consistent look and increases public support.
- The project included a new crossing over a ditch that crosses under Joan Drive and runs into Otter Creek.
- Shannon Hills's first major sidewalk project was in 2006 or 2008 along Shannon Hills Drive.
- The Mayor sees many residents walking on the sidewalks in the evenings, and they have created a greater sense of community.
- The City purchased land in auction on the south side of Shannon Hills off Sardis Road. The land is adjacent to the route of the future Southwest Trail. The City purchased approximately half of the auctioned land with the goal of creating a trailhead.
- The City plans to develop feeder trails creating a loop from the SW Trail into town and back.
- Mayor Kemp expressed his gratitude for Metroplan's commitment to funding the trail system in central Arkansas.

5. Metroplan Update

Mr. Townsell informed the Council that:

- The Board had finished Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) grant approvals. Funding must be obligated by October 1, 2021.
- Metroplan is assessing the evaluation process and requests feedback from members.
- The Regional Trails consultant has been selected and Metroplan is currently defining their scope of work. Once hired, the consultant will contact members to discuss trail locations. Members should think about where trails should be located with a focus on providing access to destinations beyond one's city.

Mr. Covington added that Toole Design group is working on design guidelines for multimodal infrastructure, including roads, transit facilities, and paths. Toole Design has distributed a survey for cities to share input on their needs and wants. Ms. Rhodes stated she would email the link to the survey to all SCC members and encouraged

everyone to fill it out.

6. Model Code Update & Review

Ms. Rhodes reported progress on Metroplan's model code project for small cities, which is an all-staff effort coordinated by Ms. Rhodes and Ms. Stewart of Metroplan with the goal of providing small cities with model zoning and subdivision ordinances as a tool to meet their planning goals.

Model code development timeline:

- A menu of zones, definitions, and a use table have been drafted to-date.
- Staff is in the process of discussing priorities and challenges individually with city leaders and drafting development standards for each zone.
- The staff's goal is to present the full code to the SCC at its March 31st meeting.
- The adoption process is expected to take six months or more and will likely involve revisiting the city's comprehensive plan to ensure consistency. Metroplan staff will work towards adoption with 2-3 cities in Q2 and Q3 of 2021, phasing in other interested cities as possible.
- Mayflower, Austin, and Ward have expressed interest in participating in the first round of adoption. Other interested cities are encouraged to contact Ms. Rhodes.

Overview of the model zones:

- The zone "menu" includes eight zones.
- Cities can choose the zones that meet their needs and are not required to place them all on their zoning map. Zone descriptions are included in this meeting's PowerPoint presentation.
 - The *Walkable Town Center (WTC)* zone will feature the most urban development standards, in the vein of small city downtowns such as Argenta in NLR, LR's South Main neighborhood, and downtown Lonoke. Cities may decide to implement this zone in a limited area where a continuous street wall is desired, with structures built up to the sidewalk. In some cities, this zone may not fit at all. Other zones like Neighborhood Commercial or Flexible Residential can be layered around the WTC zone to create a transition into more residential areas.
 - The *Neighborhood Center* zone is meant to be walkable, with more flexibility in building form, parking, and density than the WTC. It is intended to be in proximity to and compatible in size with residential neighborhoods, often at the intersection of two collector streets or an arterial and a collector. It can stand alone or be layered around a WTC as a transition into the neighborhood.
 - The *Commercial Corridor* zone is intended for major arterials, state highways, and frontage roads. It can accommodate larger retailers, some with permanent outdoor storage, such as a car or RV lot. Access management and building placement will be crucial to allowing any kind of walkability, which is more difficult in this zone but still achievable.

- The *Industrial* zone is reserved for intensive industries that are not compatible with residential or uses.
- The *Low-Density Residential* zone allows sparse development patterns for mainly single-family residences characterized by large lots and open space.
- The *Medium-Density Residential* zone encompasses many subdivisions currently under construction. It is most heavily characterized by single-family residential neighborhoods with other neighborhoods and small commercial being easily accessed by driving, walking, or bicycling.
- The *Flexible Residential* zone is characterized by a diversity of housing types, from single-family to small multi-family. It can be layered between commercial and single-family residential areas as a transitional zone, while providing housing and investment opportunities for residents.
- The *Institutional* zone, which some may choose to call the “Ed-Med” zone, is intended for large-scale educational, medical, or public service facilities.
- There is a ninth zone not included in the presentation, the *Open Space* zone, intended for the preservation of open space or recreational uses.

Next steps for staff in the model code development will include an in-depth discussion of the model zones and allowable use table at an optional SCC meeting on December 16th, and the completion of draft development and subdivision standards by the end of January.

7. Educational Presentation

In the interest of time, the presentation on the informational article, “Productive Places in a Post-Pandemic Era,” was shared with Small Cities Council members via email after the meeting.

8. Themes for Long-Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan

In the interest of time, this item was tabled for a future meeting.

9. Preview of Next Meeting

Ms. Rhodes informed the Council that an optional SCC meeting would take place at 9:00 am on Wednesday, December 16, one hour before the full Metroplan Board meeting. This meeting will permit an in-depth review of the model zones and draft allowable use table for each zone. All SCC members are encouraged to attend, especially those cities considering adopting the model code in the next one to two years. The SCC’s next regular meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 27, 2021, at 9:00 am.

10. Adjourn

Mayor Hartwick thanked members for their attendance. Ms. Hill made motion to adjourn. Mayor Robinson seconded. The Small Cities Council meeting was adjourned at 10:00 AM.