

**Minutes of the
Madison Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Technical Coordinating Committee**

July 15, 2005

Fitchburg City Hall

2:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Kennedy (for Brown), Debo, Dryer, Beaupre, McComb, Trowbridge (for Murphy), Nelson, Mandli, Ginder, Feeney (for Quade), Woodard

Members Absent: K. Clark, Coville, R. Clark, Ettinger, Kirchner, Schmale, Violante

Others Present: McDonald, Schaefer, Pike, R. Wade, P. Dunphy, D. Paoni, R. Phillips, P. Larson, C. Terrell

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes of April 15, 2005

Moved by Mandli, seconded by Woodard, to approve the April meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Presentation on the Status of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative

Randy Wade with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) provided a power point presentation on the current Milwaukee-to-Chicago “Hiawatha” rail service—a stepping off point for Madison service—and the status of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (MRRI). Ridership on the Hiawatha service increased 9% in 2004 compared to 2003 and is 14% higher in the first six months of 2005 than in 2004. On-time performance is over 90% and the best on the entire Amtrak system. A key reason for this is the dispatch operations by CP Rail, which also owns the rail line planned for the Madison service. Trowbridge asked for further explanation regarding the dispatch issue. Wade said financial incentives are provided for on-time performance. In addition, CP Rail is very good and works well with government. They own the tracks through Madison. Kennedy asked whether the ridership increases were improving financial performance and Wade responded that the fare box recovery ratio was greater than 53% now. Wade reviewed recent initiatives for the Hiawatha service, which include the addition of a roundtrip (to seven daily), a marketing program, the planned rehabilitation of the downtown Milwaukee station, the new Milwaukee airport station added in January 2005, and the planned new, relocated Sturtevant station. The new airport station—one of four in the country—demonstrates the benefits of intermodal connections, accounting for 7% of ridership. Wade then reviewed the MRRI plans for rail service in Wisconsin. Phase one would extend service from Milwaukee to Madison with 110 mph service. Phase two would provide 110 mph service between Madison and the Twin Cities. Phase three would provide 110 mph service between Milwaukee and Green Bay. Phase four would increase the speed for Milwaukee to Chicago service from 79 to 110 mph. The estimated capital cost for the phase one Madison-Milwaukee-Chicago service is \$316 million, which includes track improvements, grade crossing protection, Madison station, and modern train sets. Madison service is recognized as one of Amtrak’s Tier One corridors in terms of future development. An Environmental Assessment/Preliminary Engineering Study for the service was completed with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) approved in 2004. This means Wisconsin is ready to go if federal funding is provided to support the capital improvements. Some investments have already been made, including grade crossing upgrades, purchase of the Watertown to Madison rail line, and a train control project. Wade then reviewed the status of efforts to secure federal funding, which is necessary for the project to proceed. The House reported out a bill to provide \$12 million in funding. A bill has been introduced in the Senate to provide dedicated funding. Copies of the latest update of the MWRR plan were provided. Mandli asked if internet service would be available on the trains and Wade said yes.

4. Review of Preliminary Listing and Ranking of Candidate Projects for STP Urban Funding for 2006-2010

Schaefer reviewed priority listings. The major projects in 2006 were Segment 2 of East Washington Avenue and S. Park Street. Ginder noted that Middleton was planning to go forward with the reconstruction of existing USH 12 in 2006 even if federal funding wasn't provided. Schaefer noted that a significant amount of state funding is being provided for the project. 2007 projects include Segment 3 of East Washington Avenue, CTH M North Phase 3, and CTH CV. CTH M North is proposed for funding even though it scores slightly lower than CTH M (Valley View/Pleasant View extended intersection), because it is the last phase of a continuing project while CTH M intersection project is new. An agreement on the local share funding is needed for the CTH M intersection project. The county does not have it in their budget. Assuming the local funding issue is worked out, the CTH M intersection project would receive funding in 2008 along with the first segment of Monona Drive. Sylvester commented that expansion of CTH M from Cross Country Rd. to Mineral Point Road was a high priority for the City of Verona, and McDonald responded that improvements are clearly needed in the corridor. Schaefer stated that the only major project in 2009 is the last segment of East Washington Avenue. 2010 projects are the second segment of Monona Drive and University Avenue/CTH MS (Allen Blvd. to Segoe Rd.). Agreement on local share funding is also needed on the University Avenue reconstruction project. E. Johnson Street is at the top of the list of projects without funding in 2010.

5. Review of Draft Goals and Objectives for the Regional Transportation Plan Update

Schaefer reviewed the goals and objectives, highlighting new ones or those for which more detail is provided compared to those from the current plan. He said the "policy objectives" combine policies and objectives, which often overlap. They are result-oriented. Implementation strategies or actions will be identified for achieving the goals and objectives. The goals and objectives reflect an increased emphasis on safety, traffic management/operations, and freight transportation as well as environmental justice concerns. McDonald added that further discussion of some of the objectives will be added in the plan report where necessary. Schaefer said MPO staff were looking for feedback from committee members either today or later via e-mail. For instance, have all of the important issues or concepts been addressed? Trowbridge commented that objective #7 under Public Transit regarding establishment of a fixed guideway transit system in the east-west corridor was perhaps too specific and might be revised to include reference to other corridors. McDonald and Schaefer said this was a good suggestion.

6. Committee Member Reports

Nelson mentioned that he heard WisDOT was revising its cost participation policy. Feeney said that was correct. She said the central office would be involved as well as the district.

Woodard reported that the City of Fitchburg was working on a new design for relocated Lacy Road and the planned USH 14 interchange.

McComb said he expected another extension of TEA-21, since a reauthorization bill had not yet been passed.

Debo said Metro successfully implemented its new fare collection system in July without any problems. With the ITS data now available, Metro has begun to improve its schedule resulting in \$100,000 in efficiencies already. She said it would take around two years to complete schedule adjustments to the entire route system. Implementation of the ITS public information system, which will include real time information via the computer and kiosks, is progressing. The service to Epic Systems in Verona will probably start the second week of September. A second survey of employers is being done in Sun Prairie with service potentially to be implemented as early as September 2006. A

meeting on possible bus service was held in the Village of Oregon and there was a high level of interest. Fare structure changes are being considered for budgetary reasons. A facility needs analysis was just completed. The next phase will include schematic designs. She offered to provide a presentation on the issue at some point in the future. It is expected that the East Transfer Point park and ride facility will be completed in the fall.

Kennedy said the university's draft master plan update will be completed and available for review in September.

Trowbridge reported that the consultant interviews for the next phase of the Transport 2020 Study were scheduled for the following Monday.

Phillips mentioned that the State Street and East Washington Avenue reconstruction projects were progressing well.

7. Staff Reports

McDonald reported that the MPO board voted to change the representation on the board to switch the residency requirement of one of the three County Executive appointments from the City of Madison to a small city or village. The board approved a draft agreement executing the change and a letter of transmittal to local units of government seeking resolutions of support for the change. Resolutions are needed from municipalities making up at least 75% of the population in the MPO area. In response to a question from Woodard, McDonald said the board would need to revisit the issue if an insufficient number of municipalities adopt resolutions of support. The MPO had its triennial certification review and the MPO board representation was an item of discussion. Finally, he mentioned that it would be difficult to meet the November deadline for completed the regional transportation plan update due to delays in getting the new travel model set up and calibrated. The ramifications of not meeting the deadline are being discussed with FHWA. In response to a question from Debo, McDonald said changes to the technical committee membership would be addressed when the changes to the policy board are finalized. In the meantime, representatives from Sun Prairie, Stoughton, Verona, and Waunakee have been invited to the meetings. The committee usually acts on a consensus basis.

8. Next Meeting Dates

The next meeting dates are August 19 and September 16.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Bill Schaefer