



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

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Minutes

TRANSPORT 2020: IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

Tuesday, July 29, 2008

5:00 p.m.

**Madison Municipal Building, Room LL-110
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Madison, WI**

-- **ROLL CALL**

Members Present: Arun Rao (for Sandy Beaupre); Michael Blaska; Rod Clark; Lori Kay; Dan Larson; Paul Munz; Jim Pulvermacher; Dan Viste; Dick Wagner.

Members Absent: Karna Hanna; Chuck Kamp; Chris Klein; Sup. Al Matano; Sup. Scott McDonell; Jeff Miller.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Co-Chair Dick Wagner called the July 29, 2008 Transport 2020 Finance and Governance Subcommittee meeting to order. There were no modifications to the meeting agenda.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 28 AND JUNE 25 SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Minutes for 5-28-08 and 6-25-08 Transport 2020 Finance and Governance Subcommittee meetings were unanimously approved, as submitted on a motion by Michael Blaksa/Dan Larson.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Bob Schaefer expressed concerns about the Transport 2020 project and asked that the number of riders on the system be considered. He said that the system would cost even more, if extended over time. He also said that Wisconsin is a leader in transportation innovation and should explore "maglev" technologies.

Gurdip Brar said that he is an alderperson in the City of Middleton. He praised the group's work so far and urged them to look at all transit options, especially innovations from other countries. He also said that the high cost of building more highways should be considered in the decision making process.

Hans Noeldner said that the possibility of fuel rationing in the future should be considered by the Subcommittee and its work.

4. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF QUESTIONS AND ISSUES RAISED BY SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS (PERTAINING TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE AND WORK PLAN)

Co-Chair Dick Wagner referred to a 1-page handout that summarized a number of concerns and questions that have been raised by Subcommittee members. He said that other members should feel free to add to this list. The Subcommittee then discussed a few of the issues and asked staff to come to a future meeting with answers to the questions.

Jim Pulvermacher said that counties outside of Dane County would use the regional transit system (as they currently use the roadway system here) and there should be some way for those residents to pay for the service as well. Dick Wagner agreed that counties outside of Dane County use our transportation system and that a sales tax - even if only applied in Dane County – would capture sales that are made by those residents here.

Jim Pulvermacher also asked whether or not it would be wise to start with express bus service, rather than rail, and add rail as demand warrants in the future. David Trowbridge replied that this approach is being taken in every transit corridor in the study area, except the east-west rail corridor. He said that express bus service is recommended to be provided to virtually all of the Dane County communities surrounding Madison. Trowbridge said that commuter rail is being recommended between Middleton and Reiner Road due to the existing transit demand and the fact that fast, convenient and reliable transit service would be very difficult to provide with buses in that particular corridor.

Paul Munz asked that Mr. Trowbridge present the transit alternatives that were evaluated in the Transport 2020 process, as this may answer some of the questions raised and spur some additional questions.

5. REVIEW OF TRANSPORT 2020 ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS PROCESS

David Trowbridge (Transport 2020 Project Manager) provided an overview of the decision making process that went into the recommendation to advance the Transport 2020 commuter rail project. He noted that numerous goals and objectives were considered, and several transit options were developed (including express bus, bus rapid transit, commuter rail and street-running light rail options).

(Note: Mr. Trowbridge's slide presentation can be obtained by request)

Trowbridge pointed out that lower-cost bus options were considered throughout the Transport 2020 process (as they are required to be by Federal Transit Administration regulations). He said that the commuter rail option was preferred by the Implementation Task Force for many reason, but primarily because it would be using the freight railroad corridor - which is highly under-utilized, located very close to many important activity centers, and will allow for fast, reliable service for many years to come. Trowbridge said that in order to make buses operate as fast (and reliable) as the rail corridor option, a significant investment would need to be made (to construct new bus lanes in the street right-of-way, etc.). The capital cost of providing a true east-west bus rapid transit (BRT) system would be less than rail, but would still in the same general range (BRT: \$192 million, rail \$252 million). In addition,

significant amounts of on-street parking would need to be taken for a BRT system (and replaced), and was not included in the cost estimate for that option.

Dan Viste said that the decision to implement a rail system is a long-range decision, and that the land use that happens over time will be shaped by such a system (if it is in place). He noted that buses do not have the same appeal as rail, and would not generate the same type of ridership that rail would. Viste said that the convenience and reliability of rail service should be considered as well. He also pointed out that it may make sense to extend service to outlying communities because the cost of doing so would be less in the near-term than in the future, and would help show that the system is truly regional. Dick Wagner replied that the regional function of the system is important, and that the rail system affects transportation system users far beyond those that are located near the phase 1 Middleton-Reiner Road line. David Trowbridge added that this has been a major challenge in presenting the Transport 2020 project, and trying to demonstrate how the transportation system is comprised of many different components that work together.

Dan Larson said that demand for the transit service should dictate where and when the transit investments are made. He said that he has lived in many large communities where demand has determined investment decisions.

Paul Munz said that future discussions of the RTA should consider the needs of the roadway system, noting that the State Legislature using highway funds to pay for other “general fund” expenditures is creating a serious problem for the transportation system and future economic development. Dick Wagner said that different types of RTA structures and the types of expenditures that would be eligible will definitely be discussed by this Subcommittee at future meetings.

David Trowbridge noted that the remaining 2008 meeting dates for the Finance and Governance Subcommittee are as follows (*please note some changes in the meeting locations*). He asked that Subcommittee members contact him if they had any conflicts with these dates:

2008 Meeting Dates (all 5:00 p.m.)

- Wednesday, August 27, Room 260 MMB (*note different room*)
- Wednesday, October 1, Room 260 MMB (*note different room*)
- Wednesday, October 29, Room 300 MMB (*note different room*)
- Wednesday, November 19, Room 300 MMB (*note different room*)
- (*alternate*) Wednesday, December 3, Room 309 CCB

Jim Pulvermacher said that the Subcommittee should consider holding listening sessions at locations outside of the City. He said that many people he’s talked to would benefit from a meeting at a city or village on the periphery of Madison. Dick Wagner said that this was a good idea and asked that Mr. Pulvermacher provide some suggested venues for such a meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The Finance and Governance Subcommittee adjourned its meeting at 7:00 p.m.