



# City of Madison

City of Madison  
Madison, WI 53703  
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## Meeting Minutes - Amended ADA TRANSIT SUBCOMMITTEE TO THE TRANSIT AND PARKING COMM

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Monday, July 16, 2012

5:15 PM 15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, Room LL-130 (Madison  
Municipal Bldg)

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### 2. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

**Guests:** Mike Cechvala

**Staff:** Crystal Martin, Ann Gullickson, Chuck Kamp, Ann Schroeder

The meeting was called to order at 5:19 PM.

**Present:** 5 -

Jeanne M. Tregoning; Susan M. De Vos; Mary E. Jacobs; Carl D.  
DuRocher and William J. Tangney

**Absent:** 1 -

Bridget R. Maniaci

**Excused:** 1 -

Michael A. Huckaby

### 1. Proper Meeting Notification

The meeting was properly noticed.

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. De Vos moved approval; Mr. DuRocher seconded. The motion was  
approved by voice vote/other.

### 4. PUBLIC APPEARANCES

There were no public appearances.

### 5. DISCLOSURES AND RECUSALS

There were no disclosures or recusals.

### 6. [27049](#)

Subcommittee Organizational Meeting  
a. Election of Officers

b. Meeting Time and Date

a. Election of Officers – Ms. De Vos nominated Ms. Jacobs to be chair. Ms. Brunette-Tregoning seconded. There were no other nominations. Ms. Jacobs was willing to serve. The nomination was approved by acclamation. Ms. De Vos nominated Mr. Tangney for vice chair; Mr. DuRocher seconded. There were no other nominations. The nomination was approved by acclamation.

b. Meeting Time and Date – Mr. DuRocher recommended we keep the same time. Other committee members agreed. The meeting time will stay the same for 2013. We will meet the third Monday of every month at 5:15 PM.

7. [27050](#)

Bus Stop Spacing - Mike Cechvala, MPO

Mr. Cechvala said that as part of the Transportations Planning Board's Transit Development Plan (TDP), they look at bus stop spacing. On the isthmus, a long block is about 660 feet long and a short block is about 330 feet long. A generally accepted standard in the transit industry is that ¼ mile between stops is what people are willing to walk before they think it is too far. It is the general opinion of staff and others that Metro stops are currently too close together, and that we should change the spacing.

Mr. Cechvala showed a chart with bus stop spacing in different areas. For example, most stops on the Route 80s are between 3/16 and ¼ mile apart. In areas where we have more peripheral service – such southwest of Mineral Point Road, Raymond Road, and Allied Drive, we still have most stops in the 3/16 to ¼ mile range. The trade off of stop spacing is access to transit (stops closer together) versus speed and reliability of transit service (stops further apart).

Metro has surpassed 15 million annual rides and cannot sustain the reliability of the system and keep the current number of stops. If people miss their transfer, they will have to wait 30 to 60 minutes. That is a big issue. There have been some major reliability issues for Metro Transit that have been compounded by this increased ridership.

Factors contributing to bus stop delays include:

- Deceleration
- Opening/closing doors
- Re-entering traffic
- Re-acceleration

These factors can be minimized by appropriately spacing bus stops. The TDP breaks things down into the areas of core routes, peripheral routes, commuter routes and circulator routes. However, in the case of bus spacing, the recommendation for all of the categories is the same – space bus stops between 3/16 and ¼ mile apart. There might be some high use areas such as a large apartment complex or hospital that would call for stops being placed closer together, but that is the general recommendation.

The recommendation is that on the isthmus, Metro should either close every other stop or close none because you can't have mid-block stops. In closing every other stop, there would really be a fairly small area of lost coverage. A lot of the "lost coverage" is in the middle of Lake Monona. There is also overlapping service that would mitigate losing some stops. Losing a little bit of coverage might be something we are willing to do to gain speed and reliability. Decision makers will need to weigh the costs and benefits.

There hasn't been a lot of investment in local transit. The system was meant to be for transit dependent riders and isn't fully equipped to deal with 15 million rides a year. We need to decide how to deal with this issue.

Mr. Tangney asked about bus stop placement where someone gets off the bus and then has to walk quite a way to cross the street. Mr. Cechvala said the TDP will also be studying bus stop placement – far side versus near side. Stops should generally be far side, although there are some exceptions. The worst placement for a bus stop is mid-block.

Ms. Gullickson asked if the TDP will look at specific stops or corridors to recommend for a bus stop project. Mr. Cechvala sees the TDP as broad guidance with a recommendation for corridors or general areas for others to look at more in-depth. Then there would need to be some analysis and public comment. He worked on a similar project in Seattle at King County Metro. They posted notices for a month at the stops they were proposing to close in order to solicit feedback.

Mr. Kamp said we would do something similar to solicit feedback and perhaps start with a pilot program. We would want guidance from the MPO first. We talked about a pilot a few years ago, but system speed and reliability are more difficult for people to grasp than the concept of access. The Long-Range Metro Transit Planning ad Hoc Committee final plan in June of 2008 recommended that Metro work on speed and reliability. Most people wouldn't say getting rid of stops is a good thing, but that is one way to positively affect speed and reliability.

Mr. Cechvala said there are other ways to improve speed and reliability. Signal priority is one example. However, bus stop spacing is by far the best way. This is not true only at Metro; many other systems have done similar projects or are looking at doing this.

Mr. DuRocher said you can't assume you will gain speed and reliability from closing stops. There might be stops that are not used on every trip. There is rider resistance to closing stops. The goal is to move people efficiently, not buses. There are other ways to achieve that such as bus rapid transit and express service. He has a sense that those things are better to pursue for improving speed and reliability than closing stops and inconveniencing riders.

Mr. Cechvala said we can do a probability model to find out how much time would be saved by closing stops. Reliability is even more important than speed. We would not be closing stops to help the best trips but to improve the worst trips, to guarantee people can make their transfers.

Ms. De Vos said a lot of factors contribute to speed rather than just stops. One

is a state law that allows a lane to be reserved for buses, bikes and right turns. She thinks this has only been done in Madison near campus on University Avenue and on East Washington Avenue. Re-entering traffic is what takes the most time. Mr. Cechvala said it varies, but re-entering traffic can be a major component. If you have reserved lanes, you can minimize that. Bus rapid transit and regular buses could use those lanes. We have a few transit lanes; BRT would expand that. Ms. De Vos said we could have signs reserving lanes during certain hours. This would require some enforcement. But it would really help speed without removing any stops.

Mr. Cechvala said he rode buses to see what really delays them. The major items are bus stops and traffic signals. Traffic itself is a smaller factor. Stop consolidation and signal priority would result in the biggest improvements. But they are also looking at things like having more doors on articulated buses, types of fare media and other factors.

Ms. De Vos said that removing stops could be deleterious. She urged that other things be considered first. The Ad Hoc report was not consistent. It wanted everything. It recommended bus stops closer to major destinations and partnering with businesses to achieve this. So there it talks about convenience of stops. Consider people who are taking the bus and carrying groceries, babies or other things. That matters too. Mr. Cechvala agreed.

Mr. Tangney asked how bikes affect shared lanes. Mr. Cechvala said including bikes in a bus lane is not positive, but bikes are there anyway. It depends on the volume of bikes. If there is a high volume, giving them their own lane is ideal. On University Avenue, for example, it is best to have bikes on the left and buses on the right.

Ms. De Vos said Metro has been on a downward spiral for years. People gave up and started driving, which created more traffic and more competition on the roads. Bus stop consolidation will just make that worse. It is counterintuitive. Mr. Tangney said ridership has increased. Ms. De Vos said rides have increased, not ridership. The actual number of people taking the bus has gone down. Ms. Martin clarified that the difference is the number of unduplicated riders.

8. [27051](#)

Metro General Manager, Chuck Kamp

Mr. Kamp said discussion of bus stops is part of the healthy culture of transit ridership we have in Madison. We might disagree as to whether there is an increase in ridership; that is something to consider. Mr. Kamp considers the ridership increase a positive. There is lots of excitement that our ridership, as we measure it, is the highest in 30 years. We found an article on a bus fare increase in 1952 where ridership was 13 million. Ms. De Vos said that was a time when Madison was half as big as it is now. Mr. Kamp said at that time buses were half the size. We consider this good news but also a challenge. Do I think we could reach 20 million rides in the next five years? He was sure we have enough buses and our bus garage is big enough. There are many challenges that our system is facing, and we are working with staff, the TPC, MPO and others on this. Other communities like Madison are having these

challenges from seeing these increases such as Seattle, San Francisco, and New York. Ridership is increasing nationally. He thinks this will continue to push the demand for transit into the future. Mr. Cechvala touched on two studies. One telling thing is that there are 8 studies that either touch on transit or have transit as a main theme.

1 – Bus Rapid Transit Study

2 – Transit Development Plan

3 - Transportation Master Plan – a look at all transportation with a focus on transit, bikes and pedestrian modes

4 - UW Campus accessibility and transportation

5 – Transit Oriented Development – development, employment locations, housing – how to locate BRT stations to get the most bang for your buck which will also have real time bus stop information and the opportunity for consumers to buy fares

6 – Inter-City Bus Terminal Study – where to locate

7 – Bus garage study – Where should we locate either a large garage or a satellite facility. A previous study suggested we should build up at the 1101 E. Washington location for a 285 bus garage. We now have 209 buses in facility made for 160 buses.

8 – Bus Size Study – We are also working with Mr. Cechvala on this. This is something that was suggested in the Ad Hoc Plan. It will consider smaller and articulated buses.

The fact that there are these eight studies is a measure of what is happening with Metro that makes it a very exciting time to work with transit. One thing that isn't currently happening is a regional Transit authority. Mr. Kamp said he believes that will come back. He believes that there is bipartisan support. The Fox Cities had hearing in March looking at a possible Fox Cities RTA. Rep. Al Ott, a Republican, and another Republican legislator from Neenah were there with Penny Bernard Shaber and presented a bipartisan request. So RTA will add a ninth item to the list at some time in the future. All of the other 8 studies are things we need to support an RTA.

Mr. Kamp thanked ADATS for being part of the culture that led to our community and system being selected for the APTA award. All the big ways and little ways that you contribute helped make that happen. Ms. De Vos said it reflects Mr. Kamp's leadership. Mr. Kamp said it's all our employees.

Ms. Martin asked when we are getting paratransit buses. We had three bidders. Mr. Kamp said several of the manufacturers brought vehicles in so drivers and mechanics could look at them. We went out on the street to seek proposals. Ms. Gullickson said the big news about paratransit buses is that we got three bids from companies offering low floor buses. We will have low floor ramp buses rather than needing to use the lifts. The winning bid was Glaval. We had high floor Glaval's retired out of the fleet several years ago. We'll be getting some new vehicles this year and some next year. The first shipment will be arriving before the end of the year. The dollar volume for paratransit buses is such that we don't have to do a resolution. We can just cut a purchase order. They are a fixed asset with only a five year life. We are replacing buses not expanding the fleet. Metro is not taking on more of the service.

Ms. De Vos said in the past there have been options for vehicle length to accommodate 4 or 2 wheelchairs. Did you deal with that choice and if so did you make a choice? Ms. Martin said we are committed to four chair vehicles. As we are able to negotiate trips, this allows us the greatest flexibility.

Ms. Brunette-Tregoning asked about the timelines and priority of eight plans. Mr. Kamp said people also wonder also how they will be integrated. We're beginning to affect the quality of the ride because buses are so crowded. Some would choose not to ride because of this. For ridership through the central corridor – especially when school is in session – sometimes we'll put out 80 extra buses a day. Some communities and systems are not given the authority and resources to do that. Some of these things are best done with an RTA. That is not on list now. All the studies have different time frames. Metro can get by for a while leasing space or using current space for a bus garage. But looking at overcrowding on buses, we'd rather not wait five years. So the answer depends on time frames – TDP (short), BRT and RTA (midrange), and bus garage (long). Mr. Kamp said that is his opinion.

Mr. Kamp said we will have someone from Epic attending the bus size study committee. It's a smaller dot on the service map, but we probably could use an articulated bus out to Epic. So he doesn't mean to suggest only big red dots on the map are the only places where overcrowding is. It's just where most of the overcrowding is. Unless you ride the bus, you might think buses are generally fairly open and empty. That is not our experience. Mr. Kamp would list overcrowding as one of our major challenges today.

Mr. DuRocher asked if any of the new paratransit vehicles have a rear entry. Ms. Gullickson said none of the vendors had that option. One had a rear emergency exit with no ramp. One vendor was very surprised by that need. We'll keep asking.

Mr. DuRocher asked if there is any difference for tie downs and loading in articulated buses. Mr. Kamp said he doesn't know if there is a requirement for more tie downs and where they would be located. Mr. DuRocher asked if it would take longer for the driver to do a tie down on an articulated bus if tie downs are further from the door. That would create a delay which is counter to what we are trying to do. Mr. Cechvala said in all articulated buses he has seen, the front portion of the bus is exactly like the 40' bus.

Ms. De Vos said the Ad Hoc committee had a big component about studying Metro's marketing resources. Has there been change in the last few years? She is particularly interested in the issue of migration of people with disabilities to fixed route buses. Mr. Tangney said it was a big point in last meeting and it was in the minutes. Mr. Kamp said it is our plan to look at how we most effectively address that issue based on our resources.

Ms. Martin said Tom Kenny was here at the last meeting. Ms. De Vos said he is from Milwaukee; she is wondering about Madison. Ms. Martin said that's why he was here, to talk to us about it. He talked about what they had developed. Ms. De Vos said what has that got to do with what is happening at Metro? We don't have a New Freedom grant. Ms. Martin said there are other New Freedom grants available. But if we can secure funding, we want to look at what has been successful and not successful and what might work with us. Mr. Kamp

said we are in an education phase right now. Mr. Tangney said I got the impression we were considering Milwaukee's ideas, that it was mostly customer driven, and that it results in savings. Ms. De Vos said I was excited by what he presented. I didn't understand that was anything that was happening here. Ms. Gullickson said we need to discuss this further. We have limited staff – Ms. Martin – so that issue hasn't become a priority. But we wouldn't have asked Mr. Kenny here if we didn't want to look at it. We have to decide what we can do with our limited resources. Ms. Martin said it is nice to see the subcommittee's reaction so that we can know if this is something others besides just us are excited about. That helps us know where to start.

Mr. DuRocher asked about identifying an Inter City Bus Depot – is that under the Long Range Transportation Planning Committee? Mr. Cechvala said the transportation master plan group is looking at this. Ms. Gullickson said Brad Murphy and planning are the lead on this.

9. [27052](#)

Reports

- a. Transit & Parking Commission
- b. Commission on People with Disabilities
- c. Dane County Specialized Transportation Commission
- d. Other Community Meetings
- e. Performance Indicators
- f. Report from the Chair
- g. Staff Report - Seatbelts on Buses, Contractor Reviews

**Attachments:** [Para Indicators Apr12.pdf](#)  
[Para Indicators May12.pdf](#)  
[Metro Report Para Contractor Ops and Fleet Reviews 06 12.pdf](#)  
[Pending List 11 23 11.pdf](#)  
[ROSTER ADA TS 03 2012.pdf](#)

In the interest of time, no reports were given except staff report. Ms. Martin said Mr. Tangney's membership term is ending. It is good for 90 days after expiration, so we want to confirm either reappointment or a new appointment. Mr. Huckaby's term expires next month, and he won't be re-applying for the subcommittee. He will recommend a replacement. From now on, we will ask for an RSVP when the agenda comes out so we can keep track of quorum. Gary Poulson is on notice that we need a new TPC representative. Alder Maniaci has a standing conflict. She's asked that we tell her when we need her for quorum.

10. [08706](#)

Other Transit Related Announcements

There were no other transit related announcements.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Durocher moved to adjourn; Mr. Tangney seconded. The meeting

adjourned at 6:51 PM.