

**Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
April 6, 2022 Meeting Minutes**

[Virtual Meeting hosted via Zoom](#)

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

1. Roll Call and Introductions

Members present: Margaret Bergamini, Yogesh Chawla (arrived during item 5), Paul Esser, Steve Flottmeyer, Dorothy Krause, Tom Lynch, Jerry Mandli (arrived during item 5), Mark Opitz (arrived during item 5), Kristi Williams, Nasra Wehelie, Doug Wood

Members absent: Grant Foster, Barbara Harrington-McKinney, Gary Halverson

MPO staff present: Bill Schaefer, Colleen Hoesly

Others present in an official capacity: Jennifer Kobryn, Alex Hagan, and Karla Knorr (WisDOT SW Region), Diane Paoni (WisDOT Planning), Forbes McIntosh (DCCVA)

2. Approval of March 2, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Esser moved, Williams seconded, to approve March 2, 2022 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Communications

- Letter from USDOT to Mark Opitz (MPO Policy Chair) regarding preliminary findings from the Federal Certification Review for the MPO.
- Letter from WisDOT approving Amendment 3 to the 2022-2026 Transportation Improvement Program.

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

None

5. Updates on Beltline Flex Lane and U.S. Highway 51 (McFarland to Stoughton) Reconstruction Projects (WisDOT SW Region Staff)

Alex Hagan, WisDOT SW Region, provided a presentation on the Beltline Flex Lane project. Work is being finished up this spring/early summer. That work includes extension of the EB auxiliary lane between the Todd Drive off-ramp and on-ramp and widening of the EB bridge over Todd Drive for the auxiliary lane construction. The EB stretch will be 7 miles, WB stretch 9 miles. The general purpose lanes will be 11-ft wide, and the Flex lane will be 10-ft wide. The opening of the lanes was delayed due to the global shortage of software chips, and delayed delivery of the signs and components. It is anticipated the flex lanes will open summer 2022. The regular anticipated hours of operation are 6:45-9 AM and 3-6:15 PM in the WB direction, and 3:15-6:15 PM in the EB direction (no AM hours currently for the EB); hours may be adjusted over time. The lanes will be open at other times as needed, such as for special events or in case of incidents. Before opening the lane the Sheriff's office will conduct a sweep of the lanes to ensure they are clear, and traffic cameras and vehicle detection will be monitored by operators at WisDOT's Traffic Management Center. If a vehicle breaks down in the median shoulder lane, the Traffic Operations Center staff will change the dynamic signage to close the Flex Lane until the vehicle is safely removed. Education and outreach includes animated videos, project website, social media, and eblasts to neighborhood groups and organizations; information is also included in the WI Motorist Handbook.

Lane use violations in the first month of Flex Lane operations will focus more on education; after that citations would be written similar to any other lane violation. Informational sessions were hosted for first responders along the Beltline to ensure their awareness and education.

Schaefer stated he was under the impressions that the hours of operation would be dynamic daily, not a set schedule. Bergamini and Krause asked about staffing at the STOC; WisDOT replied there would be someone monitoring cameras the entire time the lanes would be operational, and staff would also be available on weekends for major events. Krause was concerned that it would be monitored by staff in Milwaukee and not someone local. Mandli replied that the County and first responders have been coordinating frequently with WisDOT staff and there was a detailed analysis and discussion of how the lanes will operate and how to respond in a multitude of scenarios. Wehelie asked how elected officials can share Flex Lane updates with their constituents. Hagan pointed out the ways to get information out.

Jenny Kobryn then provided a presentation on the final design work on the USH 51 (McFarland to Stoughton) project. Construction is scheduled in phases from 2024-2029 for 10 construction projects in four areas (east of Stoughton, Stoughton, the rural area between Stoughton and McFarland, and McFarland). Roundabouts at Roby Rd, WIS 138, and Hoel/Silverado Drive will be constructed in 2022, and County B/AB will be constructed in 2024. It was indicated that soils could impact the length of time the road would be closed, as there are wet soils in the corridor that may require the road to settle through a freeze-thaw cycle before opening to traffic. Schaefer asked about pedestrian crossings in Stoughton; Kobryn replied the four RRFBs that are there currently would remain, and they are working with Stoughton staff on other crossing issues. Lynch asked about bike accommodations in McFarland; Kobryn replied that in the constrained area there would be no bike lanes – in most of the downtown there will be 5-ft sidewalks, in some cases 10-ft. Opitz asked about the cost sharing on constructing sidewalks; Kobryn replied that it is 80/20 for 5-ft, anything beyond 5-ft is the responsibility of the community.

6. Approval of Scoring and Proposed Funding of Transportation Alternatives Program Projects

Schaefer stated at the last meeting MPO staff reviewed the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) projects recently submitted for the regular TAP application cycle, based on the MPO's approved scoring criteria. The MPO is selecting projects to fund with our "base" funding (\$1.443 million) and the additional FFY 2022 funding to be received from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill), which is estimated to be around \$625,000. The exact amount of additional funding available through IIJA is not yet known, but should be close to this estimate for FY '22 (\$625,000) and the remaining four years (\$2,500,000). There will be an opportunity for the submission of additional applications in late summer for the additional IIJA funding for FFYs 2023-2026. Projects not selected at this time will be considered for funding during the supplemental application process later this year along with any other project applications received.

The recommended projects to fund at this time are:

- Continuation of the Dane County Safe Routes to School program
- Two BCycle projects - stations in Madison as well as expanding stations to Fitchburg.
- Badger-Rusk Path - provides low traffic stress connection to the Beltline overpass
- N Bird Street Multi-use Path

Krause moved, Esser seconded, to approve the recommended Transportation Alternatives Program Projects. Motion carried.

7. Approval to Release Draft *Connect Greater Madison* Regional Transportation Plan 2050 Report for Public Review and Comment

Schaefer reviewed the outline/Table of Contents of the draft RTP, including the financial capacity analysis which had not previously been presented to the Board. He noted that if looking at constant dollars state funding for roadway construction has been decreasing about 1% per year since the gas tax indexing was eliminated in 2006. He noted the systems performance report appendix was being finished up and would be posted on the plan website soon. Phase 3 of virtual public meetings are scheduled for April 7th and 12th.

Esser moved, Williams seconded, to release the draft *Connect Greater Madison* Regional Transportation Plan for public review and comment. Motion carried.

8. Brief Update on STBG Urban and TAP Project Application Processes for Use of Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill Funding

Schaefer stated three applications were received for the FFY 2022 STBG funding (around \$2 million) that the MPO received as part of the new infrastructure bill. The City of Madison sent a letter requesting additional funding be applied to already approved projects, including University Avenue. New projects would need to be let by November of this year, which limits the scope of eligible projects. Staff will be scoring the applications and provide several funding scenarios. It will be a policy decision by the board whether to use the funding for new projects or adding funding to already approved projects.

9. Status Report on Capital Area RPC Activities

Schaefer noted the draft Regional Development Framework is available for public comment, and that the two agencies are working on setting up a joint meeting of the two boards.

10. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

Schaefer noted that the US Census Bureau released the final criteria for delineating urban areas, and it appears that the MPO may lose some communities in the current urban area boundary, including Stoughton, Cottage Grove, and Cross Plains. The official boundaries will be released in late summer.

Opitz announced that this was Dorothy Krause’s last meeting as a member of the MPO Policy Board, and thanked her for her years of service.

The next meeting is May 11, 2022 at 6:30 PM.

11. Adjournment

Moved by Krause, seconded by Williams, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM.