

**Madison Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
February 4, 2004 Meeting Minutes**

1. Roll Call

Members present: Robbie Webber, Bob Dye, Rose Phetteplace, Al Matano, Eileen Bruskwitz,
Lisa MacKinnon
Members absent: Kris Euclide, David Hart, John Volker, Ken Golden, Dave Phillips
Staff present: Bob McDonald, Bill Schaefer, Deb DeDecker, Bob Pike, Dan Seidensticker

2. Approval of January 7, 2004 Meeting Minutes

Moved by Webber, seconded by Dye, to approve January 7, 2004 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Communications

- Letter from Frank J. Busalacchi, WisDOT Secretary approving the 2004-2008 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Madison Urbanized Area and Amendment #1 to the 2004-2008 TIP.
- Article that Golden asked be distributed to Board members entitled, "All aboard: Cities across the nation are building light rail systems to help reduce street traffic and to attract development."

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

None

5. Presentation on the Federal Railroad Administration's Interim Final Rule on Use of Locomotive Horns at Highway-Rail Grade Crossings (Ron Adams, WisDOT)

Ron Adams, Director of WisDOT's Bureau of Rails and Harbors, gave a presentation on the rule, which becomes effective on December 18, 2004. The rule requires that trains use the horn for 15-20 seconds prior to arrival at a crossing unless the local community takes action to establish a quiet zone. For the first time, the rule prescribes a maximum as well as a minimum sound level. The rule provides for two types of quiet zones--pre-rule and new zones. The City of Madison doesn't qualify as a pre-rule quiet zone. New quiet zones must have gates and flashing lights, constant warning time, advance warning signs, and power-out indicators. Local communities must apply to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for approval of quiet zones, unless supplementary safety measures (four quadrant gates, median barrier, etc.) are implemented or the risk of crash is at or below the national risk threshold without the measures. The FRA has a Web-based tool that can be used to assess the risk of crash at crossings. Webber asked if the supplementary safety measures were mandatory. Adams said that if a community has a series of crossings that it wants to make a quiet zone, and if all of the crossings have gates and lights, and some of them have a median barrier already, then additional safety measures may not be necessary (i.e., it could be shown that as a whole the entire quiet zone has an average risk that is less than what it would be if trains blew the horn). However, for single-crossing quiet zones, the supplemental or the additional safety measures would be required. In response to another question from Webber, Adams said a median barrier might not be necessary if a four-quadrant gate was used, but it depended upon how close the hands of the gates come down together. The rule also provides for alternative safety measures (education and/or enforcement program), which could possibly substitute for supplementary safety measures, but probably not for gates and lights. Adams noted that there was no additional federal or state funding available for gates, lights, and other physical safety measures.

6. Consideration of Resolution MPO No. 38 Approving the Public Participation Procedures in the Madison Area MPO Planning and Programming Processes

Schaefer said the changes from the draft paper presented at the last MPO Board meeting are shown with strikeouts and underlining. Changes include: Editorial revisions; addition of information on efforts the MPO is already doing, but neglected to mention; and more substantive changes. Most of

the substantive changes address Title VI and Environmental Justice requirements, and were made in response to comments from the Federal Highway Administration. Schaefer highlighted some of the major changes. For example, a section was added outlining the strategies to be undertaken to reduce barriers to participation by under-served groups. These include development of a language assistance plan and making available documents or portions of documents in alternative formats or languages, if requested. Other changes to the paper include more specificity on how the MPO will evaluate its public participation process over time, the intent of the MPO to hold regular Board meetings in area communities in order to improve coordination of planning efforts, and what constitutes a major TIP amendment requiring notice and a public hearing. In response to a question, Schaefer said that major amendments were not limited to just roadway and capacity projects and included transit projects. Staff would probably hold a hearing on any borderline regional projects, but amendments for regionally significant projects are very rare.

Moved by MacKinnon, seconded by Webber, to approve Resolution MPO No. 38 Approving the Public Participation Procedures in the Madison Area MPO Planning and Programming Processes, dated February 2004. Motion carried.

7. Overview of MPO Responsibilities and Planning Regulations (Short Video and Discussion)

McDonald presented a video prepared by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, which describes the metropolitan transportation planning process and the MPO's role in the process. Several Board members requested a copy of the video. McDonald then reviewed the Federal Metropolitan Planning Rules, published in the October 28, 1993 Federal Register. He noted that the rules were published following adoption of ISTEA in 1991. New rules were supposed to be adopted following TEA-21, but were never finalized. FHWA and FTA have also published guidance interpreting the rules.

[Note: A quorum was not present at this point in the meeting.]

8. Status Report by MPO Board Members on Projects Potentially Involving the MPO

- **Transport 2020 Implementation Task Force**
- **USH 51 (McFarland to Stoughton) Needs Study**

9. Discussion of Future Work Items

10. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 3 at 6 p.m., in Courtroom 2-D of the City-County Building, 210 ML King Jr. Blvd.

11. Adjournment