



## Department of Transportation

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Director's Report – June 11, 2021

This Director's report provides both very encouraging news and very concerning news. We will work to address both in the coming months.

Sincerely,

Thomas W. Lynch, PE, PTOE, PTP, AICP  
Director of Transportation  
City of Madison

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### Major Events

- **BRT** - On May 28, 2021 the FTA released their project evaluations and recommendations for CIG funding. Of the 35 Small Starts projects in Project Development, Madison E-W BRT was one of the 5 projects recommended for funding. You can see the project ratings on the following link (proposed Small Starts is on the bottom of page 8): <https://www.transit.dot.gov/sites/fta.dot.gov/files/2021-05/FY22-Annual-Report-on-Funding-Recommendations.pdf>  
You can see the US DOT FY 22 Budget recommendation here (Madison E-W BRT page 58): [https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2021-05/Budget-Highlights2022\\_052721\\_FINAL.PDF](https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2021-05/Budget-Highlights2022_052721_FINAL.PDF)  
Congress needs to approve FY 22 budget, but it is highly likely this Federal funding will be in place. Key BRT items that the City needs to address include:
  - Approving the City's BRT budget in the 2022 Capital Budget, which serves as the local match to this federal funding.
  - Completing the Environmental Document.
  - Obtaining 3<sup>rd</sup> party agreements from entities with an interest in the route (such as WisDOT, Shorewood Hills, UW, etc.)
  - Completing both 30% and 60% design.
  - Preparing for bus procurement, which has a very long lead time.
- **Federal Transportation and Infrastructure Funding** – Representative Mark Pocan selected the Atwood Ave reconstruction project as his member-designated (ear-marked) submittal, which was subsequently included in the House Bill – the “INVEST in America Act”. Full bill text listing the project can be found on page 177 at this location: <https://docs.house.gov/meetings/PW/PW00/20210609/112745/BILLS-117-HR3684-D000191-Amdt-1.pdf>. While not approved yet – this is encouraging news and has good potential to help the City and the MPO region with project funding.

- State Transit Funding – Metro Transit receives about 30 percent of its annual operating funding from the State. On June 8<sup>th</sup> the Joint Finance Budget committee voted to cut transit funding by 50 percent in the 2022-23 budget for Tier A systems (Madison and Milwaukee). Funding for other transit systems in the state is maintained at current levels. The reduction in state funding will deplete the federal recovery funding Metro received and will likely affect services levels/area in coming years. <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/JFC-Adopts-Transportation-Funding-Plan.html?soid=1102478489879&aid=k4hihfQUGGE> .

#### Transit

- BRT - Hosted a public information meeting May 11 that was well attended. Presented updated information on station design and location.
- BRT – Urban Design Commission May 26 provided a recommendation for the station structure design. We are now working with consultants to determine feasibility and how it will fit in different station locations. Further modifications are likely as we go through the Section 106 (historic) process.
- BRT – We have hired a contract Project Manager to help. Graham Carey has managed numerous BRT projects, such as Viva in York Region Canada, EmX BRT in Eugene, Jazz BRT in Monterey, and Tempo in Oakland.
- Transit Network Redesign – Internal workshops in early May developed two concept networks. One focuses on ridership/frequency, one focuses on coverage. Both will likely be presented to TPPB in July.

#### Transportation Demand Management

- TPPB/Plan Commission workshop on May 13 presented the initial program. Many good comments were received and some loose ends need to be resolved. The project is on a small pause as we wait for new staff to join transportation.

#### Parking Enforcement

- Parking Division is pursuing different space options to house staff and vehicles. There are promising opportunities. A Communication Plan is due to Council June 18.

#### Twenty is Plenty

- Transportation Commission selected the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood (District 2) and the Hammersley/Theresa neighborhood (Districts 10 and 20) for phase 1 of the Twenty is Plenty Program to be implemented this year. Staff is working on the logistics and is working with alders and residents of the selected neighborhoods to implement the program.

#### Pedestrian and Bicycle Enhancement Projects

- With close collaboration with City Engineering, Metro Transit and Police Department, Traffic Engineering finished this year's project development process. The citywide requests were studied and prioritized based on safety, operations and equity considerations. The project list was presented at the Transportation Commission and the staff team is starting the implementation and construction process.

#### Shared Streets and Slow Streets Program

- Last year, Traffic Engineering launched the Shared Streets Program to provide additional space for people to safely socially distance while walking and biking. At the end of the program, Traffic Engineering conducted a survey with our residents late last year. Staff received over 1000

responses, with 84% of the respondents supporting the program. After reviewing the public inputs and learning from the experiences of other cities nationwide, Traffic Engineering is bringing back the program for 2021, with equipment, signage and equity improvements.

- To build back better post COVID, Traffic Engineering is also proposing to launch and experiment a new Slow Streets Program this year, which aims to modify street conditions to support walking/biking and test new street configurations to find solutions to neighborhood traffic issues.
- The plan for the 2021 Shared Streets and Slow Streets programs was presented at the Transportation Commission at its May 12 meeting and was well received by the Commission. Staff is working on implementation of these projects after the equipment needs for the Ride the Drive events.