

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **EPA ANNOUNCES \$100 MILLION AWARD TO ARKANSAS TRI-REGION COALITION**

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The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced today that the Arkansas Tri-Region CPRG Coalition has been selected for a \$99,999,999 Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) award for its “Energy and Environment Innovation for the Natural State” proposal. This transformative grant will fund projects throughout Central Arkansas, Northwest Arkansas, and the Arkansas River Valley, representing half the Natural State’s population. Metroplan served as the lead agency on the grant submittal, one of only 25 funded nationally.

Metroplan Board President, Pulaski County Judge Barry Hyde, stated “I am thrilled the efforts of Metroplan, Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission, and the City of Fort Smith have been recognized with the prestigious EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant. This monumental award is not just a testament to our commitment to environmental stewardship but also a call to action. We stand at the forefront of an ambitious journey to foster a sustainable future for our community. Together, with the EPA, we will implement innovative solutions that will significantly improve our environment and quality of life. We are honored to be among the select few to spearhead these transformative programs.”

The award will fund projects to sequester and reduce emissions by protecting and restoring natural areas, increasing efficiency, and improving access to active transportation and transit. Projects such as LED streetlights and EV charging will reduce emissions from the transportation sector, and building efficiency funding will support net-zero technologies for public and commercial buildings. Projects will be designed to ensure equitable access to the environmental benefits funded by the grant.

Metroplan Executive Director, Casey Covington, said “By preserving critical outdoor spaces, enhancing active transportation, and demonstrating innovative energy solutions, the CPRG Implementation funding will be transformative for the Natural State and our state’s growing economy and tourism. Our coalition’s selection for an award speaks to the benefits of partnerships among and within regions to achieve common energy and environment innovation goals.”

The coalition partnered with over 50 communities, agencies, and organizations across three regions to develop projects and programs that are both effective and aligned with public and stakeholder priorities. The partnerships built through this process, along with the support and enthusiasm for this work, are expected to catalyze future innovation in the Natural State.

“This CPRG grant is great news for Northwest Arkansas, and we truly appreciate the partnership with Northwest Arkansas Regional Planning Commission, Metroplan, and Fort Smith. As Fayetteville begins implementation of our recently adopted Climate Action Plan this grant brings us one step closer to achieving nature-based solutions at the city and regional level,” said Fayetteville Mayor Lioneld Jordan.

The support of the State of Arkansas and Arkansas' federal Congressional delegation was essential to securing this historic investment. The Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment's statewide Energy and Environment Innovation planning activities made organizations like Metroplan eligible to apply for implementation funding.

Mayor George B. McGill of Fort Smith stated, "We are honored to be selected to receive a portion of this vital grant from the EPA. This recognition underscores our commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship. The funds from this award will be instrumental in advancing key projects within our Energy & Environment Innovation Plan. These initiatives will not only improve the quality of life for our residents but also have a positive impact on our environment, ensuring a healthier and more sustainable future for the City of Fort Smith and the Natural State."

If you would like more information or to schedule an interview, please contact [sdozier@metroplan.org](mailto:sdozier@metroplan.org).

Link to EPA press release: <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-announces-43-billion-grants-community-driven-solutions-cut>

More information about CPRG can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/climate-pollution-reduction-grants>.

The Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment's planning effort is outlined on its website at <https://ee.arkansas.gov/environment/office-of-air-quality/eei/>.

Information about each region's EEI work can be found at:  
<https://metroplan.org/eei/>  
<https://www.nwarpc.org/energy-environment-innovation-plan/>  
<https://www.fortsmithar.gov/government/city-plans-projects/sustainability>

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Metroplan is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the four-county region of Faulkner, Lonoke, Pulaski, and Saline counties. It is a voluntary association of local governments that has operated since 1955. **For more information, see [www.metroplan.org](http://www.metroplan.org).**