

**Madison Area Transportation Planning Board (an MPO)  
August 7, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Madison Water Utility, 119 E. Olin Avenue, Conference Rooms A-B

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Chair Opitz called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

**1. Roll Call**

**Members present:** Samba Baldeh, Kelly Danner (left after item #7), Paul Esser, Grant Foster, Patrick Heck, Tom Lynch, Mark Opitz, Bruce Stravinski, Mike Tierney (arrived at start item #5), Doug Wood

**Members absent:** Steve Flottmeyer, Ken Golden, Jerry Mandli, Ed Minihan

**MPO staff present:** Bill Schaefer, Ben Lyman

**Others present in an official capacity:**

Pam Dunphy (Dane County Highway Division), Diane Paoni (WisDOT Planning), Gerry Schmidt (KL Engineering)

**2. Approval of June 19, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Esser moved, Baldeh seconded, to approve the June 19, 2019 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

**3. Communications**

- Letter from WisDOT regarding approval of Amendment #3 to the 2019-2023 TIP and notifying FHWA and FTA of the amendment.
- Letter from the City of Monona supporting the inclusion of the Atwood Avenue project in the 2020-2024 TIP.
- Letter from WisDOT providing an update on the USH 51 (McFarland to Stoughton) Corridor study and schedule.

Schaefer described the letters and noted the letter regarding the Atwood Avenue project was related to agenda item #6.

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

None

**5. Presentation on County Trunk Highway M (CTH Q to STH 113) Preliminary Design Study**

Gerry Schmidt described the status and history of the CTH M design project, including public involvement, analysis, design alternatives, comments and feedback, and the process moving forward. He then described the project corridor and issues that have been identified, including: congestion, safety, future development, utilities, stormwater management, environmental resources, multi-modal network (existing and planned), transit options, and the project's relationship to the North Mendota Parkway Study. Sight distances, left turns, speed limit variations, elevations of curves, driveways and access points, and the potential for use of an urban roadway section for portions of the corridor were all described. The presented the preliminary alternatives investigated. The project will include both wide paved shoulders/bike lanes and an off-road shared-use path. The design is based on a posted 40 MPH speed limit throughout the corridor, which allows the use of a narrower median than higher speeds would require. The design incorporates the existing two-lane roadway as two of the proposed four lanes throughout the majority of the corridor, which helps to reduce impacts. The intersection with CTH K is a major point of congestion in the corridor, and the design team has looked at

multiple alternatives, including signalized intersection, roundabout, and a structured free-flow alternative with grade separation and a single signal. He said the roundabout option is the likely preferred alternative, although without getting into the environmental review more deeply they cannot say that it is “the preferred alternative.” Volumes of various traffic movements were discussed, by AM and PM peaks. A park and ride lot is proposed near the CTH M and K intersection, which will also provide parking for trail users. Other intersections in the corridor were discussed, with traffic volumes and potential changes over time as traffic volumes grow. Access management will be incorporated throughout the corridor, consolidating driveways and redirecting driveways to frontage roads or other access roads where possible.

The west project terminus has been adjusted several times as they review how to transition between four lanes and two lanes, and how the project interfaces with the intersection with Oncken Rd. There was discussion regarding the project cost and how it fits into the TIP. Schmidt stated that pulling the terminus back from the Oncken intersection reduces the project cost by about \$1 million. A box culvert north of the Oncken intersection may be replaced and widened to accommodate a future four-lane section, as it facilitates construction staging and will save money when that portion of the road is upgraded in the future. The project timeline for the coming months was described, including continued environmental investigation, public involvement, and construction.

Danner asked about the timing of environmental documentation as it relates to public involvement, and Schmidt clarified that the third and final Public Involvement Meeting (PIM) on the project timeline was only the final PIM for the initial design phase of the project. Two to three additional PIMs would be held during the second, final design phase of the project. Schaefer asked about the environmental document for the project and how alternatives would be addressed, since CTH K is part of the general corridor but was excluded from the study. Schmidt clarified that the environmental document would include the entire initial project area and discussed how and why the project area was limited to a portion of the corridor. Heck asked why both paved shoulder/bike lanes and a separated multi-use path were included in the project design. Schmidt described the different types of users who would be comfortable using the shoulder/bike lanes and those who would not be comfortable using these higher-stress facilities and need a separated path. Lynch stated that shoulders are required and that paving them is the only design element beyond the minimum requirement. Lynch and Schaefer described the safety benefits of shoulders.

## **6. Review of Preliminary Draft Scoring of STBG – Urban Project Applications and Priority Listing of Projects for 2020-2025**

Schaefer explained that an extra year (3 total instead of 2) is included in this round due to the timing of WisDOT’s local program funding cycle. He noted that MATPB is receiving \$3.4 million in supplemental STBG funding due to additional funding appropriated in two recent omnibus bills passed by Congress. Prior to reviewing the scores of the new project applications, he mentioned that one of the projects, the Meier Road extension and bridge, was determined to be ineligible for funding by WisDOT and FHWA because it did not have a minimum 50% federal cost share.

Schaefer described the scoring criteria for roadway projects and how they differ from the criteria for ITS projects, and explained why projects scored as they did in each category. Schaefer noted that this is the second application cycle in which the new scoring criteria have been used, and that potential future changes to the scoring criteria were noted during the scoring process. Notably, the rationale for Safety Enhancement being worth only 10 points (10% of score) may be revisited. It was initially based on the availability of dedicated safety enhancement project funding (Federal Highway Safety Improvement Projects (HSIP)). Lynch and Schaefer described how this funding is difficult to obtain, especially for urban projects, although it will be used to fund part of the reconstruction of the John Nolen/Blair/Williamson intersection. Recognizing that this funding is difficult to obtain for lower-speed urban roadways than for higher-speed rural roadways, the maximum number of points awarded for safety for STBG scoring may warrant revision.

While describing scoring category VI.A Consistency with Regional and Local Land Use Policies/Plans, Schaefer noted that if the scoring criteria are revised, this criteria could become a screening criteria instead of a scoring criteria, because projects that are not consistent with adopted plans should not be funded. Schaefer also noted that the method used to calculate IX.A Cost/benefit ratio results in scores is skewed to favor larger high-volume road projects, and that this could be reconsidered when scoring criteria are amended, as it creates a bias to funding large road projects over other types of projects.

Schaefer reviewed the total scores of each project and asked for comments or questions. Danner asked about the environmental criteria, particularly how environmental impact was scored for CTH M, and why all of the projects scored so low for Environmental Justice (EJ). Schaefer explained that that criteria is scored based on direct proximity of the project to identified EJ areas, and the assumption that large projects of regional significance will impact all residents but will not affect EJ populations disproportionately unless they are directly proximate to the project. Since none of the projects are directly adjacent to EJ areas, none of the projects earned very many points for this criteria. Danner asked if there was a reason why applications for projects in EJ areas were not received, and what the MPO is doing to actively serve and solicit applications for those areas. Schaefer responded that in the past applications have served EJ areas, but applications received in this round do not directly serve those areas. Schaefer reiterated that although members of EJ populations can and do use these regional facilities, the scoring criterion is not designed to account for that; however, with new origin/destination (OD) travel data being purchased by the MPO, it will be possible to analyze the routes used by EJ populations and to include that information in scoring of projects serving EJ population travel patterns. Danner acknowledged that only projects for which applications are received can be considered, but wants to consider why applications for projects directly benefiting EJ areas are not being received.

Danner turned to the environmental impact criterion, specifically the scoring of the CTH M project discussed in the previous agenda item, and how the score was developed since the project has not yet been completely designed and its environmental documentation is not complete. Schaefer responded that most of the criteria are design-based, but with large, complex projects that take five or more years to go through design and environmental study, project design is not completed before project funding must be approved. Accordingly, the scoring must be based on the information provided with the acknowledgement that some data is missing from consideration. Danner asked why the Atwood and John Nolen projects, which earned the same score or better than the Pleasant View project, were not selected for funding. Schaefer responded that the John Nolen project couldn't be funded because of its high cost and because the CTH M project scored higher. The Atwood Avenue project is not proposed for funding because MATPB made a previous commitment to fund the Pleasant View project in the last funding cycle. Part of the reason for this was that the city plans to use funding for the project from a TIF district that will expire in 2024.

Wood spoke to the \$7 million increase in the Pleasant View project cost estimate since it was conditionally approved in the last application cycle, and asked if the MPO could fund a portion of the project rather than the complete requested amount. Schaefer acknowledged that the project corridor had been extended after the MPO's conditional selection, and elaborated on the reasons for that extension. He stated that in federal environmental documentation if only a segment of a project is being constructed it must be demonstrated that the segment is a logical terminus. Due to the previously built improvements in the Old Sauk Road area up to Timber Wolf Trail it made more sense to terminate the project there. The project is, however, now more expensive and a larger project than what the MPO reviewed and conditionally approved. Wood stated that the situation speaks to the need to carefully consider whether to conditionally approve projects in the future. Schaefer agreed that it should be done with great care and sparingly.

Opitz asked about the proposal to potentially shorten the CTH M project and how much money that was expected to save. Dunphy stated that Schaefer had asked the county to look into shortening the project to

reduce the cost, and then the supplemental funding from FHWA became available so the question has changed to looking for the logical terminus of the project rather than picking an arbitrary point. Schaefer stated that Schmidt had quoted a figure during his presentation on CTH M that the shorter option would cost approximately \$1 million less. Opitz raised the concern that the justification for extending the project beyond Oncken Road was to serve a particular development, which is struggling. Dunphy responded that the consideration is more the variability of the road section if this project ends farther north of Oncken with a four-lane roadway transitioning to two lanes and back to four and then two in a short distance. Opitz asked about the intersection widenings for the CTH M project, such as those at Oncken and Bishop's Bay. Are they being funded by the developer or by the county? Dunphy stated that the developer paid for the Bishop's Bay intersection, and the Oncken Road intersection was widened by the county during the last CTH M project. Wood asked about the status of the Cottage Grove Road project, and if negotiations were proceeding on funding that project. Dunphy stated that Dane County and the City of Madison are working on it, but she has not seen a response to the last proposal she sent out.

Schaefer described the scoring of the ITS projects, as the criteria are different from street projects. He then went over the priority projects table, starting first with the projects already approved for 2020-2022. Schaefer stated that the large cost for the stormwater facility expansion part of the University Avenue project has cast some uncertainty on whether the project will go forward. He noted that the proposed stormwater interceptor would connect in to the University Avenue corridor at Midvale, outside the limits of the road reconstruction project, and it could be constructed separately. Lynch stated that he thought the city would go forward with the project in some form, and that City Engineering staff are re-thinking the stormwater project. Schaefer provided a breakdown of the cost components for the University Ave. project, with currently allocated federal funds covering 60% of the \$14.3 million cost for the roadway portion and additional \$4 million towards the stormwater capacity expansion project. Lynch brought up the safety concerns resulting from flooding of University Avenue preventing access to the UW and VA hospitals, and stated that was a major driver for the city wanting to address stormwater in the area in conjunction with the road reconstruction.

Schaefer reviewed the proposed priority projects to be funded, and explained that the reason for funding the Exchange Street project was due to the MPO policy goal to allocate 10% of funding to small projects. He stated that staff were seeking approval to release the STBG project scoring and priority project tables as part of release of the draft TIP. Wood asked that the board be provided with additional information on the changed scope and increased cost of the Pleasant View project before a vote on the final STBG project funding awards. Schaefer said he would contact Middleton staff to see if they and their project consultant could attend the next board meeting. There was discussion about the features of the Pleasant View Road that increased the cost, including extensive excavation and large retaining walls and need to avoid a high-tension power line tower.

Foster raised a concern regarding what he saw as a disproportionate effect on the overall score caused by criteria III.A, Congestion Mitigation/TSM. With a very wide spread in scores, he said this criteria has the potential to tip the scoring to projects that add capacity. He raised a concern about induced demand from the capacity projects proposed to be funded by the MPO. Schaefer responded that the two projects are upgrading rural, two-lane roadways that are experiencing urban levels of traffic, and in some areas are in developing urban environments. Lynch stated that the scoring criteria could be revisited later and amended, and Schaefer said staff planned to do this prior to the next funding cycle. Schaefer pointed out the congestion mitigation criterion is only 12% of the total. Foster pointed out that the spread of points for other criteria are much smaller. Schaefer responded that criteria I, II.A, and IV have large spreads in scores as well. Lynch asked about the federal requirement to have a Congestion Mitigation Plan and asked if that was related to this criterion. Schaefer responded that the federally required Congestion Mitigation Process (not Plan) requires incorporation of consideration of congestion mitigation into the planning process, but does not specifically require that it be included in project prioritization. Opitz posited that the old scoring criteria didn't include several of the criteria, amounting to around 33% of the current scoring, and with pavement condition that

amounted to nearly 50% of the total scoring. He said he understood the point Foster was making, though, and agreed the criteria should continue to be revisited in the future.

**7. Approval to Release Draft 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County for Public Review and Comment**

Schaefer described the current status of developing the TIP. He said the detailed project listings were still being completed, but that the draft project maps were included in the packet along with information on the transit capital projects. Schaefer explained that the MPO's role for most federally funded projects in the TIP is to ensure coordination among the implementing agencies and ensure that the projects are consistent with regional transportation plan. State and locally funded projects, which make up a majority of the projects, do not require MPO approval, but are included for informational purposes. Lynch pointed out the importance of projects being in the TIP when applying for federal funding.

Esser moved, Wood seconded, to approve release of the Draft 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program for review and comment. Motion carried.

**8. Brief Update on Regional Travel Model Project**

Schaefer provided a brief update on the project and described the data being purchased from Streetlight, discussed under agenda item #6 previously.

**9. Status Report on Capital Area RPC Activities**

Stravinski provided an update on the status of the annual CARPC budget, which was forwarded for approval but which was not approved by the Budget and Personnel Panel. It is unclear whether CARPC will operate under last year's budget or the proposed budget, which included a 3% raise for staff.

**10. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings**

The next meeting will be held at 6:30 PM, September 4 at the City-County Building, 210 MLK Jr. Blvd, Room 351.

**11. Adjournment**

Baldesh moved, Heck seconded, to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.