1. Roll Call

Members Absent: R. Ferrell, D. Phillips, R. Williams, C. Wittke
Staff Present: B. Schaefer
Others Present: G. Hull

2. Review and Recommendation on Draft Scoring and Ranking of Candidate Statewide Multimodal Improvement Program (SMIP)/Transportation Enhancement (TE) Projects for FYs 2010-'11

Schaefer explained that most of the funding for the SMIP program comes from the Transportation Enhancements (TE) program. The TE program is funded from a 10% set aside of all Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds. Bicycle and pedestrian projects make up the bulk of projects funded under the TE program, but other eligible project activities include historic preservation and scenic beautification/streetscape enhancement projects. The TE funding is supplemented by some other STP – Discretionary funds that have been allocated to a new Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Program. A total of $18 million is available for FYs 2010-'11. WisDOT requests that MPOs prioritize projects in their areas and those rankings are considered by the state committee that makes the final decisions on which projects get funded.

Schaefer then reviewed the scoring criteria the MPO uses and the eleven projects in the Madison area and how MPO staff had scored and prioritized the projects. Hiniker asked whether streetscape improvement projects receive points under the quality of life criterion, and Schaefer said yes. Sundquist commented that as with the STP – Urban project criteria he thought it would be beneficial to prioritize the criteria through a weighting system. He also said the criteria clearly favor bicycle path projects versus pedestrian/streetscape projects. Schaefer acknowledged that. Bicycle projects typically have more use from a broader more regional area. He also noted that streetscape projects have alternative funding sources whereas regional bike facilities don’t. Schaefer said MPO staff ranked the Starkweather Creek path project as #1 with the Badger State Trail and Lower Yahara River Trail projects close behind. The Starkweather Creek path project is the final phase of a path linking moderate and low-income neighborhoods to MATC, the airport and its business park, shopping, Olbrich Park, and to the Capital City Trail and downtown. It will be pretty heavily used, mostly for transportation versus strictly recreational purposes. The Badger State Trail and Lower Yahara River Trail projects scored the same, but staff ranked the Badger State Trail #2 largely because of the uncertainty over whether the Lower Yahara River Trail project will actually happen. The feasibility study won’t be completed until the end of the summer, and the cost sharing plan and an agreement with Wisconsin & Southern Railroad still need to be worked out. The Cannonball Trail is a nice project, but the largest benefits will be realized only when the Beltline overpass is completed. Plus, the City of Madison ranked the Starkweather Creek project higher.

Sundquist said that he was surprised that Monona Drive scored so low, since it includes some traffic calming and pedestrian safety components. Schaefer responded that Monona Drive did score well under the STP-U program and is receiving STP-U and Federal safety funding because of the consolidation of driveways, addition of bike lanes, wide sidewalks, etc. The additional SMIP funding being requested is for period lighting, landscaping, and colored crosswalks. Stoebig said the pedestrian use on the segment of Monona Drive between Pflaum and Frost Woods was actually quite high. Bartol commented that there does seem to be a systematic bias against pedestrian projects. He wondered if any projects had ever been proposed to improve pedestrian access to transit, for example.
Schaefer responded that this probably reflects the fact there are other funding sources for these projects. In some cases, communities were seeking funds for the reconstruction of the street itself rather than just pedestrian enhancements. There is a transit enhancement program, funded through a 1% set aside of the formula funds transit systems receive. Hiniker commented that the pedestrian enhancements should be done as part of the street reconstruction consistent with a complete streets policy. Funding them through the TE program is somewhat contradictory to such a policy (i.e., implies they are “extras”). Hiniker said he thought the Badger State Trail should be ranked #1 because there are safety issues on Seminole Highway (the current parallel route) due to the heavy traffic on the road. It will be heavily used, although mainly for recreational purposes. Rider said the same argument about having an existing on-street route could be made in the case of the Starkweather Creek project since there is a traffic signal at Shopko Drive. Sundquist said he disagreed with making the Badger State Trail the #1 project, since it is primarily a recreational facility.

Schaefer asked if the committee wanted to make a recommendation or simply have staff report to the Board on the different comments. It was decided to have staff report that the committee felt the Starkweather Creek and Badger State Trail projects were the top projects, but that there was not a clear consensus between the two as to which was #1. There was also general consensus that pedestrian mobility was under valued with the current scoring criteria.


Schaefer said Royce Williams had requested a report on the park-and-ride lot. He said that WisDOT, which owns the lot, and the City of Madison have initiated a study to look at whether a second parking lot could be constructed within the land the state owns. If no additional land acquisition is required, a second lot could possibly be constructed in 2010. If a second lot is built, WisDOT is considering designating that as a long-term lot for intercity bus passengers and others. The city, which maintains the lot, might charge a daily fee (e.g., $2) for the long-term lot.

4. **Continued Review and Discussion on the Selection Process for Surface Transportation Program (STP) – Urban Transportation Projects**

Item deferred.

5. **Committee Member Reports**

Item deferred.

6. **Staff Reports**

Schaefer mentioned that a new expanded Finance/Governance Subcommittee of the Transport 2020 Study Committee had been created and would be meeting on May 28. The new committee members include representatives from large and small businesses, towns, cities and villages, freight transportation, Metro Transit, and WisDOT’s Transit Bureau. The expansion of the subcommittee came about after Thrive, the regional economic development enterprise for the Madison region, convened and facilitated a series of discussions.

7. **Next Meeting Dates**

    July 15, 2008
    September 16, 2008

8. **Adjournment**

    The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

*Minutes recorded by Bill Schaefer*