

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 2006 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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TRANSPORTATION STUDY KICKS OFF NEW PHASE

MADISON –Transport 2020, a study of transportation improvements for Dane County and the Greater Madison Metropolitan Area, has started a new phase to refine, evaluate and recommend improvements to the area’s transportation system. The 16-month “Conceptual Engineering & Draft Environmental Impact Statement” phase of Transport 2020 will result in a final recommendation for improving the future of transportation in Dane County, meeting the mobility needs of area residents while preserving Madison’s community and environmental assets.

Madison and Dane County are growing communities whose residents enjoy a high quality of life. As the region continues to grow – Dane County’s population is forecast to expand by 35% between 1990 and 2020 – growth management, traffic congestion, safety and job creation will become increasingly important issues. The first phase of the Transport 2020 study, completed in 2002, combined technical analysis and public participation to examine numerous alternative visions for the future of transportation in Madison and Dane County, from street and highway expansion to rail and bus service. After evaluating these alternatives in terms of cost, projected use, environmental and social impacts and their effect on meeting community development goals, the study recommended a “locally preferred alternative,” a multi-modal system consisting of commuter rail, electric streetcars, express bus service, park-and-ride lots and improvements to local bus service.

In the second phase of Transport 2020 – sponsored by the City of Madison, Dane County and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation – details of potential transportation improvements along the corridor connecting Greenway Center in Middleton, Shorewood Hills, the UW Campus, Downtown Madison and the East Towne Mall area will be refined. The Conceptual Engineering & Draft Environmental Impact Statement phase (DEIS) will include detailed analyses of the system’s expected impacts on traffic movement, the environment, noise, community development and safety. The study will also determine what the impacts will be if nothing is done to address these travel challenges.

In particular, the DEIS phase of Transport 2020 will:

- Develop a concise and accurate statement of purpose and need for transit improvements that synthesizes information about existing and future transportation problems in Dane County and desired development and redevelopment scenarios for the region, along with goals and objectives for those transportation improvements;

- Define several alternative transportation improvements, including the Locally Preferred Alternative from the previous phase of the study and several variations on it; the alternatives will be described in a high level of detail, including conceptual engineering, station and stop location and design, vehicle options, projected ridership and complete operating plans with information on travel speeds and times, number of vehicles, integration with existing freight rail operations, bus transit and road traffic;
- Evaluate alternatives in terms of:
 - social, economic and environmental impacts,
 - estimated capital and operating costs,
 - their effect on transportation in the Madison area,
 - the region's financial capacity to construct and operate the system, and
 - impacts on Dane County's land use and economy;
- Evaluate options for funding and managing an improved transit system;
- Complete a draft Environmental Impact Statement to formally summarize all relevant analyses in the framework required by the federal government.

At the conclusion of the DEIS phase of the Transport 2020 study, Madison and Dane County residents, decision-makers and other stakeholders will have a clear picture of the future of transportation in the region, including the costs and benefits of investing in an expanded transit system. Furthermore, the region will be well positioned to act on implementing this long-range vision. The reports and work products produced in the DEIS phase of Transport 2020 will be designed to meet all guidelines for the federal "New Starts" program. This program provides funding assistance for fixed guideway transit improvements and could become a primary source of capital funds for a locally preferred transit project.

Transport 2020 is one of two major public transit studies underway in the Dane County/greater Madison metropolitan area. The Madison Streetcar Preliminary Feasibility Study is another study effort, led by the City of Madison, that's recently begun its work. The Streetcar Study is evaluating street-running transit services in central Madison - services that are primarily intended to provide central City circulation and spur redevelopment along the streetcar alignment. Transport 2020 is focused on evaluating regional transit options geared primarily toward daily commuters and people accessing cultural/ entertainment activities in central Madison. The Transport 2020 transit options are also intended to spur redevelopment, mainly at station areas along the corridor. These two projects will be closely coordinated and designed so that the services complement one another and track, stations or other infrastructure can be shared to the extent possible.

Transport 2020's first public information meeting will be held on April 26, 2006. The meeting will be held at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in the "Hall of Ideas" Rooms H and I, and will be conducted in an open house format from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm, with a brief presentation at 6:00 p.m. Persons unable to attend the meeting can make their comments by contacting David Trowbridge, City of Madison Planning and Development, P.O. Box 2985, Madison, WI 53701, (608) 267-1148, or by visiting the study website at www.transport2020.net. If you need an interpreter, materials in alternate formats, or other accommodations to access this public meeting, please contact the City of Madison, Department of Planning and Development at (608) 266-4635 / (608) 266-4747 (TTY). *Please do so at least 48 hours prior to the meeting so that the proper arrangements can be made.*

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DATE

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TRANSPORT 2020 PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULED

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2006

MADISON – Dane County, the City of Madison, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation invite the public to learn more about and contribute opinions to a study of transportation improvement alternatives for the Dane County/Greater Madison Metropolitan area. Transport 2020 has entered a new phase, and the study’s first public information meeting will be held on April 26, 2006. The meeting will be held at the Monona Terrace Convention Center in the “Hall of Ideas” Rooms H and I, and will be conducted in an open house format from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm, with a brief presentation at 6:00 p.m.

The 16-month “Conceptual Engineering & Draft Environmental Impact Statement” (DEIS) phase of Transport 2020 will result in a final recommendation for improving the future of transportation in Dane County, meeting the mobility needs of area residents while preserving Madison’s community and environmental assets. At the conclusion of the DEIS phase of the Transport 2020 study, Madison and Dane County residents, decision-makers and other stakeholders will have a clear picture of the future of transportation in the region, including the costs and benefits of investing in an expanded transit system.

At the April 26 public information meeting, representatives of the technical study team as well as the study sponsors – the City of Madison, Dane County and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation – will be available to answer questions and take comments on transportation issues important to Madison-area stakeholders.

“The purposes of this first public meeting are to present preliminary information and to solicit comments on the corridor study area, draft purpose and need statement, draft goals and objectives of the study and preliminary alternatives,” said David Trowbridge, project manager. “The study team and the study committees look forward to hearing from members of the community as we embark on this current phase of project development. Investment in high quality public transit could be very important to help Madison and the region preserve and enhance our quality of life as we address the mobility challenges of our growing region.”

A high level of public participation is essential to the DEIS phase of Transport 2020 in order to ensure that transit system planning furthers community goals and positively impacts neighborhoods and Madison’s quality of life. This phase of the study will include many opportunities for stakeholders – from

transit riders to station area neighbors to commuters, developers and students – to learn about the alternatives under consideration, to provide information on transportation issues that affect them, and to guide the development of a comprehensive transportation system that meets their needs. These opportunities will include newsletters and a project website, public information meetings, neighborhood meetings, walking tours of station areas, focus groups, open houses and a study presence at community events to answer questions and gather feedback. The April 26 public meeting is the first major opportunity for Madison area residents to learn about this phase of the study and to provide comments and guidance.

Transport 2020 is one of two major public transit studies underway in the Dane County/greater Madison metropolitan area. The Madison Streetcar Preliminary Feasibility Study is another study effort, led by the City of Madison, that's recently begun its work. The Streetcar Study is evaluating street-running transit services in central Madison - services that are primarily intended to provide central City circulation and spur redevelopment along the streetcar alignment. Transport 2020 is focused on evaluating regional transit options geared primarily toward daily commuters and people accessing cultural/ entertainment activities in central Madison. The Transport 2020 transit options are also intended to spur redevelopment, mainly at station areas along the corridor. These two projects will be closely coordinated and designed so that the services complement one another and track, stations or other infrastructure can be shared to the extent possible.

Persons unable to attend the meeting can make their comments by contacting David Trowbridge, City of Madison Planning and Development, P.O. Box 2985, Madison, WI 53701, (608) 267-1148, or by visiting the study website at www.transport2020.net.

Monona Terrace is a short walk from the Capitol building, located along the Lake Monona bike and pedestrian path, and is served by several Madison Metro bus routes including routes 3, 4, 37, 38, 56, and 57. The facility is wheelchair-accessible. If you need an interpreter, materials in alternate formats, or other accommodations to access this public meeting, please contact the City of Madison, Department of Planning and Development at (608) 266-4635 / (608) 266-4747 (TTY). *Please do so at least 48 hours prior to the meeting so that the proper arrangements can be made.*

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