



CONNECTING THE REGION

A Newsletter from the Greater Madison MPO

Spring 2021

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Connect Greater Madison - Regional Transportation Framework 2050 Planning Process Underway

The Greater Madison MPO is preparing a new regional transportation plan (RTP), which will update the current plan, adopted in 2017. *Connect Greater Madison - Regional Transportation Framework 2050* will identify how the region intends to invest in the transportation system to accommodate current demands and future growth, establishing priorities to meet system performance targets while factoring available funding. The plan will include strategies to address important trends and challenges, such as changing population demographics, the increasing cost of living, and the changing economy. The RTP addresses all transportation modes, including roadways, public transit, bicycling, pedestrians, and freight. The RTP will ensure that transportation projects are coordinated between the various levels of government (municipal, county, and state). Finally, the plan will ensure eligibility of projects for federal transportation funding as the plan serves as the framework for guiding federally funded transportation investments.

Planning Process and Timeline

Initial work on the RTP thus far has been focused on analyzing the existing condition of the transportation system and identifying improvement needs related to traffic operations, safety, roadway maintenance, transit service, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Population, household, and employment forecasts are also being updated and future growth projected based on regional land use goals and policies, and local land use plans. The forecasts and future development scenario are being led by CARPC staff in coordination with the MPO, as CARPC prepares its Regional Development Framework 2050. In the next phase of the planning process, the projected growth will be used to forecast future travel, using a newly developed regional travel forecast model and assumptions about transportation improvements.

The draft plan is scheduled to be released in early 2022, and officially adopted in spring 2022.

Public Participation

The MPO is planning three phases of public participation. The first Public Involvement Meeting (PIM) will be held virtually in June. An online survey will gather feedback on perceptions of the transportation system, views on priorities and important issues needing to be addressed, and support for policies, strategies, and funding options. An interactive plan website will be

launched prior to the first PIM to provide background information, interactive maps, and project updates. MPO staff will also organize four resident focus groups in partnership with local organizations serving traditionally underrepresented communities, to gather feedback on transportation needs, barriers and goals. Stay tuned for more opportunities to get involved and help shape the future of our transportation system!

MPO to Publish Report on Local Ordinances and Best Practices Related to Ped/Bike Facilities, Policies, and Street Standards

As part of our initial background work for the update to the Regional Transportation Plan 2050, MPO staff researched requirements established by communities in the MPO Planning Area for facilities related to bicycle and pedestrian networks and safety. The report of this research, to be published in the near future, provides a robust examination of local requirements, national best practices and recommendations, and related impacts on environmental justice populations and people experiencing disabilities.

Although the Madison urban area ranked second-safest of the 100 largest US metro areas in the 2021 [Dangerous by Design](#) report, the fact that 52 pedestrians were killed from 2010–2019 (0.8 pedestrian deaths per 100,000 population), demonstrates how poorly street design supports pedestrian safety nation wide than how well streets are designed in the Madison area.

The upcoming report will highlight opportunities for communities to improve their active transportation networks through a variety of design and funding strategies. The report supports efforts to ensure that new and reconstructed streets are “Complete Streets” and to achieve “Vision Zero” [both of which are described in the report], as well as simply improving safety for users of all modes. Recommendations for design elements come from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and National Complete Streets Coalition/Smart Growth America. The report builds on the [Dane County Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Study](#) (2018), which found that approximately 74% of auto/bike crashes¹ and at least 48% of auto/ped crashes² in Dane County occur at intersections, by identifying design elements that can improve intersection and roadway safety for all users.

The MPO’s [2019 Performance Measures Report](#), which sets a target of reducing non-motorized vehicle crash fatalities and serious injuries by 5% over a five-year period, demonstrates the need for action on this measure, as it reports a 9.1% increase in this type of crash for the five-year average.

By presenting current local standards side-by-side with recommendations from national organizations, the report provides local staff and policy makers an easy way to identify “low-hanging fruit” to help meet desired outcomes, such as: reducing corner curb radii to slow turning vehicles, reduce pedestrian crossing distances and improve safety; changing sidewalk funding policies to support equity and/or budget goals; or making the best use of limited land/right-of-way.

1 Table 13

2 Table 30. “Driver Violation” crash totals (12%) include both intersection and non-intersection crashes and are not included in the 48% listed here.

Register Now for the May Bike Challenge!

The Greater Madison MPO is sponsoring another exciting bicycle challenge for individuals and workplace teams this May on the [Love to Ride Madison](#) platform. Participants join a network of Love to Ride communities around the nation and world, competing for prizes and building great habits along the way.

The last Love to Ride challenge in the Madison region was Cycle September 2020, which involved 639 participants from 51 workplaces.

Love to Ride challenges use behavior change principles to get more people bicycling more often, through personalized messaging and tools tailored to varied levels of experience and comfort. Sponsored challenges allow individuals and workplaces to compete for prizes.

Local prize sponsors include Saris, TREK, Madison BCycle and Dane Buy Local.

[Learn more and register here!](#)



MPO-RPC Joint Webinar Series: 2021 Schedule

Thursdays, 12:00-1:00 p.m.

February 18: What Can Your Regional Planning Agency Do for You? (complete)

April 29: Local Project Funding Opportunities through the MPO and WisDOT (MPO) ([register here](#))

June 17: Regional Transportation and Land Use Planning Update (MPO/RPC)

August 19: Future Environmental Corridors (RPC)

October 21: Economics of Green Infrastructure (RPC)

2021 MPO-RPC Webinar Series Begins

The Greater Madison MPO and Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (CARPC) joined forces this year to create a bi-monthly webinar series on topics related to transportation and land use in Dane County. As partner agencies working together to align transportation, land use, and natural resource planning in the Madison region, the goal of the webinar series is to share information and facilitate dialogue around the ways in which the two agencies can address common challenges faced by Dane County communities.

The new MPO-CARPC webinar series is part of an ongoing effort to improve outreach and engagement with local and county staff, elected officials, members of transportation and land use committees, and interested members of the public. Over 100 participants tuned into the first webinar on February 18, “What Can Your Regional Planning Agency Do for You?” to learn about the work of our two agencies, the tools and resources we offer, and the services we provide.

Join us for the second webinar on April 29, “[Local Project Funding Opportunities through the MPO and WisDOT](#),” to learn more about local roadway and bicycle/pedestrian project funding opportunities. Presenters will share key information to assist local communities in preparing successful funding applications under the variety of available programs, including funding schedules, processes, policies, and evaluation criteria. Examples of recent projects funded in the Madison area will also be shared.

Funding Solicitation Open for Surface Transportation Block Grant Urban Program

The Greater Madison MPO is requesting project applications for Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) - Urban funding for the 2022-2027 program cycle. The STBG-Urban program is the largest source of federal funding the MPO receives and can be used for wide variety of capital projects, including roadway construction, transit vehicles and infrastructure, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) capital improvements. New construction projects approved in this cycle will be added to the schedule in State Fiscal Years (SFYs) 2025, 2026, and 2027. Projects may be advanced to an earlier year if there are changes to the schedule of approved projects in SFYs 2022-2024 or if funding becomes available.

The amount of funding available depends upon the MPO’s annual allocation, and projects already approved but not yet completed; it will likely be around \$10 million. The MPO will also receive supplemental funding of \$3.24 million from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) as well as additional funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). These funds must be obligated or committed by September 30, 2024, so they will be available for projects in SFYs 2022-2024. **Project applications are due June 18, 2021.** Preliminary project funding awards are included in the MPO’s draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) released in August and are finalized as part of approval of the TIP in early October.

The MPO will also open the next annual Section 5310 (Enhanced Mobility of

Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities) program application cycle this June with applications due in August. The Section 5310 program funds projects that improve transportation access beyond the minimum requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Around \$316,000 in funding will be available for projects in 2022. More information on the program and application process is or will be available on the MPO's [Specialized Transportation page](#).

As with the STBG Urban program, CRRSAA and ARPA provide supplemental funding for Section 5310 Program-eligible applicants. This supplemental funding is intended to support operations and payroll projects. The combined Madison-area apportionments from these Acts is \$109,000. The MPO created a modified application review and selection process for these funds, prioritizing use for operations and payroll. Applications were due April 12. Two applications were received: one for providing rides to and from COVID-19 vaccination sites for seniors and persons with disabilities (Dane County Human Services, \$30,000); and another for the payroll expense of one employee (Capitol Express, \$39,000). As both of these projects are eligible and the total amount requested is less than the available funding, staff are recommending that the MPO Policy Board approve the funding of both projects at their May 5, 2021 meeting. The remaining local apportionment from these programs will be available as supplemental funding during the regular annual Section 5310 Program application cycle this summer.

Proposed Revisions to STBG-Urban Evaluation Criteria and Policies

Greater Madison MPO staff recently conducted a comprehensive review of the MPO's Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG)-Urban project evaluation criteria and policies, and presented recommended changes to the MPO's advisory committees and Policy Board.

The STBG-Urban criteria and policies were last updated in 2015 and cover the following potential project application types: Roadway, Transit, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), and Bike. Staff is reexamining the existing evaluation criteria and policies to account for experience using the current criteria, reflect current emphasis areas such as safety and equity, and respond to Policy Board direction, which requested the review.

All proposed changes to the STBG-Urban evaluation criteria and policies reflect the MPO's [RTP 2050](#) Goals and Policies. Major proposed changes to the Roadway project evaluation criteria are outlined below:

- » **Increase "Safety" category weight** from 10% to 20%. This weight was set at a lower value during the last update, due to the expectation that safety-focused projects would receive HSIP funding. However, few projects receive funding due to strict eligibility criteria and other factors. Staff is also proposing to score projects based on crash severity rather than crash frequency which is the current state of the practice.
- » **Increase "System Preservation" (pavement condition) weight** from 15% to 20% to reflect importance of maintaining and upgrading existing transportation system infrastructure.

- » **Increase “Enhancement of Multimodal Options” weight** from 8% to 12%, to reflect the importance of improving pedestrian, bicycle, and transit as convenient travel choices and reducing VMT.
- » **Increase “Equity” weight** from 7% to 10% to increase the competitiveness of projects that benefit Environmental Justice areas.

MPO staff will score new project applications for the 2022-2027 STBG-Urban application cycle using the revised evaluation criteria and policies. The STBG-Urban Transportation Project Selection Process document containing the proposed evaluation criteria and policies is available on the [TIP page](#).

TeleWORKS Toolkit Released

The Greater Madison MPO recently released a [TeleWORKS Toolkit](#) through its Rideshare Etc. program, to support ongoing conversations about the future of telework and how it can help reduce vehicle miles traveled in Dane County. The Rideshare Etc. program promotes alternatives to driving alone by connecting employers and individuals with information, encouragement and resources to make sustainable transportation options a success.

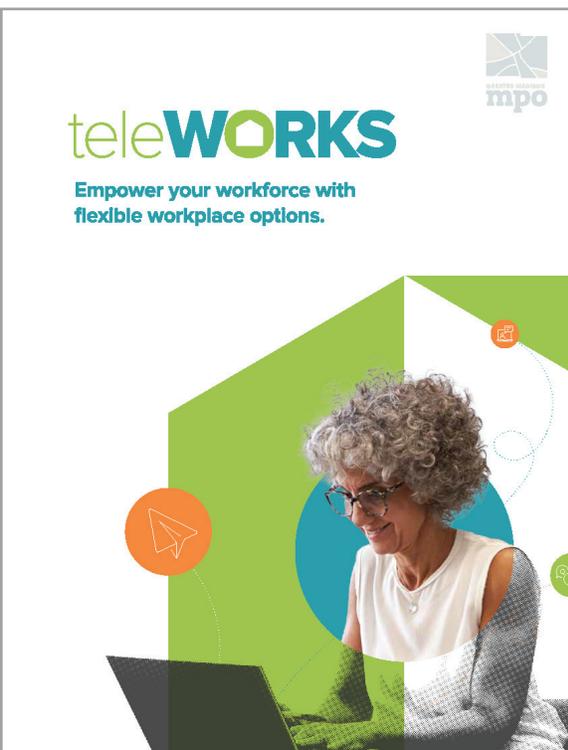
The TeleWORKS Toolkit incorporates findings from the 2020 Madison Region Remote Work Survey with data from recent national surveys and insights from local employer profiles, to highlight key considerations for employers and staff as they prepare for the “new normal.”

Results from the 2020 regional survey identified a strong desire in Dane County for part-time telework to continue as an option post-COVID, and pointed to numerous benefits that could be achieved by reducing single-occupancy vehicle commutes. An example of the possible scale of benefits to air quality alone is that, based on data from the 2017 Dane County Household Travel Survey, a 10% reduction in commute trips by Dane County residents (if not replaced by other driving trips), would result in a reduction of approximately 153,000 vehicle miles traveled and 69 tons of CO2 emissions every weekday.

The goal of the TeleWORKS Toolkit is to be a resource for discussion about the future of telework in Dane County, with an emphasis on how the public and private sectors can work together to ensure that more telework leads to less driving in our region. The toolkit encourages employers and individuals to view telework in the context of transportation sustainability, and to use it together with other transportation options such as bicycling, public transit, walking, carpooling, and vanpooling to reduce their drive-alone trips.

As part of this effort to leverage telework to reduce total driving in the Madison region, the MPO is also partnering on a scoping study led by Sustain Dane to explore: the local evolution of telecommuting and its connection to sustainability; opportunities to reduce vehicle miles traveled and increase wellness; and best practices to create resources for local businesses. The study is being funded by the Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change Clean Energy Economic Development Grant Program.

Funding for Rideshare Etc. program promotions is provided in part by Dane County, City of Madison, Metro Transit, and the UW-Madison.



Capital Area Regional Planning Commission: Regional Development Framework Update

By Steve Steinhoff, Director, Capital Area Regional Planning Commission

The Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (CARPC) is preparing the Regional Development Framework as a guide for local community planning and development. It will generally depict what type of growth should occur where, and in order to achieve shared regional goals. The MPO, in turn, will use the Framework to help identify future transportation needs in the Regional Transportation Plan.

Preparing the Regional Development Framework involves establishing goals and objectives, projecting future growth, identifying regional development concepts, building a 2050 growth scenario, and drafting a report. Throughout these steps, CARPC consulted with local officials, regional partners, and other stakeholders.

Goals and Objectives

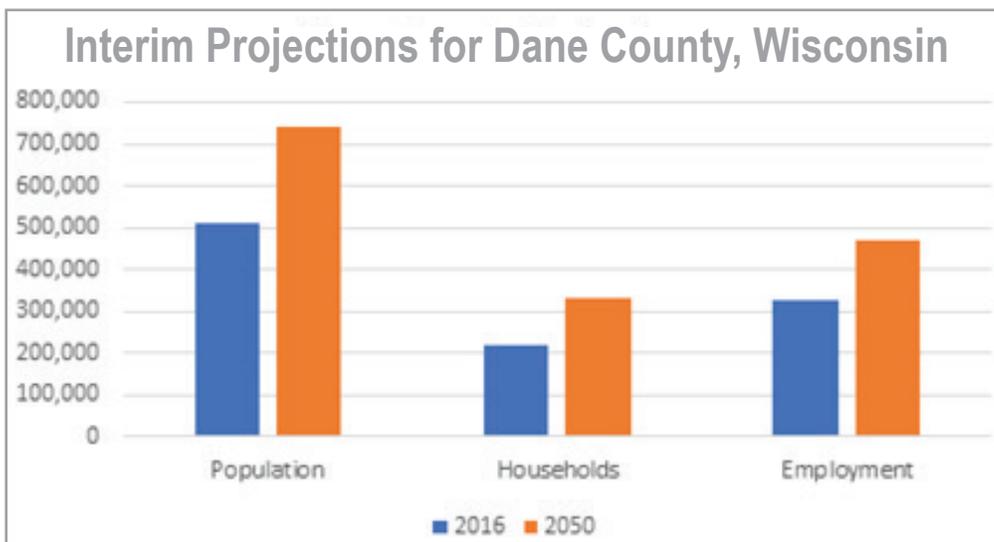
In October of 2020, CARPC adopted draft goals and objectives to guide preparation of the Regional Development Framework. The agency confirmed support for them through a [survey of local government officials in 2019](#). The goals are to promote regional development that:

1. Fosters community resilience to climate change
2. Increases access to jobs, housing, and services for all people
3. Conserves farmland, water resources, natural areas, and fiscal resources

To achieve these broad goals, CARPC established ten more specific objectives, which are listed on the [adopting resolution](#).

Growth Projections

A framework for future growth relies on estimates of how much growth will occur. CARPC based projections on past trends, third party projections, land use modeling, and professional judgement.



Regional Development Concepts

Drawing on research from regional plans in other parts of the U.S. and from local plans, CARPC identified common planning concepts used to achieve goals like those adopted by CARPC. Concepts identified were:

1. Focus growth in centers and corridors where people can live, work, shop, entertain, and meet and connect with others
2. Prioritize development in already developed areas
3. Develop traditional neighborhoods
4. Avoid growth on important environmental and agricultural areas
5. Plan areas for business growth

2050 Growth Scenario

CARPC staff based their map building on local plans, recent trends, and regional goals and objectives, seeking to be both realistic and aspirational. Initial outcomes from the 2050 growth scenario are that more than half of new households are located in centers and corridors, and more than 40 percent of new households are located in already developed areas. CARPC continues to refine the scenario based on feedback.

Next Steps

CARPC and partners will share the 2050 growth scenario and its outcomes with local communities, stakeholders, and the public in coming months. This conversation will guide preparation of a draft Framework report for further comment later in the year, followed by a final framework for adoption by CARPC.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Regional Development Framework can find more information on the [CARPC website](#) and [Facebook page](#), in the agency's [monthly newsletter](#), and at [Commission meetings](#).