Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (an MPO)  
January 6, 2016 Meeting Minutes

1. Roll Call

Members present: David Ahrens, Mark Clear (arrived during item #3), Steve Flottmeyer, Ken Golden, Chuck Kamp, Steve King, Jerry Mandli, Al Matano, Mark Opitz (arrived during item #3), Chris Schmidt, Robin Schmidt

Members absent: Jason Kramar, Ed Minihan, Patrick Stern

MPO Staff present: Bill Schaefer, Mike Cechvala

2. Approval of November 4, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Moved by King, seconded by Kamp, to approve the November 4, 2015 meeting minutes. Motion carried with Golden and R. Schmidt abstaining.

3. Communications

- Memo from WisDOT and FHWA approving the amendment to the 2015 Work Program to carry over funding and some work activities to 2016.

- E-mail from WisDOT Pedestrian/Bicycle Coordinator regarding the changes to the state pedestrian and bicycle statute and an updated frequently asked questions document. Schaefer summarized the main points and said he would bring to WisDOT’s attention that MPOs may still have policies requiring pedestrian and bicycle accommodations for STP projects. He reminded members that the MATPB’s STP Urban program policies require adherence to the TRANS 75 requirements as the law existed before being changed and TRANS 75 repealed. Golden recommended that rather than referencing the old law, that language should be added stating the requirements to avoid confusion.

- Notice from WisDOT SW Region regarding the availability of an environmental assessment document concerning the USH 12/18 (Interstate to CTH N) freeway conversion study. Schaefer reviewed the recommended improvements, including the relocation of CTH AB and construction of a diamond interchange with a frontage road connecting to the Ho Chunk property on the south side. The relocation avoids impacts to the city golf course, county landfill, and other landmarks and also makes the area more attractive for development. There is no construction funding at this time and so construction likely won’t occur for 8-10 years. The freeway conversion east of CTH AB was even more long range and might never be needed, depending upon future traffic growth. Schaefer said the CTH AB interchange study was in the MPO’s regional transportation plan. He mentioned the unrelated proposed extension of Meier Road and bridge over USH 12/18 with a possible interim frontage road using the landfill drive. Schaefer said that the City of Madison will submit a short letter of comment supporting the recommendations for the west segment to CTH AB. Mandli said that the interim improvements could be problematic for the operations of the landfill. The main access to the landfill is off of USH 12/18 now and the proposed right-in / right-out would mean all of our traffic coming from the west would no longer have access. The county might request a hearing because of this.

- Summary of provisions in the recently passed federal transportation legislation, the FAST Act. Schaefer said it is a five-year bill and provides an overall slight increase in funding. However, that is accomplished through a transfer from the general fund versus a higher gas tax and some funds for transit and Amtrak are subject to annual appropriation process. He highlighted some of the changes, including an increase in the amount of STP funding suballocated to MPOs and an increase in flexibility in project design. The requirements for frequent service on federally funded BRT projects have been relaxed on
weekends. Golden asked if there are any new funding mechanisms to assist with the YWCA’s JobRide program or accessible taxi service; Schaefer said he can look into it.

- Letters from WisDOT and U.S. DOT approving the MPO’s 2016 Work Program and funding.

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

   None.

5. **Resolution TPB No. 114 Adopting the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Strategic Plan for the Madison Metropolitan Area**

   Schaefer said that a presentation on the ITS Strategic Plan was provided to the MPO board by HNTB staff in the fall and MPO staff had reviewed the summary, recommendations, and project lists at the last meeting. The ITS Plan advisory committee met one last time to talk about implementation of the plan and there was strong support to continue the committee to oversee implementation. A key takeaway was the need for more education on systems that are currently in place that various agencies are using and how other agencies could benefit from them. Schaefer added that the plan would help us take advantage of potential federal funding opportunities like the recently announced Smart City Challenge Grant program. The City of Madison is working to prepare an application. Schaefer provided some information on the grant program. Golden asked if the policy changes at the state level, such as changes to complete streets requirements, would make our Smart Cities application less attractive. Schaefer said he didn’t think so. He mentioned that some are working with state legislators on a bill to allow pilot applications of driverless vehicles.

   Moved by R. Schmidt, seconded by Golden to adopt the ITS Strategic Plan and create an ITS subcommittee of the Technical Coordinating Committee. Motion carried.

6. **Consideration of Appointments to the MPO Advisory Committee for the Regional Transportation Plan 2050 for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County**

   Schaefer said that a draft list of committee members was included in the packet but an updated list was handed out reflecting commitments from a few additional people since the mailing went out. There are 15 confirmed members with some more to be potentially added including another MPO board member.

   Golden said he’d like to see someone from the CARPC board added and also someone with a transit perspective such as a member of the Madison Transit & Parking Commission, Madison ADA Subcommittee, or Dane County Specialized Transportation Commission. He also questioned whether Kim Lobdell, whose firm has been hired as a consultant for some WisDOT projects, might have a conflict of interest. Schaefer said he didn’t think that would be an issue, but would talk to her about it and perhaps check with FHWA to see if they saw an issue. Golden clarified that Lobdell does good work and he would not second guess her appointment.

   Schaefer asked if the board had any other ideas for appointments or if any members were interested in serving. No other members had comments on the list.

   Moved by Golden, seconded by Clear, to approve the named list of confirmed appointments from the beginning of the 1/5/16 document through Ed Lee pending further consideration of any potential conflict with Kim Lobdell. Motion carried. Golden clarified that the motion does not approved unnamed members on the list, and additions would need to be approved by the board. This allows MPO staff to schedule the first committee meeting.

7. **Consideration of Appointment to the MPO Citizen Advisory Committee**

   Matano said that we are being asked to consider Matthew Jones, a City of Fitchburg resident who is president of the Fitchburg Bicycle Advocates group.
8. Update on the Greater Madison Region Public Values and Priorities Survey

Schaefer said that the goal of 500 survey responses from the random, scientific sample was met. This included over 400 from Dane County residents and over 100 from the surrounding counties. There were also over 800 completed surveys from the general public – 1,300 total – meeting our target. The public survey will close on January 15. The consultant has started to tabulate random sample results and will present the results and findings at the survey committee meeting on January 13. The plan is to release the results to the public on January 25 and try to generate some media coverage. He noted that the goals for minority representation from the scientific sample were not met so responses from the public survey will be added. The number of responses from minorities is small and unlikely to change the overall results, but the goal is to have enough to do some cross tabulation and draw reasonable conclusions from this group.

9. Update on Regional Transportation Plan Website

Schaefer displayed the working website for the Regional Transportation Plan and said that it is not live yet. The website is controlled by staff but the MPO is contracting with Urban Interactive Studio for the basic hosting and structure. Staff developed a logo for the plan with a slogan “Charting our course.” Schaefer reviewed the various parts of the website. One of the first public comment pieces is the community mapping component that will allow people to zoom in and out, find a location, put a pin, write a comment, download a picture, and make a comment about, for instance a street, a bike trail, transit stop, or anything that either they would like to see improved or feel is a problem. Schaefer added that it will go live soon. The URL currently takes you to a placeholder site.

Clear suggested that the site clearly refer to Madison, Wisconsin. Schaefer agreed and said they would add that reference.

10. Update on the Metro Transit On-Board Survey Results and Transit Ridership Modeling Project

Schaefer said that the board received a presentation on the preliminary survey results in October. Since then MPO staff completed work to correct some of the survey records and worked with the consultant to revise the weighting. Maps showing O/D information for all passengers as well as minorities and low income persons were created. MPO staff will use the results for transit ridership modeling and that work is underway. The consultant will compare the trip tables from the survey to calibrate our travel model for our base year condition. He said the modeling work will look closely at trips to/from UW because those make up half of all trips. The consultant will also look at congested roadway speeds and bus speeds to see that those are reasonably accurate. Ultimately we will do some sensitivity testing, for instance on the premium transit mode modifier. A future transit network that includes our BRT system and other transit improvements will be tested with the model to see the results on ridership. This will also be a good sensitivity test. Schaefer said the coding of the future network was just about completed. MPO staff reviewed the network with Metro staff and incorporated their input.

Cechvala reviewed the summary of the onboard survey, including the conclusions and O/D maps. He noted the number of respondents who indicated origins outside the Metro service area, for instance Monona, and outside the Madison area but within Dane County, even a few just outside of Dane County. He explained the O/D maps, including the desire line map showing where people traveling to the downtown/UW campus area are coming from.

Kamp said that his conclusion from the survey is that people of color are largely living and working outside the central Madison area, and they are taking longer trips and transferring more. Cechvala added that African-Americans are transferring at a rate about three times higher than white riders. The numbers refer to not only where the riders live, but also where they work. For higher income riders, more are traveling to/from downtown and also from Verona, far southwest Madison, Fitchburg, and Middleton.
Schaefer said that the maps help to tell the story of why minorities ride longer and transfer more. There are probably some service changes that Metro could do to better accommodate those trips, but for the most part, the system is designed to try to accommodate these kind of cross-town and circumferential trips with the transfer point system, but those trips, by nature, are going to take longer and involve some indirection.

Golden asked if the survey results would lead to any updates of, for instance, the Transit Development Plan (TDP) or some recommended changes to the system. Kamp said that the short answer is yes, and that Metro staff are analyzing the results and thinking of things that might lead to recommendations to the TPC.

Cechvala continued and introduced a future transit network map that was passed around related to the travel demand model work. Cechvala highlighted some of the future network changes, which include the two BRT routes from the BRT study, commuter service highlighted in the TDP, and new local service in the peripheral neighborhoods. Lastly staff has modified the local service to integrate with BRT. There are also some route frequency improvements and unrelated local service improvements. The system generally becomes simpler with fewer routes and more frequent, direct service that is easier to understand.

Golden asked if any of the potential improvements to the Beltline Highway identified in the Beltline study were coded in. Cechvala said that there were a few local street crossings that could be beneficial: the Perry Street overpass and a new crossing just west of Whitney Way. They are not included in this because the transit system is dependent on the highway network, and those improvements have not been coded into the highway network yet. The park-and-ride lots will be modeled. The study also looked at BRT along the Beltline, but that is not in the model because staff are skeptical of the utility of that.

11. Status Report on Studies and Plans Involving the TPB

Schaefer said that there is not much to report on except the Interstate/Beltline interchange study. The project manager, Craig Pringle, said that WisDOT was still looking at various design alternatives for the interchange. They have expanded the number of alternatives being evaluated. They had initially ruled out some things like loop ramps that are now back in play because they are looking more at practical, cost-effective designs. They are also coordinating with potential improvements to the Beltline and Stoughton Road. There is funding for the interstate expansion project up to the interchange, but not including the interchange. However, FHWA will not allow them to expand the interstate to six lanes and have a two-lane bottleneck through that interchange area and WisDOT wouldn’t do that anyway. They are looking at ways to address this through project phasing if needed due to funding constraints.

Matano said that he had made his two appointments to the BRT committee quite a while ago, but the County Executive and the Madison mayor have still not made any appointments. He is following up with the County Executive and his staff on this. Schaefer said there have been some meetings with county and city staff to discuss the best timing for setting up the committee and starting the next phase of study given the unresolved funding issue. An economic impact study has been suggested to build support for BRT and the funding needed for it.

12. Discussion of Future Work Items

Schaefer said progress had been made on the bicycle wayfinding plan project. It is anticipated some results will be available to share with the board in the next couple of months. The goal is to have the design guidelines completed and specific signing plans for the corridors selected by spring.

13. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, February 3, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. at the Madison Water Utility Building, 119 E. Olin Ave., Room A-B.

14. Adjournment

Moved by Flottmeyer, seconded by Kamp, to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.