1. Roll Call


Members Absent: E. Fisher

Staff Present: B. Schaefer, M. Cechvala

2. Approval of January 22, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Rylander moved, Gjerde seconded, to approve the January 22, 2014 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Staff Reports

Schaefer said that he had received an email from WisDOT informing MPO staff that the MPO would not be receiving a sub-allocation of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding for the 2014-2018 projects cycle this year based on the policy WisDOT adopted for calculating the MPO sub-allocations. The state was over-programmed from the last project cycle and the state transferred one-half of the statewide TAP allocation to roadway projects as permitted by MAP-21. In order to address the funding shortfall, the MPOs’ allocations were reduced by the amount of approved projects in their areas scheduled for 2015 or later. Since the Madison area has $3.2 million tied up in the Lower Yahara River Trail project, which was delayed, all of our funding is being withheld. In response to a question from Ferrell, Schaefer said this does not jeopardize the Lower Yahara River Trail project. Madison area projects will still be able to compete for the available statewide funding. He said MPO staff did not agree with the decision and were also upset about the timing of the announcement, but there wasn’t probably much that could be done about it. Rylander speculated that WisDOT staff may not have known or been told ahead of time about the policy.

Schaefer said that a second TIP amendment was approved at the last MPO board meeting. It included project revisions that moved the Military Ridge Park and Ride Lot up to 2014, delayed the Lower Yahara River Trail to 2015, changed the Hoelpker Road bridge (over the Interstate) project from a bridge deck replacement to bridge deck overlay, and added four rail warning device projects. A third amendment on the next board meeting agenda will add carryover federal JARC and state funding for continuing YWCA’s JobRide program.

Schaefer said that MPO staff were working on completing the RFP for the regional ITS plan with Rylander’s and others’ help. He also mentioned that MPO staff would be assisting Dane County in implementing a bicycle wayfinding project. A scope of work for the RFP to hire a consultant was being developed and a project advisory committee would be assembled.

The City of Madison is the lead agency for the joint project to reconstruct the southern segment of CTH M, including the CTH PD intersection. The design for the intersection is proposed to be changed from a roundabout to a partial grade separated intersection. A diagram was distributed. Traffic operations analysis predicted the roundabout could not handle the forecast traffic volumes, particularly the eastbound left turn in the p.m. peak hour. The proposed design is a signalized intersection with the westbound through movement grade separated, allowing the eastbound left to have sufficient time for an exclusive movement. This design works with the grades in the area, the proposed bike path – which will remain grade separated – and existing constraints. The project will be built in 2015-16. In response to a question from Ferrell, Schaefer said the new design was expected to cost $1 to $1.5 million more than the roundabout.
Schaefer briefly reported on the WisDOT major corridor studies. For the Interstate 39/90 study, WisDOT completed the initial screening of potential new interchanges. A map was distributed. Three possible new locations, two with alternatives, were being carried forward for further study. All of the interchanges between USH 151 and the Beltline were being dropped from further consideration due to impacts on the interstate. Stoebig and others commented that an interchange at Buckeye Road or Cottage Grove Road would be beneficial. Schaefer said that from a commuter standpoint that might be true, but they would have negative traffic impacts on the local road network, negatively impact residential areas around the interchanges, and create congestion and safety concerns on the interstate. Rylander commented that he was surprised they weren’t at least carried forward for further study. Traffic modeling for the Beltline study was ongoing, analyzing the impact of a North Mendota Parkway, southern reliever roadway, and transit improvements. He also reviewed the delayed schedule for the Stoughton Road study with the draft EIS now scheduled for release in the fall. The recent design focus has been on the area between Pflaum Road and Buckeye Road and looking at a more urban cross-section with a lower posted speed limit.

Hull mentioned a presentation that WisDOT consultants gave on the Beltline study to a realtors group that pointed out the many isthmuses, not just the central isthmus, and other barriers that create constraints to traffic circulation. He asked if there was a general plan for dealing with these constraints. Schaefer said that this fact puts pressure on the existing arterial road system because there are fewer alternative routes. There are few options for building roadways in new corridors such as an outer Beltline.

4. Review and Discussion on Draft of Proposed Revised Policies and Project Scoring Criteria for STP-Urban Program Applications

Schaefer said that a comprehensive review and revision of the scoring criteria had never been done since the criteria were adopted in the mid-1990s. The goal is to better align the criteria with new federal law and MPO policy objectives. The proposed new criteria provide more detailed information on how projects will be scored and tailor the criteria to specific project types – roadway capacity expansion, roadway maintenance, transit capacity expansion, transit maintenance, ITS, and bicycle/pedestrian. The new system uses a 100-point scale. Schaefer said the categories of criteria and the weights assigned to them don’t differ that much from the current criteria. Schaefer reviewed the draft document, including the program objectives, policies, and criteria for the different types of projects. He said some MPOs restrict the funding to certain types of projects and/or allocate a certain percentage of the funding to different types of projects. That was not being proposed as it unnecessarily restricts the flexibility of the MPO to select the highest priority projects. The only federally eligible project types for which applications wouldn’t be accepted were environmental mitigation and recreational trails. Schaefer reviewed the policy on minimum project cost for the different types of projects. Currently, there is just a general policy to fund larger projects. Ferrell asked if the minimum cost would be indexed with inflation, and Schaefer said that could be done.

Schaefer said that MPO staff reviewed the draft criteria with the MPO’s technical committee. Some members suggested providing more detail or formulas where possible to provide more guidance on how projects would be scored under the different categories. Staff was working to do that. Rylander said that made sense. Schaefer said he’d send out a revised draft for committee members to comment on if it was going to be approved before the next meeting. In order for the criteria to be used for the project application cycle this year, it would need to be approved by the board at its May meeting.

5. Presentation on the South Capitol TOD District Planning Study Draft Recommendations and Design Concepts

Cechvala reviewed a Powerpoint presentation that had been provided by City of Madison Planning staff. He reviewed the gateway intersection recommendations along John Nolen Drive at North Shore Drive, Broom Street, and Wilson Street. He reviewed the recommendation to widen the John Nolen path to include a separated pedestrian path. Wilson Street is recommended to remain one-way with
eastbound parking removed and replaced with a counter-flow bike lane. Several potential bridge locations are laid out on each side of the Monona Terrace, which could be either narrow or wide with a plaza. He also reviewed the recommendation to site an inter-city bus terminal on North Bedford Street and West Mifflin Street.

Hull said he believed removing parking on Wilson Street would be controversial. He liked the recommendation to reroute Wilson Street to Hancock Street. He recommended that the Broom Street intersection be modified so that the eastbound through does not go concurrently with the southbound left, making it easier to travel from Broom Street to John Nolen to Williamson Street.

6. Committee Member Reports

Williams said it bothers him that bus rapid transit is not in the MPO’s TIP. He is also concerned that the site for the inter-city bus terminal is not large enough. He also commented that the MPO should have a say on the new parking being provided at the airport since it affects transit and regional traffic patterns.

7. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21, 2014.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm.

Minutes were recorded by W. Schaefer and M. Cechvala