



**Preliminary Engineering/NEPA Analysis  
for the  
Dane County/Greater Madison Metropolitan Area**

For additional project information: [www.transport2020.net](http://www.transport2020.net)

## Minutes

### TRANSPORT 2020: IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE (ITF) TRANSIT OPERATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE/TAC

**Thursday, November 2, 2006**

**5:30 pm**

**Madison Municipal Building, Room LL-110**

**215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard**

**Madison, WI**

#### -- ROLL CALL

Subcommittee Present: Jim Berkenstadt; John DeLamater; Sup. Chuck Erickson; Kristine Euclide; Ken Golden (*alternate*); Jesse Kaysen; LeAnna Wall (*for Joe Olson*).

Subcommittee Absent: None.

TAC/Staff Present: Rod Clark (Wisconsin Department of Transportation); Chuck Kamp (General Manager, Madison Metro); Arun Rao (WisDOT); Bill Schaefer (Madison Area Metropolitan Planning Organization); David Trowbridge (Madison Planning and Development; *Transport 2020 Project Manager*).

Others Present: Ed Addison (Sun Prairie Transportation Commission); Margaret Bergamini; Deven Carlson (UW-Madison); Mike Cechvala; Ken Kinney (*HNTB Project Manager*); Caron Kloser (HNTB); Chris Kopp (Cambridge Systematics); Sup. Al Matano (ITF Member); Kimon Proussaloglou (Cambridge Systematics); Bob Schaefer; John Steines (Friends of Starkweather Creek); Dick Wagner (ITF Member); Royce Williams (Pro-Rail); Bruce Wilson (Madison Area Bus Advocates).

#### 1. INTRODUCTIONS

Transit Operations Subcommittee Co-Chair Kaysen welcomed Subcommittee members to the meeting. Committee member and meeting attendee introductions were made.

#### 2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was deferred until after presentations.

### **3. PUBLIC INFORMATION UPDATE**

The project team is continuing outreach to neighborhoods and meetings with stakeholders. The Transport 2020 and Streetcar teams presented to the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce. Feedback from the meeting indicates support for transit to move forward and to continue to show the synergies between the two projects. Caron Kloser attended the EINPC meeting on October 19. A key outcome of the meeting is that residents want to see bus improvements along with commuter rail investment in future presentations. The team will continue coordination efforts to meet with local neighborhoods and special interest groups. Alderman Golden said that efforts to organize a west side neighborhood planning council are underway. The project team must also continue to seek out low income and minority groups.

### **4. ENGINEERING UPDATE**

Ken Kinney summarized engineering tasks underway, which are scheduled to be complete in December. Chris Kopp gave a brief presentation and video of a new vehicle technology, the Alstom RegioCitadis, currently in use for the Kassel RegioTram project in Germany. The Transport 2020 team may want to consider this technology as it can run under either diesel or electric power. The RegioTram operates in a city very similar to Madison. An audience member asked if the technology is FRA compliant (it is not). There would need to be a temporal separation of freight rail, future high speed rail, and the RegioTram (that is, freights and high speed passenger rail could not operate at the same times the RegioTram is operating). Another audience member commented that the project team is not considering future technologies and expressed concern about impacts to vehicular traffic being queued on cross streets. A committee member commented that his previous experience in Chicago was that traffic was not significantly affected by 3 or 4 rapid transit train cars passing through at-grade crossings. Other comments on the RegioTram

- Can it fit several wheelchairs? – the vehicle can probably be configured to do that
- What is the difference between 3<sup>rd</sup> rail power source and overhead power source? – safety at at-grade intersections
- North American O&M costs could be higher if service is provided out of Germany – the manufacturer may entertain providing North American service.
- With two means of propulsion, we could be buying “1.5 vehicles”? – with all of the diesel railcars on the market carrying similar price tags, the costs difference would not be substantial; it is the cost of the catenary system that would be more substantial
- Can the Streetcar project use this technology? – yes
- WSOR will not support electrical overhead catenary in their corridor.
- How does this technology compare to Colorado Rail Car? – the Rail Car is a much larger vehicle and is FRA-compliant to run in freight corridors without temporal separation.

### **5. LAND USE/DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Ken Kinney summarized land use tasks completed and tasks to be complete in November. The land use/development assessment is focused on the New Starts criteria for land use. The effort is about two-

thirds complete. Draft population projections and densities along the alternative corridors were presented.

## **6. RIDERSHIP AND TRAVEL DEMAND UPDATE**

Kimon Proussaloglou gave a status report on the ridership model and presented initial findings. Using comments from FTA and the MPO, the project team updated and enhanced the model to account for the unique travel characteristics in the Madison area. The model validates observations obtained from Metro Transit surveys. The model is now ready to evaluate ridership on the alternatives and bus network.

Questions/comments raised:

How does model account for airport trips? – The model captures employees traveling to and from the airport, but it does not model traveler trips.

Does the model take walking to and from vehicles into account?-yes

The Transit and Parking Commission is implementing a transit-oriented parking policy, primarily focused on parking prices. A parking strategy plan is expected to be underway in January. The Government East parking ramp is nearing the end of its life and the city will need to decide if it will reinvest in the expense of a garage or allow the land to develop to a higher and better use.

The subcommittee commented it has a very high comfort level with the updated travel model.

## **7. RAIL/BUS ROUTE UPDATE**

Ken Kinney addressed the subcommittee on transit strategies and plans to move the project successfully through the New Starts review process. The study team must stay focused on providing the FTA an alternative that demonstrates maximized cost effectiveness and a sound financial plan. The financial plan must demonstrate that it benefits all transit; the 2020 alternative and the bus system. Ken further emphasized that the bus route revisions to be reviewed tonight are for planning purposes to start modeling ridership and evaluating cost/benefits. Bus transit plans will continue to evolve as the commuter rail and the bus system, if successfully funded, are implemented in the future.

Chris Kopp reviewed revised bus plans based on comments received from Metro Transit as well as comments received from the last Transit Operations subcommittee meeting. The revisions to be reviewed tonight focused on reducing duplicative service and investing those operational savings in other routes throughout the bus system. The goal of the revisions reviewed this evening are to make each of the alternatives as competitive as possible with each other in providing the highest level of ridership. Alternative 2A bus route revisions result in a 3% increase in bus vehicle service hours; Alternative 3 provides an 8% increase; and Alternative 5 results in a 2% decrease. The subcommittee noted that an 8% increase in service hours can still be a problem to fund even if a new source of funding is created. Overall, the subcommittee was pleased with the revisions and thanked the team for their hard work.

The subcommittee suggested that the project team develop some example travel time scenarios to make the revisions more understandable to the public; for example, a typical trip to school or a shopping trip.

## **8. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bob Schaefer asked that the project team share the long term costs of the transit vision; it is more than just the implementation of commuter rail. There is also the potential that the transit vision will actually increase population density in outlying areas of Dane County. What portion of transit trips are paid for by the participant? How much can parking rates be increased before jobs start to migrate to areas outside the Isthmus. What would it cost to provide peripheral services without rail?

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

The next subcommittee meetings are scheduled for December 7 and January 9. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

***These minutes represent the writer's interpretation of discussion and resolution of key points. Please contact Connie White of HNTB (608/294-5000) to discuss questions, modifications or corrections.***