

**Greater Madison MPO  
Citizen Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

**September 16, 2020**

*Virtual Meeting*

**5:30 p.m.**

**1. Roll Call**

*Members Present:* Caravello, Clark (joined meeting during item #3), Clow, Preboski, Rider (joined meeting during item #6), Sullivan, Williams, Wilson

*Members Absent:* Lawler, Schmitz

*Staff Present:* Schaefer, Brucaya, Holloway

**2. Approval of August 26, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Wilson moved, Caravello seconded, to approve the August 26, 2020 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

**3. Staff Reports**

- **MPO Public Participation Plan Update**

Schaefer discussed the MPO's public participation plan update. He noted that virtual meetings have worked well during the COVID-19 pandemic and that the MPO is planning to continue offering virtual meetings and webinars as a supplement to in-person meetings even after the pandemic.

- **2021 MPO Work Program**

Schaefer noted that the 2021 work program is in progress, and staff would review highlights at the next meeting.

- **MPO E Newsletter**

Schaefer said that the next issue of the MPO newsletter, which will article on the MPO rebranding, will be sent out in the next week or so.

**4. Recommendation on Draft 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program for the Madison Metropolitan Area and Dane County**

Schaefer described some of the most significant proposed changes to the TIP, reflecting the city of Madison's Executive Capital Budget:

- The Lake Street parking garage project, originally planned for 2024, will be delayed until after 2025. A new inter-city bus terminal is planned to occupy part of the street-level space, with private development above the garage.
- The final section of the West Towne Path, between West Towne Mall and High Point Road, is being delayed to 2025 or later due to budget issues.
- The City of Madison's Vision Zero Initiative, with \$500,000 allocated per year for transportation safety projects, is being added.
- The BRT budget is being refined, but Metro hasn't provided the details yet.
- WisDOT staff still need to provide information on state project changes/additions.

There are no proposed changes to the MPO-funded projects included in the TIP.

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Clow moved, Preboski seconded, to recommend approval of the draft 2021-2025 TIP. Motion carried.

## **5. Review and Recommendation on MPO Title VI Non-Discrimination Program/Language Assistance Plan**

Schaefer noted that the MPO is required to prepare a Title VI plan as a recipient of federal funding. Some of the actions the MPO has taken to promote non-discrimination and reach out to non-English speaking populations include:

- Developing a set of EJ priority areas based on the percentage of minority and low-income residents. While the MPO will continue to monitor changes in minority, low-income, and other EJ populations individually, these EJ priority areas make it easier to visualize how EJ populations will be affected by transportation decisions.
- Including both Spanish and English text on the 2020 version of the Dane County Bicycle Map.
- Publishing the MPO's Regional Transportation Plan summary in Spanish, as well as English, on the MPO website.
- Publicizing the Title VI plan in Spanish, Hmong, and Traditional Chinese languages, as well as English, on the MPO website.

Schaefer noted that WisDOT complimented the MPO's Title VI plan, noting that the plan is a model for other MPOs.

Caravello noted an error in the appendix of the Title VI plan (table G-1, pg. G-2): Stoughton is shown as a village rather than a city.

Wilson moved, Caravello seconded, to recommend approval of the updated MPO Title VI Program/Language Assistance Plan, with the correction noted by Caravello. Motion carried.

## **6. Presentation on Regional Telework Study**

Brucaya presented the results of the MPO's Regional Remote Work Survey, conducted June 9-30, 2020. The purpose of the survey was to understand the implications of COVID-19 for future workplace organization and commuter transportation trends in the Madison region and to identify opportunities to connect employers and employees with the tools needed to successfully support remote work and other sustainable, flexible commute options.

The survey generated 1,881 responses. 73% of respondents were in non-managerial positions, with the remainder divided between managers and executive leadership.

Some interesting findings:

- Less than 10% of respondents said that remote work was somewhat or very common at their workplace, prior to the COVID-19, and only 1% primarily telecommuted.
- At the height of COVID-19 restrictions, 80% of respondents worked from home at least 1 day per week, and 64% worked from home five or more days per week.
- The top challenges of telework identified by respondents were: a lack of access to equipment and quality workspace, barriers to communication and collaboration, and negative impacts to workplace culture and social connectivity.
- Top benefits of telework identified by respondents were: time and money savings, greater comfort and lower stress, greater personal and professional satisfaction.

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- When business gets back to “normal,” 79% of respondents would like to continue working from home at least one day per week, and nearly 50 percent would like to work at home at least three days per week.

Following the presentation Clow said that she was surprised by how clear cut the findings of the survey were, and that she had not seen telework so clearly linked to environmental benefits. She asked if the MPO will be publicizing the benefits of telework. Brucaya said that the MPO will be working to publicize the benefits of telework to employers as well as to the broader community. The MPO is partnering with Sustain Dane to promote the benefits of telework more widely. Clow also asked about the public cost savings of increased telework. Schaefer said that the most important impact of telework is probably reducing peak period travel, which drives the need for expanded roadway capacity. But he also noted that increased telework may also lead people to live in more distant locations, which could end up increasing overall travel.

Preboski noted that many rural areas will need better high-speed internet service to make telework feasible. Clow asked if the MPO could put together a 3-5 page written document detailing some of the results of the survey along with the benefits of telework, and suggested that it would be a useful resource for employers and could provide them with the rationale to permit more remote work options.

Brucaya asked committee members to contact her if they think of other groups that the MPO should share this research with. She also noted that the TDM coordinating group will be trying to put together a webinar, along with Downtown Madison Inc. and the Chamber of Commerce, to share this information more widely.

## **7. Review of City of Madison Staff Presentation on Refinements Being Considered to the East-West BRT Project**

Schaefer described refinements to the BRT project being considered at the City staff and committee level. The budget and design changes being considered are largely aimed at improving the project’s rating by FTA for Small Starts grant evaluation. The planned satellite bus facility at the former Oscar Mayer site, on Madison’s east side, and some bus replacements, both of which are related to the BRT project, would be folded into the project. Two additional BRT lines are proposed to have overlapping service with the East-West line. One line would provide peak period service from the Capitol Square to Middleton, using diesel buses. The other new line would provide service from the North Transfer Point to the South Transfer Point, using electric buses. Outside of the area where these lines overlap with the East-West BRT, they would operate without the infrastructure improvements along the route that will be implemented on the East-West route.

There have been some adjustments to the planned route and stops on the East-West BRT route, including some large sections of the route where the BRT buses may run in the center of the roadway. The Metro Transit network redesign effort, which will be moving forward next year, may result in further changes to the proposed BRT routes and stations. Assuming funding approval from FTA, construction could occur in 2023, and service could start in 2024.

Williams asked if the packet that was submitted to FTA has been posted online. Schaefer said that he did not think that it had been posted publicly, and he did not know if there was a plan to post it. Rider asked about safety considerations for pedestrians reaching stations located in the middle of the street. Schaefer said the same crossing safety improvements would be needed as with the curb running option. He noted that center running buses create cost savings for stations because only a single station in the middle of the road is needed rather than two stations on opposite sides.

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## **8. Committee Member Announcements**

Williams noted that Amtrak is planning to reduce service on their long distance train routes, including the Empire Builder that passes through Wisconsin (from daily to three days per week).

Clow suggested that the Dane County Cities and Villages Association would be a good place to share the MPO's telework materials. They might be able to distribute the information more widely and quickly than the MPO could.

## **9. Next Scheduled Meeting Date**

- Wednesday, November 18, 2020.

## **10. Adjournment**

Rider moved, Clow seconded, to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

*Minutes were recorded by Holloway and Schaefer.*