

**Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
May 11, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

[Virtual Meeting hosted via Zoom](#)

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

1. Roll Call and Introductions

Members present: Phil Caravello, Yogesh Chawla, Steve Flottmeyer, Grant Foster (joined at item 7), Gary Halverson (joined at item 7), Tom Lynch, Mark Opitz, Nasra Wehelie, Kristi Williams, Doug Wood

Members absent: Margaret Bergamini, Paul Esser, Barbara Harrington-McKinney, Jerry Mandli

MPO staff present: Bill Schaefer, Colleen Hoesly

Others present in an official capacity: Diane Paoni (WisDOT Planning), Pam Dunphy (Dane County Highway Dept.), Dave Benforado (Village of Shorewood Hills), Chris Petykowski (City of Madison Engineering)

2. Approval of April 6, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Williams moved, Wood seconded, to approve April 6, 2022 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Communications

None

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

None

5. Public Hearing on the Draft *Connect Greater Madison Regional Transportation Plan 2050 for the Madison Metropolitan Area*

Opitz opened the public hearing. There were no registrants to speak, and therefore Opitz closed the hearing.

6. MPO 2022 Resolution No. 4 Approving *Connect Greater Madison Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) 2050 for the Madison Metropolitan Area*

Schaefer reviewed highlights of the draft RTP recommendations. He noted there is one minor proposed change to the Major Roadway Projects and Studies map, noted in the Addition/Change Sheet dated 5/5/22, showing a small segment of County Highway M recommended for capacity expansion in the city of Verona. The Future Roadway Functional Class Map shows, in part, planned local collector roads, in order to highlight their importance for distributing traffic and for multimodal connectivity. There are a few changes in the Addition/Change Sheet based on comments from local staff in Verona and Sun Prairie. For Transportation Systems Management, the major recommendation is to develop a regional Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) plan. The Congestion Management Process has been updated as previously reviewed with the board. There is a Vehicle Electrification recommendation to promote the transition to EVs. This is supported by new Federal funding, and staff anticipates developing a priority location analysis to assist local communities with siting EV charging infrastructure. The Future Transit Network builds upon BRT and the Network Redesign Study.

Particularly for the local routes it is a conceptual plan and will be fleshed out further as part of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) and annual service adjustments. The RTP recommends exploring other transit service models in areas and/or at times of the day where that makes sense. The Future Bicycle Network includes recommendations focus on completing priority missing links and priority regional paths. Transportation demand management (TDM) recommendations include strategic planning for the MPO TDM program, expanding capacity with additional program funding, and working with other communities to support TDM initiatives like the City of Madison's TDM program.

Chawla asked about the priority regional shared-use paths map. He noted that the county has Parks dept. grants available bi-annually and asked whether staff can share details about which routes are yet to be funded, or which have applied for parks grants and not been funded. The county board helps evaluate applications, so it would be helpful to understand which paths have not been funded, along with their cost estimates if available. Schaefer stated that the MPO has conceptual cost estimates for these projects, and all of this information can be shared with county Parks staff. He noted that in many cases the regional projects are beyond the scope of the county parks grant program to fund, but not always. Chawla said he would work to get this topic on the county board agenda after receiving more information from MPO staff.

Schaefer summarized the Environmental Justice (EJ) Analysis and Fiscal Analysis, which hadn't been previously reviewed with board. The EJ analysis looks at how well the future planned transportation networks serve MPO-identified EJ areas. The Fiscal Analysis is required to ensure that the RTP is fiscally constrained. Funding conclusions from that include that there is sufficient funding to cover the identified major local roadway reconstructions and priority regional multi-use path projects, but that additional funding solutions are necessary to maintain the roadway system in good repair and achieve the full regional transit system vision over the longer term.

After the plan is adopted, staff will develop an interactive online summary for the public; provide presentations for local communities; begin working on studies identified in the plan and supporting local communities during project development, including assistance with local grant applications; and supporting plan implementation through the funding process.

Hoesly summarized the public comments received and substantive revisions recommended by staff. The MPO solicited comments on an interactive map of the future proposed transportation system, which received about 160 responses, most of which (70%) related to the bike network. Staff analyzed comments on the second interactive map relative to environmental justice (EJ) areas, with results included in the board packet. The formal public comment period for the draft RTP was open April 15-May 8; comments were submitted through the plan website and by email, from the public and staff from Sun Prairie, Verona, and WisDOT Central Office. The majority of comments related to recommendations and supporting actions in the Bicycle, TDM, and Parking sections. The FHWA reviewed the federally required sections of the plan and found no concerns. Hoesly then reviewed the proposed substantive revisions based on comments received, listed in the Addition/Change Sheet in the board packet.

Lynch noted that the federal infrastructure bill includes a great deal of new funding and the City of Madison plans to apply to several of these new programs, such as Safe Streets for All. Often, program applications ask whether the proposed project is in the RTP and the TIP. Lynch asked whether there is a way to include projects in the TIP even though they may not be funded. Schaefer stated that smaller intersection-level projects are not usually included in the RTP due to their scale, but that projects can be included in the TIP as "illustrative projects," rather than part of the official project list, so they can be pointed to as mentioned. Lynch said that is what the city is looking for – something to reference in their application. For example, the city is planning to apply to the Safe Streets for All program for 23 projects totaling about \$11.5 million. Hoesly noted that the RTP recommendations and supporting actions are

written to allow for flexibility in supporting local safety initiatives generally, through the Safe Systems Approach. Schaefer added that the MPO will be looking at potential use of its planning funding to support local grant applications.

Opitz stated that the RTP was a significant effort by MPO staff and thanked them for the work involved. He asked whether the new cover page would make it clear that this plan is an “update,” to the previous plan, as both will have a year 2050 horizon. Schaefer stated that the plan has a new name and will include the year of adoption on each page, but that staff would consider adding “update” to the title.

Wood moved, Williams seconded, to approve MPO 2022 Resolution No. 4, adopting the *Connect Greater Madison* Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) 2050 for the Madison Metropolitan Area, which incorporates the changes to the Draft Plan dated April 2022, listed in the Addition/Change sheet dated May 5, 2022. Motion carried.

7. Approval of Scoring and Proposed Funding of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Urban Program Projects with FFY 2022 Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill Funding

Schaefer stated that the MPO has \$2.1 million in FFY 2022 funding to allocate under the STBG-Urban program. There is another application cycle currently underway for FFY 2023-2026 funding, under which the MPO expects to have about \$8.5 million to allocate; applications for this are due June 3. Projects receiving FFY 2022 funding need to be let this fall, so WisDOT requested only simple projects. The MPO received three applications, two from the City of Sun Prairie and one from the Village of DeForest. The MPO also received letters from the City of Madison and Village of Shorewood Hills requesting a funding increase for the University Ave project, which received funding but is now short of the MPO’s 60% funding policy based on cost increases since it was approved. The City of Madison also recognized that if University Ave receives additional funding, it would be fair to also increase funding for the Pleasant View Road project that is scheduled to be let this year. Schaefer added that if the board approves funding increases for these projects, it would also be fair to increase funding for the County Trunk Highway M project with FFY 2023 funding, which is also short of funding due to cost increases.

Schaefer said staff provided two funding scenarios in the board packet and are recommending Scenario 1, which would use most of the money on the N. Thompson Rd. project in Sun Prairie, with the remaining split between University Ave. and Pleasant View Road. However, staff recognize the financial hardship placed on the Village of Shorewood Hills by the University Ave project cost-share requirement. Schaefer noted that he has been working to access the CRRSAA Bill funding that WisDOT chose to use on a state project, and that FHWA is expected to provide a legal opinion on that soon. There is still a possibility that this \$3 million may become available. He emphasized that the use of the funding on new vs. already approved projects is very much a policy decision for the board.

Dave Benforado, Village of Shorewood Hills President, registered to speak. He said the village favored Scenario 2 in the board packet, which allocates all of the additional funding to the University Ave. and Pleasant View Rd. projects. The Village has historically been responsible for the operations and maintenance of the three westbound lanes between University Bay Dr. and Shorewood Blvd. The Village has accepted that for the past few decades, but the cost-share for this major reconstruction is a huge burden for the village. He described the project and noted its high score by the MPO. He said the village just took out bonds for \$6 million, representing in large part their share of the University Ave project. This is the village’s largest single contribution to a public works project, and represents almost two years’ worth of the village’s entire levy.

Schaefer summarized comments provided by Mayor Esser of Sun Prairie, who was unable to attend the meeting tonight. Esser stated that he understands the village’s predicament and acknowledges the challenging decision for the board; however, the University Ave project has already received a large

amount of funding, and N. Thompson Rd is in very poor condition and needs immediate attention. He noted that the purpose of this solicitation was for simple projects like this one, which is a resurfacing. Therefore, he is in favor of Scenario 1.

Opitz then turned to the board for questions and discussion. Wood asked how the N. Thompson Rd. project score would compare to other projects if this were a normal TIP approval process, as it seems low relative to other projects the MPO has been approving. Schaefer said that the score is low due to the limited nature of the project, however, this is precisely the type of simple project that was requested due to the necessity to obligate the funding this year. Wood stated that he is sympathetic to the village's situation and leans toward increasing the funding for University Ave. and Pleasant View Rd. He is concerned that the MPO's goal is to fund projects at 60%, and these projects are currently only at about 50% funding.

Foster stated that as a member of the MPO policy board, he looks to the MPO's two main policies that should guide the decision, which are 1) using the project scoring tool to make decisions as objectively as possible, and 2) applying the policy to fund projects at 60%. He acknowledged that the MPO also has an unwritten policy to "spread the wealth" by periodically allocating funding to projects in smaller communities that may not have received funding recently, however, he feels that this is not the best way to make decisions. As a result, Foster stated that he is in favor of Scenario 2. Schaefer clarified that there is a policy that the MPO allocate "over time" (not within a given application cycle) a minimum of 10% of MPO funding for small projects, defined at \$2.8 million or less; the Sun Prairie project is slightly over that. The purpose is to provide equity, to allow smaller communities to compete, as they would otherwise typically score lower in the MPO funding criteria based on their location. The MPO's funding is based on the population of the entire urban area, so there is justification to consider that geographic equity. Grant asked whether the MPO is behind on that metric, as a smaller project in McFarland was recently funded. Schaefer stated that project was funded in the cycle before the last one; in the last round, all of the funding (\$20 million) went to Madison projects, because Madison was the only community to apply. He noted that Madison did not have a large project funded in the cycle prior to the last one, however that was a rare case. He also recognized that Madison applies for funding for regional roadway projects, of which University Ave is one, so it does make sense that Madison receive more funding due to this.

Foster stated that Madison applies for regional projects, such as University Ave., and the role of the MPO scoring criteria is to allocate funding toward projects with high regional value. Lynch said that Foster and Schaefer both make good points. He noted that Madison applies for many projects; this is a rare project request by Sun Prairie. He said he saw value in the staff recommendation and would probably support it. Chawla asked about the potential County Highway M funding mentioned in the presentation. Schaefer said he commented that if the board approves funding increases for University Ave and Pleasant View, it would also be fair to increase funding for the CTH M project because it is also short of the 60% funding. However, FY 2023 funding would need to be used for that project as it is scheduled for 2023. Chawla commented that he thinks the CTH M project will contribute to sprawl and is not in favor of adding funding to it. He said development north of Lake Mendota would contribute to flooding problems. Opitz asked whether staff considered an option that would fund the Sun Prairie project at a lower percentage. Schaefer said that this was a possible scenario to consider. Wood responded that he didn't think it would be good to change the funding policy on a case-by-case basis.

Foster moved, Halverson seconded, to approve funding Scenario 2 using the FFY 2022 allocation to add funding to the University Ave. and Pleasant View Rd. projects. Motion carried.

Schaefer commented that he would encourage Sun Prairie and DeForest to submit their projects for funding with the FFY 2023-2026 funds.

8. MPO 2022 Resolution No. 5 Approving Amendment #4 to the 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program for the Madison Metropolitan Area & Dane County

Schaefer summarized the list of projects included in the amendment and listed on the agenda. He noted that the board packet included an alternate project listing that shows the funding for University Ave. and Pleasant View Rd. as approved by the board. The resolution will need to be amended to remove reference to the N. Thompson Road project.

Lynch asked to clarify that the board would need to strike item 12 in the resolution. Schaefer said yes, and also remove the N Thompson Rd. project from the project listing and substitute the alternate project listings for University Ave. and Pleasant View Rd.

Lynch moved, Foster seconded, to approve Resolution No. 5 approving amendment #4 to the 2022-2026 TIP with the following changes: Eliminate references to the N. Thompson Rd. project and change the project listing table to delete N. Thompson Rd. and reflect the federal funding for University Ave. and Pleasant View Rd. in the Scenario 2 table. Motion carried.

9. Request for Project Applications for FFY 2022 Funding under New Carbon Reduction Program and Discussion of Cost Sharing Policy for Projects

Schaefer stated that this was an informational item. However, it will be an action item to approve funding for projects at the next meeting. The Carbon Reduction Program is a new program under which the MPO will receive about \$1 million annually. He reviewed some of the eligible project types. Because the FFY 2022 funding must be committed by this fall, the focus of this round of applications was on non-construction projects. Schaefer reviewed the four applications received. Moving forward, staff will work on developing policies and project evaluation criteria; for this cycle, there was not time to do that. Schaefer said staff would provide a proposal for funding the projects at the next meeting, but would likely recommend providing some funding for all projects. Schaefer said staff was interested in feedback from the board on whether to apply the same 60% funding policy for this program as the STBG Urban and TAP programs.

Foster stated that he supports funding these projects proportionally until the MPO has a policy in place for this program. Lynch noted that when using federal money, there are more hoops to jump through, so the benefit can decrease for small grants. Schaefer said that is generally true, but less so for non-construction projects. Lynch added that the environmental review requirements may not apply to non-construction projects, but the city is now running into “Buy America” provisions that are making some purchases more difficult. Schaefer noted that a minimum project cost will be established in the future for the program as is in place for the other programs.

10. Discussion on Future Board Meeting Format and “Outreach” Meetings

Opitz said he had requested that this be an agenda item. Schaefer has heard interest in continuing with virtual meetings, but wanted to check in with the board again. The MPO does not have the capacity for hybrid meetings at this time, but may in the future. The board could continue all virtual, or have some meetings virtual and some in-person; the city frowns on the latter option, but there is not a strict prohibition. The MPO board has also in the past had 1-2 “outreach” meetings in the past, where the board would meet in one of the other communities in the MPO area and include a presentation by staff on local transportation plans and projects in that community. Staff thinks these would be good to resume, but could be done virtually as well.

Wood said he would like to resume in-person and asked whether the interest in continuing with virtual meetings is due to COVID or convenience. Schaefer said he believes it is mostly due to convenience, as it allows members juggling multiple meetings to attend in cases where they would otherwise not be able

to if travel was required. Additionally, virtual is more convenient for the public. Chawla supported continuing to meet virtually to make it easier to juggle the many meetings that he and some other board members are involved in. He added that the county's guidance is to continue to meet virtually until hybrid meetings are feasible, so that the meetings can continue to be recorded. If the board goes back to meeting in person, Chawla would like it to be in a room that allows for hybrid participation and recording. Foster agreed and said the ability for the public to participate virtually is his primary consideration. He believes Madison IT is working on getting the technology to accommodate hybrid meetings in more rooms. He also agreed with Chawla's point that virtual meetings make it easier to participate with so many meetings. The Board of Public Works (BPW) will continue to meet right before the MPO policy board, starting at 4:30 p.m., so participating in both will be difficult if travel is involved. Foster added he is open to some in-person meetings if there is a virtual access option.

Caravello agreed with Chawla and Foster. He said that hybrid would be a good option if it was available, but prefers virtual until then. He also prefers virtual from a personal carbon reduction standpoint, though agrees it would be nice to see people in person at some point. Opitz suggested that perhaps one of the outreach meetings could be in-person. Wood added that he would like in-person meetings because with recent changes to the board, about half have not yet been able to meet in person as a group. He feels there is something lost over time without that type of interaction. He supported Opitz's idea of holding 1-2 in-person outreach meetings annually as a compromise. Halverson said he is also in favor of virtual meetings, as he has had to miss a few of the board meetings due to conflicts, including BPW meetings. Williams said she prefers virtual meetings, but added that she would like to meet everyone in person at least once. Wehelie also prefers virtual meetings due to convenience, but thinks it would be nice to meet everyone, so she is fine with either option.

Opitz said that with the majority of board members preferring to meet virtually, it makes sense to do so for now. He added that in Middleton, the council has started to meet in person, but the committees are virtual, so they are experimenting with how to maintain consistency and communicate the different formats to the public. For hybrid meetings, Middleton's attorney has said that the majority of members must attend in person for a quorum. Opitz added that he, Schaefer and Vice Chair Wood can start by discussing options for an in-person outreach meeting this summer or early fall.

11. Status Report on Capital Area RPC Activities

Opitz said he would like to hear preferences from board members on whether to keep this as a regular agenda item. With no board members on CARPC anymore, Schaefer said he could review CARPC meeting agendas moving forward and provide pertinent updates. Schaefer mentioned the idea of a joint meeting with CARPC in August. Schaefer said the July MPO board meeting would likely be cancelled.

Foster said there has not been much to report on in the past, so he would be fine with removing this as a standing agenda item. He liked the idea of Schaefer reviewing the CARPC agendas and reporting relevant items to the board as necessary. He said the joint meeting could perhaps be in-person. Opitz supported moving forward with Schaefer providing relevant updates as part of announcements or via email.

12. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

There were no announcements. The next meeting is June 1, 2022 at 6:30 PM.

13. Adjournment

Halverson moved, Williams seconded, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:16 PM.