

Minutes of the Meeting

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING FOR THE MILWAUKEE URBANIZED AREA

DATE: October 11, 2021

TIME: 1:30 p.m.

PLACE: Virtual Meeting

Milwaukee Urbanized Area Members Present

Donna Brown-Martin, Chair Director, Department of Transportation, Milwaukee County
Robert J. Bauman Alderman, City of Milwaukee
Daniel Boehm President and Managing Director,
Milwaukee County Transit System
Scott Brandmeier Director of Public Works/Village Engineer,
Village of Fox Point
Karen Braun Manager of Engineering Services,
Department of Public Works, Waukesha County
Allison M. Bussler Director of Public Works, Waukesha County
Chad Chrisbaum Engineer in Charge, Transportation Infrastructure Division,
(Representing Kimberly Montgomery) Department of Public Works, City of Milwaukee
Alex Damien Interim Director of Public Works, City of Waukesha
Peter Daniels City Engineer, City of West Allis
Jon Edgren Director of Public Works/Highway Commissioner,
Ozaukee County
Julie Esch Deputy Director, Department of Transportation,
Milwaukee County
Russell Goodwin Supervisor, 18th District, Milwaukee County
Thomas M. Grisa Director, Department of Public Works, City of Brookfield
Jerrold Kruschke City Engineer, City of Milwaukee
Sam Leichtling Planning Manager, Department of City Development,
City of Milwaukee
Michael Martin Director of Public Works, Village of Hales Corners
Jeffrey S. Polenske Commissioner of Public Works, City of Milwaukee
Scott M. Schmidt Highway Commissioner/County Engineer,
Washington County
Andrea Weddle-Henning Transportation Engineering Manager
Milwaukee County Department of Transportation
William Wehrley City Engineer, City of Wauwatosa
Dennis Yaccarino Senior Budget and Policy Manager, City of Milwaukee

Non-Voting Members Present

Kevin Muhs, Secretary Executive Director,
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
Brian Udovich Highway Operations Manager,
Highway Department, Jefferson County

Guests and Staff Present

Julie Anderson Director,
Racine County Public Works and Development Services

Michelle Beasley Citizen

Tim Birkel Engineering Supervisor, City of Cudahy

David Bizot Chief, Regional Pollutant and Mobile Source Section,
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Tammy Bockhorst Legislative Aide, Alderman Bauman’s Office,
City of Milwaukee

Roslin Burns Program and Planning Analyst, Southeast Region,
Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Leeann Butschlick Director of Public Works, Village of Shorewood

Rhiannon Cupkie Business Manager, Department of Public Works,
Waukesha County

Melinda K. Dejewski City Engineer/Director of Public Works,
City of St. Francis

Mike Didier Town Chairman, Town of Port Washington

Brian Engelking Transit Director, Waukesha Metro Transit

Anthony Geiger Grants Manager, Milwaukee County

Traci Gengler Principal Engineer, City of West Allis

Bryan Haas Project Engineer, City of Greenfield

Tom Hafner Administrator/Public Works Director, City of Delafield

Tom Hagie Administrator, Town of Brookfield

Christopher Hiebert Chief Transportation Engineer,
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Ryan Hoel Deputy Chief Transportation Engineer,
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Ethan Johnson Senior Engineer,
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Jeffrey Katz City Engineer and Director of Neighborhood Services,
City of Greenfield

Ben McKay Deputy Director,
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Montre Moore Public Involvement and Outreach Specialist,
Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Glen E. Morrow City Engineer/Director of Public Works,
City of Franklin

Lucas Pichler Project Engineer-Transportation,
City of New Berlin

Tamara Simonson City Engineer, City of New Berlin

Ken Smith Research Analyst, Milwaukee County

Jacob Varnes Local Program Manager, Southeast Region,
Wisconsin Department of Transportation

Mike Wieser Director of Engineering and Public Works,
City of Cedarburg

ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m. by Ms. Brown-Martin, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Transportation System Planning and Programming for the Milwaukee Urbanized Area (Milwaukee TIP Committee). She welcomed all present. Mr. Hoel indicated that the attendance of Committee members and guests participating via the webinar was being recorded by Commission staff, and he asked attendees participating via conference call to introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 22, 2021, MEETING

Ms. Brown-Martin stated that the Milwaukee TIP Committee is being asked to consider approval of the minutes of the September 22, 2021, meeting. Mr. Hoel noted that the minutes include information requested by Committee members at that meeting related to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnerships Programs and information from Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee regarding their processes or procedures for project identification related to their requested changes to the STP-M evaluation process. He noted that the Committee received separate memorandums addressing requests made during the September 22nd meeting for information on criteria used by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and other Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and for an evaluation of the two alternative methods for implementing the suggested changes to the STP-M process, adding that both would be discussed during this meeting.

Responding to an inquiry by Mr. Grisa, Mr. Polenske stated that the City of Milwaukee began using its current process within the past year to evaluate City projects, such as its rapid-implementation-type projects or spot improvement projects. Mr. Polenske noted that the City of Milwaukee also is addressing equity through selecting projects in neighborhood revitalization areas, in areas with higher populations of people of color, and in areas with lower vehicle availability. Mr. Polenske further noted that the City of Milwaukee introduced its Complete Streets policy in 2018 and that it is developing a guidebook that will provide a more detailed process for implementing the policy.

Mr. Grisa identified an error in the minutes regarding the organization shown for Mr. Schmidt. Mr. Hoel responded that the final minutes would correctly reflect his organization.

Ms. Brown-Martin asked if the Committee members had any additional changes to the minutes, and upon hearing none, called for a motion. Mr. Grisa made a motion to approve the minutes, as corrected, for the meeting held on September 22, 2021. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bussler, and the Committee unanimously approved the minutes.

CONTINUED DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL CHANGES TO THE EVALUATION, PRIORITIZATION, AND RECOMMENDATION PROCESS FOR FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM—MILWAUKEE URBANIZED AREA FUNDING

Ms. Brown-Martin stated that the Committee would next continue its discussion, begun during its September 22, 2021, meeting, of potential changes to the evaluation, prioritization, and recommendation process for Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Surface Transportation Block Grant Program—Milwaukee Urbanized Area (STP-M) funding. Ms. Brown-Martin stated that, over the years, the members of this Committee have constructively worked together to develop and refine the process for evaluating and prioritizing roadway projects recommended for STP-M funding. She further stated that when the Commission staff requested Milwaukee TIP Committee members and local communities with arterial

facilities eligible for STP-M funding to submit suggestions for potential changes to the STP-M evaluation and prioritization process, Milwaukee County did not submit its suggested changes with a goal of forcing the Committee to make changes that some counties and communities may be uncomfortable with or are opposed to. She noted that Milwaukee County would like to maintain the Committee's spirit of collaboration.

Mr. Muhs noted that many comments were received following the Committee's previous meeting, and he stated that he wanted to clarify that Commission staff did not receive any requests to change the current methodology for allocating funding between project types. He further stated that the 10 percent smaller sponsor set-aside would not be changed by the requested changes proposed by Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee.

Mr. Hoel reviewed the SEWRPC Staff Memorandum entitled *Summary of Types of Criteria Utilized by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and Other Metropolitan Planning Organizations in their Evaluation of Projects for Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Funding*. Mr. Hoel noted that during the previous Committee meeting, Ms. Bussler requested additional information on the process the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) uses to evaluate projects for STP-Urban (in small urban areas), STP-Rural, and the Local Bridge improvement programs. Mr. Hoel indicated that WisDOT's process utilizes their web-based Local Entitlement System (LES) application to evaluate, approve, and manage projects and entitlement balances for the Department's STP-Urban (small urban areas), STP-Rural, and Local Bridge improvement programs. He noted that the LES allocates STP-Urban, STP-Rural, and Local Bridge funds to local units of government statewide using an "entitlement" methodology that calculates each municipality's entitlement balance based on past obligations and current funding amounts. Mr. Hoel stated that this Committee originally used a similar process to evaluate and prioritize projects for STP-M funding. However, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) considered this process to be a suballocation of STP funds, which FHWA has indicated is not permitted.

[Secretary's Note: The staff memorandum entitled *Summary of Types of Criteria Utilized by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and Other Metropolitan Planning Organizations in their Evaluation of Projects for Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation Block Grant Program Funding* can be accessed from the following link:
<https://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPCFiles/CommissionFiles/CommitteeFiles/2021/2021-10-07-memo-b-mke-tip.PDF>]

Mr. Hoel then summarized the Commission staff's review of the processes used by seven other MPOs for the evaluation and prioritization of roadway projects for STP funding. He noted that the MPOs selected for the review serve urbanized areas both larger and smaller than the Milwaukee urbanized area, and they are located geographically close to the Milwaukee urbanized area. Mr. Hoel noted that the other MPOs use a wide range of criteria to evaluate and prioritize their projects, but that most of the other MPOs utilize desired outcome criteria to a greater extent than currently utilized in the Milwaukee urbanized area. Mr. Hoel noted that the Indianapolis MPO's process is the most similar—in terms of the overall weighting of physical and operational-type criteria and desired-outcome-type criteria—to the process currently utilized in the Milwaukee urbanized area.

Following Mr. Hoel's presentation of the criteria utilized by WisDOT and other MPOs for local STP projects, the following comments and questions were raised by the Committee:

1. Responding to a question from Mr. Grisa, Mr. Hoel stated that MPOs for urbanized areas with populations of 200,000 or more are not permitted to suballocate STP funds. He noted that the Federal government wants to ensure that its investments in roadways in these urbanized areas are being made wisely through performance-based planning and project selection and are consistent with the MPO's regional transportation plan.

Mr. Hoel then reviewed the SEWRPC Staff Memorandum entitled *Evaluation of Potential Changes to the Process to Evaluate, Prioritize, and Recommend Projects for Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation Block Grant Program—Milwaukee Urbanized Area Funding*. He noted that even though Commission staff analyzed the impacts of two potential alternatives (Alternatives 1 and 2) for implementing changes suggested by Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee to the process that would be utilized to evaluate and prioritize projects for years 2026-2027 STP-M funds, the Committee does not necessarily have to pick one or the other. Mr. Hoel also noted that if the Committee chooses to change the evaluation and prioritization process, the weighting of the various criteria will be an important topic to consider by the Committee. Mr. Hoel stated that Alternatives 1 and 2 included adjustments to existing criteria pertaining to job/housing balance and transit accessibility, elimination of the existing transit, bicycle, and pedestrian accommodations criteria, and the addition of new criteria pertaining to transit/highway reliability, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, minority/low-income accessibility, local funding to support affordable housing, and proximity to land uses zoned consistent with the urban-type land uses recommended in VISION 2050—the year 2050 regional land use and transportation plan.

[Secretary's Note: The staff memorandum entitled *Evaluation of Potential Changes to the Process to Evaluate, Prioritize, and Recommend Projects for Federal Highway Administration Surface Transportation Block Grant Program—Milwaukee Urbanized Area Funding* can be accessed from the following link:
<https://www.sewrpc.org/SEWRPCFiles/CommissionFiles/CommitteeFiles/2021/2021-10-07-memo-a-mke-tip.PDF>]

With respect to Commission staff's analysis of the proposed affordable housing criterion, Mr. Hoel noted that Commission staff used information that was immediately available, and he stated that local municipalities would be able to provide additional information as necessary. With respect to Commission staff's analysis of the proposed land use criterion, Mr. Hoel indicated that older, generalized zoning data from 2000 was used in the analysis, and that newer data would need to be assembled if this criterion would be included in the evaluation and prioritization process.

Mr. Hoel stated that the Commission staff evaluated the effects that Alternatives 1 and 2 would have had on evaluating and prioritizing 21 reconstruction projects, 23 resurfacing/reconditioning projects, two capacity expansion projects, and 10 smaller sponsor set-aside projects evaluated in 2019 and 2020 for years 2023-2025 STP-M funding. With respect to the reconstruction projects, Mr. Hoel stated that implementing Alternative 1 would have moved projects three to four places up or down the ranking on average, with one project increasing its rank by 10 places and one project decreasing in rank by 11 places. Implementing Alternative 1 would not have changed the highest-ranking project (the City of Wauwatosa's North Avenue project), but it would have yielded a new second-ranked project (the City of Milwaukee's W. Vliet Street project would have replaced Milwaukee County's CTH BB project). Mr. Hoel indicated that implementing Alternative 2 would have moved projects two places up or down the ranking on average, with one project increasing its rank by five places and one project decreasing its rank by four places. Implementing Alternative 2 would have yielded the same top two ranked projects as Alternative 1.

With respect to the resurfacing/reconditioning projects, Mr. Hoel noted that implementing Alternative 1 would have resulted in projects moving 5 places up or down the ranking on average, with one project increasing its rank by nine places and one project decreasing its rank by 13 places. Mr. Hoel stated that implementing Alternative 1 would not have changed the highest-ranking project (the City of Milwaukee's E/W. Locust Street project), but it would have yielded a new second-ranked project (the Village of West Milwaukee's W. Greenfield Avenue project would have replaced Waukesha County's CTH O project). Mr. Hoel indicated that implementing Alternative 2 would have resulted in projects moving three places up or down the ranking on average, with three projects increasing their rank by five places, and one project decreasing its rank by nine places. Implementing Alternative 2 would have yielded the same top two ranked projects as Alternative 1. In addition, implementing Alternative 2 would have yielded a new third-ranked project (the City of West Allis' W. National Avenue project) that, due to its lower amount of requested funding, would have been recommended for funding.

With respect to the capacity expansion projects, Mr. Hoel stated that implementing Alternative 1 or Alternative 2 would not have changed the ranking of the two projects, with Waukesha County's CTH O project remaining as the sole recommended project for funding. Mr. Hoel noted that implementing Alternative 1 or Alternative 2 would have improved the total score of the City of Wauwatosa's N. 124th Street project with respect to the total score of Waukesha County's project.

With respect to the smaller sponsor set-aside projects, Mr. Hoel indicated that since the Village of West Milwaukee's W. Greenfield Avenue reconditioning project would have been initially recommended for funding, it was not included in the evaluation of projects seeking the smaller sponsor set-aside funding. Mr. Hoel stated that implementing Alternative 1 would have resulted in projects moving one place up or down on average, with one project increasing its rank by two places and one project decreasing its rank by two places. Implementing Alternative 1 would not have changed the highest-ranking project (the City of Oak Creek's W. Drexel Avenue project), but it would have yielded a new second-ranked project (the City of Greenfield's S. 68th Street project would have replaced the Village of Greendale's W. Grange Avenue project). Mr. Hoel stated that implementing Alternative 2 would have resulted in projects moving zero to one place up or down the ranking on average, with one project increasing its rank by two places and two projects decreasing their rank by one place. Implementing Alternative 2 would have yielded the same top-two ranked projects as Alternative 1.

Following Mr. Hoel's presentation of the memorandum summarizing the evaluation of the two alternative methods for implementing the requested STP-M evaluation and prioritization process changes, the following questions and comments were raised by the Committee:

1. Responding to a question from Mr. Grisa, Mr. Hoel stated that the determination of projects of areawide significance was used in the original process, developed in 2013, serving as an initial screening to identify which projects would be evaluated with essentially the pre-2013 STP-M procedures. He added that the initial screening of projects with areawide significance has not been used since 2015, when the STP-M evaluation and prioritization process was changed to remove the secondary evaluation. He noted that the determination of areawide significance is used in the procedures for calculating the amount of STP-M funds to each project category, and to help the Committee ensure the quality of projects recommended for funding. Mr. Hoel stated that as the intent of the small sponsor set-aside category is to give those less-competitive projects a chance to receive STP-M funds, such projects would not necessarily need to meet the threshold for areawide significance to be funded.
2. Ms. Bussler stated that both Alternatives 1 and 2 would be devastating for projects getting funded in Waukesha County, result in a shift of tens of millions of dollars out of Waukesha County to

other areas. She added that it would be difficult for Waukesha County to replace these funds with local funds to make up for the loss, which would result in the County seeking other funding sources—potentially at the detriment of other counties and communities in the urbanized area. She added that she would have desired specific recommendations by Commission staff for implementing the proposed changes for Committee consideration and action.

3. Mr. Polenske stated that when VISION 2050 was adopted, it set a path for the Region to follow to improve other modes of transportation in addition to arterial roadways. Mr. Polenske said that the Committee needs to think more broadly about transportation projects and the people that the urbanized area's governments are collectively trying to serve, such as people who need access to jobs and people who do not have access to an automobile. He stated that the Committee should be thinking about how it can help achieve the recommendations of VISION 2050. Mr. Bauman added that the Region's citizens expressed their support for affordable housing and improved transit as part of the development of VISION 2050, which was reflected in the plan. He added that implementing the proposed changes to the STP-M process was an obvious way to implement those VISION 2050 objectives.
4. Mr. Grisa commended Commission staff for their efforts in responding to the Committee's requests for additional information. He said that he understands the perspectives of Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties, and each's respective communities, and that the Committee should try to find a compromise that considers these different perspectives. Mr. Grisa noted that he does not fully share Mr. Bauman's perspective of VISION 2050, as the plan includes roadway improvements and capacity expansions in addition to improvements to other modes of transportation.
5. Mr. Grisa expressed concern that the Committee does not have enough information to decide at this meeting whether to significantly alter the STP-M project evaluation and prioritization process at this meeting. He noted that the Committee should take the time to fully understand and consider the existing criteria and any proposed new criteria. With respect to the existing job/housing criterion, Mr. Grisa stated that Committee members should understand how the job/housing balance criterion is calculated before applying it to all projects. For example, he would like to know whether the job/housing balance calculation accounts for lower-wage jobs in the suburbs that are staffed with college and high-school students who live at home or who live with friends. With respect to the existing transit accessibility criterion, Mr. Grisa noted that proposed projects in the Village of Butler would receive no transit access bonus points—even though existing bus transit service operates along its eastern border (N. 124th Street)—while proposed projects in the Village of Elm Grove would receive transit access bonus points. Mr. Grisa further noted that it is difficult to fully implement some of the suggested criteria without completing preliminary engineering, which is not required as part of project eligibility.
6. Mr. Grisa stated that he could support the doubling of the maximum points that could be received for the transit, bicycle, and pedestrian accommodations criterion from 5 to 10 points. Mr. Grisa said that this minor change would serve as a compromise while the Committee takes time to further consider the evaluation changes proposed by Milwaukee County and the City of Milwaukee.
7. Ms. Brown-Martin acknowledged comments provided by Ms. Dejewski and Mr. Brandmeier via the virtual meeting chat box regarding the need for additional data and time for considering major changes to the STP-M project evaluation and prioritization process. She suggested that it may be best for communities in the urbanized area to take the time to collectively think about and work

through what it would mean to consider “desirable outcomes” to a greater extent in the evaluation and prioritization process. She stated that Milwaukee County does not want to disrupt the coalition of local governments that have effectively worked together through this Committee.

8. Mr. Muhs stated that the Commission staff would welcome further direction on this topic from the Committee. He stated that there is room to reconsider parts of the STP-M project evaluation and prioritization process with respect to VISION 2050’s recommendations. He noted that VISION 2050 is a comprehensive plan, and that there are elements of the plan that could be better considered as part of the STP-M project evaluation and prioritization process. Mr. Muhs suggested that it may be best for the evaluation and prioritization for the current round of STP-M funding to include relatively minor changes, such as the one suggested by Mr. Grisa. Mr. Muhs added that the Committee could further explore additional changes to the STP-M evaluation and prioritization process next year—an off-year for STP-M evaluation and prioritization—so that it can be completed well before the next STP-M funding cycle. Mr. Muhs acknowledged additional comments provided via the virtual meeting chat box that some communities desire better transit, but they have little ability to control those outcomes (similarly, some counties have little ability to influence zoning).
9. Ms. Bussler stated that she appreciated Ms. Brown-Martin’s willingness to take the time to explore potential changes to the STP-M evaluation and prioritization process in more detail. She noted that suburban communities often focus on trying to solve the transit “last mile problem,” yet these communities would not receive transit access points under the current process.
10. Mr. Leichtling stated that, while he recognized the desire to pause and further consider potential changes to the STP-M evaluation and prioritization process, the information provided in the SEWRPC Staff Memorandum related to criteria utilized by other MPOs illustrates that the Milwaukee urbanized area is falling behind other MPOs with respect to using desired-outcome criteria. However, he stated that the City of Milwaukee does not intend the proposed changes to be a divisive issue and that City staff would be willing to further discuss this topic with the other Committee members.
11. Mr. Martin stated that he appreciated the comments from Ms. Bussler and Mr. Grisa, and he stated that he agreed with Mr. Grisa that the Committee should use the current STP-M evaluation and prioritization process for now and further explore potential changes to the process next year. He noted that under Alternatives 1 and 2, the major sponsors (those with at least a 2.5 percent share of total estimated vehicle miles of travel) would continue to have their projects funded.
12. Mr. Polenske stated that he is open to further discussion on considering desired outcome, and other criteria to a greater extent, but recommended that the Committee not take too long to act on such changes.

Ms. Brown-Martin asked whether further work to consider changes to the STP-M process should be done through the committee as a whole or as a subcommittee. Mr. Muhs stated that the further discussion of potential changes to the process should be open to all Committee members and communities with eligible projects.

Mr. Martin then made a motion that the Committee continue to evaluate and prioritize STP-M projects using the existing process previously established by the Committee. Mr. Brandmeier seconded the motion. Mr. Grisa then made a motion to amend the current motion to double the maximum points awarded for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian accommodations from five points each to 10 points.

Responding to an inquiry by Mr. Leichtling, Mr. Grisa confirmed that the doubling of points would apply to all project categories. Mr. Damien seconded the motion to amend. Ms. Brown-Martin called for a vote to approve the motion to amend, and the motion to amend was approved on a vote of 21 ayes and 1 nay, with Mr. Schmidt indicating opposition to the motion.

Ms. Brown-Martin then called for a vote to approve the motion, as amended, to evaluate and prioritize STP-M projects using the existing process previously established by the Committee, modified to double the maximum points awarded for transit, bicycle, and pedestrian accommodations from five points each to 10 points for all project categories. The motion was approved on a vote of 21 ayes and 1 nay, with Mr. Schmidt indicating opposition to the motion.

Ms. Brown-Martin indicated that she would work with Commission staff to set up future meetings to continue the exploration of potential options for modifying the current STP-M project evaluation and prioritization process.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Milwaukee TIP Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m. on a motion from Ms. Weddle-Henning, a second from Mr. Martin, and a unanimous vote to adjourn by the Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin J. Muhs
Secretary