



# Small Cities Council Meeting Summary

Wednesday, April 26, 2023 | 9:00 AM  
Jacksonville Community Center  
*Approved June 28, 2023*

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

## **SCC Members Attending**

- |                                      |                         |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Mayor Mike Kemp, Chair            | City of Shannon Hills   |
| 2. Mayor Charles Gastineau, Co-Chair | City of Ward            |
| 3. Mayor Bernie Chamberlain          | City of Austin          |
| 4. Mayor Sammy Hartwick              | City of Greenbrier      |
| 5. Mayor Crystal Herrmann            | City of Alexander       |
| 6. Mayor Danny Hester                | City of Mayflower       |
| 7. Mayor Butch House                 | City of England         |
| 8. Mr. Keith Keck                    | Hot Springs Village     |
| 9. Mayor Cody Kees                   | City of Cammack Village |
| 10. Mayor Derrick Rainey             | City of Wrightsville    |
| 11. Mayor Terry Don Robinson         | City of Wooster         |

## **Additional Attendees**

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| 10. Ms. Tanya Childers | Central Arkansas Planning & Development Dist. |
| 11. Judge Barry Hyde   | Pulaski County                                |
| 12. Ms. Leigh Ann Pool | Central Arkansas Planning & Development Dist. |
| 13. Ms. Ashton Pruitt  | Greenbrier Chamber of Commerce                |
| 14. Mayor Allen Scott  | City of Bryant                                |
| 15. Mr. Richard Weaver | City of Greenbrier Councilmember              |

## **Metroplan Staff**

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 13. Mr. Casey Covington   | Interim Director                        |
| 14. Mr. Hans Haustein     | GIS Analyst/Planner/Perf Measure Coord. |
| 15. Mr. Jonathan Lupton   | Senior Planner for Publications         |
| 16. Ms. Bernadette Rhodes | Community Planner                       |
| 17. Mr. Jeff Runder       | Senior Planner for Technical Analysis   |

## **I. Call to Order**

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

## 2. Introductions & Announcements

Participants introduced themselves.

## 3. Summary of Previous Meeting

Mayor Chamberlain made a motion to approve the summary of the March 29th, 2023 meeting. Mayor House seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## 4. Metroplan Update

Mr. Covington provided an update on Metroplan activities.

- **Safe Streets and Roads for All planning grant:** Metroplan was awarded this \$700,000 federal grant late last year. A full update will be provided at the Metroplan Board meeting. A consultant has been selected to complete the plan and contract negotiations are underway. Staff is working on a formal grant agreement with FHWA, as well. The grant will fund a Regional Safety Action Plan to address multimodal safety issues on Central Arkansas' roadway system. An adopted Safety Action Plan will allow individual jurisdictions to apply for implementation/construction funding next year.
- **Other current NOFOs (Notices of Funding Opportunity):**  
Federal transportation grants with pending deadlines are:
  - Electric vehicle infrastructure grant. closes the end of April.
  - Safe Streets and Roads for All. Safety Action Plan needs to be in place before communities can apply for implementation funding. If communities have a specific roadway in mind, they have the option to apply for a grant for Supplemental Planning Activities.
  - PROTECT grant for resiliency to weather-related issues in our transportation system, such as frequent flooding of a critical roadway. Combines FY 2023 & 2024 funding into one NOFO. Communities can apply for planning or construction funding. \$700 million to be awarded annually.

Ms. Pool from CAPDD shared a current grant opportunity from the Delta Regional Authority for qualified communities, due end of June.

Mr. Covington reminded attendees that in addition to an MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization), Metroplan is also a CoG (Council of Governments) and can assist with items that are needed among several member jurisdictions, such as tornado response planning. Mr. Covington then asked Mr. Lupton to give an update on Census data releases that can assist with grant applications. Mr. Lupton shared that DHC (Data and Housing Characteristics) data will be released on May 25<sup>th</sup>. This data will include population by age, group quarters, owner/renter data. This data will provide a more in-depth understanding of our member communities. In June, the Office of Management and Budget is expected to announce new metro areas, which will be defined by county and commuting flows. Central Arkansas' MSA is currently a 6-county metro area and is expected to remain the same. Mr. Lupton encouraged members to contact him with any data questions.

Ms. Rhodes provided an update on the 2023 Metroplan Board Benchmarking Trip to Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania. The program will include redevelopment of downtown areas and former industrial sites and the multimodal facilities that were developed along with it. The trip will include a visit to a small community. A draft trip itinerary and cost information will be shared at next month's board meeting.

## 5. Arkansas Planning Official Training

The Arkansas Public Administration Consortium (APAC) offers live online trainings for planning officials, which can include planning commissioners, city council members, staff, and elected officials. Information about training dates and cost was shared on the agenda. Additional information is available at <https://ualr.edu/publicaffairs/apac/>.

## 6. Shareworthy

Ms. Rhodes played the video below. Attendees then discussed the fiscal impacts of low-density housing and broad annexations on both tax collection and maintenance cost of public utilities.

**Video Title: *This Ponzi Scheme Might END Suburban Prosperity***

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=tl3kkk2Jdol](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tl3kkk2Jdol)

Summary: The Growth Ponzi Scheme, also called the "Municipal Ponzi Scheme," is a core Strong Towns insight describing the financial characteristics of post-war North American growth patterns. In the Growth Ponzi Scheme, municipalities receive the modest near-term financial benefits from new development in exchange for the larger long-term financial commitments of providing ongoing service and maintenance. The Growth Ponzi Scheme is not nefarious; there is not a specific individual or group that has created it for their own benefit. It has emerged from a broad cultural consensus about economic growth, development patterns, and debt. So what can you do?

Following the video screening, attendees discussed the benefits of speaking with residents about their desires for the community and the growing demand for somewhat denser/mixed-use housing with pedestrian access to amenities. Housing such as duplexes and triplexes, especially those built on previously developed land (infill) can utilize existing utilities instead of creating new connections that the city must maintain and replace over time. Cities can analyze their total lane miles of streets within their city limits to estimate how long it would take to overlay all their streets given their current annual investment in overlays. Metroplan staff member, Jonathan Lupton, can provide cities with data on their total roadway lane miles and housing units per roadway mile. It is also advisable to project the cost of maintaining public infrastructure before annexing land weigh that against the long-term goals and benefits of annexation, such as property tax and local sales tax collection.

## 7. Member Q&A

- How to capture revenue from local businesses that deliver products outside city limits. Sales tax is paid at the point of delivery, not where the product is manufactured. Some cities are exploring the possibility of implementing a small fee on the product sales price that would go back to the city of manufacture. Some cities collect business license fees based on annual sales.
- Franchise fee for fiber optics. Cities were encouraged to adopt fees to capture revenue.
- Short-term rentals. Cities were encouraged to adopt permitting requirements and policies for short-term rentals, especially those that are not owner-occupied.

## 8. Preview of Upcoming Meetings

Mayor Kemp announced that the April Board of Directors meeting would take place immediately following the Small Cities Council meeting, and the May Metroplan meetings will take place on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

## 9. Adjourn

Mayor Gastineau made a motion to adjourn. Mayor Chamberlain seconded. Mayor Kemp adjourned the Small Cities Council meeting at 9:50 AM.