Minutes of the
Madison Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Technical Coordinating Committee

April 21, 2006 Fitchburg City Hall 2:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Beaupre, K. Clark, Debo, Dryer, Feeney, Ginder, Kennedy, Murphy, Nelson, Dunphy (for Mandli), Andros (for Violante), Woodard

Members Absent: Coville, R. Clark, Ettinger, Kirchner, McComb, Schmale

Others Present: McDonald, Schaefer, Pike, D. Trowbridge, K. Lobdell, M. Hoelkner

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes of January 20, 2006

Moved by Woodard, seconded by Clark, to approve January meeting minutes. Motion carried.


Trowbridge distributed a newsletter announcing the kick off of the second DEIS phase of the study. He noted that the first phase of the study was completed in 2002 and recommended a commuter rail system entirely in the rail corridor from Middleton to East Towne as an initial start-up system. Trowbridge also distributed a study schedule with maps of the preliminary alternatives being screened and evaluated. He reviewed the alternatives and indicated those that the study committee has recommended moving forward for detailed analysis. These include the Rail Right-of-Way (ROW) Alt. (Alt. 2a), Airport Rail ROW (Alt. 3), and the Isthmus/Mineral Point Rail ROW & Street Running (Alt. 5). The Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Rail Street Running Alternatives were recommended to be dropped from further consideration due to cost, traffic impacts, and other considerations. He mentioned that Alt. 5 would require a hybrid rail vehicle that could operate both on the rail line and run in the street. McDonald said that Alt. 5 could include bifurcated service with some trains running to Middleton while others use Mineral Point Rd. with the same thing on the East side. This is the system that is being modeled for the regional transportation plan update. In response to a question from Woodard, Trowbridge said there was one freight train per day using the west rail corridor carrying coal to UW and MG&E. Trowbridge said a public meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday, April 26. The goal is to complete the first part of this phase of the study by the end of the year and have a New Starts application ready by January 2007. Completion of the EIS is scheduled for January 2008, but there are milestones that must be met first. Governance and local financing will be key issues.

4. Presentation on Stoughton Road/USH 51 (S Beltline to STH 19) Corridor Study Alternatives and Comments Received at Public Meetings

Kim Lobdell, KL Engineering, first distributed the informational handout from the public information meeting. Using a series of maps and exhibits, she then provided background on the study and reviewed the three sets of alternatives being evaluated. Over 60,000 persons and jobs are expected to be added on the East side in the next 35+ years. A needs assessment completed in 2003 identified problems and issues and this EIS phase of the study is looking at potential solutions. Three levels of improvements (A, B, C) have been developed for the different sections of the corridor. The first level focuses on TSM-type improvements such as improving signal timing and extending turn lanes, the second uses a combination of at-grade intersections and grade-separated interchanges, and the third provides a free flow solution for the entire corridor. Both regional and operations modeling is being used to evaluate the different potential alternatives. Lobdell said the modeling has turned up two surprises. First, the side roads serve as the biggest capacity constraint in the corridor, because most trips have an origin or
destination in the corridor. There are very few regional through trips as those are on the Interstate. Secondly, the diversion of traffic from the Interstate when the capacity of USH 51 is expanded with the free flow improvements is not as great as was expected. There is considerable diversion, however, from Monona Drive and other parallel local streets. Select link analyses are being done to help with the analyses. Lobdell then reviewed the level of service (LOS) projected during the peak hour at the intersections along the corridor in Year 2030 under the different improvement alternatives. Under Alternative A, many of the intersections would be operating at LOS F. Most of these would be improved to at least LOS D with the Alternative B improvements, and LOS B or C under Alternative C. She also showed the projected peak hour travel times in the corridor. Under Alternative A, the travel time would increase from 20 minutes currently to 35 minutes. In addition to traffic capacity improvements, the study is also looking at safety, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, transit service improvements, and potential economic development opportunities. After meeting with Metro and MPO staff, it was determined that most transit service improvements in the corridor would be on the local street system. Some of these are planned for this year. Schaefer noted that the most significant improvement was the addition of service in the corridor connecting the South and East Transfer Points. A number of potential ped/bike over/underpasses have been identified along with other facility recommendations. Lobdell then highlighted specific improvements for the different sections of the corridor for each alternative using orthophoto maps with the roadway configurations drawn on them. She indicated that there was support from the public on the extension of Anderson Street to Lien Road and for the split diamond interchanges at Pflaum and Buckeye Roads under Alternative B. Finally, she reviewed the summary of impacts from the different alternatives and their cost, which ranged from $100 million for Alternative A to $300 million for Alternative C.

5. **Review and Recommendation on Scoring and Ranking of Candidate Statewide Multi-modal Improvement Program (SMIP) Projects**

Schaefer distributed tables with the draft scoring and ranking and priority of candidate projects. He said there was $12.2 million available statewide for the FY 2007-2009 funding cycle. There are ten project applications from the MPO planning area totaling $7.8 million and another four projects from the outer Dane County area that were not scored and ranked. Schaefer reviewed the ten projects and showed how they fit into the existing and planned bikeway system using the draft regional bikeway system map and draft West Side Bicycle Plan map. He said all of the projects are excellent projects and are on the “regional” system identified on the MPO’s draft bikeway plan map. The highest scoring project was the Sherman Flyer path in the rail corridor connecting the North side to the planned Yahara Parkway Path. This will provide a direct route suitable for bicyclists in the Sherman Avenue corridor. Three projects had the second highest score and were prioritized 2-4 in the following order: Ice Age Junction Path between CTH MV/Military Ridge Trail and CTH PD; Pheasant Branch Creek Trail Enhancements, including construction of two bridges over stream crossings and paving of the path; and the Cannonball Trail Phase I in the South side rail corridor being abandoned from the Beltline down to the Capital City Trail. The Cannonball Trail is planned to cross the Beltline to Fish Hatchery Road to the north and continue in the rail corridor southwest to the Military Ridge Trail. WisDNR is purchasing the land in the rail corridor. Woodard asked how projects were scored under the mobility enhancement criterion. Schaefer responded that the key factor is whether there are any reasonably direct, bicycle suitable routes (generally on-street) to the proposed path in the same corridor. He said scoring can be difficult in cases of multi-phase projects.

Moved by Clark, seconded by Murphy, to recommend approval of the draft scoring and ranking and priority listing of candidate SMIP projects. Motion carried.

6. **Committee Member Reports**

*Item deferred.*
7. **Staff Reports**
   *Item deferred.*

8. **Next Meeting Dates**
   The next meeting dates are May 19 and June 16.

9. **Adjournment**
   The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

   *Minutes recorded by Bill Schaefer*