

**Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization  
(MPO) December 6, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

[Virtual Meeting hosted via Zoom](#)

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Opitz called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

**1. Roll Call and Introductions**

**Members present:** Richelle Andrae, Liz Callin, Phil Caravello, John Duncan, Pam Dunphy, Paul Esser (arrived during item #8), Steve Flottmeyer, Barbara Harrington-McKinney (arrived at item #7), Tom Lynch, Charles Myadze, Mark Opitz, Kristi Williams, Doug Wood

**Members excused:** Derek Field

**MPO staff present:** Alex Andros, Colleen Hoesly, Bill Holloway, Ben Lyman

**Others present in an official capacity:** Colleen Harris (WisDOT), Jennifer Kobryn (WisDOT), David Schmidt (WisDOT), Jerry Shadewald (HNTB)

**2. Approval of November 1, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Williams moved, Wood seconded, to approve the November 1, 2023 meeting minutes with the following revisions:

- Wood called the meeting to order.
- Time of adjournment was 7:37 p.m.

Motion carried.

**3. Communications**

- None.

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

None.

**5. Approval of Award of Supplemental ARPA and CRRSAA Section 5310 Funding**

Williams moved, Wood seconded, to approve the award of Supplemental ARPA and CRRSSAA Section 5310 Funding.

**6. MPO 2023 Resolution No. 16 Approving Amendment No. 1 to the 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County**

Lyman explained that this is the TIP amendment needed to award the supplemental ARPA and CRRSSAA Section 5310 funding approved in item #5.

Duncan moved, Myadze seconded, to approve MPO 2023 Resolution No. 16 approving Amendment No. 1 to the 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program for the Madison Metropolitan Area and Dane County.

## **7. Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) I-39/90 Corridor Study Update**

Kobryn presented an update on the status of WisDOT's I-39/90 Corridor Study. She noted that WisDOT is currently studying the project and working on the environmental impact statement but does not have funding for construction yet. The project is 67 miles in length, running from the Beltline (US 12/18) Interchange in Madison to Wisconsin Dells. WisDOT is currently examining alternatives for the project and considering traffic demand, safety, pavement and bridge condition, corridor resiliency, and other factors.

Kobryn discussed the potential for additional general purpose lanes throughout the corridor and the possibility of flex lanes, instead of additional general purpose lanes, between the Beltline Interchange and Wis 19. She noted that by 2050, flex lanes in this corridor would need to be open between 43 and 100 hours per week. She also said that the flex lane alternative would be anticipated to result in additional traffic diversion and crashes relative to the general purpose lane alternative. She added that flex lanes would have a lower initial cost than general purpose lanes but that the higher operations and maintenance costs for flex lanes would, after about 10 years, make general purpose lanes the lower cost option.

Lynch thanked Kobryn for maintaining flex lanes as an alternative in the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) and suggested that the study needs to find a way to account for induced demand, which cannot be predicted using the MPO travel model, and resulting greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Shadewald said that their team's analysis has indicated that the traffic volumes and GHG emissions would be virtually identical with flex or general purpose lanes, since flex lanes would be open whenever they are needed. He said the team would look further into other ways to estimate induced demand.

Kobryn then discussed the potential design changes to existing interchanges in Dane County, and potential new interchanges in the City of Madison at Hoepker Road and Milwaukee Street.

Lynch asked about the construction of multimodal crossings, including tunnels under the highway, would be endorsed in the EIS. Kobryn said that WisDOT's goal is to include multimodal accommodations but that it would have to abide by state law, which limits WisDOT's ability to take land for new bike and pedestrian facilities using eminent domain.

Wood asked Kobryn whether she was confident that a new Milwaukee Street interchange would not negatively impact the functioning of the Badger Interchange (Wis-30, I-39/90, I-94). Kobryn said that WisDOT's analysis of similarly spaced interchange-system interchange pairs shows that the rate of merging crashes at these types of locations is equivalent to the rate of merging crashes prior to the construction of the second interchange of the pair. Shadewald added that the proposed design of the Milwaukee Street Interchange was adjusted to maximize the distance between westbound on-ramps and the Badger Interchange.

## **8. Electric Vehicle (EV) Plan Presentation and Approval to Release**

Holloway gave a brief presentation on the purpose and scope of the plan and detailed Dane County's top charging needs, priority locations for charging infrastructure, and recommendations for local governments and the state that are included in the plan.

Opitz asked that a copy of the presentation be sent out to the MPO Board.

Andrae asked about the issue of changing state law to allow entities other than public utilities to sell energy by the kWh, and where other states are with respect to that issue. Holloway replied that Wisconsin is one of only a few states that have a law like this and that he is unaware of how the process is unfolding in states other than Wisconsin.

Myadze asked, with regard to the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant submitted in June 2023, whether the funds, if received, would go towards expanding the charging network or reducing charging fees for low-income people. Holloway replied that the primary purpose of the grant funding would be to provide funding for level 2 chargers located in residential areas where people currently lack the ability to charge their vehicles at home—this would both increase residential accessibility to charging infrastructure and offer much lower charging costs than if EV owners in those areas were to charge their vehicles using level 3 fast chargers elsewhere.

Esser moved, Williams seconded, to approve the release of the draft Dane County Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Plan for public comment. Motion carried.

## **9. Regional Safety Plan Goal Setting Discussion and Planned Next Steps**

Hoesly presented on the development of the Regional Safety Plan. She noted that the Plan must include a goal and timeline for eliminating roadway fatalities and serious injuries by setting a target date for achieving zero roadway fatalities and/or an ambitious percentage reduction in roadway fatalities and serious injuries by a specific date, with the goal of eliminating all roadway fatalities and serious injuries. The reduction and elimination of roadway injuries and fatalities goes hand in hand with increasing active transportation modes and creating healthier communities.

Hoesly stated that the goal for this agenda item was to reach consensus among Board members on a Vision Zero goal so that it can be included in the draft plan. It will become official once the plan is adopted.

She noted that the City of Madison has already adopted a Vision Zero Plan that set a goal of eliminating all traffic deaths and serious injuries. The MPO currently supports the goals identified in the Wisconsin Strategic Highway Safety Plan (2023-2027). She then provided an overview of the safety goals that have been adopted by MPOs elsewhere in the U.S. and traffic safety statistics in Dane County and across the U.S.

Hoesly then provided an overview of goal setting considerations.

Lynch asked whether you can be a part of Vision Zero if your goal is not zero. Hoesly replied that she thought the Vision Zero Network would require a goal of eliminating traffic deaths and injuries but that the Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program is somewhat less rigid, requiring a goal of an ambitious reduction with an eventual goal of reaching zero.

Lynch commented that “Vision Ten” and “Vision Twenty” don’t sound right and that they imply an acceptance of these deaths. While “Vision Zero” may sound overly aspirational, if we don’t say “Vision Zero,” it means we accept a certain number of deaths.

Wood asked if the MPO would set interim benchmark goals as it worked towards the ultimate goal of zero. Hoesly said that the MPO would be required to report on its progress towards zero and to identify the incremental steps being taken to reach that goal. Wood said he saw a risk in setting a goal that is so

aspirational that it strains credibility. He said that there has not been much improvement in traffic safety over the last ten years and, with the Madison area expected to grow by almost 200,000 people by 2050 and by probably 100,000 by 2040, he wondered how achievable a goal of zero is by 2040, when much of the infrastructure will be unchanged from what it is today. He asked how a Vision Zero goal would affect the work of the MPO Board. Hoesly said that the MPO could direct more of the funding it controls to safety-focused projects but that another big part of setting a Vision Zero goal is being able to set an example for communities in the area and working with local governments to implement Vision Zero plans at a local level.

Duncan asked if there are other communities in the MPO area besides Madison that have set Vision Zero goals. Hoesly replied that Sun Prairie is working on a Vision Zero initiative, for which they received funding from the MPO, and that Fitchburg is also looking into a Vision Zero plan. Beyond those, Hoesly noted that the MPO has met with staff from many communities in the area during work on the MPO's high injury network maps, and that planning and engineering staff have remarked that the maps will make it easier for them to make the case for adopting a safety initiative to their communities' policymakers.

Duncan asked whether there is a possibility of setting a goal of eliminating all traffic deaths and injuries by 2035. He noted that Madison has set a goal of 2030 to eliminate traffic deaths and fatalities. He also suggested that, if the MPO wanted to set a goal based on a percent reduction, it should be 75% rather than 50% by 2035. Hoesly said that the City of Madison's goal is for the year 2035, rather than 2030. Duncan said he thought it would be good for the MPO to match Madison's 2035 goal.

Hoesly said that, because Madison has set their Vision Zero goal at 2035 and makes up the lion's share of fatalities and serious injuries in the Madison area, if the City can achieve that goal, the MPO will be that much closer to meeting a similar goal of its own.

Callin said she thought it would make sense to set an overall goal, and that the next step would be breaking that down and figuring out what to do to achieve that goal.

Myadze said it seemed like putting the cart before the horse to set the goal before you know how you can achieve it. He said he would like to hear more about the strategies for achieving the goals.

Hoesly said she thought that it would be appropriate for the Board to go either way—to start with the goal and figure out the strategies needed to achieve it or to look at the strategies available and then set the goal.

Esser noted that since the City of Madison, representing half of the County's population and more than half of the County's traffic injuries and fatalities, has set 2035 as their Vision Zero goal, it would make sense for the Board to follow suit. He drew a comparison to the effort to send a man to the moon—at the time those who set the goal did not know how it would be achieved but they set the goal and then worked to figure out ways to achieve it.

Lynch said that U.S. traffic fatalities have climbed 70% since 2010 and that the U.S. now has three to four times the traffic fatalities of our peer countries elsewhere in the world. He noted that these other countries are no smarter than the U.S. but they have a different culture and that we need to change our culture to start figuring out how to reduce these crashes. He noted that 47,000 people died in crashes last year and that the public would be appalled if that number of people had died in a drug trial or military action, but that we have just been conditioned to accept that level of traffic deaths as the cost

of doing business. These other countries have figured it out, why can't we?

Andrae said that she would support either the elimination of traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2040 or a 50% reduction by 2035. She noted that the benefit of more ambitious goals is that they necessitate harder conversations about tradeoffs. She also said she thought an ambitious goal of zero would resonate more with the public than a smaller reduction that would require more explaining.

Myadze said that he would be in favor of setting a goal of a 50% reduction by 2035.

Opitz suggested the goal could also be something like a 50% reduction by 2030.

Wood said that he had been persuaded to "shoot for the moon" and support a goal of zero rather than a 50% or 75% reduction.

Duncan said he would support zero by 2040.

Caravello said he supported setting a goal of zero deaths and injuries.

Opitz and Williams both said that they supported setting a goal of zero as well. Opitz noted that the goal of zero deaths and serious injuries by 2040 appeared to be the consensus of the Board.

Hoesly then reviewed the Regional Safety Plan and Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant application schedule. She said that MPO staff recommended not applying for round three of the SS4A grants but continuing to work with the consultant to get background information to build consensus with local communities and be ready to submit for round 4 in 2025.

Duncan said he agreed with staff that focusing on getting the plan in the best possible shape over the coming year and working with area communities to build consensus before applying for a round 4 grant in 2025 was the best approach.

## **10. Status Report on Capital Area RPC Activities**

No discussion on Capital Area RPC Activities.

## **11. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings**

Opitz asked Callen to introduce herself to the Board since some members were absent at the last meeting. Callen introduced herself as a planner with the City of Madison, working primarily on BRT and the passenger rail study, and as a City of Madison appointee to the MPO Board.

Andros told the Board that the MPO had recently hired Kayla Haas as a marketing and communications specialist. Haas introduced herself and explained that she will be splitting her time, 75% MPO/25% CARPC.

Andros and Hoesly explained that the MPO had recently submitted a preliminary draft MPO boundary to WisDOT and received comments back. MPO staff will be meeting with communities to ensure that the boundary is acceptable to them. The boundary will come before the Board at their February meeting.

Wood announced that Monona's Transit Committee has recommended that Monona join Madison Metro, and the City Council appears ready to support that.

Next MPO Board Meetings:

- Wednesday, January 3rd, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. (Remote meeting via Zoom)

## **12. Adjournment**

Esser moved, Williams seconded, to adjourn. The motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.