1. Roll Call

*Members present:* David Ahrens, Mark Clear (arrived during item #6), Ken Golden, Jeff Gust, Jerry Mandli, Al Matano, Ed Minihan, Mark Opitz, Chris Schmidt (arrived during item #6), Robin Schmidt, Patrick Stern

*Members absent:* Chuck Kamp, Steve King, Paul Lawrence

*MPO Staff present:* Bill Schaefer, Mike Cechvala

2. Approval of January 7, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Moved by Opitz, seconded by R. Schmidt, to approve the January 7, 2015 meeting minutes. Motion carried with Golden abstaining.

3. Communications

- Letter from WisDOT approving the 2015-2019 Transportation Improvement Program
- Letter from WisDOT approving the 2015 MPO Work Program and federal planning funding
- Letter from WisDOT regarding a corridor and access management study of State Trunk Highway 138 between Oregon and Stoughton and upcoming local officials meeting.

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

None

5. Resolution TPB No. 100 Approving Amendment #1 to the 2015-2019 Transportation Improvement Program for the Madison Area & Dane County

Moved by R. Schmidt, seconded by Stern, to approve Amendment #1 to the 2015-2019 TIP. Motion carried.

6. Update on New WisDOT Policy Guidance on the STP Urban Program

Schaefer referred to a handout titled Draft MPO/TMA Policy Proposal. He said WisDOT was working to update its policy regarding the administration of all local programs and in particular the STP Urban program. Donna Brown-Martin, the transit and local program director, reviewed the handout at the last MPO Directors meeting, which outlines some issues and possible approaches discussed by the work group set up to oversee development of the new policy. He said a draft guidance document was expected to be distributed in the next couple of months. Schaefer discussed some of the issues outlined in the handout. A related issue mentioned is a department proposal to require local program projects to be fully designed at the time of application for funding. This was included in the Governor’s budget.

Gust added there are some other components to the department proposal which won’t affect the MPO’s STP Urban program. Design must be 100% locally funded and the funding split would be 60/40 instead of 80/20. Also, the local program would be mostly funded with state funds with the thought that would remove some “red tape” and possibly reduce costs in some cases for projects. R. Schmidt commented that labor costs might go down if the state rescinded its prevailing wage law and the Davis-Bacon law didn’t law due to federal funding not being used. Golden asked if the board should consider making comments on the document at its next meeting, and Schaefer said once a complete draft document was sent out he would put it on the agenda and make sure the board had an opportunity to comment before it was finalized. He added that he felt Brown-Martin was making a good faith effort to make sure the guidance worked for MPOs as well as WisDOT. He said WisDOT SW Region and MPO staff met with her to review the changes to the funding and schedule of
STP Urban projects approved as part of the TIP and WisDOT agreed to work with us to get those changes entered into the state’s system.

Schaefer said the purpose for reviewing the document with the board was to point out the impacts on the MPO’s funding of projects and possible policy changes the MPO might want to make as a result. For example, with reduced flexibility to adjust funding for projects, the MPO might want to consider a 60/40 cost share rather than 50/50 to mitigate the risk for communities when project costs go up. Another issue concerns how far along a project must be in the design process before an application for it is submitted. Golden commented that this was included in the scoring criteria and Schaefer concurred. Golden said a minimum threshold might be established rather than or in addition to making that part of the criteria. Schaefer agreed.

7. Review of Revised Draft of STP Urban Roadway Project Scoring Criteria and Scoring of Example Projects and Discussion of Program Policy Issues

Schaefer mentioned that MPO staff had reviewed an earlier draft with the board last spring, but put the project on hold for a while when it was obvious the new criteria wouldn’t be ready in time to use for the last application cycle. He said the goal now was to get the new criteria approved by May or June. He said staff had completed a final draft of the criteria for roadway projects, but was still working on the criteria for other projects. The new draft includes some formatting changes and some additional guidelines for the scoring. Schaefer said he reviewed the draft with the MPO’s technical committee and they decided to set up a subcommittee or work group to work with staff on finalizing the criteria.

Golden said he thought setting up a work group of the board also made sense. He expressed concern that the technical committee wouldn’t necessarily have a handle on the policy issues reflected in the criteria. He said board members could perhaps participate on the same work group as the technical committee members to provide that policy perspective. He gave an example of how much traffic volume is weighted in prioritizing roadway projects. R. Schmidt asked about the timing for finalizing the criteria and policies, and Schaefer said approval by the MPO board at the June meeting at the latest. That is when applications are due. Schaefer said he agreed with Ken that policy is embedded in the criteria. He said the new draft criteria are written in an attempt to reflect current MPO policy. There are also more technical issues like how to address and measure safety. Schaefer said the technical subcommittee had good representation from different sized communities and a county representative.

R. Schmidt said the board should provide some policy direction to the committee, for example, perhaps giving more weight to multi-modal versus regional importance. Schaefer said the weights for the different criteria could be easily modified. Golden said in addition to weighting there were other overarching considerations or principles, for example, addressing access by low income populations. Matano asked if any others were interested in participating on the work group with Ken, and no one volunteered. Board members expressed support for having Golden represent them on the work group and report back.

Golden asked for a brief discussion of some principles that should guide the process. Matano said one was to avoid funding only highway projects. R. Schmidt said the criteria should account for racial disparities or desperate impact of projects on certain population groups. Golden mentioned access and mobility for those without cars. Schaefer reminded the board that different criteria were being developed for the different types of projects, but within the same framework of categories. The mix of type of projects funded is ultimately more a policy issue. Ahrens commented that the criteria should be reviewed to avoid duplicate or overlapping categories. He thought functional class, traffic volume, level of congestion, and the cost-benefit ratio were all factoring essentially the same thing. Schaefer pointed out that cost benefit ratio related cost to the overall benefits of the project reflected in the score. Stern responded that functional class and traffic volume were different because new transit service could result in traffic being reduced on a street like University Avenue but it would still be a principal arterial. Gust said WisDOT favors funding of projects on the higher volume roadways that serve more people. Schaefer mentioned the technical committee thought a criterion should be added for whether the roadway was a freight route. Board members agreed.
Golden said some of the criteria might be better as threshold or screening criteria versus scoring criteria. Mandli commented that the board should provide policy direction to the technical committee, but let the technical staff work out the technical issues. He said the members on the subcommittee understood policy issues. Golden said he has experience serving on committees with both policy and technical staff.

Schaefer pointed out the scoring that was done of three example projects under the new criteria. The result was the rank order of the projects remained the same as under the old criteria, but the score for University Avenue increased relative to the two others. He explained the reasons for that, including the change to the land use related criterion favoring projects serving regional and mixed use centers and redevelopment areas. Schaefer also pointed out the separate document outlining some pure policy issues for consideration, including the cost share and whether to have a set aside of some funds for smaller, lower cost projects. Opitz said a way to address the latter issue would be to add a criterion related to how long a project had been “in the queue.” Golden said he supported the idea of funding some smaller projects. Mandli said he also supported that.


Schaefer said MPO staff reviewed the map with the MPO technical committee again. There was still some concern among City of Madison staff about two roadway corridors that are being changed to minor arterials, particularly Crystal/Acewood/Starker. A meeting has been set up with city staff to discuss the map, any impacts of the map on street design or marking requirements, and how the functional class designation is used by the city. The City of Madison has its own map, which differs from the regional map and hasn’t been updated for a while. Schaefer mentioned that a list of the more significant proposed changes to the current map was included in the packet as requested by the board. The list includes primarily roadways that are being reclassified from collectors to minor arterials since that is the most controversial type of change. He said staff was simply asking for permission to release the map for public comment at this point.

Moved by Opitz, seconded by Clear, to release draft of the Roadway Functional Classification Map and associated changes to the Madison Urban Area boundary for review and comment. Motion carried.

9. **Presentation of Active Living Places Project**

Schaefer said the project was an outgrowth of the Capital Regional Sustainable Communities project, which identified meeting the growing demand for walkable places as a priority challenge to address. The idea was to come up with a way to measure active living places, defined as areas where daily needs can be met using active transportation. Transit was included because most people walk to/from the bus and it allows reaching destinations further away. This will be a nice educational tool, but will also be helpful for neighborhood planning. He said MPO staff planned to use it to identify existing and planned active living centers or areas and use that as a framework for the regional transportation plan.

Golden asked if block length was factored into the methodology. Schaefer said that intersection density was one of the criteria under the general walkability category. With shorter block lengths, there are more intersections and more direct routes between origins and destinations. It is also used as a proxy for pedestrian-oriented design of areas, since that is something that is difficult to quantify. Destination density is the other major component of walkability.

Schaefer reviewed the composite active living score map, and pointed out some observations. He said staff think the weight for destination density probably needs to be increased. Stern asked why theater was included as a separate destination and not included in a general entertainment facility category. Schaefer said that was something to consider. Staff is looking to get input from the land use planners on the destinations used and their weights. R. Schmidt commented that food cart locations might be added. Stern asked why the Allied Drive neighborhood scored pretty well. Schaefer said the area scored well because of the bike paths, street intersection density, and some destinations. The methodology doesn’t fully account for the barrier to walking
that Verona Road creates. That is something staff will be looking at. R. Schmidt asked how streets without sidewalks are treated. Schaefer responded that local streets without sidewalks were still included in the walking network.

10. Discussion Regarding MPO E-Newsletter Options

Schaefer said staff are planning to start distributing an e-newsletter as part of its public outreach activities. He reviewed the three options for distributing it and their advantages and disadvantages, which were outlined in a handout. The options were use of the City of Madison’s MyAccount, an email subscription via the MPO website, or a private email marketing service. The concern about use of Madison’s MyAccount is it doesn’t show the autonomy of the MPO from the city.

Board members expressed concern about use of MyAccount because it would not reflect the fact that the MPO is not a city agency. R. Schmidt said communities could provide a link on their websites to the sign up page on the MPO’s website. Stern wondered if it could be set up so people could register on their community website. Clear said the lists could be subscribed to each other so posts to the Madison list would automatically be cross-posted to the others. Clear offered to help with the technical issues in getting it set up. Schaefer said he would have staff contact him.

11. Discussion Regarding WisDOT Major Corridor Studies

Minihan said that for the USH 51 (McFarland to Stoughton) Study WisDOT was now planning to focus on safety and intersection improvements. Gust confirmed that WisDOT is no longer looking at expansion to a four-lane expressway. Matano said he asked for this item to be on the agenda because of his concerns about the cumulative impacts of multiple projects, including Stoughton Road, USH 51 south of the Beltline, and the Beltline. Golden said that for the Beltline study the MPO should work to get as much traffic off the Beltline as possible via park-and-ride lots, additional Beltline crossings, etc. Opitz mentioned that a group has been meeting with WisDOT to promote initiation of a major study of the Highway 19 corridor that would evaluate the North Mendota Parkway. Gust said he was aware of that, and mentioned that USH 14 was another potential major study.

12. Status Report by Madison Area TPB Members on Studies and Plans Involving the TPB

Item deferred.

13. Discussion of Future Work Items

Schaefer provided an update on the Metro Transit on board passenger survey. A pre-test was completed last week and it went well. The actual survey would be conducted from the last week of February until spring break starts for UW in late March. Stern asked if destination counts were being done. Schaefer said the survey asks for origin and destination information, but also a set on-to-off survey is being done which will provide origin/destination data with which to expand the survey sample to a complete transit trip table. Schaefer also provided an update on the ITS Plan. A second workshop was held that went well. It focused on the roles of the different agencies with respect to the different ITS functional areas. The consultant is working to complete the ITS inventory and some work has been done on the plan goals and objectives. A presentation will be provided to the board at one of the next two meetings. Matano added that meetings of the Bicycle Plan advisory committees are scheduled for mid-February.

14. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 4, 2015 at 6:30 p.m. at the Madison Water Utility Building, 119 E. Olin Ave., Room A-B.
Golden requested that an agenda item be included for the next meeting on the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission’s Land Use Plan. He indicated he would like to try to secure funding so that CARPC and the MPO could participate in an integrated land use/transportation planning process.

15. Adjournment

Moved by C. Schmidt, seconded by Stern, to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.