



CONNECTING THE REGION

A Newsletter from the Greater Madison MPO

Quarter 4 | 2021

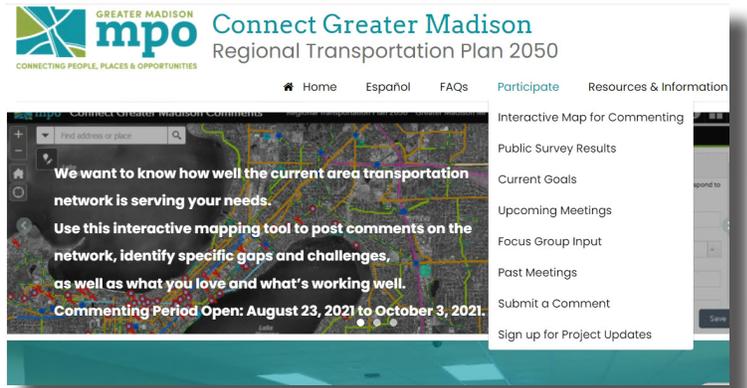
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Second Round of Public Meetings Held for RTP

The MPO recently completed the second round of public involvement meetings for the [Connect Greater Madison: Regional Transportation Plan 2050](#) planning process on November 11 and 16. The presentation, followed by Q&A, detailed the MPO's public engagement activities and findings; summarized planning efforts for each transportation mode; provided an overview of initial travel forecast modeling results; and reviewed the next steps in the planning process.

Public input on the plan has been gathered through a series of focus groups, an online survey, and an interactive online map. The purpose of the focus groups was to collect feedback from area residents less likely to respond to the online survey or offer comments in a public meeting. The top themes expressed by participants involved transportation access, convenience, costs, and barriers. Public survey participants identified maintaining and improving existing infrastructure, expanding and improving public transit, and reducing the impact of climate change as the most important issues. Over 1,300 comments regarding bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and roadway transportation were received via the interactive map commenting tool.



Public participation opportunities on the Connect Greater Madison 2050 website.

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Greater Madison MPO

Highlights: Planning Work Informing the RTP

The Madison Metro Transit System is currently undergoing its most significant update in decades, with the new bus rapid transit (BRT) line planned to begin service in 2024 and a network redesign project currently underway. The goal of the redesign is to integrate the local bus system with the new BRT service, and to make the service more effective. The MPO has developed a future planned transit network building off of the initial BRT service and preferred network redesign concept (see next article).

The MPO has also identified a draft future planned bicycle network through a review of local plans and conversations with planning staff in Madison-

area communities. Planned improvements to the regional bike network are expected to improve connectivity and reduce the level of traffic stress (LTS) faced by bicyclists on key routes. The MPO also maintains data on the Dane County pedestrian network (sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.), and will be identifying high priority locations for new sidewalks on major roads. Further refinements to the bicycle and pedestrian network plans are ongoing.

MPO staff are still developing recommendations related to current and future regional roadway needs. Recommendations will be driven largely by pavement conditions; roadway safety analysis; current congestion and travel time reliability issues; and travel forecast modeling. The MPO's regional travel model forecasts future traffic on regional roadways based on planned growth and improvements to the transportation system, including planned future transit and bicycle networks, new roadways, and planned or potential roadway capacity expansions. This allows evaluation of the impact of potential future transportation system improvements on travel patterns and the performance of the system.

Preliminary results for a scenario that assumes transit and bicycle improvements, new collector streets, and road capacity changes programmed with committed funding in the next five years indicate that by 2050, countywide weekday vehicle miles traveled (VMT) would increase from 14.5 to 20 million, while the number of weekday public transit trips would climb by 68% to over 91,000.

Next Steps in Public Engagement

Draft planned facility maps and other recommendations and materials will be posted to the [RTP website](#) in early 2022. The draft roadway, transit, and bicycle plan maps will allow for comment through an online mapping tool. A final series of public meetings is planned for March, and the MPO Board is expected to approve the final RTP in May. Materials from the most recent meetings can be accessed here: [View Recording and Presentation Slides](#).

Metro Transit Network Redesign Study Update

Metro's [Transit Network Redesign](#) project seeks to re-imagine Metro's service to complement and work with Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) seamlessly and efficiently. BRT routes are anticipated to begin operation in August, 2023, with east-west corridor infrastructure improvements completed and full operations commencing in August, 2024. If operated in conjunction with existing Metro service, many routes would become redundant and not be an efficient use of resources. The Transit Network Redesign builds off the selected BRT routes to provide connections throughout the service area, both feeding into BRT and providing local service far from BRT.

The Network Redesign reached an important milestone in October, when the City of Madison Transportation Policy and Planning Board (TPPB) directed staff to design a transit network that will focus frequent service on a limited number of routes serving areas with high densities of jobs and residents, with some basic service levels also provided to lower-density areas with transit-dependent populations. This decision builds on the data and feedback collected as part of the [Alternatives Report](#) and related public engagement activities. The TPPB directed staff to use the [Ridership Concept](#) as the base for the recommended network, but recognized that adding service to new areas will require shifting service away (cont'd, p. 3)

Sun Prairie Local Bus Service

The City of Sun Prairie is working to design and implement local bus service in 2023, when the East-West BRT line will offer service between the Sun Prairie Park & Ride and the rest of the Metro system – including a one-seat ride to West Towne Mall and beyond the Beltline!

At that point, the existing morning- and afternoon-only commuter service (Route #23) will be retired, but transit service through Sun Prairie and connecting to BRT will still be needed.

At the request of Sun Prairie staff and elected officials, MPO staff are providing support for this transition, including use of our Streetlight Data subscription to analyze travel patterns within Sun Prairie, and providing independent third-party review of proposed service agreements.

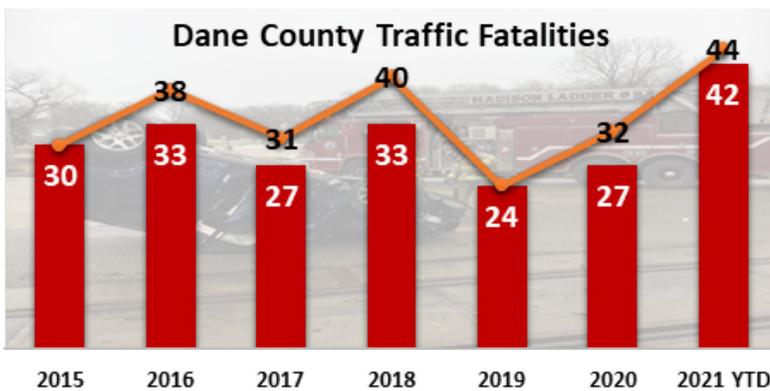
from other corridors and routes shown in that concept network. The project team – which includes representatives from multiple City of Madison departments, UW-Madison, the MPO, and project consultants Jarrett Walker + Associates and Urban Assets – is finalizing the recommended service network and analyzing its effect on job accessibility and travel times, among other metrics. Look for the Draft Network Plan release in January 2022. Implementation of the new transit network will begin in August 2023, when BRT routes begin operation.

Deadliest Year on Dane County Roadways in Over a Decade

Improving safety for all roadway users is a top priority of the MPO. Since 2015, 239 people have lost their lives on Dane County roadways, with 2021 being the deadliest year in over a decade, particularly for vulnerable roadway users including bicyclists and pedestrians.

The MPO is an active partner of the Dane County Traffic Safety Commission (TSC), which is a collaboration of multidisciplinary stakeholders, including

representatives from law enforcement, planning, engineering, public health and education, dedicated to reducing fatal and serious injuries on Dane County roadways. The TSC held its annual meeting in September to review the previous year's crash data, resulting in the formation of four workgroups to develop data-driven safety action plans focusing on reducing dangerous driving behaviors, reducing impaired driving, improving safety for vulnerable roadway users, and addressing racial disparities in traffic safety.



The MPO has been working with the UW Traffic Operations and Safety (TOPS) Lab to complete an update to the Intersection Safety Screening Analysis study that was first performed for the MPO in early 2019. This second phase will include a tool for local communities to help prioritize safety improvements for their roadways. The MPO will be in touch with local agency staff in early 2022 to share the results of the Intersection Safety Screening and discuss next steps the communities may take.

Throughout the MPO planning area, improving traffic safety has been in the spotlight for many communities. Both the City of Madison and City of Sun Prairie have adopted the Vision Zero approach to traffic safety, with the goal of eliminating traffic fatalities on their roadways. The City of Madison used a data-driven process to develop a High Injury Network to identify critical locations to improve traffic safety. According to City Traffic Engineer Yang Tao, 2/3rds of Madison's traffic fatalities, and 3/4th of serious injury crashes, occur on just 10% of the roadway network. Recognizing that reducing vehicle speed is a key strategy for improving safety outcomes, Madison reduced the speed limits across many of the roadways identified as being part of the High Injury Network.

To learn more about Vision Zero initiatives, visit [Madison's Vision Zero website](#) or [Sun Prairie's Vision Zero website](#).

Greater Madison Telework Survey Results

A summary report and full results of the [Greater Madison Telework Survey 2021](#) are now available on the MPO website. The summary includes an overview of survey results; comparisons to 2020 survey data; and an equity analysis of key questions based on respondent demographics including age, race, gender, disability status, and parent/caregiver status. The report also summarizes responses to new questions this year exploring the impact of telework on individuals' transportation behaviors.

This year's survey was conducted online from July 20–August 16 in partnership with Sustain Dane and the Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change (OECC). The survey received 1,179 responses from executives, managers, and non-managers in Dane County. Sixty-one percent were from the public sector and 39% from a variety of other industries and occupations.

Results build upon findings from the first [Madison Region Remote Work Survey \(June 2020\)](#) and indicate that part-time telework will continue to be a regular part of local workplace structures for the foreseeable future as business returns to “normal.” Responses provide insights for area employers and policymakers making decisions about future workplace policies, transportation, and land use planning in Dane County.

Prior to the pandemic, 68% of respondents primarily drove alone to work, while another 12% rode the bus and 6% each bicycled and carpooled/vanpooled. The largest percentage of respondents (46%) commuted between 15–30 minutes, and 35% commuted over 31–minutes.

Looking ahead, nearly three-quarters of executives and managers reported expecting that more employees will work from home on a weekly basis post-pandemic. Among all respondents, over half expect to telework between 1–4 days per week, and another 9% expect to telework full-time.

When asked about transportation- and sustainability-related impacts, over half of executives and managers said they view telework as a “sustainability strategy,” that includes reducing drive-alone commutes, greenhouse gas emissions, and office energy use.

Among all respondents, over two-thirds said that having a lower carbon footprint due to less driving is a benefit of teleworking. Forty-seven percent said that the amount they plan to telework in the future will help them reduce their weekly driving by 1–9 trips, and 31% said it will help them reduce their weekly driving by 10+ trips.

This potential for telework to not only reduce peak-hour congestion in Dane County, but to also enable teleworkers to reduce their total vehicle miles traveled (VMT), is something that the MPO will continue to advance with partners as part of the RoundTrip travel demand management (TDM) program (see TeleWORKS Toolkit in sidebar).

In the near term, these survey results will inform an ongoing scoping study led by Sustain Dane and funded by the Dane County OECC, which will identify recommendations for institutionalizing long-term support for telework as a driving reduction strategy, in service to the Dane County Climate Action Plan goal of reducing total VMT in the county by 15% by 2050.

Telework Survey Goals

Understand trends and attitudes related to telework in Dane County caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;

Understand benefits and challenges experienced by individuals and employers;

Explore potential long-term impacts on transportation habits relative to reducing vehicle miles traveled;

Understand employer expectations for telework post-pandemic;

Identify equity considerations, keys to success, and useful resources for employers and individuals; and,

Inform conversations with and among policymakers, employers, and individuals.

TeleWORKS Toolkit

Earlier this year, the MPO used findings from the 2020 Madison Region Remote Work Survey to develop a [TeleWORKS Toolkit](#) that includes data, tips, and profiles of employers in Dane County. It encourages employers and individuals to view telework in the context of transportation sustainability, as a way to reduce single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) use. The toolkit also highlights other ways that employers are supporting non-SOV transportation, including bicycling, public transit, walking, carpooling, and vanpooling.

Federal Infrastructure Bill is an Historic Investment in Transportation and Other Infrastructure

The recently approved Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA), which includes surface transportation programs reauthorization, will provide additional and new funding for transportation investments. It substantially increases funding for existing programs such as Planning, which provides the bulk of funding for the MPO budget, and the two highway programs for which the MPO receives a direct allocation: Surface Transportation Block Grant – Urban and Transportation Alternatives.

Funding increases statewide for roadway, bridge, safety, transit, and bicycle programs range from 27% to 60%. The bill also creates new competitive discretionary programs such as Safe Streets for All and a program to increase resilience of the transportation system.

MPO staff will review information on the bill as it becomes available to determine our new formula funding, and identify opportunities to apply for new grant funding and/or support applications by our state and local partners. It is an exciting opportunity to invest in our regional transportation system to improve lives, create living wage jobs, and support economic growth.

Reflections from Neil Janes, 2021 MPO Planning Intern

Neil Janes joined the MPO as a City of Madison AASPIRE (Affirmative Action Student Professionals in Residence) intern in June 2021. He applied to the position to put into practice what he has been learning as part of his master's degree in urban planning focusing on sustainable development and transportation systems. During his internship, he supported the outreach and communications efforts of the MPO by running social media campaigns, and writing and disseminating press releases. He analyzed public survey data and even had the chance to present to the MPO policy board! Neil learned more about how the regional transportation planning process works throughout his internship and is excited to build on these experiences to help foster equitable and sustainable transportation and land use systems in the future.



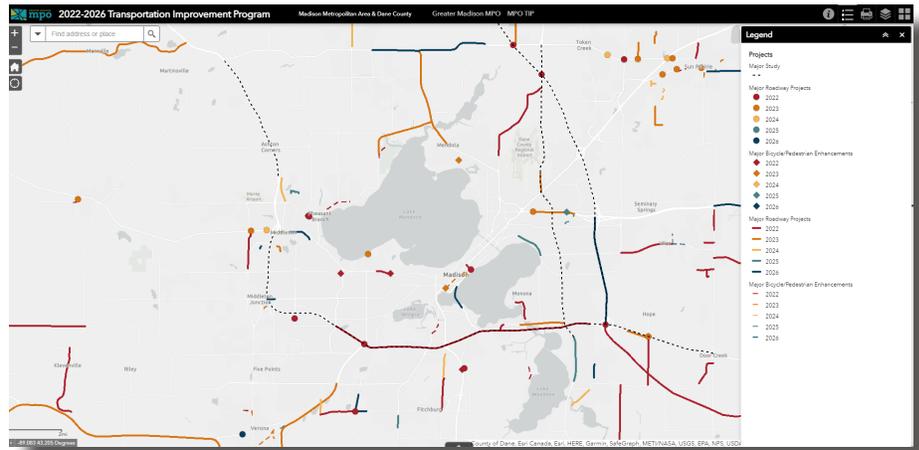
Neil is currently a master's candidate at UW-Madison pursuing a double-degree in Urban and Regional Planning, and International Public Affairs with a certificate in Business, Environment, and Social Responsibility. He volunteers with the Wisconsin Student Planning Association, as well as with the Federal Planning Division and the U.S. Green Building Council's emerging professionals group. He received his bachelor's degree in International Relations with a focus on European Affairs from the UW, and has worked for the University as a teaching assistant and policy research associate. He is grateful for his experience working with the MPO and looks forward to building on the skills and knowledge he gained there. In his spare time, you can usually find Neil cooking or baking a loaf of bread in the kitchen. As a transit-dependent person, he also enjoys hiking, biking and exploring the Madison area.

2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Approved

The MPO Policy Board approved the [2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#) for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County at their meeting on October 6, 2021. The TIP lists major transportation improvements and studies with approved or committed funding during the next five-year period. The Greater Madison MPO must approve all projects with federal funding and/or that are regionally significant, including those selected or programmed by implementing agencies such as WisDOT and Metro Transit. As part of the TIP process, the MPO ensures coordination of projects amongst implementing agencies and consistency of projects with the Regional Transportation Plan.

The MPO receives a direct allocation of funding under the Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) – Urban program and solicits applications and selects projects for funding under this program every two years. As part of approval of the 2022-2026 TIP, the Board approved the following STBG-Urban projects for the 2022-2027 program cycle: (cont'd, p. 6)

- Autumn Ridge Path/ Overpass (Milwaukee St. to Commercial Ave.) – Path with new overpass of STH 30. Construction is anticipated in 2025, but could be advanced to 2024 if funding is available.
- Atwood Avenue (S. Fair Oaks Ave. to Cottage Grove Rd.) – Reconstruction to a three-lane divided roadway with pedestrian crossing improvements, off-street path on both sides, and bike lanes south of Walter Street. Construction is anticipated in 2025-’26, but could be advanced to 2023-’24 if funding is available.
- John Nolen Drive (Lakeside St. to North Shore Dr.) – Reconstruction of the roadway and bridges, shoreline, and path. This project is only partially funded at this time, and the city will be pursuing Bridge and other federal funding to supplement the MPO funding. Construction is anticipated in 2026-’27.
- Mineral Point Road (Beltline Hwy. to S. High Point Rd.) – Pavement replacement and marking consistent with the planned Bus Rapid Transit project with a new off-street path on the north side. Construction is anticipated in 2026, but could be advanced if funding is available.



Interactive 2022-2026 TIP map of major projects, available at [this link](#).

The TIP document is on the MPO’s website at this link: [2022-2026 TIP](#). An interactive map of the major TIP projects is also on the website at this link: [ArcGIS Web Application](#).

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Applications Available

The Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program provides funding for active transportation construction projects and Safe Routes to School programs. Funding is available directly through the MPO for projects within the [Urban Area](#), and statewide funding administered by WisDOT is available for projects both within and outside of this area. The current application cycle will be for funding available in calendar years 2024-2026.

The eligible project categories under the TA program per federal law and MPO policy are:

- Provision of on- and off-street facilities for pedestrians and bicycles;
- Provision of infrastructure and systems that provide safe routes for non-drivers;
- Conversion and use of abandoned rail corridors for trails; and
- Safe routes to school program activities (non-infrastructure).

The WisDOT TA program application is available [here](#); projects in the Madison urban area need to submit the [Greater Madison MPO Supplemental Application for STBG TA Program Projects](#) as well (cont’d, p. 7)

as the WisDOT TA program application. Prior to completing the applications, interested parties should review the [Policies and Scoring Criteria for STBG Transportation Alternatives Set Aside Program Projects](#).

Recent projects funded through the TA Program include the Garver Path (Madison, under construction), Commercial Ave. Path (Sun Prairie, 2022), DeForest Schools Safe Routes Path (DeForest, 2022), West Main St. Bike Boulevard (Madison, 2022), West Towne Path Phase 3 (Madison, 2022), and the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin's Dane County Safe Routes to School Program (county-wide, ongoing).

For more information about the TA Program in the Greater Madison Urban Area, contact [Ben Lyman](#). For information regarding the TA program throughout Southwest Wisconsin, contact [Michael Erickson](#) or visit the [WisDOT TA Program web page](#).

2022 MPO Work Program Adopted

The MPO's 2022 Work Program was recently approved by the MPO Board and submitted for approval by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and U.S. DOT. The work program outlines major transportation planning issues; describes the work activities the MPO will undertake and be involved in; summarizes recent activities and accomplishments; and identifies the staff time and budget that will be spent on the different planning activities. The document is required as a condition of receiving federal transportation funding.

Major planning activities in 2022 include:

- Completing Connect Greater Madison, the Regional Transportation Plan 2050 Update, and beginning work on implementation of planning-related recommendations.
- Working with the UW-Madison Traffic Operations & Safety Lab to complete a project to identify and map a High Injury Network for the Madison Metro Area, and conducting follow up work to the Phase 2 Intersection Safety Screening Analysis that was just completed. Also, continuing to work with the Dane County Traffic Safety Commission to analyze and educate stakeholders and the public on safety trends.
- Providing support for completion of Madison Metro Transit's Bus Network Design Study and development of initial service revisions based on the study recommendations. Also resuming the update to the Transit Development Plan.
- Creating an online dashboard for transportation system performance measures data, with interactive maps, to replace the annual report PDF.
- Providing support for major WisDOT studies of Stoughton Road, the Beltline, and the Interstate.
- Providing support to local governments in implementing RTP recommendations and preparing grant applications.
- Continuing and expanding Travel Demand Management (TDM) program activities, and promoting the new program brand (RoundTrip).



GREATER MADISON
mpo
2022
UNIFIED PLANNING WORK
PROGRAM (UPWP)

The work program is available on the MPO's website at [this link](#).

CARPC Regional Development Framework Update: Explore the New Esri Hub Site

Explore the [Capital Area Regional Planning Commission's](#) draft 2050 Regional Development Framework through a new website. Developed using Esri Hub, the project site brings the draft Framework to life through narrative, images, and interactive maps. View the Framework's goals, objectives, strategies, indicators, and more at rdf-carpc.hub.arcgis.com.



Building on the extensive outreach conducted through the [A Greater Madison Vision](#) initiative, CARPC began developing the Regional Development Framework in 2019. The Framework is designed to be a guide for incorporating regional land use goals into local decisions. Integrating public priorities, local input, and regional data, the Framework will provide a foundation to support continuing growth, tackle common challenges, and protect key resources.

To date, CARPC has solidified the Framework's goals and objectives, calculated growth projections, and developed a preferred 2050 growth scenario. The draft Framework identifies strategies to achieve desired development patterns and practices and outlines implementation actions that stakeholders can take to make them happen. Throughout the planning process, CARPC consulted with local officials, regional partners, and other stakeholders to ensure each component accurately captures current conditions and future aspirations.



CARPC staff are currently working to finalize the draft Framework and put together a summary report. Following Commission adoption, staff will work with communities and partner organizations to implement the Framework in 2022 and beyond. CARPC will also collect, analyze, and share data on each of the Framework's performance indicators to track our progress toward regional goals.

For more information, visit the [Framework site](#) or contact Steve Steinhoff at steves@capitalarearpc.org.