



Small Cities Council Meeting Summary

Wednesday, July 27, 2022 | 9:00 AM
Jacksonville Community Center
Approved September 28, 2022

Meeting PowerPoint slides available at <https://metroplan.org/small-cities-council>

SCC Members Attending

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| 1. Mayor Sammy Hartwick, President | City of Greenbrier |
| 2. Mayor Bernie Chamberlain | City of Austin |
| 3. Mayor Charles Gastineau | City of Ward |
| 4. Mayor Sam Higdon | City of Guy |
| 5. Ms. Jennifer Hill | City of Haskell |
| 6. Mayor Butch House | City of England |
| 7. Mayor Allan Loring | City of Wrightsville |
| 8. Mayor Terry Don Robinson | City of Wooster |

Metroplan Staff

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|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 9. Mr. Casey Covington | Deputy Director/CARTS Study Director |
| 10. Ms. Bernadette Rhodes | Community Planner |
| 11. Mr. Tab Townsell | Executive Director |

1. Call to Order & Welcome

Mayor Hartwick called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked participants to introduce themselves.

2. Introductions & Announcements

All participants introduced themselves, then Mayor Hartwick asked for any announcements.

Mayor Gastineau shared that there is a great deal of construction going on in Ward, including work on the city's first signalized intersection. Asphalt is being laid and the project is on track to beat its 300-day deadline.

Mayor Hartwick mentioned Greenbrier's initiative to build an amphitheater in the city park. The city is holding a public meeting and plans to apply for a State Parks grant. Phase I includes grass seating, with seats planned for Phase 3 of the project.

There were no further announcements. Mayor Hartwick asked Ms. Rhodes to proceed with the agenda.

Ms. Rhodes asked for a volunteer for the September Community Spotlight. Mayor House volunteered. *Note: Due to a scheduling conflict, England's Spotlight has been postponed until the November 2022 SCC meeting.*

3. Summary of Previous Meeting

Ms. Hill made a motion to approve the summary of the May 25, 2022 meeting. Mayor Higdon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Community Spotlight on Haskell

Ms. Hill showed a slideshow of Haskell, which is centered around the intersection of Hwy. 67 and 229 along the Heritage Trail. The City features a park and walking trail, with bathrooms added in 2015 and a pavilion in 2021, both through grant funding. There are 3 ballfields, a half basketball court, and a playground in the park. The original Haskell City Hall is now a community center in the park and can be rented for events and club activities. The park also includes an Historical Museum and a Fire Museum, which was donated by a City Council member who is a retired firefighter.

Haskell is home to the Harmony Grove School District, which includes grades Pre-K through 12. 85% of children in the district live outside of Haskell. Their mascot is the Cardinals.

Haskell has three fire stations. In front of City Hall is a "Town Center Mix" zone, which includes businesses like a pharmacy and a medical clinic. Haskell's commercial strip includes a Sonic, Dollar General, Harps, and gas stations.

Haskell's industry includes McLehane Equipment, a pest control company, and Rineco. There are also several food trucks in the city. Arkansas Health Center is located in Haskell and includes a nursing home, a jail, and other facilities.

Ms. Hill outlined the city's subdivisions, including new developments including a 16-house addition and a second 9-hole golf course with 103 houses. The developer sold all 103 lots in one day.

5. Metroplan Updates

Mr. Covington summarized the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) federal grant, which the Metroplan Board authorized staff to work on. Staff would like to submit an application for funding to create a Regional Safety Action Plan, which all cities in Central Arkansas could benefit from.

Mr. Covington also shared that ARDOT has provided the state's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which are on the Executive Committee's agenda to adopt. The TIP outlines all projects on ARDOT's funding list, including overlays and major construction projects.

Mr. Townsell told members about his recent visit to the City of Keo and mentioned the possibility of Keo joining Metroplan. The City Council has passed a resolution to request membership and it will be presented for a vote at August's Board meeting. Mayor Stephanie White has indicated

interest in comprehensive planning and exploring new zoning and subdivision regulations.

Mr. Townsell also informed members that they would receive copies of Metroplan's new Conflict of Interest disclosure form, which all Board members must complete.

Mayor Loring inquired about the match for the SS4A construction grants, which can present a barrier for smaller cities. Mr. Covington indicated that there is a 20% match required for construction grants, but in-kind contributions are allowed. Mr. Covington showed the regional map which shows underserved Census tracts which are a focus of the SS4A grant. 44% of Central Arkansas' population resides in these disadvantaged areas. The grant is also focusing construction grants on locations with high numbers of serious and fatal crashes.

Ms. Rhodes shared an update on the Northern Colorado Benchmarking Trip. The itinerary is coming together well and flights and hotel rooms are booked.

6. UDO Review & Recommendation

Ms. Rhodes summarized the two 3-hour UDO Review Retreat meetings that were held in June and July. There were 28 total participants, who brought up questions and suggested changes. The main themes resulting from the meetings were 1) clarification, 2) simplification, 3) definition, and 4) illustration. Changes were made to the following sections:

- Parking
- Landscaping & fencing
- Sign measurement illustrations
- Sidewalk construction
- Drainage
- Application review
- Variance criteria
- Inspections
- Definitions

Metroplan's next step will be to complete a customization and implementation guide for adopter cities. Next steps for the Small Cities Council are to review the summary of changes and consider recommending the final version of the UDO to the full Board for its adoption as the Metroplan model zoning and subdivision ordinance for small cities. The UDO will remain voluntary for cities to consider adopting and could either replace or supplement cities' current ordinances. Ms. Rhodes stated that staff would still retain the ability to make minor changes as needed to clarify the document, but the content would remain the same upon recommendation.

Ms. Rhodes called attention to an email from the Arkansas Outdoor Advertising Association, a copy of which was provided to each member. The email includes the AOAA's feedback on the UDO's sign regulations. Staff is working to incorporate some of the recommended changes. Ms. Rhodes emphasized that each city will have the authority to make the sign regulations their own before adopting the UDO, or the section can be pulled from the UDO and signs can be regulated through a separate ordinance.

Mayor Hartwick called for a vote. Mayor Gastineau made the motion to recommend the UDO to the Metroplan Board of Directors for adoption. Ms. Hill seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

7. Preview of Upcoming Meetings

Upcoming meeting dates were provided via a slide in the PowerPoint presentation. The next Small Cities Council meeting will take place at 9:00 AM on Wednesday, September 28th. All Metroplan meetings will take place at the Jacksonville Community Center through the rest of 2022.

8. Shareworthy: Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)

Ms. Rhodes provided an outline of SS4A. The grant is meant to implement Vision Zero, which finds no amount of roadway fatalities acceptable and focuses on building transportation and response systems that minimize the impact of driver error. 5 elements are included in Vision Zero: 1) road design, 2) user behavior, 3) speed management, 4) vehicle safety, and 5) post-crash care. The SS4A planning grant is designed to help regions and cities determine how to improve upon these five systems. State transportation departments may not apply for SS4A, only local governmental units, tribal organizations, and metropolitan planning organizations. SS4A construction funding requires a strong Safety Action Plan, so Metroplan would like to start with the regional planning process. Cities can then use the regional plan to qualify for construction funding. The funding would help hire a consultant to help staff and Board members write the plan.

Ms. Rhodes and Mr. Covington outlined example activities of the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan:

- *Leadership commitment and goal setting for eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries.*
- *Planning structure through a committee charged with oversight of the Action Plan.*
- *Safety analysis of the existing conditions.*
- *Engagement and collaboration with the public and relevant stakeholders.*
- *Equity considerations developed through a plan using inclusive and representative processes.*
- *Policy and process changes that identify opportunities to improve how processes prioritize transportation safety.*
- *Strategy and project selections that identify a comprehensive set of projects and strategies to address safety problems.*
- *Progress and transparency methods that measure progress over time, including outcome data.*

Mayor Loring asked whether a state highway would qualify for construction funding since ARDOT is not allowed to apply for the grant. Mr. Covington and Mr. Townsell clarified that state highways are eligible for funding, with ARDOT's support for implementing the changes. Mayor Loring asked if ARDOT could provide the 20% match. Mr. Townsell and Mr. Covington answered that ARDOT could provide state funding, but not federal dollars, to help meet the match.

Mr. Covington emphasized that the Safety Action Plan's #1 task would be to set specific targets and timeframes for reducing serious and fatal crashes. Grants must be completed in 12-18 months, which means that cities could potentially use the action plan to apply for construction funding in 2024.

Mayor Gastineau asked whether a roadway without a large number of crashes would be eligible for funding. Mr. Covington and Ms. Rhodes clarified that project with an historically high number of crashes would be prioritized for funding. Mr. Townsell stated that this grant is aimed toward retrofitting existing dangerous designs, and that going forward, new facilities need to be designed better with safety for all modes in mind, and wider is not always safer. He referenced increased pedestrian fatality data, with pedestrian deaths increasing 62% since 2009.

9. Adjourn

Ms. Rhodes and Mr. Covington expressed best wishes for Mayors Kemp and Holland as they recovered from medical procedures. Ms. Hill made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Higdon seconded. Mayor Hartwick adjourned the Small Cities Council meeting at 9:55 AM.