

Minutes of the Third Meeting

OZAUKEE COUNTY TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DATE: February 21, 2017
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
PLACE: Room 118
Ozaukee County Administration Center
121 W Main Street
Port Washington, WI 53704

Members Present

Kathie Geracie County Board Supervisor/Chair Public Works Committee, Ozaukee County
Chair
Barbara Bates-Nelson Executive Director, United Way of Northern Ozaukee County
Dr. Wilma Bonaparte Vice President, MATC Mequon
Jon Edgren Director, Ozaukee County Department of Public Works
Pam King Executive Director, Grafton Chamber of Commerce
Amber Koehler.....Manager, Ozaukee County Shared-Ride Taxi Services
Tom Mlada..... Mayor, City of Port Washington
Michelle Pike Director, Aging and Disability Resource Center of Ozaukee County
Kathleen Schilling..... Executive Director, Ozaukee Economic Development
Jeff Sponcia..... Manager of Planning, Milwaukee County Transit System
Maureen Squire Executive Director, Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County
Blaine Szudajski.....Operations Supervisor, GO Riteway Transportation Group
(representing R.J. Bast)
Steve Taylor Vice President of Student Life, Concordia University Wisconsin
Jason Wittek..... Transit Superintendent, Ozaukee County Department of Public Works
Jessica Wolff.....Director of Planning and Development, Village of Grafton

Guests and Staff Present

Joseph Delmagori..... Senior Transportation Planner, SEWRPC
Christopher T. HiebertChief Transportation Engineer, SEWRPC
Gayle McCoy Driver, Ozaukee County Shared-Ride Taxi
Kevin J. Muhs Deputy Director, SEWRPC
Tom Richart County Board Supervisor, Ozaukee County

ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairwoman Geracie called the meeting of the Ozaukee County Transit Development Plan Advisory Committee to order at 10:01 a.m. Attendance was taken by circulating a sign-in sheet. She then asked the Committee members, guests, and staff to introduce themselves.

CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 24, 2017 MEETING

Chairwoman Geracie indicated that the first item on the agenda was the consideration and approval of the minutes for the previous meeting of the Advisory Committee held on January 24, 2017. Mr. Muhs directed the attention of the Committee members to Attachment A of the meeting minutes, which included three revised maps of travel patterns on the Shared-Ride Taxi service. He said the revised maps were created in response to the Committee's request to separate the travel analysis patterns into weekday, Saturday, and Sunday time periods. He said each map now also includes a note regarding the average number of weekday, Saturday, and Sunday trips that occurred during September 2016. Ms. Schilling made a motion to approve the January 24, 2017 meeting minutes. Mr. Edgren seconded the motion and the Advisory Committee unanimously approved the minutes.

DISCUSSION OF OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS FOR OZAUKEE COUNTY TRANSIT SERVICES

Mr. Muhs reviewed the three objectives with the Committee members and summarized the corresponding public transit principles, design and operating standards, and performance standards associated with each objective. He said that the objectives and their supporting standards and performance measures were based on those developed for the Washington County Transit Development Plan and indicated that the Committee could modify them to better reflect the Committee's goals for transit services in Ozaukee County.

During the review of Objective No. 1 and its associated standards and performance measures, Committee members had the following questions or comments:

1. Mr. Wittek stated that language on transit choice riders should be added to the description of the first objective to include those who make the personal decision to use transit rather than their own vehicle. Mr. Muhs said this objective would be revised to include these types of riders. He also noted that the first objective was slightly modified to focus on job-specific transit services to address a previous recommendation by the Committee.
2. Ms. Wolff suggested that phrasing for all of the objectives and their associated standards and performance measures use 'will' rather than 'should' to make a stronger statement regarding the County's expectations for its transit system. Mr. Muhs said the Commission staff tends to use wording that is advisory in nature but would review the narrative to determine places where changing the wording would be most appropriate.

3. After Mr. Muhs summarized the design standard on shuttle bus service, Chairperson Geracie reminded the Committee that they had discussed the creation of a shuttle service as a partnership with businesses to prevent the County from being entirely responsible for its implementation and operation. She requested that the standard be revised to include this statement, and Mr. Muhs said the revisions would be made to this standard.
4. Ms. McCoy asked if the County Justice Center is included as a type of major activity center. Mr. Muhs said it would be included as a government facility.
5. During the review of the performance standard on population, Mr. Muhs explained that transit riders are considered served by transit when they are within one-half mile of a commuter bus stop and within one-quarter mile of a local shuttle bus. In response to a question raised by Ms. Schilling regarding the differing walk distances and types of transit, Mr. Muhs explained that people are more inclined to walk a longer distance to a commuter bus stop since the service provides a faster travel time and has limited stops. With local bus service, he said the expectation from riders is the walk should be shorter because service is more frequent and many more bus stops are available. Mr. Wittek said he would be interested in any statistics that indicate how far people are willing to bike to get to a bus stop. Mr. Muhs said Commission staff could look into any research on the average length of bike trips for taking transit services.

[Secretary's Note: Following the meeting, Commission staff reviewed research on the average length of bike trips for taking transit services. A 2011 survey of passengers of the METRO transit system in Houston found that the average distance traveled by bike to transit stops was about 2.7 miles. In a 2013 study titled "*Public Transit Catchment Areas: The Curious Case of Cycle-Transit Users*", a survey found that bicyclists using transit in Philadelphia traveled on average 2.8 miles by bike to transit stops. By comparison, the study also found that bicyclists using transit in San Francisco traveled on average 5.4 miles by bike to transit stops. Commission staff found that the Los Angeles County

Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) defines biking distance to transit stops as three miles from a station.]

Ms. McCoy pointed out that those in motorized scooters and blind people might have different distances that they are willing to travel based on how comfortable or familiar they are with the surrounding environment. Chairperson Geracie stated she would be interested in knowing if there was data available on how far people are willing to walk to a park-ride lot. Mr. Muhs indicated it is likely best to survey riders to determine what acceptable walk distances might be. In response to the request by Mr. Wittek, Mr. Muhs said a reference to transit choice riders will be added to the performance standard on population.

6. Chairperson Geracie mentioned the importance of marketing to inform people of transit options that provide access to jobs. Mr. Sponcia said the issue is often that employers are not aware of the existing transit options that would allow them to reach a pool of potential employees or that they could operate a shuttle between their places of employment and a nearby transit service. Chairperson Geracie suggested an initial step could be to survey businesses to better understand if they are aware of existing transit services. Ms. McCoy said it was important to ensure that businesses know there are connections between Ozaukee County's Shared-Ride Taxi service and local MCTS bus routes, which can increase the opportunities for workers to get to jobs.
7. Chairperson Geracie reiterated that if there is a need to implement a shuttle bus service to employers, it should be done through a partnership between the County and local businesses. Ms. King said the hope of many employers is that their employees will earn enough money that they can purchase a car and not need to use a transit service. For this reason, she said many businesses are reluctant to fund and operate a shuttle that might end up being only a temporary service. She believed that a shuttle service that is financially supported and shared by multiple businesses could be an option but businesses would need to be willing to have staggered start times in order for this service to be effective. Ms. King further indicated that the Shared-Ride Taxi is a good service for workers but the half-hour window for drop-off times means employees could be quite early or late for work.

8. Mr. Sponcia said he often meets with social justice groups in the City of Milwaukee who say that there are limited opportunities to get to other counties because of a lack of access to transit. He said there needs to be more efforts to expand access to transit for those in the inner city, and that this lack of access to transit is often a primary reason many are unemployed. Ms. McCoy agreed and suggested that transit operators consider providing a person a free bus pass, especially to those in low-income populations, since it provides them with mobility and access to jobs.
9. Mr. Wittek stated that the County recently issued press releases to notify transit riders about the three new stops in Milwaukee County that are now being served by the Shared-Ride Taxi service.
10. In response to a question from Ms. Wolff regarding the jobs per acre described in the performance standard on density, Mr. Muhs indicated that four jobs per acre being needed to support local fixed-route transit service was likely written in error and he will verify the accuracy of that standard.

[Secretary's Note: Following the meeting, Commission staff reviewed job density minimums for fixed-route transit service, and determined that a standard of at least four jobs per acre was accurate, but not placed in the proper context. The standard was developed based on a minimum density that averages four jobs per acre over an entire quarter section (one-quarter square mile), and therefore the standard will be restated as at least 640 jobs per quarter section are needed to support local fixed-route transit service.]

During the review of Objective No. 2 and its associated standards and performance measures, Committee members had the following questions or comments:

11. After Mr. Muhs summarized the description for Objective No. 2, Mr. Wittek indicated that the Cedarburg and Port Washington park-ride lots are scheduled for new paving and accessibility improvements by WisDOT later this year.

12. Referring to the standard on bus stop and park-ride lot design, Mr. Sponcia suggested that the narrative include a reference to the appropriate spacing of bus stops in business parks. Mr. Muhs said this section would be revised to reflect this information.
13. In response to Ms. King inquiring how peak periods are defined, Mr. Muhs explained that peak periods are typically from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., but also stated that individual bus routes may have differing peak periods based on ridership, length of the route, and the destinations served by the route.
14. Referring to the design standard on service frequency, Ms. Schilling questioned if local fixed-route service needs to be included in this standard since this type of service does not currently exist in the County. Mr. Muhs indicated it should remain since it would apply to any potential shuttle service. Mr. Sponcia explained that MCTS is currently studying a possible shuttle service that would connect Bayshore Town Center to major business parks, but noted that the smaller vehicles that would be used for this type of service might result in some operational complications for the agency. Mr. Muhs explained that from an operations perspective, transit agencies prefer to keep a uniform fleet of vehicles since replacement parts, maintenance schedules, and expected service life will then be consistent across the fleet. With the smaller vehicles often associated with shuttle services, agencies are required to budget for different types of replacement parts and that the smaller vehicles need to be replaced more frequently than standard transit buses. Mr. Wittek suggested that the best scenarios for utilizing small vehicles for shuttle services could be explained in the alternatives chapter that will be written later on in the transit development plan process.
15. In response to questions from several Committee members about which standards apply now and which standards would be met in the future, Mr. Muhs clarified that the County does not necessarily need to meet all of the standards listed and indicated that they are being included as goals to guide decisions made by the County. Ms. Wolff asked that Commission staff develop an introduction explaining that the standards will not be seen as requirements for or promises by the County, but rather as guidance for the County. Mr. Muhs said this introduction will be included in Chapter III, preceding the figure containing the objectives and standards. Ms. McCoy asked if current fixed route services are conforming to the 60 minute off-peak headway frequency

recommended in the design standard. Mr. Wittek noted that this part of the standard applies to non-commuter routes, such as MCTS local routes, and that those routes meet this standard.

16. Ms. Wolff reiterated the need to use a more active voice in the wording and phrasing throughout the objectives and standards. Mr. Muhs responded that the appropriate parts of the figure would be modified to use more active voice and would then be provided to the Committee for review. Chairperson Geracie said she was fine with using a more active voice for the wording but cautioned that she does not want the plan to commit the County to providing a higher level of service than it can afford.
17. Mr. Wittek recommended that within this objective Commission staff include language about the 24-hour notice for reserving the Shared-Ride Taxi service as well as a goal regarding limiting the number of same day service denials that occur. Mr. Muhs said these recommendations would be included in the standards of the second objective.
18. Ms. Wolff asked about private transportation services and whether they could be included in the plan. Mr. Muhs said discussion on those services could be included in the alternatives chapter that will be developed later on in the process.
19. During the discussion on the standard on passenger demand, the Committee members provided examples as to when the Ozaukee County Express experiences crush loads and passengers are required to stand, notably during Summerfest. Mr. Muhs suggested including a standard relating to having no standing passengers on the Express, but the Committee decided not to include that standard.
20. Ms. King asked about what other agencies have comparable transit services to those operated by the County. Mr. Wittek indicated that there are comparable commuter bus services in Washington County and Waukesha County and that there are comparable shared-ride taxi services in Washington County, Door County, and the newly established service in Walworth County. Mr. Muhs said Commission staff would look into other national examples and that a comparison to local and national peer services would be included in Chapter IV. Mr. Wittek mentioned that

other agencies have reached out to the County seeking to use the County's transit service operations as a model for their own commuter bus and shared-ride taxi services.

21. After Mr. Muhs summarized the standard relating to on-time performance, Ms. Koehler mentioned that the Shared-Ride Taxi schedules an additional 30 minutes for pick-ups and 60 minutes for drop-offs when riders call to make an appointment to ensure that the service is on-time. In response to Chairperson Geracie, Ms. Koehler explained that riders can sign up for subscription rides if they will be picked up and dropped off from the same places every day. Ms. McCoy indicated that as a courtesy, the Shared-Ride Taxi operators will call riders to inform them when the taxi is running late or is delayed due to special needs of passengers, and operators will also contact employers to inform them if delays in the taxi service will make their employees late for work. Mr. Sponcia mentioned that the 90 percent on-time performance measure as described in the performance standard is particularly difficult for commuter bus routes due to traffic congestion. He said the actual on-time performance experienced by MCTS on Route 143 is typically around 70 percent.

During the review of Objective No. 3 and its associated standards and performance measures, Committee members had the following questions or comments:

22. Ms. Wolff suggested that language be added to the description of the objective about balancing service operations with budgetary concerns as a means of providing some flexibility to elected officials. Mr. Muhs said the objective would be revised to reflect this suggested language.
23. After Mr. Muhs highlighted the design standard on fare increases, Mr. Wittek explained that the last fare increases for the Express and the Shared-Ride Taxi were in 2012 and 2015, respectively. He also noted a proposed bill that was introduced through the State Legislature that would have established a standard fare box recovery ratio of 25 percent for all transit services in the State. The bill has not moved forward, but it would have been very difficult for small transit systems to meet this standard. Mr. Muhs suggested that the Committee should consider adding language to the standard stating that fare increases should not occur faster than the rate of inflation. Mr. Wittek said this standard could be added and noted that he is not opposed to reasonable fare increases since they are necessary to maintain the service levels of the transit system.

24. Referring to the operating standard on cost sharing, Mr. Muhs reminded the Committee that this standard was added in at the request of Chairperson Geracie. Mr. Wittek suggested that the standard elaborate that these services would deviate from established routes currently operated by the County's transit services, and therefore would constitute a special service targeted to an agency or employer. Ms. Wolff recommended that the standard also indicate that business improvement districts (BIDs) could serve as an additional method for funding any new transit services that specifically serve places of employment.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Schilling informed the Committee about an upcoming event that will provide an opportunity for the County to explain to businesses its transit services and the recent expansion of the Shared-Ride Taxi service to better connect with MCTS routes.

NEXT MEETING

Mr. Muhs suggested that the next Advisory Committee meeting be held in two months to give Commission staff time to develop drafts of Chapter III (Objectives and Standards) and Chapter IV (Evaluation of Existing Transit Services). After discussing possible dates, the Committee agreed to hold their next meeting on Tuesday, April 25 at 10:00 a.m. Ms. Schilling requested that Commission staff send an email to the Committee members with a reminder about the next meeting.

Mr. Muhs said the first public meeting to review and receive input on the transit development plan will likely be scheduled for either May or June, which is in addition to the business-focused input meeting that is scheduled to take place on May 10.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on a motion by Ms. King, seconded by Ms. Schilling, and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 11:24 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Muhs

KJM/CTH/JMD
#236255
4/17/2017