1. Roll Call

   Members present: David Ahrens, Mark Clear, Steve Flottmeyer, Ken Golden, Chuck Kamp, Steve King, Jerry Mandli, Al Matano, Ed Minihan, Mark Opitz (arrived during item #5), Robin Schmidt, Patrick Stern

   Members absent: Jason Kramar

   MPO Staff present: Bill Schaefer, Mike Cechvala

2. Approval of February 3, 2016 Meeting Minutes

   Moved by Kamp, seconded by Gruber, to approve the February 3, 2016 meeting minutes. Motion carried with Golden abstaining.

3. Communications

   - Letter from WisDOT approving Amendment #1 to the 2016-2020 TIP.
   - Letter from WisDOT SW Region Office to members of the technical and policy advisory committees for the USH 51 (Stoughton to McFarland) Study indicating that the department has identified a preferred alternative, a hybrid alternative including some elements of the low-build and four-lane expansion alternatives. Schaefer said an Environmental Assessment will document the new alternative. There will be public meetings in the fall. Schaefer noted MPO staff included a map of the improvements with the letter, and he summarized them.

   Ahrens asked if the selection of this preferred alternative offered any insight to WisDOT’s views on the USH 51/Stoughton Road project north of the Beltline. Schaefer said he didn’t think so as the two roadways are very different, although WisDOT is moving to a phased approach for Stoughton Road as well. Minihan said the Town of Dunn is supportive of the intersection and other safety improvements.

   - Letter from WisDOT regarding local officials and public meetings on April 7 regarding the Interstate/Beltline interchange study.

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

   None

5. Resolution TPB No. 116 Approving Amendment #2 to the 2016-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County

   Schaefer said this is was really a one-project TIP amendment to modify the listing for the Madison Central Park ped/bike improvements project to add funding for real estate acquisition. The land will be used for a bike path along the rail corridor, car and bike parking, and a drop off area. Three other projects have been included for information purposes because they are locally funded projects. They involve or impact state highways. They include a new roundabout at STH 138 just west of USH 51 for the Kettle Park West development in Stoughton, addition of a lane to the EB on-ramp for USH 18/151 at Epic Lane, and the widening of the Locust Street bridge over USH 18/151 to add bike/ped accommodations.

   Moved by Schmidt, seconded by Golden, to approve Amendment #2 to the 2016-2020 TIP. Motion carried.
6. Scoring and Funding of Transportation Alternatives Program Project Applications for the 2016-2020 Program Cycle

Schaefer said that the MPO now receives a direct allocation of funding under the Transportation Alternatives Program, now actually called the STP Block Grant Set-Aside Program. Each program cycle adds two years of projects. He said the MATPB received four years worth of funding because in the last cycle no funding was available due to the delays with the Lower Yahara River Trail project. Eight applications were submitted: three by the City of Madison, one each by the cities of Middleton, Verona, and Fitchburg, and Town of Cross Plains, and one by Dane County for a Safe Routes to School project. He noted that project descriptions with some scoring comments by staff, a project location map, the draft project scoring and ranking table, and a draft funding recommendation table were all included in the meeting packet. He said MPO staff reviewed all of this information with the MPO technical and citizen advisory committees, and they both endorsed the staff’s project scoring and funding recommendations. Schaefer reviewed the eight projects.

Golden asked why Century Avenue was constructed without bike facilities to begin with and when it will be reconstructed. Opitz said it is a county highway and he didn’t recall when it was constructed and why bike facilities weren’t included. He said there was no room within the roadway to add bike lanes. Land acquisition is required on the north side for the side path. The road and bridge have another twenty years-plus lifespan.

Schaefer said that the Middleton and Fitchburg projects and Madison’s West Towne path projects all scored much higher than the other projects under the enhancing mobility/connectivity category. They are all on the designated primary route system, and also either eliminate a barrier or provide a missing link in a corridor without a good, safe alternative. They also score better than the other projects in the usage/accessibility category, which looks at increased use and improved access to jobs. The Verona path project scores well on the quality of life sub-criteria, but not access to jobs and services. The West Towne path and Fitchburg projects scored the highest in terms of project readiness because of the extent of design work that has already been done. The West Towne path scored well for cost effectiveness due to fact the middle segment of the project is being constructed with local funds. It will also be done as part of the Gammon Road reconstruction project.

He said the Safe Routes to School project scored well. It is an ongoing project. The City of Madison had a Safe Routes to School coordinator for a couple of years. Some work with school districts has been done through the Healthy Kids Collaborative and MPO staff has assisted with those efforts. The City of Sun Prairie has also implemented a SRTS program. This project would build on those activities and expand them to other school districts in the county.

Ahrens said that for the non-infrastructure projects, evaluation is more difficult. However, the scoring criteria should address whether a project that is ongoing has been evaluated and proven effective. Mandli commented said that one of the technical challenges for intersection improvements near a school is a roundabout must be considered, but they don’t work well in areas with high pedestrian and bicyclist activity.

Schaefer said the staff recommendation is to fund Madison’s West Towne path, Middleton’s Northeast Connector path, and two of the three years of funding for the SRTS project. There isn’t sufficient funding for the third year, but the county could apply again in the next program cycle. He mentioned that it was discovered the City of Madison made an error in its cost estimate on the application for the West Towne path. However, city staff said they would accept a lower percentage share of federal funding and so the federal share on that one would be 56% instead of 60%.

Ahrens said that an evaluation plan for the SRTS project should be submitted for approval prior to the start of the project, and then a post-project evaluation report be submitted. He suggested requiring this. Schaefer said the MPO could request this as a condition of approval of the funding. In response to a question about funding, Schaefer said the county would need to work within the budget and scale their activities to include the evaluation.
Schaefer said that the projects not selected will be forwarded to WisDOT for potential funding with the statewide pool of funds. WisDOT will use its own criteria for selecting the projects. They will award extra points for projects that aren’t in the larger urban areas that received separate funding. If any of the projects is awarded funding, the federal share will be 80%, which is WisDOT’s policy.

Moved by Schmidt, seconded by Ahrens, to approve the staff recommendations for TAP project funding with the condition that Dane County submit an evaluation plan for its Safe Routes to School project prior to award of funding and submit an evaluation report following completion of the project. Motion carried with Mandli abstaining.

7. Letter of Support for City of Madison/Metro Transit TIGER VIII Application for Funding to Design and Construct a Satellite Bus Garage Facility and Purchase Articulated Diesel-Electric Hybrid Buses

Kamp said that Metro applied last year for a new bus operations facility on city-owned property on Nakooosa Trail, but was not successful. Staff discussed the process with Federal Transit Administration staff, who informed Metro that the project was in the highest scoring group. The fact that Milwaukee secured funding for its streetcar project probably hurt Madison’s chances as well, because typically only urban area in each state receives funding. FTA staff said Metro needed to make the case on the equity and socioeconomic benefits of the project. A different consultant, Vandewalle Associates, that has more local experience was hired to help with the application.

Moved by Opitz, seconded by Schmidt, to approve the letter of support. Motion carried.

8. Citizen Participation Effort and Schedule for Preparing the 2017-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County

Schaefer said that he has the board review and approve the schedule and public participation plan for the TIP every year. The format and timeline are similar to other years, except the MPO will not be seeking applications for STP-Urban projects this year as we have gone to a biennial schedule in coordination with the state biennial budget and WisDOT’s local program. The MPO will request project listings for major projects, have an interagency project coordination meeting, compile a draft TIP in August, hold a hearing in September, with by the board in October. He said he was encouraging communities to start thinking about STP-Urban project applications for next year.

Moved by Stern, seconded by Schmidt, to approve. Motion carried.

9. Additional Appointments to the MPO Advisory Committee for the Regional Transportation Plan 2050 for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County

Schaefer said there are two additional persons that are proposed for addition to the committee: Susan Schmitz, the President of Downtown Madison Inc.; and Andrew Disch with the Madison Area Builders Association. Approval is being requested to add them to the RTP committee.

Moved by Clear, seconded by Minihan, to approve the appointments to the committee. Motion carried.

10. Appointment of MPO Representative to the Policy Advisory Committee for the Interstate 39/90/94 (Madison to Portage) Corridor EIS Study

Matano asked if any board members were interested in representing the MPO on the committee. Schaefer said a traffic impact analysis study looking at potential new interchanges and crossings had been completed and WisDOT had now moved to a Tier 1 EIS study. WisDOT has been holding joint technical and policy committee meetings during the day, although that could change. The MPO is a participating agency for the study. If no one is interested, Schaefer said he could provide updates to the board and schedule a presentation at the appropriate time. The meetings are about every few months. Stern said he is potentially interested but
the meeting time during the day is a problem. Golden suggested Jason Kramar. Matano said he would contact Kramar and ask if he is interested.

Moved by Gruber, seconded by Stern, to refer to the next meeting. Motion carried.

11. Recommendation to City of Madison Mayor Regarding Appointment of MPO Representative to the City’s Long-Range Transportation Planning Committee

Schaefer said that it sounded like Tim Gruber had already been appointed by the Mayor to the Long-Range Transportation Planning Committee as the second MPO representative. He said the ordinance calls for the parent body, in this case the MPO, to provide a list of recommended appointees to the Mayor from which to choose. Golden already is on the committee representing the Madison Transit Commission and Matano is also on the committee representing the county. The appointee must be a City of Madison resident. Steve King is the other MPO representative to the committee. The only two other possibilities are Mark Clear and Dave Ahrens.

Moved by Stern, seconded by Minihan, to recommend that Tim Gruber be appointed to this committee as the other MPO. Motion carried.

12. Response to Request for Comments on the Coordination Plan, Impact Analysis Methodology, and Project Purpose and Need for the Interstate 39/90/Beltline Interchange EIS Study

Schaefer said that there is a formal federally required process for engaging other agencies in environmental impact studies. One of the requirements is to prepare an agency coordination plan to outline how and when WisDOT will seek input and comments. The coordination plan for the study has been prepared. In addition to that, WisDOT is also seeking comments on an impact analysis methodology report and a project purpose and need document. The coordination plan and impact analysis methodology are straightforward and staff doesn’t have any comment on those. The purpose and need document, which was included in the packet, provides the basis by which WisDOT evaluates and selects the alternative for the project. Staff has prepared some draft comments on behalf of the MPO on the document. The letter acknowledges the issues in terms of safety, geometrics such as the left-hand exits, and the need to coordinate this project with the other WisDOT projects. The main comment questions WisDOT’s policy to use for their traffic operations analysis the thirtieth highest hour speed and Level of Service C standard. This means planning for never having any congestion. The letter questions the appropriateness of this given financial constraints, costs and potential impacts. This is particularly true for Interstate, which has peak periods different from the usual recurring commute time periods. Schaefer said the letter also recommends thinking long term. This includes consideration of connected and autonomous vehicle technology, and the impact that will have both on safety and capacity.

Golden said that land consumption should be considered and minimized by the design. He recommended that exceptions to design standards should be explored. We do all of our transportation planning for Level of Service D, so a LOS C interchange is irrational. Stern said in defense of the LOS C that tourism up north is very important to the economy and that section of the interstate is an impediment to travel in the summer. Matano said he would have rather seen the letter two weeks ago in order to provide edits. He suggested that he and Golden suggest some edits.

Moved by Clear, seconded by Kamp, to approve the letter with edits suggested by Matano and Golden. Motion carried with Flottmeyer abstaining.

13. Update on the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) 2050

Schaefer said staff held a series of three kick-off meetings in early March in Madison, Verona, and Sun Prairie. The presentation provided at the meetings was included in the packet. The turnout for the meetings was not great and staff is considering ways to get better turnout for the next series of meetings and to engage the underserved populations in some way even if not through the public meetings. Staff is working on some
tweaks to the plan goals and drafting associated policies, which serve as the foundation for the plan. Staff is also working on the plan report outline and analysis and modeling. The next plan advisory committee meeting is at the end of April.

Schaefer reviewed the presentation from the public meetings, which provided background information about the MPO and the regional transportation planning process; the schedule for the plan, analysis of the existing transportation system, and results of the values and priorities survey.

Golden commented on the survey, indicating he thought people such as his former constituents in the Allied Drive area would want other options on the list such as “How do I get to the grocery store?” People with disabilities would have a different take as well. Matano commented on the disconnect between people saying making their neighborhood more convenient and safe to walk and bike was most important and building more bike paths was a lower priority. He said there were two different concepts in people’s minds: somebody who lives three blocks from Trader Joe’s that enjoy the fact they can walk there versus people who value the Southwest Path more for longer distance travel.


Schaefer said an ITS committee was created as a subcommittee of the technical committee. The plan is to generally meet quarterly to keep the ITS conversation going and facilitate plan implementation. The first meeting was held since adoption of the plan. Presentations were provided by the ITS program director for the Wisconsin TOPS Lab covering several subjects, including a possible real time incident etc. mapping tool idea, and by City of Madison Traffic Engineering on the McKee-Fish Hatchery Road adaptive traffic signal system planned for expansion to the University Avenue corridor. Schaefer said the presentations were in the packet.

15. Status Report on Studies and Plans Involving the TPB

Schaefer said that due to fiscal constraint, WisDOT is going to a phased implementation approach on the USH 51/Stoughton Road corridor with some interim improvements. The traffic forecasts are being redone with the new growth forecasts and new travel model. There will be public meetings in the fall, and the draft environmental impact statement is scheduled to be completed in spring of 2017. WisDOT is following a similar approach with the Interstate study as was done for the Beltline study: they are doing a high level look at alternatives, including out-of-corridor alternatives, as well as transit, ped/bike, and other improvements. One roadway alternative being carried forward for further analysis is a Sun Prairie bypass. This was due to the amount of traffic traveling between I-94 and I-39/90/94.

Golden asked if they will analyze how this “east reliever” might affect land use. Schaefer said yes but right now they were just looking at it from a traffic standpoint to see if it will help the interstate, similar to the Beltline study. Golden said that the Beltline is in an existing developed area and they dismissed the southern reliever. If they determine that the east reliever should not be dismissed for traffic reasons, they should also make sure it is not incompatible with local land use plans.

16. Discussion of Future Work Items

There will be an update on Dane County’s Transit Linking Communities transit capital grant program at the next meeting.

17. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

Schaefer said that the next agenda will be light and he is thinking about an outreach meeting in a different location. Fitchburg will be contacted to see if a meeting can be scheduled there.

18. Adjournment

Moved by Gruber, seconded by Stern, to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.