

Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (an MPO)
September 1, 2010 Meeting Minutes

1. Roll Call

Members present: Eileen Bruskevitz, Joe Chase, Mark Clear, Duane Hinz, Brett Hulsey (arrived and left during item #5), Steve King, Jerry Mandli, Al Matano, Mark Opitz, Chris Schmidt.

Members absent: Chuck Kamp, Steve Ritt, Paul Skidmore, John Vesperman.

Staff present: Bill Schaefer, Bob Pike

2. Approval of August 4, 2010 Meeting Minutes

Moved by King, seconded by Schmidt, to approve the August 4, 2010 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Communications

Schaefer said there were no communications in the packet. He said a letter was received from WisDOT after the mailing approving TIP amendment #6 for the Military Ridge Park & Ride Lot expansion.

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

None.

5. Public Hearing on Draft 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County

Matano opened the public hearing, and asked staff to provide a presentation on the draft TIP. Schaefer first reviewed the STP Urban Priority Project Listings as proposed in the draft TIP. Schaefer said there have been some more recent discussions between City of Madison and Dane County staff regarding the timing of the joint city-county projects. Both the city and county are now in agreement on delaying the last two segments of the CTH M reconstruction and expansion project a year. The primary reason for this is that it would allow the Fish Hatchery Road project to be moved up to 2012 at the same time that WisDOT would be doing the Phase 2 work on the Fish Hatchery/Beltline interchange and more importantly before work is started on the Verona Road/West Beltline interchange reconstruction in 2014. The primary alternate route for traffic during the interchange reconstruction project will be McKee Road to Fish Hatchery Road. WisDOT will also be completing an improvement to the McKee Road/Verona Road intersection prior to the project. Another benefit of delaying the CTH M projects is that it will allow more STP Urban funding to be allocated for University Avenue, reducing the shortfall from \$760,000 to about \$450,000, and for the CTH M (North of Cross County to North of McKee Road/CTH PD) project, eliminating the \$350,000+ shortfall under the current scenario. Under this scenario, the E. Johnson Street project could be moved back up to 2014 and the Cottage Grove Road (Interstate to Sprecher Road) project could be done in 2015 when WisDOT had scheduled the project to expand the Cottage Grove bridge over the Interstate. McKee Road/CTH PD would be moved back to 2016. Schaefer said that while there is certainly a desire to get the CTH M corridor work done as soon as possible it makes sense to get the work done on Fish Hatchery Road before the Verona Road/West Beltline project, which is going to result in significant traffic diversion. There are also serious questions as to whether the current schedule for the CTH M work could be met given the scope and complexity of the projects, including the work being done now on the Pleasant View Road extension and the two roundabouts. Schaefer said MPO staff would review the proposed changes with the MPO technical committee and come back to the board with a recommendation at its next meeting. However, he wanted to share with the board the current thinking in terms of the desirable timing of the different projects.

Asked if traffic diversion from the Verona Road interchange project to CTH M was also a concern, Schaefer said yes, but less so than diversion to Fish Hatchery Road. CTH M is only two lanes now and

the road will remain open during construction. Also, there are some parallel routes to CTH M even though the extension of S. High Point Road has not been completed between Raymond and Mid-Town Roads. King said he understood the need for the delay to the CTH M projects, but was concerned about the condition of McKee Road east of CTH M. He wondered if some interim work on CTH PD could be done prior to 2014. Schaefer said he would raise the issue with city engineering staff. Chase asked for verification that the USH 151/Main Street interchange project was on the advanceable list. Schaefer said it was and WisDOT staff was attempting to move the construction schedule up. Clear asked about the Interstate 39/90 expansion project and whether that was in the MPO's planning area. Schaefer said that only a small portion of that project was in the MPO planning area. The EIS for the project is almost completed. The next step is to get the project enumerated by the State Transportation Projects Commission. WisDOT would then develop a schedule for design work, phasing, and seek funding.

Schaefer highlighted some additional WisDOT and local projects in the draft TIP other than the STP Urban projects. Bruskewitz asked if a roundabout would be constructed at the intersection of STH 113 and STH 19. Schaefer said he didn't know, but there is a policy that a roundabout alternative must be considered for any intersection project using federal funds. Asked about the experience with roundabouts, Schaefer said he didn't have data on local projects, but the overall experience is that roundabouts reduce serious crashes, if not the overall crash rate. Bruskewitz asked how much traffic roundabouts could handle, and Schaefer said he didn't know, but the one being constructed at Mineral Point Road and Pleasant View Road is probably pushing the limits. Schaefer reviewed the bicycle and major Metro transit capital projects.

There were no persons who registered to speak, and therefore Matano officially closed the public hearing.

6. Consideration of Resolution TPB No. 43 Regarding Amendment #7 to the 2010-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County

Schaefer said that WisDOT wanted to start the design for four projects to upgrade guardrail end treatments. The guardrails don't meet Federal safety standards and need to be upgraded. The projects are on the Beltline, Interstate 39/90, USH 18/151, and USH 151. There is also a similar project on I-39/90 outside the MPO area that has been included for informational purposes. Construction for one will be in 2012 and construction for the other three will be in 2013. The projects currently show IM and NHS as the Federal funding sources, but WisDOT has applied for Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding for the projects. The funding or schedule for other projects will not be affected by the addition of these projects.

Moved by Bruskewitz, seconded by King, to adopt Resolution TPB No. 43, Amendment #7 to the 2010-2014 TIP. Motion carried.

7. Consideration of Scoring and Ranking of Candidate Statewide Multi-modal Improvement Program (SMIP)/Transportation Enhancement (TE) & Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Program (BFP) Projects for FYs 2012-2014

Schaefer said WisDOT requests MPOs to rank the applications within their planning areas. The state committee that WisDOT sets up to decide which projects receive funding considers the MPO rankings as part of its process. He said the committee has generally followed the MPO rankings in its decisions on funding for Madison area projects. He said there were eight projects submitted in the MPO area. A total of \$30-\$34 million is available statewide for three years of projects (2012-2014). Schaefer reviewed the eight projects. He mentioned that the City of Middleton had to revise its project application. The original proposed project included a ped/bike overpass of USH 14 with two connecting paths. The city proposed to fund a majority of the cost of the project through TID funds. WisDOT informed the city of an unwritten policy that applicants must ask for funding covering at least 50% of the total cost of a project. The city changed the project to propose design for the complete project and construction of only the southern path connection under the Beltline to Elmwood Avenue

and the downtown area. The path would connect to a planned park-and-ride facility. Because of the change in scope of the project, MPO staff reduced the score and priority ranking for the project.

Schaefer said the two top scoring and highest ranked projects were the City of Madison's proposed ped/bike overpass of the Beltline for the Cannonball Trail and the Dane County Parks Department's Lower Yahara River Trail Phase 1 project connecting the Capital City Trail to McFarland. He said the City of Madison was seeking about \$2 million in Federal funding. The city anticipates being able to transfer about \$900,000 in Federal funding that had been earmarked for the Aberg Avenue overpass project that received ARRA funding. The Lower Yahara River Trail project is very expensive (\$3.8 million) due to the boardwalk along the north shore of Lake Waubesa and the bridge over Lower Mud Lake. About \$3 million in Federal funding is being sought. The 3rd highest ranked project is Phases 2 and 4 of the Cannonball Trail sponsored by the City of Fitchburg. He said the staff rankings for these projects were consistent with the rankings for the ARRA funding cycle last year that was approved by the MPO Board. Due to the quick turnaround, the MPO's Technical Coordinating Committee and Citizen Advisory Committee were not able to meet to make a recommendation on the project rankings. However, staff distributed the information on the projects and the rankings and the feedback staff received was supportive of the rankings for the top projects. Staff also presented the project rankings to the City of Madison's Long-Range Transportation Committee as part of a presentation on the TIP and there also was general agreement by that committee on the top projects. Schaefer said he thought there was a good chance the Beltline ped/bike overpass and Lower Yahara River Trail projects would both receive funding. However, it was possible the committee might select a lower scoring project due to the high cost of the Yahara River Trail project. Schaefer said he was looking for a recommendation from the Board to send to WisDOT.

Moved by Bruskewitz, seconded by King, to approve the draft SMIP project rankings prepared by staff.

Clear commented that he thought the project to fund widening of Old Sauk Road for paved shoulders for bicyclists should have been ranked higher because it is a popular bicycle route and there isn't a safe alternative. Schaefer responded that the reason for the score is that while safety would be improved with wide paved shoulders the traffic volumes are still not that high and the roadway is mostly a recreational route. He also noted that some MPO Board members were concerned in the past about the precedent of funding bike facilities on a project when there is Federal and now a state policy to provide pedestrian and bicycle accommodations as part of roadway projects. Chase commented on the Sun Prairie project, which would connect to the existing path that stops at the USH 151 underpass. This would provide a connection between Madison and Sun Prairie and connect to a growing retail area. Matano commented that Chase's comment raises the issue of whether a project completes a path system. Schaefer said one of the criteria is whether the project is a key system/site, which refers to whether it is on or connects to the planned regional bikeway system. The Sun Prairie path is on the planned regional system. He said it is always difficult whether one looks at a project in isolation or as a phase of a larger project that will provide great benefits once completed. Chase said the path does connect to the Main Street area as well as O'Keeffe Avenue. Clear agreed that the path helps connect to the local street network. He also mentioned the value of these projects, because of the low cost relative to benefits. Opitz asked when WisDOT needed the rankings, and Schaefer said WisDOT wanted them by mid-September. The state committee would be meeting in early October. Opitz said he would ideally like to have the technical committee make a recommendation. Schaefer said if the Board postponed action, he would send the current draft rankings and tell WisDOT he would send the final rankings later following action by the Board. It would be preferable for the Board to act tonight though. Opitz said all of the projects have merit, but he didn't think the level of use of the Sun Prairie project would be nearly as high as some of the Madison projects. He said he was uncomfortable making changes at this time. Schmidt commented on the value of the Old Sauk and Sun Prairie projects as well. Schaefer said the committee understands that the more expensive projects tend to score higher and could fund a lower scoring project that was a low cost project.

Clear moved, Chase seconded, to amend the motion to move the SW Sun Prairie/Madison Connector Path project from #6 to #3 and to move the West Old Sauk Road Bicycle Accommodations project from #7 to #4. Motion failed.

Schmidt moved, Chase seconded, to revise the scoring of the Sun Prairie path project by increasing the score for "Impact - # of People" from a 2 to a 4 and to revise the score of the Old Sauk Road Bicycle Accommodations project by reducing the score of the same criteria from a 4 to a 2. The rankings would be unaffected. Motion failed.

A vote was then taken on the main motion to approve the draft project rankings without any changes. Motion carried.

8. Update on the Milwaukee-Madison Intercity Passenger Rail Service Project and Madison Station

Matano said there was a public meeting yesterday on the station that some MPO Board members attended. Schaefer said a copy of an informational handout from the meeting was at members' places. WisDOT presented designs for the station and the platform. The facility would use the 1st floor of the DOA Building for ticketing, a restaurant, and restroom facilities with a short skywalk, an escalator, and two elevators down to the platform. The platform would be in the center between two tracks to allow freight trains to bypass when the intercity passenger trains are picking up passengers. The cost estimate for the station is \$11.5 to \$12.5 million, which doesn't include parking or any multi-modal connection facilities. The state will own and operate the station. One possible location for the intercity bus parking is in the freight loading area of Monona Terrace off John Nolen Drive. There is a traffic signal at that location. He said it was clear from the meeting the focus thus far has been on the station itself and that WisDOT hadn't thought through the inter-modal connections. Some of these facilities could be included in the planned redevelopment of the Government East parking ramp site along with the extra parking for rail passengers. Schaefer said the City of Madison had applied for a TIGER II grant for detailed planning of the redevelopment of the Government East site, the site beyond the Municipal Building, and additional planning for the surrounding two-block area. The grant is just for planning and design work, although the chances of receiving construction funding would increase if the city received the grant. He said City of Madison and WisDOT staff are having ongoing discussions about parking, traffic, cost, and other issues. He said he thought the role of the MPO would be to see that the multi-modal connection issues were satisfactorily addressed.

Bruskewitz asked the location of the parking. Schaefer said it would be underground below the current ramp, Pinckney Street, and the parking area behind the Madison Municipal Building. They are looking at up to 1,500 spaces. The Government East ramp now has about 560 spaces. Potential uses discussed for the Government East ramp site include a hotel, public market, and bike station. Schmidt mentioned that an issue raised at the meeting is the proposal for one reversible escalator, which is problematic. The reason for not proposing two escalators had to do with FRA regulations that limit the amount of space available at the bottom of the platform and measure the bottom of the platform to the structure. If the FRA doesn't grant a variance, that will drive the cost up.

Royce Williams, 2437 Fox Ave., Madison, registered to speak. He said there were many issues that need to be worked out. He said he got the impression WisDOT was planning for a basic station and it is unclear who will pay for all of the other facilities. The parking issue is huge, and there is a question as to who will subsidize the cost of those spaces if there is discount parking. Another big issue is the local bus connections. Williams also said he thought WisDOT could do a better job getting information out to elected officials and others.

Schaefer said Donna Brown could not make it to the meeting, but planned to provide an update at a future meeting. The plan was to have the environmental document and design completed by April of next year. Clear said other government agencies as well as WisDOT needed to get their act together quickly because there are many decisions to be made in a short amount of time.

9. Update on the Dane County Regional Transit Authority (RTA)

Opitz said that Schaefer included in the packet a draft document outlining principles for preparing the transit plan that was prepared by RTA Board Chair Wagner. He said it was very much a preliminary draft document. He also mentioned that the RTA Board bylaws, which govern the function of the board, how it is organized, and the operating rules. It was also noted that some municipalities are putting an advisory referendum on the ballot regarding adoption of a sales tax to fund commuter rail. Clear commented that the consensus seems to be that the RTA Board will schedule the referendum on the transit plan next April. Matano commented that he was concerned the outline put together by Chair Wagner did not reference the Transport 2020 study and recommendation even though he understood the need to revisit some aspects of the recommendation due to the intercity passenger rail project. Schaefer said the Transport 2020 consultants would be looking at that issue and analyzing some different scenarios in terms service levels, the type of technology (whether FRA compliant or not), and whether a second track was added.

Royce Williams, 2437 Fox Ave., Madison, registered to speak. He said he was disturbed that there didn't seem to be any connection between the transit plan principles document and the work that has been done by the Transit Development Plan committee on developing service scenarios for the RTA. He asked Opitz to respond.

Opitz noted that there was some discussion on that issue at the last RTA Board meeting, and he thought the RTA would be using the work of the TDP committee and all of the past studies. He said the RTA has been in information gathering mode with presentations by various agency staff. The RTA transit plan committee will be discussing the principles document at its next meeting, and will be meeting regularly to develop the transit plan. Schaefer said he thought the RTA would review the work of the TDP committee and use it as a resource. He said the principles document references the types of services that have been developed and discussed by the TDP committee. Opitz commented on the confusion that the advisory referenda on commuter rail will cause. Matano said Transport 2020 was more than just a study. It resulted in a specific recommendation to move forward through the Federal New Starts process, and he thought the RTA seemed to be "reinventing the wheel."

10. Status Report by Madison Area TPB Members on Projects Potentially Involving the TPB:

- **USH 51 (USH 12/18 to I 90/94/39) Corridor Study**
- **USH 51 (McFarland to Stoughton) Corridor Study**

Schaefer said that there wasn't anything new to report. Vesperman mentioned that the project manager for both those studies received a promotion and needs to be replaced.

11. Discussion of Future Work Items:

- **Approval of 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program**
- **2011 Work Program and Budget**
- **Transit Development Plan (TDP) and RTA Service Scenarios**
- **MPO Congestion Management Process**
- **Regional Transportation Plan Update**
- **Revisions to MPO Operating Rules and Procedures**

Schaefer said that the TIP would be on the October agenda for approval. The work program will be reviewed at the October meeting with action at the November meeting.

12. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

The next meeting is scheduled for October 6, 2010 at the Madison Water Utility at 7 p.m.

13. Adjournment

Chase moved, Chase seconded, to adjourn. Motion carried.