

Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (an MPO)
April 1, 2009 Meeting Notes

[Note: There was not a quorum of members, so the Board met as a subcommittee to discuss the non-action items on the agenda.]

1. Roll Call

Members present: Robin Schmidt, Robbie Webber, Al Matano, Chuck Kamp, Duane Hinz, Tom Clauder, John Vesperman.

Members absent: Eileen Bruskewitz, Joe Clausius, Ken Harwood, Jerry Mandli, Mark Opitz, Satya Rhodes-Conway, Paul Skidmore.

Staff present: Bob McDonald, Bill Schaefer, Bob Pike

2. Approval of March 4, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Not in order due to lack of quorum.

3. Communications

The following were in the packet:

- Email dated March 13, 2009 from David Knuti with the Madison Peak Oil Group and Madison Area Bus Advocates to the MPO requesting the agency to provide comments on the proposed development of the Madison intercity bus station with an attached position statement on the issue.
- Letter from WisDOT Secretary Busalacchi approving Amendment #2 to the 2009-2013 TIP.

Others handed out at the meeting:

- Letter to McDonald from James Oberstar, Chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, requesting that the MPO provide specific certifications and accountability information on the Economic Recovery Act.
McDonald said FHWA, FTA, and the national MPO organization have told him that the MPO doesn't need to respond, but he will coordinate with WisDOT regarding oversight of projects.
- Email dated March 23, 2009 from Bob Schaefer to the MPO providing comments on the Transport 2020 Alternatives Analysis study.
McDonald said the email includes a number of lengthy attachments. Rather than copy them, he said he would forward the email to Board members for their information.
- Email dated March 26, 2009 from Karl Schulte with Union Cab to the MPO expressing support for the ARRA (Federal Stimulus Bill) projects included in proposed Amendment #3 to the TIP and also requesting consideration of request for 1-2 accessible minivans; and email response from MPO staff indicating that Union Cab is not an eligible recipient for funding.

4. Public Comment (for items *not* on MPO Agenda)

There were two registrants:

David Knuti, Madison, indicated he had sent the position statement on the Badger Bus Station on behalf of the Madison Peak Oil Group and the Madison Area Bus Advocates. To summarize, the station is in the advanced stages of redevelopment planning with the Badger Bus Company planning to convert the station into a mixed residential and commercial development. The project could be approved as early as July. There has been no advanced planning with the City of Madison or UW-Madison for another site for an intercity bus station. He said the company believes it can transfer its operations to the new Union South building on campus or the Memorial Union. No arrangements have been made to accommodate Greyhound Bus Company, which leases space at the station. So the City will lose its intercity bus station.

At the same time, WisDOT proposes increasing intercity bus service in its state transportation plan and there are plans for intercity rail and commuter rail with a need for good bus connections. If an RTA could be formed, it could help fund these things. He said he has tried to get the City of Madison planners and the State to intervene, but without success. The response has been that the bus company owns the site and can do what they want with it. Badger Bus Company says they have tried to participate in planning efforts with other intercity bus companies in the past, but without success. He urged the MPO to intervene in the process either now as the redevelopment is being considered or in addressing the need for another site.

Schmidt asked Knuti to confirm that Van Galder operates without a station using only pick-up and drop-off points. Knuti said yes, but they use stations in Janesville and Rockford. Matano asked Rod Clark, WisDOT Transit Bureau Chief, if the State has any regulations on intercity bus service. Clark said intercity bus service has been totally deregulated for about 25 years now. Bus terminals are generally the property of the bus companies and they can decide what they want to do with them. WisDOT has a program to subsidize intercity service that provides access to non-urbanized areas. However, this has only covered about 50% of the deficit for such service, which hasn't been sufficient to attract much interest from carriers. The Governor's budget includes a proposal to create an intercity bus program that would try to fill gaps in service with funding assistance, but it would not get the State involved in regulating service or controlling terminal activity. Schmidt asked if permits were required for bus companies to pick up and drop off passengers on the street. Webber responded that the Madison Long-Range Transportation Planning Commission discussed this issue at their last meeting and asked City staff to provide a memo on that and indicate any concerns they had. Knuti asked Clark if there was funding for the two new intercity bus routes serving Madison recommended in the draft State Connections 2030 Plan. Clark said potential routes were identified based on an initial analysis. All of them would not necessarily be implemented. If a program with funding were created, a methodology would be established to prioritize routes for funding.

Royce Williams, Madison, commented that the bus terminal issue is another reason that we need an RTA, which could build the terminal and lease space to the bus companies. Examples of this are Milwaukee and Champaign-Urbana, IL. The loss of the terminal could create a major problem if Greyhound and others start using the Memorial Union and the UW-Madison decides it doesn't want the Union to serve the function of an intercity bus terminal. He said using eminent domain to purchase the bus station property was an option for the city. He also commented on the RTA legislation. He agreed with the provision in the Budget Bill that uses the MPO planning area as the boundary and requires all communities to be part of the RTA. However, he said he disagrees with the governance of the RTA with the City of Madison only having two of six appointments. He also felt there should be oversight by an elected body, which could be done by having the county supervisors that cover the RTA area vote once a year on the budget and maybe vote on appointments. He suggested that perhaps the MPO could comment on this.

5. Consideration of Resolution TPB No. 25 Regarding Amendment #3 to the 2009-2013 Transportation Improvement Program for the Madison Metropolitan Area and Dane County

Not in order due to lack of quorum. Schaefer asked Rod Clark, WisDOT, whether the TIP amendment would need to be approved before the Board's next regular meeting on May 6. Clark felt it would be because some of the projects, including the Aberg Avenue ped/bike overpass, are aiming for an early May letting. It was suggested that a special meeting be scheduled. Discussion followed concerning the needed timing of the meeting while still meeting public notice requirements. McDonald said he would attempt to schedule a special meeting on Friday (April 3) at noon with the TIP amendment being the sole agenda item.

6. Consideration of Press Release, Citizen Participation Effort, and Generalized Schedule for Preparing the 2010-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Madison Metropolitan Area and Dane County

Matano recommended without objection that McDonald be permitted to draft the press release and set the schedule for preparing the TIP.

7. Consideration of Letter of Transmittal Requesting Projects for STP-Urban Funding and TIP Update

Matano recommended without objection that McDonald be permitted to send out the letter requesting projects for STP-Urban funding and the TIP update.

8. Status Report on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Economic Stimulus Bill) and Solicitation and Selection of Local Transportation Projects by FHWA and WisDOT Staff

McComb provided a power point presentation on ARRA highlighting the Act's objectives, available FHWA funding, and other key rules and provisions. WisDOT is responsible for implementing the Act. Transit funding is also available through FTA programs. He reviewed the apportionment of FHWA program funding to Wisconsin and sub-allocation between state and local projects and different areas of the state. The MPO is responsible for selection of projects using STP-Urban funds sub-allocated to the Madison urban area. All rules regarding federal-aid transportation programs apply. He also reviewed the different dates by which state and local funds must be obligated (i.e., funding agreement signed by FHWA). He emphasized the high degree of accountability and transparency expected with regular reporting and data provided on projects and jobs created. Because of this, FHWA will be increasing its scrutiny in overseeing the implementation of the Act.

Rod Clark distributed a handout and reviewed the ARRA funding distribution in Wisconsin and WisDOT's process for state and local projects. Wisconsin is receiving \$529 million with 67% or about \$355 million apportioned for state projects. About \$16 million must be set aside for Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects. There is a separate application process for these funds. He said MPOs would be asked to provide rankings of TE projects in their planning areas. This leaves 30% or \$159 million for other local projects. This is a larger percentage than normal. Of this, \$49 is sub-allocated to the largest urbanized areas, including \$9.7 million for the Madison area. The remaining \$110 million can be used anywhere in the state. Clark said the Governor's goals for implementation of the Act were to spend all of the money, be ready if additional funds were made available, create jobs quickly, and use the funding for useful projects that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the transportation system. Both the state and local ARRA project delivery processes are being done in two stages. The first stage for both was initiated before the final bill was passed because of the much tighter deadlines that were included in the House bill. The Governor has released the list of Stage 1 State projects, which total around \$300 million out of the \$355 million available. The proposed bid letting schedules for these are April-June 2009. A Stage 2 process will select additional projects with a deadline of March 2010 for obligation and April for letting. The Stage 1 solicitation for local projects resulted in only 40 projects that could meet the April/May letting timeline. A Stage 2 solicitation has been initiated for two groups of projects: those that could have PS&E completed by May 1 for letting by June/July 2009 and those with a PS&E date of December 1 and letting by spring 2010. Once the projects are selected, WisDOT will help manage the design process to meet the deadlines and identify backup projects if needed. The state will also be ready with additional projects in case funds are redistributed either from other states or the funds set aside for local projects if they aren't used. In response to a question, Clark said funds that aren't spent by the required timelines will go back to U.S. DOT and then be redistributed back to those states that obligated all of their funding.

For transit projects, there were four pots of funding with Madison Metro receiving around \$9.8 million. WisDOT will be applying for ARRA funding under the high-speed rail program in June. WisDOT is applying for funds to improve service in the Milwaukee-Chicago and extend service to Madison. If funded, the Madison service could start as early as 2012. An issue that will need to be resolved is the station location(s) in Madison. In response to questions from Kamp, Clark said the Federal Railroad Administration would decide on which projects get funded and they hope to make decisions by September. Matano asked about the process for deciding on the details of the stations, and Clark said there isn't one yet, but WisDOT has had preliminary discussions with local governments. He said Dane County is very interested in a station at the airport.

9. Presentation of State Trunk Highway 19/113 Access Plan by WisDOT SW Region Staff

Mark Westerveld, WisDOT SW Region, provided a power point presentation on the study. He said this corridor was chosen for study because it is an important east-west route with no parallel routes and Sun Prairie and Waunakee are both growing rapidly. He presented traffic forecasts for the corridor, reviewed the study purposes and approach, and the steps in the process. The plan will provide WisDOT with a tool for evaluating access requests and guide local development along the corridor. Objectives included limiting new access points that would compromise safety, achieving appropriate spacing of access intersections, accommodating access needs of existing businesses, and addressing multi-modal needs. He said five of the six communities in the corridor have adopted resolutions of support with the Town of Burke being the only one that didn't. Westerveld then reviewed some example recommendations and passed around copies of corridor segment maps illustrating the recommendations.

Webber commented that because there are no parallel roads it is critical that bicycle accommodations be provided throughout the entire corridor. The same is true for transit needs. Schmidt asked why the Town of Burke didn't approve the study, and Westerveld said they disagreed with some details on some intersections. Kamp asked if they had looked at park and ride (PnR) lot opportunities, and Westerveld said this corridor was not a high priority for PnR lots. Vesperman said a study had been done identifying priority locations for PnR lots.

10. Status Report by TPB Board Members on Projects Potentially Involving the TPB:

- **Transport 2020 Implementation Task Force**

Kamp reported that the Legislative Council approved the RTA committee's report and draft legislation by a 14-8 vote. He said the Wisconsin Urban Transit Association supports this version rather than the one in the budget bill because it is more flexible. Matano said a meeting of the Finance/Governance Subcommittee was scheduled for April 20.

- **USH 51 (USH 12/18 to I-39/90/94) Corridor Study**

McDonald said public meetings would be scheduled soon.

- **North Mendota Parkway Implementation Oversight Committee**

Hinz reported that at the March meeting the natural resources area was approved. With respect to the roadway alignment, two more alternatives were added. Analysis is being done on the alternatives, which will hopefully be narrowed down to one or two.

- **USH 51 (McFarland to Stoughton)**

McDonald reported that a Technical Advisory Committee was recently held.

11. Discussion of Future Work Items:

- **2009-2013 Transit Development Plan (TDP)**

McDonald said MPO staff is working with Metro staff on this and will be bringing information to the Board at future meetings.

- **2009 Federal Certification Review of the MPO**

McDonald noted that the review would occur in the summer.

- **Congestion Management Plan**

McDonald said this would be part of the Federal Certification review and that staff need to show some progress on this. FHWA staff has agreed to provide some assistance.

- **Badger Bus Terminal**

McDonald asked if the Board wanted to put this issue on the May meeting agenda for discussion. Webber said it would provide an opportunity to formally discuss it. McDonald asked whether he should invite a representative from Badger Bus Company, and Webber said it would be more important to have City of Madison staff at the meeting to answer questions about any plans they have and traffic and permitting issues. McDonald said he'd invite City Planning and Traffic Engineering staff.

12. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

Webber noted that following the spring elections replacements for she and Clauder would need to be appointed. She said normally members serve until they are replaced, but didn't know if that applied since they are supposed to elected officials. Matano thanked Webber and Clauder for their service on behalf of the Board.

McDonald said the next regular meeting is scheduled for May 6.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.