

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

(UPWP)

FY 2025



The preparation and publication of this document was funded in part through grants provided by the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Transit Administration. The provision of Federal financial assistance should not be construed as denoting U.S. Department of Transportation approval of plans, policies, programs, or projects contained herein.

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

FISCAL YEAR 2025

Approved _____, 2024, by Resolution # 2024-__

Prepared by:

Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission

In cooperation with:

Cities of Pine Bluff and White Hall

Jefferson County

Pine Bluff Transit (PBT) and Southeast Arkansas Transit (SEAT)

Arkansas Department of Transportation (ArDOT)

Federal Highway Administration

Federal Transit Administration

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INTRODUCTION

What is a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)?

A Metropolitan Planning Organization or MPO is a transportation policy-making agency comprised of representatives from local governments and transportation agencies. The Census Bureau in 2022 changed the guideline for determining a Metropolitan Planning Area changing from a strict population count to a population density definition. The Federal Surface Transportation Act of 1973 required any urban area with a population over 50,000 people to have a designated MPO. Although the Pine Bluff – White Hall urban area does not meet the new definition, coordination with the Governor and local governments has extended the Pine Bluff – White Hall MPO existence.

The Pine Bluff-White Hall urbanized area, which includes portions of unincorporated Jefferson County, is designated as the Pine Bluff Area Transportation Study (PBATS). The Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (SEARPC) has been designated the MPO for PBATS. The MPO is comprised of two committees; 1) the Policy Committee which serves as the governing body and provides policy guidance and; 2) the Technical Committee which provides technical support and guidance in the transportation planning process.

Policy guidance and overall direction for the integrated, multi-modal, urban transportation planning process is provided by the PBATS Policy Committee. The Policy Committee includes the mayor and one Alderman from the Cities of Pine Bluff and White Hall, the County Judge and one Quorum Court member, the ArDOT District 2 Engineer and ArDOT MPO Coordinator, and an ex-officio representative from both the Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (SEARPC) and the Alliance of Jefferson County. Table 1 identifies current members. The Policy Committee reviews and approves both the UPWP and TIP and is responsible for approving the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the Study Area.

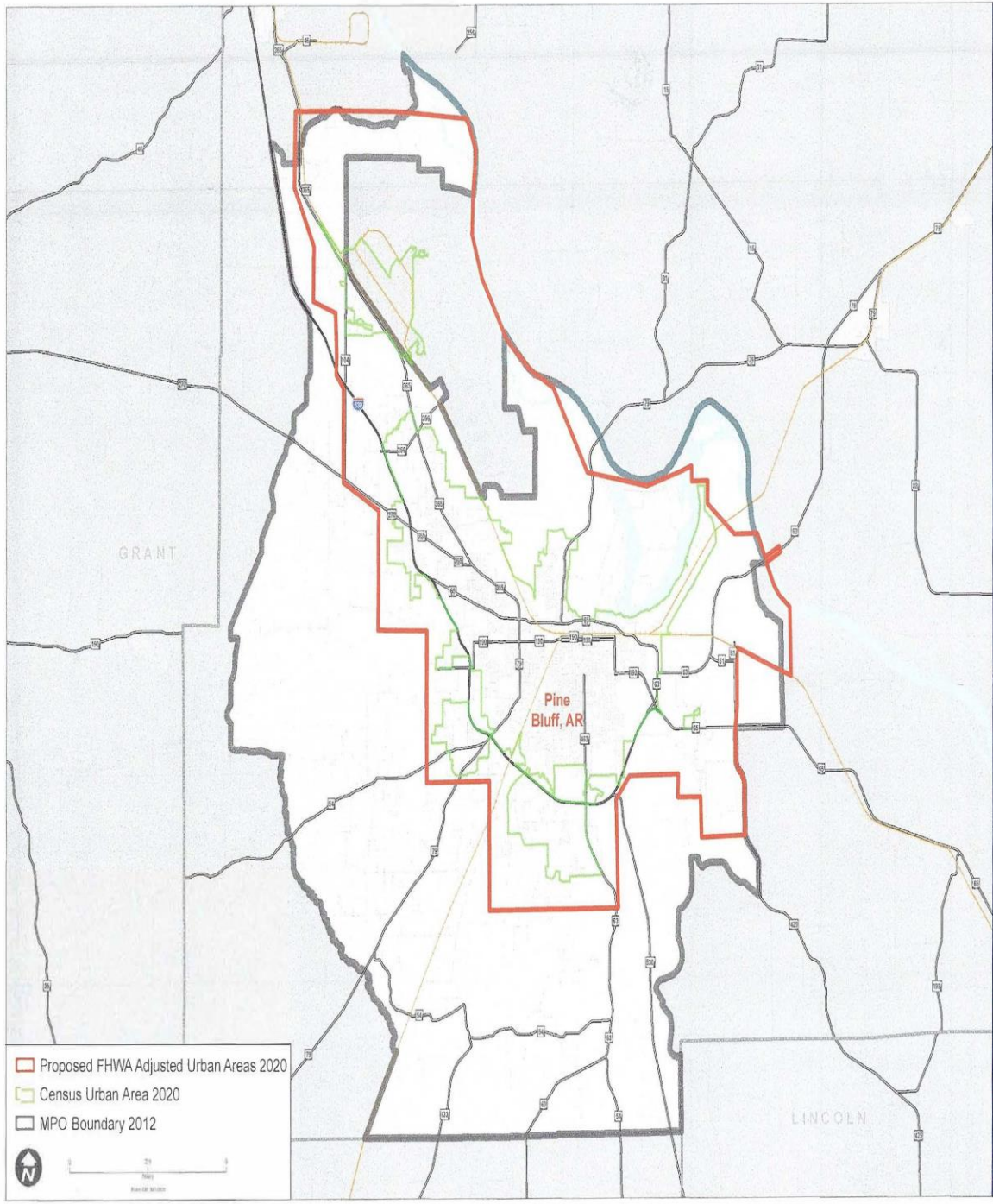
The PBATS Technical Committee assists the Policy Committee by reviewing and making recommendations on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, reports, and studies that the Policy Committee must approve. The TAC members are those technical and professional staff members of local governments and ArDOT who are responsible for planning and managing various transportation systems within the Study Area and a non-voting ex-officio representative from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). See below for current members.

The Metropolitan Planning Organization ensures that existing and future transportation projects and programs are based on a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive planning process (3-C).

**TABLE 1
PBATS MEMBERSHIP**

POLICY COMMITTEE	
REPRESENTATIVES	NAME AND TITLE
Jefferson County	Gerald Robinson, County Judge Jimmy Lee Fisher Jr., Quorum Court Member
Pine Bluff	Shirley Washington, Mayor Bruce Lockett, Alderman
White Hall	Noel Foster, Mayor Scott Ray, Alderman, Vice-Chair
Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Comm.	Ken Smith, PBATS Chairman
ArDOT	Andrew Hoggard, District 2 Engineer Sunny Farmahan, MPO Coordinator
Economic Development Alliance of Jefferson County	Allison J.H. Thompson, President

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE	
REPRESENTATIVES	NAME AND TITLE
Jefferson County	Rickey Bullard, County Road Department County Road Supervisor
Pine Bluff	Tom Bennett, PB Street Manager Cassandra Shaw, Transit Director Vacant, Traffic Division, PBPD
White Hall	Noel Foster, Mayor
ArDOT	Bryan Swinney, Construction Engineer Anthony Hunter, ArDOT Planning
Pine Bluff Airport Commission	Doug Hale, Airport Manager
Alliance of – Jefferson County	Nancy McNew, Alliance
Area Agency on Aging (SEAT)	Stephanie Bradshaw, Transportation Director
Federal Highway Administration (Non-voting)	Valera McDaniel, Transportation Planning Coordinator
S.E. Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (Non-voting)	Larry Reynolds, Executive Director



MPO STUDY AREA

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MPO Function

Metropolitan Planning Organizations have five essential functions and are responsible for the development and maintenance of three (3) key documents.

The essential functions are:

1. Establish and manage a fair and impartial setting for effective regional transportation decision making in the metropolitan area.
2. Identify and evaluate transportation improvement options.
3. Prepare and maintain the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for the area that addresses mobility and access for people and freight; as well as maintaining efficient system performance, preservation, and quality of life.
4. Develop a Transportation Improvement Plan that serves as a short-range plan to meet the area's goals.
5. Involve the public in the transportation planning process.

Primary Documents Produced by the MPO

- a. The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The UPWP serves as the activity and budget document for the MPO staff and identifies transportation actions to be performed on an annual basis.
- b. The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The MTP is the long-range strategic transportation planning document that identifies future investments to be made in the area's transportation system. This plan is updated every five years.
- c. The Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The TIP is a four-year funding program that implements the transportation projects and policies identified in the MTP. It must be updated at least once every four years but may be updated more frequently. In Arkansas, the TIP is updated annually.
- d. The Public Participation Plan (PPP) is an informational document that provides guidance and techniques the MPO will use to inform citizens in the transportation planning process.

Planning Process

As the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Pine Bluff-White Hall urban area, the Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission is responsible under Section 134 of Title 23, United States Code for carrying out a cooperative, comprehensive, and continuous (3-C) process designed to promote involvement by all users of the transportation system, such as the business community, community groups, environmental organizations, freight operators, and the general public, through a proactive public participation process.

SEARPC conducts the planning process for the Pine Bluff Area Transportation Study (PBATS) in cooperation with the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ArDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Cities of Pine Bluff and White Hall, and Jefferson County.

Section 134 of Title 23, U.S.C states:

(a) *Policy – It is in the national interest –*

(1) *To encourage and promote the safe and efficient management, operation, and development of surface transportation systems that will serve the mobility needs of people and freight and foster economic growth and development within and between states and urbanized areas, while minimizing transportation related fuel consumption and air pollution through metropolitan and statewide planning processes identified in this chapter; and*

(2) *To encourage the continued improvement and evolution of the metropolitan and statewide transportation planning process by metropolitan planning organizations, State departments of transportation, and public transit operators as guided by the planning factors identified in subsection (h) and section 135(d)*

Planning Factors – *The metropolitan planning process shall provide for the establishment and use of a performance-based approach to transportation decision making to support the national goals described in 23 U.S.C. 150(b) and the general purposes described in 49 U.S.C. 5301(c).*

- A. Support the economic vitality of the United States, the States and Metropolitan Areas, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
- B. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- C. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- D. Increase the accessibility and mobility options available to people and for freight;
- E. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- F. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- G. Promote efficient system management and operation; and
- H. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.
- I. Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate storm water impacts on surface transportation; and
- J. Enhance travel and tourism.

The Planning Factors, which apply to each Element of the Unified Planning Work Program, are listed in Table 2 below:

TABLE 2

FAST ACT PLANNING FACTORS	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
44:21 Program Support and Administration					X			X		
44:22 General Development and Comprehensive Planning	X			X	X	X	X	X		
44:23 Long Range Planning	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
44:24 Short Range Planning	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
44:25 Transportation Improvement Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

NATIONAL GOALS

It is in the interest of the United States to focus the Federal-aid highway program on the following national goals:

1. Safety- To achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.
2. Infrastructure Condition- To maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair.
3. Congestion Reduction- To achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System.
4. System Reliability- To improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system.
5. Freight Movement & Economic Vitality- To improve the National Highway Freight Network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development.
6. Environmental Sustainability- To enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment.
7. Reduced Project Delivery Delays- To reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens and improving agencies' work practices

PLANNING EMPHASIS AREAS

In December 2021, in support of the BIL, FTA and FHWA issued updated Planning Emphasis Areas for use by metropolitan planning organizations, state departments of transportation, transit agencies, and federal land management agencies in their Unified Planning Work Programs and State Planning and Research Work Programs.

Tackling the Climate Crisis: Transitioning to a Clean, Resilient Future: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) divisions and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regional offices should work with State departments of transportation (State DOT), metropolitan planning organizations (MPO), and providers of public transportation to ensure that our transportation plans and infrastructure investments help achieve the national greenhouse gas reduction goals of 50-52 percent below 2005 levels by 2030, and net-zero emissions by 2050, and increase resilience to extreme weather events and other disasters resulting from the increasing effects of climate change. Field offices should encourage State DOTs and MPOs to use the transportation planning process to accelerate the transition toward electric and other alternative fueled vehicles, plan for a sustainable infrastructure system that works for all users and undertake actions to prepare for and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Appropriate Unified Planning Work Program work tasks could include identifying the barriers to and opportunities for deployment of fueling and charging infrastructure; evaluating opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing single-occupancy vehicle trips and increasing access to public transportation, shift to lower emission modes of transportation; and identifying transportation system vulnerabilities to climate change impacts and evaluating potential solutions. We encourage you to visit FHWA's Sustainable Transportation or FTA's Transit and Sustainability Webpages for more information.

Equity and Justice⁴⁰ in Transportation Planning: FHWA Division and FTA regional offices should work with State DOTs, MPOs, and providers of public transportation to advance racial equity and support for underserved and disadvantaged communities. This will help ensure public involvement in the planning process and that plans, and strategies reflect various perspectives, concerns, and priorities from impacted areas. We encourage the use of strategies that: **(1)** improve infrastructure for nonmotorized travel, public transportation access, and increased public transportation service in underserved communities; **(2)** plan for the safety of all road users, particularly those on arterials, through infrastructure improvements and advanced speed management; **(3)** reduce single occupancy vehicle travel and associated air pollution in communities near high-volume corridors; **(4)** offer reduced public transportation fares as appropriate; **(5)** target demand-response service towards communities with higher concentrations of older adults and those with poor access to essential services; and **(6)** consider equitable and sustainable practices while developing transit-oriented development including affordable housing strategies and consideration of environmental justice populations.

Executive Order 13985 (Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities) defines the term “equity” as the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality. The term “underserved communities” refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, as exemplified by the list in the preceding definition of “equity.” In addition, Executive Order 14008 and M-21-28 provides a whole-of-government approach to advancing environmental justice by stating that 40 percent of Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities. FHWA Division and FTA regional offices should work with State DOTs, MPOs, and providers of public transportation to review current and new metropolitan transportation plans to advance Federal investments to disadvantaged communities.

To accomplish both initiatives, our joint planning processes should support State and MPO goals for economic opportunity in disadvantaged communities that have been historically marginalized and overburdened by pollution and underinvestment in housing, transportation, water and wastewater infrastructure, recreation, and health care.

Complete Streets: FHWA Division and FTA regional offices should work with State DOTs, MPOs and providers of public transportation to review current policies, rules, and procedures to determine their impact on safety for all road users. This effort should work to include provisions for safety in future transportation infrastructure, particularly those outside automobiles.

A complete street is safe, and feels safe, for everyone using the street. FHWA and FTA seek to help Federal aid recipients plan, develop, and operate streets and networks that prioritize safety, comfort, and access to destinations for people who use the street network, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, micro-mobility users, freight delivery services, and motorists. The goal is to provide an equitable and safe transportation network for travelers of all ages and abilities, including those from marginalized communities facing historic disinvestment. This vision is not achieved through a one size-fits-all solution – each complete street is unique and developed to

best serve its community context and its primary role in the network.

Per the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's 2019 data, 62 percent of the motor vehicle crashes that resulted in pedestrian fatalities took place on arterials. Arterials tend to be designed for vehicle movement rather than mobility for non-motorized users and often lack convenient and safe crossing opportunities. They can function as barriers to a safe travel network for road users outside of vehicles.

To be considered complete, these roads should include safe pedestrian facilities, safe transit stops (if present), and safe crossing opportunities at an interval necessary for accessing destinations.

A safe and complete network for bicycles can also be achieved through a safe and comfortable bicycle facility located on the roadway, adjacent to the road, or on a nearby parallel corridor. Jurisdictions will be encouraged to prioritize safety improvements and speed management on arterials that are essential to creating complete travel networks for those without access to single-occupancy vehicles.

Public Involvement: Early, effective, and continuous public involvement brings diverse viewpoints into the decision-making process. FHWA Division and FTA regional offices should encourage MPOs, State DOTs, and providers of public transportation to increase meaningful public involvement in transportation planning by integrating Virtual Public Involvement (VPI) tools into the overall public involvement approach while ensuring continued public participation by individuals without access to computers and mobile devices. The use of VPI broadens the reach of information to the public and makes participation more convenient and affordable to greater numbers of people. Virtual tools provide increased transparency and access to transportation planning activities and decision-making processes. Many virtual tools also provide information in visual and interactive formats that enhance public and stakeholder understanding of proposed plans, programs, and projects. Increasing participation earlier in the process can reduce project delays and lower staff time and costs. More information on VPI is available at [Virtual Public Involvement - Public Involvement - Planning - FHWA \(dot.gov\)](#).

Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET/U.S. Department of Defense) Coordination: Encourage MPOs and State DOTs to coordinate with representatives from DOD in the transportation planning and project programming process on infrastructure and connectivity needs for STRAHNET routes and other public roads that connect to DOD facilities. According to the Declaration of Policy in 23 U.S.C. 101(b)(1), it is in the national interest to accelerate construction of the Federal-aid highway system, including the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, because many of the highways (or portions of the highways) are inadequate to meet the needs of national and civil defense. The DOD's facilities include military bases, ports, and depots. The road networks that provide access and connections to these facilities are essential to national security. The 64,200- mile STRAHNET system consists of public highways that provide access, continuity, and emergency transportation of personnel and equipment in times of peace and war. It includes the entire 48,482 miles of the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways and 14,000 miles of other non-Interstate public highways on the National Highway System. The STRAHNET also contains approximately 1,800 miles of connector routes linking more than 200 military installations and ports to the primary highway system.

The DOD's facilities are also often major employers in a region, generating substantial volumes of commuter and freight traffic on the transportation network and around entry points to the military facilities. Stakeholders are encouraged to review the STRAHNET maps and recent Power Project Platform (PPP) studies [Transportation Studies | FHWA \(dot.gov\)](#). These can be a useful resource in the State and MPO areas covered by these route analyses.

Federal Land Management Agency (FMLA) Coordination: FHWA Division and FTA regional offices should encourage MPOs and State DOTs to coordinate with FLMAs in the transportation planning and project programming process on infrastructure and connectivity needs related to access routes and other public roads and transportation services that connect to Federal lands. Through joint coordination, the State DOTs, MPOs, Tribal Governments, FLMAs, and local agencies should focus on integration of their transportation planning activities and develop cross-cutting State and MPO long range transportation plans, programs, and corridor studies, as well as the Office of Federal Lands Highway's developed transportation plans and programs. Agencies should explore opportunities to leverage transportation funding to support access and transportation needs of FLMAs before transportation projects are programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Each State must consider the concerns of FLMAs that have jurisdiction over land within the boundaries of the State (23 CFR 450.208(a)(3)). MPOs must appropriately involve FLMAs in the development of the metropolitan transportation plan and the TIP (23 CFR 450.316(d)). Additionally, the Tribal Transportation Program, Federal Lands Transportation Program, and the Federal Lands Access Program TIPs must be included in the STIP, directly or by reference, after FHWA approval in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 201(c) (23 CFR 450.218(e)).

Planning & Environmental Linkages (PEL): FHWA Division and FTA regional offices should encourage State DOTs, MPOs and Public Transportation Agencies to implement PEL as part of the transportation planning and environmental review processes. The use of PEL is a collaborative and integrated approach to transportation decision making that considers environmental, community, and economic goals early in the transportation planning process, and uses the information, analysis, and products developed during planning to inform the environmental review process. PEL leads to interagency relationship building among planning, resource, and regulatory agencies in the initial stages of planning to inform and improve project delivery time frames, including minimizing duplication and creating one cohesive flow of information. This results in transportation programs and projects that serve the community's transportation needs more effectively while avoiding and minimizing the impacts on human and natural resources. More information on PEL is available at [Planning and Environment Linkages | Environmental Initiatives | Environmental Review Toolkit | FHWA \(dot.gov\)](#).

Data in Transportation Planning: To address the emerging topic areas of data sharing, needs, and analytics, FHWA Division and FTA regional offices should encourage State DOTs, MPOs, and providers of public transportation to incorporate data sharing and consideration into the transportation planning process, because data assets have value across multiple programs. Data sharing principles and data management can be used for a variety of issues, such as freight, bike and pedestrian planning, equity analyses, managing curb space, performance management, travel time reliability, connected and autonomous vehicles, mobility services, and safety. Developing

and advancing data sharing principles allows for efficient use of resources and improved policy and decision-making at the State, MPO, regional, and local levels for all parties.

Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act): On December 4, 2015, President Obama signed into law Public Law 114-94, FAST Act, which funds surface transportation programs—including, but not limited to, Federal-aid highways, through FFY 2020. The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), enacted in 2012, included provisions to make the Federal surface transportation more streamlined, performance-based, and multimodal, and to address challenges facing the U.S. transportation system, including improving safety, maintaining infrastructure condition, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency of the system and freight movement, protecting the environment, and reducing delays in project delivery. The FAST Act builds on the changes made by MAP-21.

Performance-Based Planning and Programming (PBPP): Following federal transportation laws (MAP-21 and FAST Act), grant recipients are required to transition to performance-driven, outcome-based programs. Performance management is a strategic approach that uses performance data to inform decision-making and outcomes. FTA and FHWA published the final rule on Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Transportation Planning and Metropolitan Transportation Planning on May 27, 2016. The rule establishes new requirements for States and MPOs to coordinate with transit providers, set performance targets, and integrate those performance targets and performance plans into their planning documents by certain dates. As part of this PBPP approach, recipients of federal highway and transit funds are required to link investment priorities from their Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to achieve performance targets. In a series of rulemakings, FHWA and FTA are establishing national performance measures in areas such as safety, infrastructure condition, congestion, system reliability, emissions, and freight movement.

Civil Rights: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin. Specifically, 42 USC 2000d states that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” The use of the word “person” is important as the protections afforded under Title VI apply to anyone, regardless of whether the individual is lawfully present in the United States or a citizen of a State within the United States. In addition to Title VI, there are other Nondiscrimination statutes that afford legal protection. These statutes include the following: Section 162 (a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 USC 324) (sex), Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (age), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (disability), Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, 49 CFR Part 21, 23 CFR Part 200, U.S. DOT Order 1050.2A (Standard Title VI Assurances and Non-Discrimination Provisions), Executive Order (EO) #12898 (Environmental Justice), and EO #13166 (Limited English Proficiency).[1] Notably, the MPO complies with all federal non-discrimination laws and regulations.

3-C Process: The purposes of the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 134, 23 U.S.C. 150, and 49 U.S.C. 5303, as amended, are to set forth the national policy that the MPO designated for each urbanized area is to carry out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive (3-C) performance-based multimodal transportation planning process, including the development of a metropolitan

transportation plan and a TIP, that encourages and promotes the safe and efficient development, management, and operation of surface transportation systems to serve the mobility needs of people and freight (including accessible pedestrian walkways, bicycle transportation facilities, and intermodal facilities that support intercity transportation, including intercity buses and intercity bus facilities and commuter vanpool providers) fosters economic growth and development, and takes into consideration resiliency needs, while minimizing transportation-related fuel consumption and air pollution; and to encourage the continued development and improvement of metropolitan transportation planning processes guided by the planning factors set forth in 23 U.S.C. 134(h) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(h).

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety: Livable communities that support bicycling and walking are a high priority of the U.S. DOT. A livable community is one that provides safe and convenient transportation choices to all citizens, whether it's by walking, bicycling, transit, or driving. Pedestrian and bicyclist safety improvements depend on an integrated approach that involves the 4 E's: Engineering, Enforcement, Education, and Emergency Services.

FY2024 UPWP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Pine Bluff Arsenal Compatible Use Roadway study (Hwy 256 Roadway design)- continuation
- Prepared 2023-2026 TIP Amendments
- Provided technical assistance to local jurisdictions.
- Pine Bluff Transit assistance – Carryover funds
- Participated in Bike and Trails discussions.
- MTP Plan Maintenance
- Worked with Pine Bluff City officials on Housing and TOD inclusion.
- Provided documentation and information for Policy Board meeting.
- Completed FY2023 Annual Performance and Expenditures Report
- Adopted FY2024 Unified Planning Work Program
- Attended and managed Pine Bluff and White Hall Planning Commission meetings
- Reviewed local site development requests.
- Reviewed demolition and building permits.
- Worked with Pine Bluff Transit and SEAT on long range needs and goals.
- Maintained and updated website as needed.
- Coordinated Performance Measures

FY2025 Goals

Goals for the MPO in FY 2025 include:

- Completing a draft Bike & Pedestrian Plan
- Draft Regional Trails Program
- Coordinate PB Transit transition from 5307 to 5311 funding status
- Actively coordinate Transportation and Land Use planning through local jurisdiction involvement.
- SEARPC will analyze socio-economic data to stay abreast of housing trends, traffic patterns and population shifts to improve transportation decision making.
- Update Public Participation Plan
- Renew agency(s) Memorandums of Understanding
- Begin preparations for 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan
- Safe Streets for All Planning grant
- Draft Complete Streets Policy

UPWP Purpose

The UPWP describes the planning activities that the metropolitan transportation planning organization and other agencies propose to undertake during FY 2025 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025) to address local and regional transportation issues. The Unified Planning Work Program also provides budgeting and proposed expenditures of local, state, and federal funds used to support the various planning activities while providing a management tool for the MPO and the funding agencies in scheduling transportation planning activities, products, and milestones.

Pursuant to these functions, the PBATS FY2025 UPWP is the document identifying all USDOT funded transportation planning activities that will be undertaken within the Pine Bluff-White Hall Metropolitan Area by the Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (SEARPC) during the FY 2025 project year. The UPWP has been developed as a cooperative venture between SEARPC (which provides administrative staff for the PBATS MPO), ArDOT, FHWA, FTA, City of Pine Bluff, City of White Hall, and Jefferson County.

WORK ELEMENTS

Five work categories or tasks have been developed relative to the planning process that address the factors of the FAST ACT listed previously. These are as follows:

Task 1: 44.21 Program Support and Administration

Task 2: 44.22 General Development and Comprehensive Planning

Task 3: 44.23 Long Range Transportation Planning
Complete Street Planning

Task 4: 44.24 Short Range Transportation Planning

Task 5: 44.25 Transportation Improvement Program.

44.21 PROGRAM SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION

DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this task is to ensure that the transportation planning process conducted in the Study Area is **continuous, cooperative, and comprehensive**, and that has resulted in plans and programs consistent with the comprehensive planned development of the urbanized area. The task consists of the daily administrative and management work elements that are necessary to maintain the transportation planning and public participation process for the Pine Bluff-White Hall Urbanized Area for both the FHWA and FTA portions of the program. This task reflects all those activities associated in ensuring community involvement in the planning process, monitoring of on-going planning activities, and ensuring that all modes of transportation are considered in the planning process in terms of addressing the planning factors as stated in federal transportation legislation.

WORK TASK

44.21.01 – Work Program Development and Administration

- A. Financial Management:** Provide administrative, budgeting, bookkeeping, and clerical duties required to perform work tasks and comply with ArDOT, FTA, and FHWA requirements. Progress reports, payment requests, budget monitoring and related documentation will be prepared.
- B. Administration:** MPO staff will prepare reports and agendas for the SEARPC Technical Committee and Policy Board meetings and respond to committee and/or Policy Board requests and maintain program management and coordination. An on-going review of MPO by-laws and policies will be conducted. Evaluation and upgrading of equipment and SEARPC's website will continue.
- C. Record Maintenance:** These activities will include all correspondence from ArDOT and local. questions and decisions regarding transportation actions within the MPO area. Committee memberships, agency agreements, financial documentation, and meeting minutes and attendance rosters will be maintained.
- D. Document Preparation:** Staff will prepare the 2026 UPWP which identifies the transportation planning and programming activities to be undertaken in the SARPC area.
- E. Staff Training:** MPO staff will participate in various training related to transportation requirements including performance measure development and adoption, professional development, and other Planning related topics.
- F. Community / Member training:** Staff will look for ways to provide training for member agencies, citizens, and the media to emphasize the importance of the MPO and community support through transportation process and to improve understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- G. Review and Update MOU's:** Staff will review interagency Memorandums of Understanding and updates as needed.

44.21 PROGRAM SUPPORT AND ADMINISTRATION (cont.)

44.21.02 – Public Information and Citizen Participation

- A. Public Participation Plan:** MPO staff will ensure compliance with its current public Involvement procedures and will annually review and update, when needed, the agency's Public Participation Plan.
- B. Planning assistance:** MPO staff will assist SEARPC member organizations in utilizing transportation resources by relaying information regarding transportation programs (TAP, etc.). Staff will assist in updating the Master Street plans for each entity and continue involvement in all local planning issues.

C. Intergovernmental review: Review area Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) and Federal Highway Administration funding applications.

END PRODUCT

	END PRODUCTS	Completion Dates
1	Record keeping, correspondence, public involvement	On-going
2	Audit Report	July 2025
3	Financial and Performance Reports.	Quarterly
4	FY2026 UPWP.	May 2025
5	Office/equipment upgrades.	On-going
6	Website Maintenance	On-going
7	Documentation of PPP compliance maintained on file	On-going
8	Compliance Documentation and Training	On-going
9	Community / Member training	On-going
10	Planning Assistance and Program Funding Review	As needed
11	Prepare FY 2024 APERs	November 2024
12	Review and update MOU's	June 30, 2025

Cooperating Agencies: SEARPC, ArDOT, FHWA, FTA, Pine Bluff Transit, SEAT, City of Pine Bluff, City of White Hall and Jefferson County.

44.21 Funding Data

Local \$ 4,663
Federal \$ 18,652
Total \$ 23,315

UPWP Percent 15 %

44.22 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

DESCRIPTION

The maintenance of socio-economic data, land use, and transportation system characteristics on a current basis is necessary to compare and evaluate existing conditions in relation to assumptions and forecasts made in developing transportation plans. The determination of the magnitude and location of changing demographics and statistics is essential in updating the overall transportation plan and in the scheduling of priority projects in the Transportation Improvement Program.

The purpose of this task is to collect various data and information that is used in the transportation planning process. The data and information collected is used for the purpose of identifying trends and gaps in connectivity that may result in a lack of transportation related access across various population sectors.

WORK TASK

44.22.01 – Technical Assistance to Local Governments

A. **Map Review**: SEARPC staff will assist local jurisdictions in map review and amend the functional classification maps within the study area as needed.

44.22.02 – Geographic Information, Graphics and Mapping

A. **GIS Development**: SEARPC will work to upgrade PBATS area maps to ArcMap and ArcGIS format.

44.22.03 – Land Use / Socioeconomic Data Development

A. **Demographics and Projection**: MPO staff will collect and compile demographic data related to population, housing, and employment to provide transportation related projections to assist in prioritizing local projects. Data will be collected from local jurisdictions, ArDOT, the Census bureau, and American Community Survey (ACS).

B. **Land Use / Transportation Coordination**: SEARPC will assist local jurisdictions in coordinating land use decisions with consideration toward transportation alternatives.

44.22 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING (cont.)

END PRODUCT

	END PRODUCTS	Completion Dates
1	Map Review	On-going
2	Traffic count database	On-going
3	GIS mapping program	On-going
4	Demographic and development database	On-going
5	Land use / Transportation Coordination	On-going

Cooperating Agencies: SEARPC, ArDOT, FHWA, FTA, Pine Bluff Transit, SEAT, City of Pine Bluff, City of White Hall and Jefferson County.

44.22 Funding Data

Local \$ 3,730
Federal \$ 14,922
Total \$ 18,652

UPWP Percent 12 %

44.23 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

DESCRIPTION

The 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) plan was adopted in September of 2020 and amended in March 2021. PBATS' 2045 MTP plan will be reviewed to determine areas of the plan that may need amending to better reflect the Urban Area's current and future transportation needs. Preparation will start on the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. To this end, this task will also involve evaluating the work conducted under the other tasks of the UPWP to determine if the Plan meets the immediate needs of the Study Area. A review of local government's policies and practices that have a bearing on the implementation of the Transportation Plan will also be undertaken as part of this task. As part of the stated Planning Emphasis Areas Complete Street Planning will be included this and future planning Unified Planning Work Programs. A minimum of 2 % of PL funds will be used for Complete Street work to satisfy this requirement.

WORK TASK

44.23.01 – Metropolitan Transportation Plan

- A. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Maintenance: Maintenance of the 2045 MTP will be the primary focus of this element of the UPWP. Amendments will be addressed as needed.

B. 2050 MTP Development

C. Plan Development: Staff will continue to work with local governments on regional transportation plans and / or updates:

- a. Review with local governmental units the Arkansas Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan
- b. Encourage coordination of local Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plans with the State Plan

D. Transit Expansion – Work with Pine Bluff Transit on transition from 5307 funding to 5311 funding.

E. PEA and Performance Planning - Provide guidance to local jurisdictions in areas related to Planning Emphasis Areas and Performance Based Planning and Target setting. Through policy Board adoption the MPO will support and adopt ArDOT’s performance targets.

F. Assistance to Local Governments – Assist local governments with project priorities and funding opportunities as it relates to transportation planning.

G. Complete Streets: Continue work with local governments to develop and get implemented a “Complete Streets” policy for the Cities in the MPO area. A minimum of 2.5 percent of Federal allocation shall be spent on working toward Complete Street policies.

END PRODUCT

	END PRODUCTS	Completion Dates
1	2045 MTP Monitoring and amending as needed	On-going
2	2050 MTP Development	September 2025
3	Transit 5311 Transition	December 31, 2024
4	PEA and Performance Planning	On-going
5	Assistance to local governments	On-going
6.	Complete Streets planning and coordination	On-going

Cooperating Agencies: SEARPC, ArDOT, FHWA, FTA, Pine Bluff Transit, SEAT, City of Pine Bluff, City of White Hall, and Jefferson County.

44.23 Funding Data

Local	\$ 13,989
Federal	\$ 52,847
Federal Dedicated Complete Streets	\$ <u>3,109</u>
Total	\$ 69,945

UPWP Percent 45 %

44.24 SHORT RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

DESCRIPTION

The staff will continue to provide technical assistance to local governments in their planning process as it relates to the MPO 3-C transportation planning process. We will assist local governments in preparing and administering “Transportation Alternative” program grants (Enhancement, Trail, Safe Routes to Schools, etc.) and other transportation grants as requested or as may come available. The staff will participate in various community and regional committees related to transportation. Staff will work with local governmental bodies to assist in the understanding of MPO Transportation Planning.

WORK TASK

44.24.01 – Traffic Monitoring and Analysis of Existing Conditions

- A. **Traffic Counts:** Utilize state and local traffic counts to monitor area of congestion or safety issues.
- B. **Project Priority List:** Staff will work with the TAC to maintain a continuous project priority list.

44.24.02- Traffic Congestion and Safety Planning

- A. **Crash data analysis and eCrash:** Staff will review and monitor traffic accidents and crash data to identify patterns and use the data to meet FAST Act performance measures when adopted.
- B. **Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act compliance :** Inclusion of performance measures are required by the FAST ACT. To this end, staff will continue to work with ArDOT staff and other MPO’s to include performance measures that will be used to guide future transportation projects.
- C. **Highway Safety Improvement Program** – MPO will participate in on-going involvement with the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP).
- D. **Streetscape extension project:** MPO will continue to monitor and assist the City of Pine Bluff, Downtown Development regarding extending the adopted streetscape project on Main Street from 4th Avenue to Harding Avenue.

44.24.03 – Public Transportation, Goods Movement, and Intermodal Planning:

- A. **Transit Performance Measures:** Staff will work with Pine Bluff Transit and Southeast Arkansas Transit by providing technical assistance in the implementation of performance measures once adopted.
- B. **Statewide Public Transportation Coordination Plan:** SEARPC staff will assist public transit operators and local human service providers in coordinating the delivery of transit services. Staff will monitor and work with ArDOT in the coordination of the Statewide Plan.

44.24 SHORT RANGE PLANNING (cont.)

C. Assist Pine Bluff Transit on Program Requirements: SEARPC staff will work with PBT on meeting the Program Requirements including the Program of Projects, Public Participation, TIP and MTP development, and assist with public involvement through the agency’s Public Participation Plan.

D. Comprehensive Plan Development: Staff will assist Pine Bluff on implementation of the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan.

F. Map and Data Resources - Research availability of maps and data available to assist with visual data on transportation and socio-economic data (ITERS, MySidewalk, UrbanSDK).

END PRODUCT

	END PRODUCTS	Completion Dates
1	Traffic Monitoring	On-going
2	Project Priority List	On-going
3	Complete Street planning and coordination	On-going
4	Comprehensive Plan implementation	December, 2024
5	Transit performance measures	On-going
6	Statewide Public Transportation Plan	On-going
7	Pedestrian and Bicycle Sidewalk Analysis	June 30, 2024
8	Highway Safety Improvement Program Targets	As Determined by ArDOT
9	Map and Date Resources research	December 2024

Cooperating Agencies: SEARPC, ArDOT, FHWA, FTA, Pine Bluff Transit, SEAT, City of Pine Bluff, City of White Hall and Jefferson County.

44.24 Funding Data

Local **\$ 6,839**
Federal **\$ 27,356**
Total **\$ 34,195**

UPWP Percent **22 %**

44.25 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

DESCRIPTION

The objective of this task is to further the goals and objectives of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) planning process through review and analysis by MPO staff or in support of the existing TIP or developing a new TIP.

WORK TASK

44.25.01 – TIP Development, Project Selection and Monitoring

A. Transportation Improvement Program: MPO will monitor and amend the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program as needed.

44.25 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (cont.)

B. Annual Listing of Projects (ALOP): Listing and publication of Annual List of Projects (ALOP) in which Federal Highway and Federal Transit funds have been obligated.

C. Monitor Project Progress: Monitor progress on TIP projects and keep local government up to date.

D. Transportation Improvement Plan: Staff will coordinate with ArDOT on the development of the 2025-2028 TIP,

END PRODUCT

	END PRODUCTS	Completion Dates
1	2023-2026 TIP updates and amendments	On-going
2	Annual Listing of Projects (ALOP)	December 2024
3	Monitor TIP Projects	On-going
4	2025*2028 TIP Development and Adoption	September 2024

Cooperating Agencies: SEARPC, ArDOT, FHWA, FTA, Pine Bluff Transit, SEAT, City of Pine Bluff, City of White Hall, and Jefferson County.

44.25 Funding Data

Local \$ 1,865

Federal \$ 7,461

Total \$ 9,326

UPWP Percent 6 %

2024 UPWP FINANCIAL SUMMARY

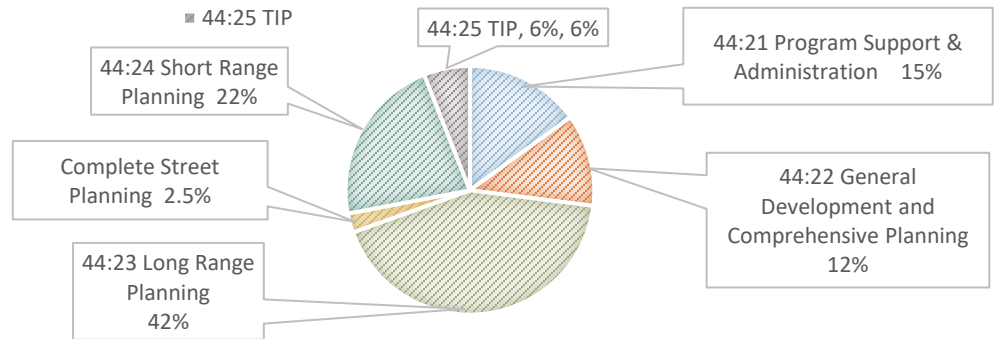
It is anticipated that to complete the work tasks as described in the UPWP, \$124,346 in PL, FTA and 2023 UPWP carryover funds (\$9,346) will be required. The following table indicates the estimated cost by work task to complete each task.

TASKS	PL & FTA FEDERAL (5307)	LOCAL	TOTAL
44:21 Program Support and Administration	\$ 18,652.00	\$ 4,663.00	\$ 23,315.00
44:22 General Development and Comprehensive Planning	\$ 14,922.00	\$ 3,730.00	\$ 18,652.00
44.23 Long Range Planning	\$ 52,847.00	\$ 13,212.00	\$ 66,059.00
- Complete Street Planning	\$ 3,109.00	\$ 777.00	\$ 3,886.00
44.24 Short Range Planning	\$ 27,356.00	\$ 6,839.00	\$ 34,195.00
44:25 Transportation Improvement Program	\$7,461.00	\$ 1,865.00	\$ 9,326.00
TOTALS	\$ 124,346.00	\$ 31,087.00	\$ 155,433.00

**** Federal Share includes FHWA / FTA Consolidated Planning Funds**

UPWP COST ALLOCATION

- 44:21 Program Support & Administration
- 44:22 General Development and Comprehensive Planning
- 44:23 Long Range Planning
- Complete Street Planning
- 44:24 Short Range Planning
- 44:25 TIP



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PUBLIC NOTICE OF DRAFT FY2025 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

The Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission (SEARPC - MPO) is inviting the public to review and provide comments on the draft Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for the Pine Bluff Area Transportation Study (PBATS) area. This document describes what transportation planning activities will be conducted within the Pine Bluff Urbanized Area between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025. In accordance with the U. S. Department of Transportation rules and regulations the anticipated expenditures are outlined for those activities.

The UPWP can be viewed at www.searpc.com and is on file and available for public inspection at the Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission office, located at 1300 Ohio Street, Suite B, Pine Bluff, Arkansas from the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Copies will be sent to individuals by calling 870-534-4247.

Comments concerning the proposed UPWP will be received beginning Monday, April 2nd, 2024, and until 11: a.m., Wednesday, May 2nd, 2024. Comments should be submitted to the Southeast Arkansas Regional Planning Commission, 1300 Ohio, Suite B, Pine Bluff, Arkansas 71601. Should you have any questions, please contact the SARPC office at 534-4247.

