



Q&A: *Pathways to 2050* | Public Information Meeting #1

June 15 & 17, 2026

Note: The Q&A includes responses to questions that were answered in the meeting chat or that we didn't have time to answer during the live sessions. It includes only questions submitted through the Q&A feature, as meeting chat history is not available after the sessions.

	Question	Response
1	What is the financial relationship between the federal government and the state?	Transportation projects are funded through a combination of federal, state, and local funding sources. Federal funding for formula programs is administered by the Wisconsin Dept. of Transportation; discretionary funding programs are administered directly by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or Federal Transit Administration (FTA).
2	Is there a plan to address street parking?	Street parking is one of many transportation topics that may be considered as part of the Regional Transportation Plan, though it is not addressed as a standalone element. If you have feedback about street parking in a specific location, we encourage you to share it through the online comment map so it can be considered as part of the planning process.



	Question	Response
3	You mentioned that the MPO is responsible only for planning, with implementation left to communities and other agencies. Do you think this is the best approach? Would our transportation system be better if planning were more closely integrated with implementation, such as by empowering the MPO to play a more active role?	Federal law establishes MPOs as regional transportation planning organizations, with planning responsibilities that are separate from project implementation. The MPO operates within that framework and works closely with local governments, WisDOT, Metro Transit, and other partners to develop a coordinated regional transportation system. While the MPO does not build or operate transportation facilities, it helps guide investment by allocating federal transportation funds, ensuring projects are consistent with the Regional Transportation Plan, and serving as a resource to communities and partner agencies throughout project development and implementation.
4	Vision 2050 from SEWRPC has a very bold, ambitious future plan and openly acknowledges that it cannot be achieved without changes in how transportation—particularly transit—is funded and supported at all levels. The current plans for the Madison area seem to shy away from that level of ambition. Why?	Federal regulations require metropolitan planning organizations to prepare a fiscally constrained Regional Transportation Plan, meaning the projects included must be supported by reasonably anticipated funding. We also recognize that achieving our ideal future transit network will require new funding strategies. For more information, see pages 4-25 through 4-28 of our current Regional Transportation Plan.



	Question	Response
5	Is establishing opposition to the expansion of interstate highways and other limited-access highways (such as the Beltline) something that could be included in MPO plans?	The MPO welcomes public input on all transportation topics, including highway expansion. All comments received during the planning process are documented and shared with the MPO Policy Board for consideration as the Regional Transportation Plan is developed. The current Regional Transportation Plan addresses roadway capacity expansion in several places: • During scenario planning, the travel model was initially run without any local roadway capacity expansion projects to determine whether additional capacity would be needed. Based on that analysis, only two local roadway projects—CTH K and Reiner/Sprecher Road—were identified as necessary by 2050. State highway expansion projects were also included in this evaluation (pages 4-15 and 4-16). • The Traffic System Management and Operations section states: “Adding travel lanes to a roadway or other major capacity expansion is often not feasible or desirable because of the cost and many negative impacts to the environment, residents’ quality of life, and other roadway users.” (page 4-22) • Also on page 4-22, the MPO's Congestion Management Process (CMP) states: “Strategies that add roadway capacity, primarily at bottlenecks or other strategic locations, should only be considered when other strategies prove ineffective and doing so is consistent with other goals and policies.” • Figure F-a (page F-9) of the Congestion Management Process identifies Mid E as the target level of service (LOS) for "Freeway-Other" roadways in the planning area, which includes the Beltline.



	Question	Response
6	How is the MPO preparing for the return of Amtrak through the Hiawatha West expansion? Will our transit networks be ready? How will we ensure that stations in the Madison area are transit- and bike-accessible, rather than car-focused? What steps can the MPO and area communities take to help accelerate the return of intercity rail?	While the station location has not yet been finalized, the State Office Building in downtown Madison (1 W. Wilson St.) is currently the most likely site. This location is well served by the existing sidewalk network and shared-use paths and is within walking distance of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations on the Capitol Square, as well as several other Metro bus stops, making it highly accessible by walking, biking, and transit. Multiple public parking garages are also nearby, providing access for those traveling by car. The City of Madison is leading local efforts to bring intercity rail back to the area by evaluating potential station locations and engaging the public throughout the planning process. The MPO is supporting the City's efforts and will continue coordinating regional transportation planning to help ensure the station is well connected to the surrounding transportation network.

