

Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the

**WAUKESHA AREA TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

DATE: October 2, 2019  
TIME: 1:00 p.m.  
PLACE: Waukesha Metro Administration and Maintenance Facility  
2311 Badger Drive  
Waukesha, WI

**Members Present**

Kathy Gale .....Executive Director, Eras Senior Network  
Chair  
Jennifer Andrews ..... Director of Community Development, City of Waukesha  
Community Development Department  
Sarah Butz..... Director, Community Benefit, ProHealth Care  
Dan Ertl.....Director of Community Development, City of Brookfield  
Evonne Johnson .....Transportation Manager, School District of Waukesha  
Prasanna Nanda.....Director, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Transportation Services  
Joe Peterangelo ..... Senior Researcher, Wisconsin Policy Forum  
Mary Check Smith ..... Manager, Waukesha County Department of Health and Human Services  
Aging and Disabilities Resource Center

**Guests and Staff Present**

Fred Abadi ..... Director of Public Works, City of Waukesha  
Rhiannon Cupkie (alternate for Allison Bussler)..... Manager, Administration,  
Waukesha County Department of Public Works  
Brian Engelking ..... Transit Director, City of Waukesha Metro  
Kevin Muhs..... Executive Director, SEWRPC  
Xylia Rueda .....Transportation Planner, SEWRPC  
Jennifer Sarnecki..... Principal Transportation Planner, SEWRPC  
Dave Steele ..... Executive Director, Regional Transit Leadership Council

**ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Gale called the second meeting of the Waukesha Area Transit Development Plan Advisory Committee to order at 1:00 p.m. Ms. Gale thanked everyone for attending and noted that attendance was taken by circulating a sign-in sheet for signature. Ms. Gale asked the Committee members, guests, and staff to introduce themselves.

**CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JULY 10, 2019, MEETING**

Ms. Gale indicated that the Committee is being asked to consider approval of the minutes of the July 10, 2019, meeting. She asked if Committee members had any changes, and upon hearing none, called for a

motion. Mr. Ertl made a motion to approve the minutes for the meeting held on July 10, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. Nanda, and the Advisory Committee unanimously approved the minutes.

**CONSIDERATION OF CHAPTER III, “PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS”, OF SEWRPC COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PLANNING REPORT NO. 336, “WAUKESHA AREA TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN: 2021-2025”**

At the request of Ms. Gale, Ms. Sarnecki reviewed the objectives, principles, standards, and performance measures and noted changes that were incorporated since the initial review at the July 10, 2019, meeting. She noted that not all standards may be met when analyzing the transit systems. Ms. Sarnecki stated that Commission staff received an email from Mr. Ertl following the July 10, 2019, meeting regarding the walking distance described in the preliminary draft of Figure 3.1, Public Transit Service Objectives, Principles, Standards, and Performance Measures for Waukesha Metro and the Waukesha County Transit System. After the brief summary of the email, Mr. Ertl added that the walking distance of one-quarter mile is not adequate in all parts of Waukesha County due to the lack of sidewalks and safe pedestrian crossings. Mr. Ertl further indicated that the completed document should include text, directed at local government, regarding the importance of incorporating pedestrian accommodations into roadway designs. Mr. Muhs stated his appreciation for Mr. Ertl’s comments and reiterated the importance of considering pedestrian safety when designing the transportation system.

The following questions and comments were raised by the Committee members during Ms. Sarnecki’s presentation on transit system objectives and standards:

1. Mr. Ertl noted that he defers to Commission staff to address his comment regarding the importance of local governments providing pedestrian accommodations where appropriate. Mr. Muhs noted to members and guests that walkability and accessibility is mentioned in Objective 2 of the document. Mr. Muhs added that Commission staff will consider how to incorporate pedestrian accommodations into the performance standards and evaluation of the transit systems.

[Secretary’s note:

In response to Mr. Ertl’s request, Figure 3.1, Objective 2, Bus Stop and Park-Ride Lot Design has been amended to state, “for local routes, place stops approximately every three blocks and provide accessible paths and crosswalks to bus stops.” A footnote further indicates that, “this standard encourages that accessible sidewalks and crosswalks be provided to bus stops and that all pedestrian facilities be designed and constructed in accordance with the Federal American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its implementing regulations.” Commission staff plans to address this standard by conducting a survey of each bus stop and indicating, at a minimum, the presence or absence of pedestrian accommodations, bus pads, curb ramps, and bus shelters. The findings of this survey will be referenced as part of the service evaluation, alternatives analysis, and plan recommendations. Specific bus stops in need of improvement will be identified, along with cost estimates and potential funding sources. The detailed bus stop survey would be included as an appendix to the Transit Development Plan.]

2. Mr. Ertl noted that the major activity centers in the performance standards in Objective 1 should include additional destinations, including cultural centers and parks. Ms. Sarnecki indicated that additional activity centers could be included based on direction from the Advisory Committee and further noted that government institutions and libraries could also be included. Mr. Ertl agreed that the list of activity centers should include libraries, government centers, and cultural centers.

3. Mr. Peterangelo inquired about the process of choosing activity centers and thresholds as noted in footnote “a” in Objective 1. Mr. Muhs stated that the identified activity centers reflect regional standards and align with the Commission’s regional planning goals. Following this comment, Ms. Check Smith asked if the list of activity centers listed in footnote “a” of Objective 1 were in any particular order. Mr. Muhs stated that the list is in no particular order.
4. Ms. Andrews requested that middle schools and high schools be included in the list of activity centers. Mr. Muhs indicated that schools could be included and requested confirmation from Mr. Engelking and Ms. Johnson regarding at what age school students typically begin to ride Waukesha Metro Transit. Mr. Engelking stated that middle school students take public transportation. Ms. Johnson agreed that students around this age group will start using the transit system independently.

[Secretary’s note:

At the direction of the Advisory Committee, Commission staff included the following activity centers to the analysis: public libraries in Waukesha County, public and private middle schools and high schools, government and public institutional centers, and cultural centers.]

5. In response to a question from Ms. Gale, Mr. Muhs noted that facilities that serve transit-dependent populations include senior centers, senior meal sites, residential facilities for seniors and/or people with disabilities, residential facilities for low-income individuals, and government facilities that provide significant services to members of transit-dependent population groups, as listed in footnote “a” of Figure 3.1.
6. Ms. Gale inquired if transit fare affordability could be included as a performance measure. Mr. Muhs indicated that Objective 3 includes a design and operating standard for fare increases, which specifies that fares not increase faster than the rate of inflation and that fare increases will be considered in the alternatives section of the Transit Development Plan in relation to when periodic fare increases should occur. Mr. Muhs noted that one option would be to compare the median income of households in the transit service area to determine the proportion of income that would be spent on transit fares and further indicated that Commission staff will conduct research to determine if other transit agencies include measurable performance standards related to fare affordability.

[Secretary’s note:

Commission staff reviewed literature from the Transit Cooperative Research Program related to transit performance measurement and evaluation. The literature indicated that a select number of larger transit agencies include fare affordability as a goal but a quantifiable standard related to fares was not specified and therefore, a performance metric for fare affordability will not be incorporated into Figure 3.1. Commission staff will include a discussion regarding fare affordability strategies in the Alternatives chapter for consideration by the City of Waukesha and Waukesha County when fare increases are proposed in the future, such as allowing riders to pay for a monthly pass in installments or fare capping for individuals at the cost of a weekly or monthly pass. Waukesha Metro is currently employing fare collection policies that can help make fares more affordable such as allowing free transfers, offering 31-day passes, and offering reduced fares for people with disabilities, seniors, youth between ages 5 and 18, and a summer youth pass.]

There being no further discussion, Chapter 3 of the Waukesha Area Transit Development Plan was approved with noted edits to incorporate pedestrian accessibility and expand the definition of the major activity centers, on a motion by Ms. Andrews, seconded by Ms. Check Smith, and carried unanimously by the Committee.

### **PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY MATERIALS FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE WAUKESHA METRO TRANSIT SYSTEM AND WAUKESHA COUNTY TRANSIT SYSTEM**

Ms. Sarnecki began the presentation with a brief explanation of the process and the metrics used for the evaluation. Mr. Muhs added that the peer group review is intended to determine how well the Waukesha Metro and County transit systems are performing compared to other transit operators in the State and Nation. He stated that transit operators with similar characteristics were chosen for the peer comparison. He stressed that it was difficult to find peers for Waukesha County Transit System because of the unique mix of commuter and local service it provides, such as the Route 1 extension on Bluemound Road. He also noted the blend of peak and mid-day services which is unlike other transit operators. Ms. Sarnecki noted that peer transit systems were initially selected using the methodology presented in the Transit Research Cooperative Program Report 141, A Methodology for Performance Measurement and Peer Comparison in the Public Transportation Industry, and that the data were generated from the Urban Integrated National Transit Database administered by the Florida Department of Transportation. Commission staff reviewed the list of potential peers to narrow the selection to those transit systems that most closely matched the service characteristics of the City of Waukesha and Waukesha County.

The following questions and comments were raised by the Committee members during Ms. Sarnecki's presentation on the evaluation of the transit systems:

1. Responding to an inquiry made by Mr. Nanda regarding the table on slide 7 under "Commute Direction Served", Mr. Muhs stated that difference between traditional versus reverse direction served is that the traditional direction focuses on the commute into downtown in the morning and the commute out of downtown in the evening whereas the reverse commute transports passengers out of downtown in the morning and into downtown in the evening. Mr. Muhs stated Route 901 is an example of a route that serves a traditional and reverse commuter pattern. Responding to an inquiry made by Mr. Peterangelo, Mr. Muhs stated that the table shown on slide 7 of the presentation identifies Waukesha County Transit as providing traditional and reverse commute trips to reflect that one of the most productive routes, Route 901, operates in both directions.
2. During Ms. Sarnecki's presentation, Mr. Muhs asked Committee members to consider other potential activity centers outside the City of Waukesha's municipal boundaries that may benefit from transit service such as the job resource centers at the Waukesha County Technical College located in the City of Pewaukee. He asked members to if this is something the staff should consider as a performance measure. Ms. Gale responded that hospitals and clinics are important destinations and inquired which major hospitals, medical centers, or clinics are not accessible by Waukesha Metro Transit. Ms. Butz indicated that the map shown on slide 11 shows certain clinics are outside the Waukesha Metro Transit Service area and requested that Commission staff indicate which hospitals or clinics are not served. Mr. Muhs indicated that staff will conduct further research on which medical facilities in the City are not served by Waukesha Metro.

[Secretary's Note:

Following the Advisory Committee meeting, Commission staff confirmed that the two medical centers currently not accessible by Waukesha Metro Transit in the City of Waukesha are the ProHealth Care Rehabilitation Hospital of Wisconsin located at

1625 Coldwater Creek Drive and the ProHealth Care Medical Clinic located at 2130 Big Bend Road.]

3. During Ms. Sarnecki's review of the graphs starting on slide 16, Mr. Muhs explained that this type of graph shows the range that meet the standards, Waukesha Metro Transit's performance, and the median of the peer group. Ms. Check Smith inquired about the numbers at the bottom right of the range on slide 16 and Mr. Muhs clarified that those numbers indicate the minimum amounts to meet the standard for each metric. In response to Ms. Gale, Ms. Sarnecki clarified that measures comparing annual statistics utilized 2017 data while the measures comparing percent annual change included data over a five-year period from 2013 through 2017. Mr. Muhs added that percent annual change is used because of the multiple number of local factors that could affect the operating expenses, which could result in permanently higher or lower values. He stated that using this method of evaluation shows if the transit system is progressing in a positive way relative to its peers under each measure.
4. Mr. Muhs noted that the graphic on slide 21, operating assistance per passenger, shows that Waukesha Metro compares favorably to its peers. He stated that the high median percent annual change among the peer systems indicates that they were experiencing a faster decline in ridership and fares than Waukesha Metro Transit during the 2013 through 2017 time period.
5. Responding to an inquiry made by Mr. Nanda regarding what is included in operating assistance, Mr. Muhs stated that amount of operating assistance includes the portion of the operating costs not covered by fares.
6. Mr. Muhs noted that the farebox recovery ratio figure on slide 22 shows that the Waukesha Metro Transit System is efficient with a larger percentage of operating expenses covered by fares. Mr. Engelking noted that Waukesha Metro fares have remained the same since 2008 and further stated that some transit systems in Wisconsin have similar fares as Waukesha Metro.
7. During Ms. Sarnecki's review of the Waukesha County Transit System's performance evaluation, Mr. Muhs stated that the primary purpose of much of the County's transit system is to provide travel between Waukesha and Milwaukee County and therefore the evaluation of transit service focuses on those individuals residing in facilities for seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income households. He also clarified the "Walking + Transit" designation on slide 25 indicates the distance that an individual could travel with a connecting local transit trip within 15-minutes or less.
8. Mr. Peterangelo asked what passenger miles per revenue vehicle mile measures, as shown on slide 30. Ms. Sarnecki stated that passenger miles per revenue vehicle mile is a good measure of passenger loading on a transit vehicle over the length of an entire route. For instance, if there are some segments of a particular route where many seats are empty, but high ridership on other portions of the route, passengers per revenue mile may be relatively high while passenger miles per revenue mile may be relatively low. Mr. Muhs elaborated that this also relates to ridership on an entire route where there are a high number of boardings and alightings on one segment versus another, such as Goerke's Corners in Brookfield. Mr. Muhs noted that most of the ridership on Waukesha County commuter routes occurs east of the City of Waukesha, rather than west of the City of Waukesha.
9. Ms. Gale inquired if the peer agencies that were selected for comparison against Waukesha County's service included contracted services or publically owned and operated transit services. Mr. Muhs indicated that the peer agencies selected include both contracted services and publically

operated services and added that it is not unusual for a transit system to provide commuter bus services through a contract. Mr. Muhs further noted that Waukesha County does not meet the operating expenses per revenue vehicle hour standard shown on slide 34, which is largely a result of the contracted service costs.

10. Ms. Check Smith thanked Commission staff for the information and presentation.

There being no further questions or comments, Ms. Sarnecki noted that staff will complete the data analysis for Chapter 4 of the transit development plan in coordination with Waukesha Metro Transit and Waukesha County Transit System staff, and present a draft of the chapter at the next meeting.

#### **INITIAL DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETINGS AND BUSINESS OUTREACH FOR THE WAUKESHA AREA TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Ms. Sarnecki requested input on the timing and format of future public involvement for the Waukesha Area Transit Development Plan. She further noted that outreach could be conducted in one or two rounds, with the earliest effort potentially occurring after approval of Chapter 4 and a potential second round of public outreach occurring after development and approval of draft alternatives in Chapter 5. She also noted that Commission staff would like input regarding the groups to include in the public involvement process, which may include the general public, businesses, or business groups. Mr. Muhs noted that the format could be open-house or a small group discussion format, and indicated that the small group discussion have generated helpful input during previous transit development plans' outreach efforts. The following questions and comments were generated as part of the initial discussion of public involvement and business outreach for the Waukesha Area Transit Development Plan:

1. Responding to an inquiry made by Ms. Gale, Mr. Muhs stated that the number of public meetings held has varied between transit development plans. The attendance levels also varied by county but Commission staff observed considerable participation resulting from focused outreach to the business community during recent transit development plan processes.
2. Ms. Check Smith asked if previous public involvement efforts for transit development plans have occurred after the completion of Chapter 4. Mr. Muhs responded that the timing and amount of public involvement has varied by plan, with Washington County holding one round of public involvement after the alternatives were developed and Ozaukee County conducting two rounds of public involvement. He further noted that the goal of public input is to ensure that the City and County receive meaningful input on what issues should be considered as part of the planning process and if transit alternatives meet the needs of the community.
3. Ms. Johnson inquired about what the timeframe for the outreach and requested that it not occur during the holidays. Mr. Muhs indicated that if the Advisory Committee decides to hold two rounds of public involvement, the first round would occur approximately in February 2020.
4. Mr. Ertl encouraged Commission staff to conduct targeted public involvement. In response to Ms. Gale, Mr. Ertl indicated that the groups to target should include business groups or assembled focus groups, and that established meetings might provide opportunities where the transit development plan could be incorporated as part of the regular agenda. Ms. Gale also suggested established groups such as Bus Buddies, a travel training group, and senior or low-income housing such as La Casa Village and Saratoga Heights, as examples for a targeted audience.
5. Responding to an inquiry made by Mr. Ertl regarding engaging local officials, Mr. Muhs stated it would depend on when City and County staff prefer to review the draft transit development plan

with their elected officials. Mr. Muhs further noted that Commission staff would be happy to present to local elected officials.

6. Ms. Butz suggested connecting with the Waukesha County Business Alliance and with leaders from human resource departments at key businesses in Waukesha County. Mr. Muhs agreed that the labor force conversation is important during this process, particularly including human resource professionals.
7. Ms. Gale stated the importance of reaching out directly to riders and potential riders—the employees, not just their employers—during the outreach stage. Ms. Check Smith agreed and added that we tend to survey those who currently use the service but we need to reach out to the people that are not currently using transit to understand why they do not take transit. Mr. Muhs stated that Commission staff will also work with the Waukesha-Ozaukee-Washington Workforce Development Board to better understand their transportation challenges as it relates to workforce.
8. Mr. Ertl encouraged Commission staff to include human resources representatives in the discussion to better understand if employers are unable to attract or retain employees as a result of transportation challenges. Ms. Gale gave an example of reaching out to senior housing employees and their employers regarding transportation to work, particularly challenges attracting and retaining certified nursing assistants. Mr. Nanda noted that the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee at Waukesha is experiencing challenges recruiting students to attend the campus in the City of Waukesha due to lack of frequent transit service.

Mr. Muhs asked if there were any further questions or comments regarding the public involvement and business outreach process. There were none. Ms. Gale noted that no action would be needed on this item.

#### **NEXT MEETING OF THE WAUKESHA AREA TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Mr. Muhs indicated that the next meeting will include consideration of Chapter 4 and suggested that the next meeting could tentatively be scheduled for Wednesday, December 11, 2019, at 1:00 p.m. The Committee members agreed and Commission staff subsequently sent a calendar appointment to Advisory Committee members.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on a motion by Ms. Butz, and seconded by Mr. Nanda and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin J. Muhs  
Recording Secretary