

**Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
February 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

[Virtual Meeting hosted via Zoom](#)

Opitz called the meeting to order at 6:17 PM.

1. Roll Call and Introductions

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

Members excused: none

MPO staff present: Alex Andros, Colleen Hoesly, Bill Holloway, David Kanning

Others present in an official capacity: none

2. Approval of December 6, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Williams moved, Andrae seconded, to approve the December 6, 2023 meeting minutes. Motion carried with Field abstaining.

3. Communications

- Letter to elected officials regarding transit-related surveys
- WisDOT approval of 2023 RES 16 Amendment to the 2024-2028 TIP

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

None.

5. Review and potential approval of *Dane County Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Plan*

Andros stated that staff has received additional comments on the plan since the December Policy Board meeting. Proposed additions and changes to the draft plan are reflected in the Change Sheet in the board packet and are based on comments received from Dane County communities and members of the plan steering team, as well as ongoing research by MPO staff. The MPO Technical Coordinating Committee recommended approval of the plan at their January meeting. Staff recommends that the Policy Board approve the *Dane County Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure Plan* for adoption with the recommended additions and changes detailed in the Change Sheet.

Holloway reviewed some of the more significant changes reflected in the change sheet. McFarland is recommended to be added to the Priority Charging Locations map due to the recent removal of a nearby level 3 charging station. References to state legislation enabling charging fees based on energy use are revised, as the legislation is expected to be signed into law soon. A vehicle weight table is added to show a comparison of the weight of EVs to similar ICE vehicles. Details of WPPI Energy's programs and policies are added. A link and maps related to the new U.S. Department of Energy 30C Tax Credit Eligibility Locator are added. Details about policies in other cities that allow EV owners to charge in public on-street parking spaces via an extension cord across the sidewalk are added. A section explaining Right-to-Charge laws is added.

Andrae asked if, regarding local ordinances that allow extension cords across the sidewalk for EV charging, whether we know if all municipalities in Dane County need to change their ordinances, or if some have supportive policies already in place already. Holloway stated that the need for this type of policy depends on the local housing stock, and whether people have off-street parking spaces they can use to charge. It could also be a stop gap in cases where a community is working to add additional EV charging locations. Andrae asked whether the plan is stating that communities should adopt requirements for providing EV charging in new development. Holloway stated that the plans recommends that communities consider this. He noted that the “right to charge” laws apply to existing housing stock, by giving residents subject to oversight by homeowners’ associations the right to install charging infrastructure for their individual use.

Myadze moved, Field seconded, to approve the *Dane County Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Plan*. Motion carried.

6. Presentation and possible approval of Greater Madison MPO 2024 Res. #1 MPO 2020 Urban Area Boundary

Hoesly shared a presentation on the background of the process and noted that staff is recommending board approval at this meeting. This process typically occurs every ten years after the decennial Census. The U.S. Census Bureau defines the Urban Area Boundary, and MPOs can then develop an Adjusted Urban Area Boundary (UAB) that adds areas to more accurately reflect local conditions. The Adjusted UAB defines where Surface Transportation Block Grant-Urban (STBG-U) funding can be awarded. After the Adjusted UAB is adopted, the MPO will define its Planning Area Boundary (PAB), which is a larger area with a 20-year planning horizon. The PAB is the area analyzed in the Regional Transportation Plan. During the process to create the Adjusted UAB, staff met with the majority of affected communities and received helpful feedback that was incorporated into the proposed draft. Staff worked to maximize federal funding eligibilities for local jurisdictions where possible when defining the Adjusted UAB. The City of Stoughton and Village of Cross Plains are the two largest areas no longer included in the UAB, however, they will continue to be part of the PAB.

Wood asked whether the MPO could extend the Adjusted UAB to include the Village of Cross Plains. Hoesly said yes, but give the level of interaction that staff has had with the village in the past, and the desire to maximize both urban and rural funding opportunities, it makes sense to remove it; however, the village does desire to stay within the PAB, so it will continue to be considered for planning purposes. Wood expressed a general curiosity in the flexibility of the boundary and asked whether it could be extended to the City of Stoughton. Hoesly stated that Stoughton cannot be included because it became its own defined Urban Area after the last census. Wood asked what the consequences are of being within the UAB versus the PAB. Hoesly stated that STBG-U funding can only be spent within the UAB per current policy of the MPO; rural program funding may not be spent within the UAB. She noted that the MPO could revise its policy to allow the spending of STBG-U funding *beyond* the UAB, but rural funding may never be spent *within* the UAB. Caravello asked about thoughts on Mount Horeb. Hoesly stated that staff has been discussing that and it will be included in the next agenda item. She noted that the UAB cannot contain multiple urban areas, but the PAB can.

Williams moved, Wood seconded, to approve Greater Madison MPO 2024 Resolution No. 1, Approving the 2020 Urban Area Boundary for the Madison Urban Area of Dane County, Wisconsin, as amended per email to the policy board on 2/15/24. Motion carried.

7. Discussion on Planning Area Boundary

Hoesly stated that some MPOs adopt their Urban Area Boundary (UAB) and Planning Area Boundary (PAB) at the same time, but staff decided to focus on the adjusted UAB first in this case due to the complexity of the funding implications related to the UAB and desire to make both discussions easier. She noted that the PAB has a 20-year planning horizon; that it must encompass the adopted Adjusted UAB; and that it can include other census-defined urban areas. Andros noted that the PAB is the area within which the Federal metropolitan transportation planning and programming requirements apply, and that federally funded or regionally significant transportation projects within the PAB must be included in the MPO's regional transportation plan (RTP) and Transportation Improvement Program. The MPO's next RTP will focus on the land within the PAB, so staff is looking to the board for comments and direction regarding areas that should or should not be included.

Hoesly noted that during the last update to the PAB, the Board directed staff to initiate discussions with the Village of Oregon about adding them, after which they were added. Mount Horeb is the only remaining census-defined urban area in Dane County that is not part of the PAB, and it shares similar commuting characteristics to Oregon and Stoughton. Staff has not spoken with Mount Horeb yet and is looking for Board feedback on whether Mount Horeb should be approached about possibly being added to the PAB.

Opitz said that he thinks it is important to talk with Mount Horeb about the advantages of being added. Commuting patterns make it clear that Mount Horeb is part of the larger connected region. Field stated that he also supports approaching Mount Horeb. It is growing rapidly and commuting will only increase. Wood agreed that Mount Horeb should be included. Caravello also agreed.

Opitz asked how Oregon has felt about being included in the PAB since they were added. Andros stated that despite initial resistance they now seem to appreciate it, and noted that staff recently provided transit planning assistance to the Oregon per their request that led to a successful grant application for additional consultant assistance.

Opitz stated that given board feedback, staff should reach out to Mount Horeb about the potential to be added to the Planning Area Boundary.

8. Recommendation on MPO Comments on the I-39/90/94 Study

Hoesly stated that staff is looking for Board feedback and guidance. The MPO is a "participating agency" on the I-39/90/94 Interstate Study per WisDOT invitation. Participating agencies have added opportunities for comment on the project. WisDOT held a coordination meeting for participating agencies on 1/31/2024 as part of the NEPA process. At this meeting, the study team reviewed the coordination plan outlining all participation opportunities over the course of the study, and requested concurrence from participating agencies on "Concurrence Point #1," the project purpose and need and range of alternatives, which the study team presented on to the MPO Policy Board at two meetings in 2023. This concurrence point is primarily aimed at federal agencies with more formal sign-off roles, but the MPO could submit comments. Comments would be due by February 14. Given that the Board did not express strong critiques on these two items when they were presented in 2023, staff believes the more beneficial opportunity for the MPO to comment will be on "Concurrence Point #2," which is the identification of the preferred alternative for the main line and interchanges that will move forward. WisDOT is on a very condensed timeline, so it will be important for the MPO to keep track of comment windows. Comments on Concurrent Point #2 are due May 1, so staff proposes bringing draft comments

to the March or April Board meeting. In the past, the MPO has not consistently provided comments on major studies like this, so staff would like board feedback on standardizing a process for when and how the MPO will comment on studies like this moving forward, including whether comments should be submitted by staff or brought to the Board for review.

Opitz stated that the MPO has knowledgeable and professional staff that the Board trusts to facilitate input on projects, and that the best time to involve the Board would be for policy guidance on preferred alternatives. Esser agreed with Opitz in support of staff's judgement, and added that he agrees that the Board does not need to submit comments on Concurrence Point #1, but should weigh in on Concurrence Point #2. Lynch stated that the approach to large projects like this by WisDOT southwest region staff recently has felt very collaborative and the City of Madison is very appreciative of this. He noted that the proposed alternatives flow from the project purpose and need, so based on the wording of the purpose and need, he wants to note that there is not a main line alternative that does not involve increasing capacity. Instead, WisDOT is bringing forward a managed lane alternative, similar to the Beltline flex lane, as well as a full capacity expansion. Multimodal connections are not included in the alternatives, but WisDOT has been active in asking the city for its priorities, more as a mitigation measure rather than part of the main alternative. The Board can concur, not concur, remain silent, or offer comments. Because the turnaround for comments on Concurrence Point #1 is so quick, the city will not have time to review draft comments with committees and is still figuring out how to approach this. Lynch added that he wants to emphasize that there is not an alternative that involves no capacity expansion, and also wants to emphasize that the WisDOT project team has been very collaborative and he appreciates the tone they have taken with the communities this project will affect.

Lynch moved, Wood seconded, to allow staff to submit comments as staff sees fit, without stating concurrence or non-concurrence. Wood asked for clarification as to whether this motion applies only to Concurrence Point #1, so that staff may still bring draft comments to the board before the May 1 deadline for Concurrence Point #2. Hoesly stated that the WisDOT project team is anticipating the comment period for Concurrent Point #2 to be open April 1-May 1, and there is a board meeting scheduled for May 1, so the board would have time to provide comment on the preferred alternative before that deadline if desired. She added that depending on how much information is available on the preferred alternative, there could potentially be an initial discussion at the March board meeting, and certainly a discussion at the April board meeting. Andros added that she would like the MPO to be consistent in its approach to commenting on major projects moving forward. Lynch noted that this is the first of four major WisDOT studies coming up and agreed that the MPO should have an accepted protocol moving forward. Opitz added his perspective that the board is a high-level policy body that provides direction and can rely on staff to make professional judgements in situations like this without having to run everything by the board. Motion carried.

9. Presentation and discussion of potential spending on "E-TIP" [on-line Transportation Improvement Program] software

Andros explained that staff has been exploring the possibility of spending money on an e-TIP pilot project that would streamline the TIP compilation process, and wanted to share the idea and potential cost with the board for discussion purposes only. Andros then reviewed the potential benefits highlighted in the board packet. She emphasized that compiling the TIP is a time-consuming process, and that an e-TIP would increase staff efficiency as well as transparency for the public project sponsors. Staff has spoken with other MPOs who use e-TIP platforms, including others who use the EcoInteractive platform under consideration. EcoInteractive was recently hired by Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), and the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

(ECWRPC) is considering it as well. Hoesly added that the FHWA has said the subscription cost cannot be paid for with MPO “PL” or Planning funding; it could be considered a “pilot” project paid for with PL funding for the first three years, but after that the MPO would need to pay for it with local funding.

Esser noted that the 2024 MPO budget was fully committed when the board approved it last year and asked what is not being done if the MPO commits \$30,000 for this project in 2024. Andros stated that the approved budget includes funding for a pilot project, but at the time, staff did not know the specific cost of the platform. If approved, the UPWP would need to be amended to include the specific project and dollar amount. Hoesly added that there was quite a bit of carryover funding from last year, so there is flexibility in the budget, given that this pilot portion can be covered by Planning funding; however, if approved, the bigger consideration moving forward would be finding the local match to cover the cost after the initial three years. One possibility is that if all the large MPOs in the state move to this platform, it appears likely that WisDOT could decide to make it a statewide contract to standardize the process, which would then not need to be covered by local dollars. Andros added that covering the long-term cost is an important consideration, but she believes it is worth getting something started now, given how the funding landscape may change with the participation of other large MPOs and WisDOT. Wood asked how the MPO pays for its Streetlight subscription. Andros said it is paid for with PL funding, due to the way the FHWA defines “maintenance,” which is an eligible expense under PL funding; big data is constantly updated. Hoesly added that big data, such as that provided by Streetlight, is considered a necessary product that informs the MPO’s plans, so it is considered eligible for PL funding, whereas e-TIP software is considered an administrative tool. Wood stated that it sounds like a great idea, but staff is smart to be wary of future ongoing maintenance costs.

10. Update and Discussion of Local Programs (STBG-U, TAP and CRP)

Andros stated that the major issue right now is that the MPO has a shortfall in its STBG-U funding due to awarding nearly \$4 million more in STBG-U funds than were available for the 2025-2029 allocation cycle. This was due to miscommunications with WisDOT surrounding new state processes. Staff has developed two scenarios to address this, outlined in the board packet, and is thankful for the flexibility of the City of Madison in considering opportunities to phase the John Nolen Drive reconstruction. Staff learned from WisDOT today that the MPO has \$1 million more than anticipated available, due to a project within the city of Stoughton being moved to another funding program based on the changing Urban Area Boundary discussed under agenda item 6. Staff wanted to make the board aware of these changes.

Andros stated that the state Joint Finance Committee just approved the federal expenditure plan for SFY 2024, so projects selected for Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funding can now be programmed, and the MPO will need to amend its TIP to add those projects.

Lynch stated that he recently learned there is excess funding available in different pots, so there may be an opportunity to change the TIP to address the shortfall. He added that because of this, he would ask that the board be open to flexibility in the coming months, to shift projects to take advantage of other sources of funding that may be available. Hoesly added that there have been a lot of changes recently to the funding pots that are available and the traditional role of the MPO in programming STBG projects. Prior to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), there was less STBG funding at the state level and the MPO would select projects and send them on to WisDOT region staff to program; now, due to the large increase in funding and WisDOT having less ability to use state flex funding to accommodate project sponsors’ preferred timing within a four-year funding cycle, this is the first year that the large MPOs have had to work with WisDOT region staff to make sure that projects are programmed so that funding is used only within the year it is available.

11. Staff Reports and Announcements

- Update on new greenhouse gas performance measures: Hoesly stated that a new performance measure for greenhouse gas emissions has been added to the list of performance measures that MPOs nationwide must report on annually. Initially, state DOTs were supposed to set an emissions baseline for the national highway system and a declining emissions target by February 1, 2024, after which MPOs would have 180 days to develop baselines and set their own declining targets. This has been a contentious measure and many states have filed lawsuits, so the FHWA extended the deadline to March 1, however that is still subject to change. In the meantime, MPO staff is looking at a variety of methodologies for establishing an emissions baseline so that the MPO can be ready.
- Update on Regional Safety Action Plan: Work continues. Staff sent another recap of data and discussions to local communities for review. Staff should have a draft ready for the board to review at the March or April board meeting.

12. Status Report on Capital Area RPC Activities

No discussion on Capital Area RPC Activities.

13. Adjournment

Next MPO Board Meeting: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. (Remote meeting via Zoom)

Williams moved, Lynch seconded, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.