Minutes of the
Madison Area Transportation Planning Board
Technical Coordinating Committee

January 28, 2009      Fitchburg City Hall  2:00 p.m.

1. Roll Call

Members Present:    Beaupre, Dryer, Rice (for Dunphy), Koprowski (for Hoelker), Kennedy, McComb, Murphy, Nelson, Sobota (for Persich), Sylvester, Andros (for Violante), Vela, Woodard

Members Absent:    K. Clark, R. Clark, Coville, Even, Ginder, Kirchner, Kugler, Scheel, Simon


2. Approval of October 22, 2008 Meeting Minutes

Moved by Woodard, seconded by Kennedy, to approve the October 2008 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Presentation on Connections 2030, the Draft Statewide Multi-Modal Transportation Plan

Beaupre, WisDOT Central Office, provided a power point presentation on the draft plan. The presentation focused on the organization of the plan and plan components. She said it is organized around seven themes rather than the individual transportation modes to encourage a more integrated multi-modal approach. She reviewed the plan development process. Following the current public involvement process on the draft plan, the draft plan will be finalized and more formal hearings held this summer. The plan includes 37 policies, which are designed to be implemented individually or in packages. The finance section includes a policy component, which is new. The plan also includes an implementation chapter, which was not part of the former Translinks 21 plan. Beaupre then reviewed the seven themes and example policies for each of them. She said there is a greater emphasis on traffic operations in the plan with the policy recommendations building off of the highway access management plan that was completed two years ago, but not released to the public. With regards to promoting transportation security, the plan documents existing plans and defines the role of WisDOT. There is a focus on eliminating redundancies and evacuation plans. The finance section discusses funding challenges and makes some policy recommendations, but doesn’t recommend levels of funding. The policy recommendations are grouped according to short-, mid-, and long-term to indicate general priority. The plan proposes a corridor management approach to promote a multi-modal approach and help link the state policies to implementation of projects at the regional level. The plan identifies a statewide system of priority corridors and includes maps of the corridors and metropolitan planning areas that illustrate conceptually how the plan policies would be implemented in terms of projects. WisDOT hopes to update these maps regularly as studies are completed and projects implemented. WisDOT will adopt the plan this summer. There is no formal approval process. The Madison Area Planning Area map was then handed out. Sobota asked if the plan addresses funding for intercity bus stations. Beaupre said it recommends a program for inter-modal transit stations. Schaefer said MPO staff continued to have concerns about the number of capacity projects (including freeway conversions) shown on the map, particularly since the MPO plan must be financially constrained and does not include most of them.

4. Presentation on 2008 Metro Transit On-Board Survey

Schaefer provided a power point presentation on the survey. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) recommended that an on-board survey be conducted as part of the Transport 2020 Study to use in validating the transit component of the regional travel model. Metro has good ridership data down to the bus stop level, but lacks good transit trip origin-destination data. FTA provided the City of Madison with a grant to conduct the study and perform associated model improvement work. The
survey was conducted from February to April 2008, excluding the time UW-Madison was on spring break. In addition to providing data for improvements to the model for the Transport 2020 Study, the other purposes for the survey were to support ongoing transit route/operations planning, improve the understanding of bus riders, and receive feedback from them. Schaefer then reviewed the survey form and sampling plan. Surveying was conducted during the weekday a.m. peak and midday periods. The consultants did an excellent job in maximizing the recovery of the data and in geo-coding the origin/destination locations. Schaefer reviewed trip purpose data and maps showing the concentrations of trip ends by trip purpose. Around ½ of trips are work/work related, another 1/3 are for college/university/t tech, and 5-6% more for K-12 school. Vehicle availability data was cross-tabulated with data on trip purpose and route category. Data was also shown for access mode to the bus, distance walked, transferring activity, bus use frequency, length of time using the bus, and method of payment. Schaefer next showed a series of slides comparing socio-economic data for passengers with the area population. He then showed trip purpose information for the UW campus routes and the concentrations of trip ends for those routes. Information was next provided on how passengers rated the quality and level of Metro mainline and campus service. Metro received very high satisfaction ratings overall. Also, safety was not a significant concern for most riders. Finally, Schaefer noted some trip and passenger characteristic trends dating back to 1991. For instance, the percentage of passengers with no auto available in their household has dropped significantly and the percentage that had a vehicle available for their trip has increased. Also, the percentage of college/university trips has increased. Schaefer noted that the presentation was posted on the MPO website.

5. Discussion Regarding the Federal Economic Recovery Bill

McDonald said FHWA agency staff provided information on the current House and Senate bills being considered at the MPO Directors meeting the previous day. He highlighted what staff understands about the parameters of the bills at this time, noting that things could certainly change before it is passed. The goal is to have legislation passed by mid-February. There will be no earmarked projects, but rather the transportation funding will be allocated according to the current federal transportation programs. All of the same program requirements will apply (e.g., projects must be in the long-range transportation plan and TIP). Thus, the Madison area will receive a direct allocation of STP-Urban funding. It is estimated at this time that it will be around one year’s allocation or $6 million. Metro Transit will also receive a direct allocation of transit formula funding. There will be strict accountability requirements with reports due as frequently as monthly on progress in implementing the projects and creating jobs. To be eligible for stimulus funding, projects must be "planning specification and engineering (PS&E)" ready within 90-120 days from the time of passage of the bill, but not already under contract (i.e., been approved with funding obligated by FHWA). McDonald said WisDOT asked the MPOs to submit a list of potential projects within a week, and told committee members to send projects to him that could be PS&E ready within this time frame.

Nelson said there are very few projects that could be PS&E ready in that short of a timeframe. Woodard agreed. Nelson said one project the City of Madison is considering for the funding is the Aberg Avenue bike/pedestrian overpass, which is 50% funded with Enhancement funds. The stimulus funding could cover the 50% local share. McComb said that the stimulus funding needs to be in addition to the current level of funding so that if currently programmed projects are funded additional projects must be moved up. Nelson asked about the first phase of the Monona Drive project, and Vela said the PS&E documents are due to FHWA on February 1. It was then discussed whether the City of Monona should delay sending these documents. Woodard mentioned the possibility of funding some resurfacing projects, but Nelson said those projects also could not probably have PS&E completed within the time frame. Woodard mentioned the Capital City Trail Overpas project, and McComb said funding for that project might have already been obligated but he would check.
6. **Committee Member Reports**

Kennedy said that the Observatory Drive connection to Highland Avenue was completed and the roundabout was working well.

Sylvester mentioned that City of Verona and Madison staff would be meeting soon to discuss designs for the CTH M project.

Vela said the PS&E documents for Phase 1 of the Monona Drive reconstruction are due February 1, and work has begun on the design for Phase 2. A public meeting is scheduled on that. This is the same section that is closed now to repair a sewer main line that was hit by contractors.

Sobota reported that bus service is being started from Portage and the provider has talked to Metro about drop off and pick up locations in the Madison area. He said the MPO’s Rideshare Coordinator indicated the existing vanpools are over capacity. He also mentioned the ongoing fare policy discussions. An increase of either 25 cents or 50 cents from the current $1.50 cash fare is being considered along with associated increases in discounted fares and the unlimited pass programs.

Woodard reported that the design for the Capital City Trail overpass was completed. He also mentioned that the acquisition of the former rail corridor by the Cities of Fitchburg and Madison for the planned Cannonball Trail had been completed. The city is going to initiate work to make it usable by pedestrians this summer.

Nelson said City of Madison staff have had trouble repairing water mains in the Beltline corridor due to fiber optic cables, and is meeting with WisDOT staff about this.

Anderson mentioned that there were flooding problems near the intersection of USH 14 and STH 92 in Brooklyn last year. A permit is being sought to lower the water level of the adjacent wetland, but he questioned whether that would be approved.

Koprowski reported that the third phase of the Beltline study looking at long-term improvements was set to begin soon.

7. **Staff Reports**

McDonald reported that the MPO had sent a letter of comment to WisDOT on the coordination plan and impact analysis methodology for the USH 18/151 (Verona Road) Corridor Study, which was very similar to the comment letters on the two USH 51 Corridor studies. The MPO approved Amendment #1 to the 2009-2013 TIP at its last meeting. The TIP amendment resolution was at members’ places. McDonald also reported that the March 4 MPO Board meeting will be a community outreach meeting in the City of Sun Prairie. This will provide local planning staff with an opportunity to inform the Board about local transportation issues and MPO staff to provide some information about the MPO and its current activities. Also, Dave Trowbridge will be making a presentation on the Transport 2020 Study and the draft recommendations of the Finance/Governance Subcommittee.

8. **Next Meeting Dates**

The next meeting dates are Wednesday, February 25 and Wednesday, March 25. The February meeting may be cancelled.

9. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

*Minutes recorded by Bill Schaefer*