

CITY OF MADISON  
INTERDEPARTMENTAL  
CORRESPONDENCE

TO: Ald. Ken Golden, District 10

FROM: George E. Austin, Director  
Department of Planning and Development

DATE: October 25, 1995

SUBJECT: Your Memo of October 17, 1995 "Organizational Options for Transportation Services"

10/26/1995  
TRANSPORTATION DEPT  
City of Madison

This memorandum summarizes my initial thoughts on your memo of October 17. I agree with your observation that the Dane County Regional Planning Commission (the metropolitan planning organization for Madison) is the agency charged with the responsibility for transportation planning for the City of Madison. Your memo suggests that the Planning Unit would be responsible for the transportation planning to the extent that transportation planning is undertaken by the City of Madison. If resources were available, it may make sense to coordinate general mid-range and long-range planning including land use and transportation planning out of one agency (i.e. the Planning Unit). However, in the absence of additional resources, I don't believe that any meaningful changes will occur or that real transportation planning work will get done.

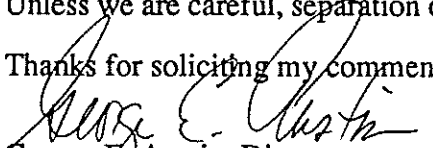
In the absence of additional resources, the staff team, if formed, should use the Regional Planning Commission, as the designated MPO, to accomplish their work. The staff team could identify any transportation planning activities which should be undertaken for the City of Madison and request RPC staff assistance to complete these projects. These requests could be incorporated in their annual overall planning work program. The Planning Unit could coordinate the meetings of this team. I don't believe that an additional committee would be required to oversee the work of this team. The existing Public Works Improvement Committee could function in this capacity quite well.

I have two concerns with the proposed commission/committee structure outlined in the memorandum. I believe that the required cross membership will be problematic. It is difficult to find citizens that are willing to spend their time serving on city boards and commissions. Requiring cross membership will significantly limit the number of candidates and is more of a commitment than we can expect from the citizen appointments on average. The other concern I have is with the formation of an additional commission. Under current state enabling legislation, the Plan Commission already is charged with the preparation and maintenance of the City's Master Plan. The statute states that it shall be the function and duty of the Commission to make and adopt a Master Plan for the physical development of the city. This includes land use, transportation and other functional elements.

I would also recommend that the Transportation Commission/Plan Commission Subcommittee continue to function as a subcommittee of the Plan Commission and be charged with the responsibility for coordinating land use and transportation issues which come before the Plan Commission, Board of Public Works and the Common Council.

In summary, I believe that separating Madison Metro, the Parking Utility, and Traffic Engineering may create additional challenges for policy coordination and linking transportation operations to planning objectives. Unless we are careful, separation of these functions could result in more fragmentation.

Thanks for soliciting my comments.

  
George E. Austin, Director  
Department of Planning and Development


c: Larry Nelson, Acting City Traffic Engineer  
Paul Larrousse, Madison Metro  
Duane Hinz, Parking Utility Manager  
Brad Murphy, Planning Unit Director  
Mayor Paul R. Soglin  
Anne Monks, Assistant to the Mayor

CITY OF MADISON  
COMMON COUNCIL OFFICE  
**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL**  
CORRESPONDENCE  
ROOM 417 - CITY-COUNTY BUILDING  
266-4071

NOV 5 1995

TRANSPORTATION DEPT  
City of Madison

Date: November 1, 1995

To: George Austin, Director of Planning & Development  
From: Ald. Ken Golden, District Ten   
Subject: TRANSPORTATION SERVICES - ORGANIZATION

George, thanks for the comments. I take them to heart and want to respond to the matters you differ from my original proposal. I'm in agreement with you that long-range master planning is the province of the Plan Commission. I do think though that systematic input from other commissions to the Plan Commission on long-range master planning is insufficient at this time and should be made a more systematic part of the process. The issue of the joint PC/TC Committee is one I think bears some scrutiny. I am totally satisfied with the work of that of that committee and with the nature of the issues it addresses. I think establishing a more defined mission for that committee, insuring that if we did split traffic engineering, bike and pedestrian matters from transit and parking into two commissions, that both those commissions be represented on the joint PC/TC. I also think that the addition of a Public Works representative would make that commission more of a player in terms of looking towards the future. I don't think the mission of this joint commission as being in competition with the Plan Commission's role. I therefore like to work out a mission for that joint commission which recognizes the Plan Commission's lead in terms of long-range planning but recognizes the legitimacy and contributions from the other commissions.

As to your second major criticism of my proposal, the ability of us to sustain joint appointments may indeed be problematic, particularly with reference to citizen appointees. What I had in mind was a preponderance of aldermanic representation in terms of joint appointments. I think more alders would like to be in the mix and find the current limitations on aldermanic input to planning vis-a-vis numbers of appointments, to be something that the Council might be interested in addressing. I think the best way of addressing that is to create a forum where more alders can feed into the long-range master planning process. I think the work of a joint commission, particularly in reference to some of the issues that it's already dealt with such as street standards, 51-151 land use near that intersection, etc..., is perfectly appropriate for greater Council input. I do think we could find citizen members with a strong interest in enhanced participation. If we can't then perhaps the dual appointments should be limited to aldermanic appointments. I don't think members of the Council would shrink from such a challenge. If they did we would obviously have to look at this.

As to the overlapping appointments to the two transportation committees we currently have five alders on the Ped/Bike SubCommittee and Transportation Commission combined and a sixth on the Paratransit Oversight Committee. In making two of those members serve on more than one commission I think would be imperative to maintain some consistency and coordination in policy advice. I think a greater linkage between these commission and the Plan Commission is also appropriate and think that reserving one of the chairs on the Plan Commission for such an appointment would not be difficult to accomplish and would pay strong dividends.

CITY OF MADISON  
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Date: November 1, 1995

Finally, As I indicated linkage with Public Works would seem to me something that the Board of Public Works would value and support. If it became necessary to add membership to the Plan Commission to accommodate this, so be it if retention of strong citizen participation were compromised by the nature of the appointments made.

As to the final point, which I am not sure was really critical or not with regard to coordination of transportation services, I think that the amount of detail currently not dealt with by the Transportation Commission with reference to transit planning and transit operations is something my proposal is designed to address. We currently have two meetings a month and we are finding that those meetings are running routinely three hours each. If you add the two hours of the Ped/Bike SubCommittee we all ready have eight hours and three meetings per month on these issues. My sense is that the Metro/Parking Commission in my proposal would continue to meet twice a month with the Ped/Bike/Traffic Commission meeting once a month would be sufficient. That's the same number of meetings and with two overlapping appointments consistency and collaboration would be sufficient particularly if there was some effort on the part of staff to insure consistency.

In sum I appreciate your comments and frankly feel more strongly that the alignment of commissions and staff organization has merit. I think the key criticism you have made which I would like to incorporate into a final proposal relates to the mission of the joint PC/TC and whatever it may become with respect to affiliation of other commissions. I look forward ideas you might have as to a mission statement for that committee. Thank you for your comments and hopefully you can come to the Transportation Commission meeting when these matters are discussed and final recommendations made.

Ald. Ken Golden  
District Ten

KG:lmv\organz10

cc: Larry Nelson, Acting Traffic Engineer  
Duane Hinz, Parking Utility Manager  
Mayor Paul R. Soglin  
Brad Murphy, Planning Unit Director  
Anne Monks, Mayoral Assistant  
Transportation Commission Members

CITY OF MADISON  
COMMON COUNCIL OFFICE  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL  
CORRESPONDENCE

Date: October 17, 1995

To: Larry Nelson, Acting City Traffic Engineer  
Paul Larrousse, Metro Manager  
Duane Hinz, Parking Utility Manager  
George Austin, Director of Planning and Development  
Brad Murphy, Planning Unit Director

From: Ald. Ken Golden, District Ten *KGG/elmv*

Subject: **Organizational Options for Transportation Services**

The purpose of this memo is to share my thoughts about the above referenced subject to elicit your comments. I would like all of you to have a chance to comment on these ideas prior to putting them into a more formal process for consideration. Subject to your comments, I would like this memo to become part of the agenda when the organizational issues around the Department of Transportation are considered on October 24th.

I want to start with some of the assumptions that have gone into my thinking.

*\* The resolution of the organizational alignment we ultimately chose needs to be both functional from the standpoint of how staff in various City agencies perform and to whom they report, but must also be consistent with the way policy making is done at the Commission level. I therefore think the organization must either reflect or be compatible with the policy making structure that we put together.*

*\* Transportation policy oversight by Commissions involve reviewing operations and accommodating them to changing conditions, anticipating changes in the community and planning how systems will address these changes and initiating something new to either address change or just to improve what we do. These functions must be adequately supported by whatever alignment we ultimately chose. Specifically, some type of linkage between planning and operations at the policy-making level of things is needed (I don't think we do this well now).*

*\* Change in Madison often comes through processes associated with the planning function. Even though planning is fundamentally separate from transportation, its relationship to the transportation operating units must be considered as part of the current organizational discussions.*

*\* The current policy making structure puts pedestrian and bicycle planning and operational issues in a subordinate position by creating a sub-committee of the Transportation Commission to deal with these issues. This also provides no linkage between Pedestrian-Bicycle and the Board of Public Works or City Engineering.*

*\* Opportunities for better coordination of services exist between Engineering and Traffic Engineering, which can either be expressed organizationally or can be expressed through the creation of staff level coordinating bodies. In either case, better coordination might result if policy-making bodies bridge these to organizational units.*

*\* There is currently minimal overlap in the policy making commissions. Alders and citizens are appointed to one. The only existing overlap involves a person who serves as both a Plan and Transportation Commissioner. The existence of a joint Plan Commission/Transportation Commission Sub-Committee and the positive reaction by policy making bodies to its existence suggests that creating more overlap may reveal unrealized opportunities for better functioning. Greater overlap might improve the coordination of policy making.*

*\* The sheer size and detailed nature of operational issues related to Madison Metro make it appropriate to consider Metro as an independent department of City government directly reporting to the Mayor. While there is a need to coordinate with other Transportation related service entities, the same might also be said of Engineering and Planning (not to mention the RPC). Apart from scope and impact the autonomous nature of Metro's operations and its separate labor issues all suggest Metro function as a department.*

*\*Parking while numerically small with respect to budget and staffing, also is fundamentally an independent entity from both an operational standpoint and with respect to the entities with which it interacts. No matter how attached any organizational entity, Parking Operations will tend to function autonomously as a business. Parking planning is a combination of community and economic development and neighborhood support services.*

*\* Traffic Engineering is more connected to other City service functions than other MDOT entities. Specifically, its inter-relationships with Planning and City Engineering are considerable and opportunities for improved services exist if we align Traffic Engineering with Engineering in a more meaningful way.*

*\*Transportation planning in many ways is a service that the City has not provided. It extends way beyond what had been the former Department of Transportation and even beyond what is or might be done by the Department of Planning and Development. It goes all the way to the Regional Plan Commission which performs MPO functions for the City and which, apart from data seems to do very little for the City. Until staff for transportation planning is created and located, a staff level organizational entity to provide transportation planning by coordinating activities across what had been the Department of Transportation sub-entities and Engineering and Planning and the Regional Plan Commission needs to be created. The organizational location for transportation planning should be in an entity that supports planning as a priority activity and would reduce the provision of that service in light of operational demands. Yes, that sounds like the Planning Unit, but the operational entities have got to be major players too!*

If all those assumptions are correct I would propose the following as an organizational structure for transportation services.

- #1. Transportation planning shall be placed in the Department of Planning & Development in the Planning Unit. Its mission should be provision and coordination of City transportation planning. A separate Transportation Planning Committee, modeled on the Mayor's Public Works committee, should be created.
- #2. Traffic Engineering shall be placed in the Public Works consortium and function as a division within that group. It should have horizontal (cross functional is Madison's new way of saying this, I think) relations with Planning and Engineering and oversee provision and coordination of roads for vehicles along with pedestrian and bike issues.
- #3. Metro should be an independent department reporting directly to the Mayor.
- #4. Parking Division shall also be an independent department reporting to the Mayor. It could be put in the Public Works consortium, but I'm not sure if this is advantageous. Placement of parking under any of the four legitimate alternatives creates a dysfunctional organization insofar as the department head overseeing parking would not necessarily be sufficiently conversant with parking issues to form a leadership function very well. The five options are the Comptroller's Office (assuming we view parking more as an enterprise), Parks (due to Mall-Concourse connection) or Planning (which assumes parking more as a support for downtown land use), Engineering (which assumes parking staff supports the proper operation of the physical plant) and under Metro (which basically has no discernible logic I can see). I don't like any of these!

If such an organizational structure were created, one key entity that would need to be created within the City's organizational structure would be the creation of a standing committee of department and division leaders focussing on transportation. Such a committee could be chaired by a restored Public Works Director, by the City Traffic Engineer or really any of the other entities involved in the provision of transportation related services. It would have to include Metro, Parking, Engineering and Traffic Engineering and Planning at minimum and maybe the RPC. One of the other potential ways of leading this function would be via the creation of a cabinet-like position in the Mayor's Office using one of the existing Mayor's aides for that purpose. I don't believe that any changes would need to be made to the personnel requirements for a Mayor's aide to achieve this.

Turning now to the effects this might have to the commission's involved, I see three major changes suggested by the above organizational alignment. The following changes in the commission structure suggested by the organizational alignment:

- #1. The Transportation Commission's mission would be scaled down to that of a transit and parking commission. Traffic Engineering (for pedestrians, bikes and motor vehicles) would be removed as a function of the new transit/parking commission. We could consider eliminating the MetroPlus Oversight Committee too, building its mission into the Transportation Commission itself.

- #2. The Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety Committee, currently a sub-committee of the Transportation Commission, would be dissolved but be recreated as the Pedestrian, Bicycle and Traffic Commission, independent and free-standing staffed by the Traffic Engineering Division.
- #3. The Plan Commission and the Board of Public Works would retain its current missions.
- #4. The current TC/PC Sub-Committee which represents only the Transportation and Plan Commissions would be created as an independent commission charged with overseeing transportation planning. It might also focus on cross-cutting issues as well. Membership on that committee would be limited to only people (Alders or citizens) who are members of the other four commissions discussed above. Two members from Plan, two members from Transit/Parking, two members from Traffic/Ped-Bike and one member from Public Works (I see slightly less of Public Works impact here).
- #5. In addition to the dual appointments to the transportation/planning commission, there would be a conscious effort for overlapping appointments to the four standing commissions themselves. Two members of the Plan Commission would come from the transit/parking commission and ped-bike/traffic commission (one each). As to the transit/parking commission, one member would already be on the Plan Commission. I suggest two additional members come from the ped-bike/traffic commission to ensure high levels of consistency and communications. The ped-bike/traffic commission would therefore already have a Plan Commissioner and two transit/parking commission as members, I suggest an additional member from the Board of Public Works. I think the overlapping appointments should emphasize but not be restricted to alders to increase the influence of the Council on these commissions.

The mission of the transportation/planning commission needs to be developed. I think the current TC/PC Sub-Committee presents a useful model and starting point for the mission of that commission. The role of that commission would best be expressed by focussing on overlapping policy-related issues, much as the TC/PC Sub-Committee currently does, and major land use considerations both with respect to urban growth and with respect to in-fill. The commission would also be charged with looking into the future concerning the creation and distribution of parking resources and the extension of Metro services to new areas of the City. These roles would obviously overlap with the work of parking/transit commission. The role of the latter commission would be much more geared towards to the day-to-day operational policy issues.

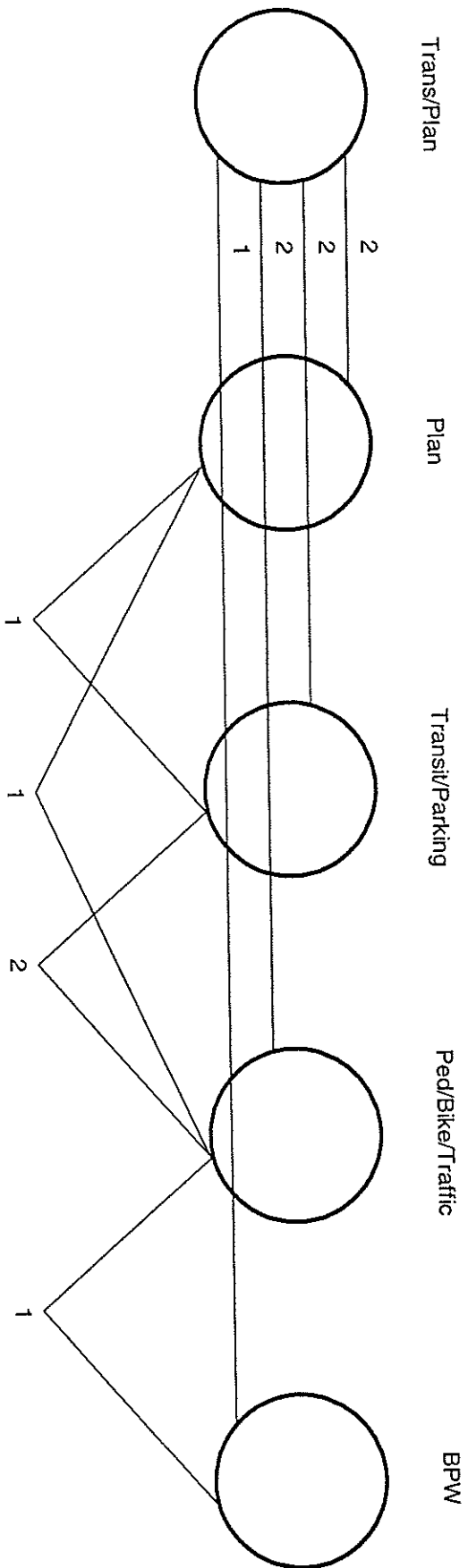
I present this as a discussion piece. It represents a somewhat radical departure from where we are at the current time. It also is based on the assumption that if we appoint citizens to the overlapping positions, they can sustain the level of work associated with this appointment.

I anxiously await your comments on this proposal and look forward to some lively discussions. I want to be real clear that this is simply an idea at this point and I am not wedded to it in any way other than thinking that it will greatly improve the influence of the public and the Council on program and policy development. Please feel free to comment in any way you choose in either writing or via telephone. Thank you for your consideration.

Ald. Ken Golden  
District Ten

KG:lmv:jm:\trnorg10

cc: Mayor Paul R. Soglin  
Anne Monks, Mayoral Assistant  
Transportation Commission Members



CITY OF MADISON  
**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL**  
CORRESPONDENCE

Date: September 27, 1995

To: Traffic Engineering Staff  
From: Ald. Ken Golden, Chair, Transportation Commission  
Subject: ORGANIZATIONAL OPTIONS

As you all know two reports came under Council consideration at virtually the same time. One, was the Strategic Planning Report and one was the report prepared by the Comptroller's Office labeled, "Organizational Options". The Strategic Planning Report has now been considered and adopted by both the City Transportation Commission and Common Council. The Organizational Options Report on the other hand is still pending before the Transportation Commission..

The next step in the process for the Organizational Options Report will be a hearing before the City's Transportation Commission. I supported this hearing as a way of allowing staff to get directly involved in commenting on the options before us, or on one's they may want to raise. I would personally encourage each of you to come and comment. I can assure you all Transportation Commission members would welcome your thoughts, advice and perspectives on this subject. I personally intend to listen very closely to staff perspectives on the issue of how to organize transportation services (just as I want the folks across the street to listen to me).. I suspect most of the other Transportation Commissioners will feel the same way. I also think that it is critically important that all of you participate in this discussion so that you can shape the direction of all City initiatives related to organization of transportation services. I want to assure you that there is really no "chosen" alternative for how to proceed. This process is wide open. To be sure, costs of re-instituting a Traffic Engineer and a Director at the same time make it extremely difficult in having a budget for both of the positions at this time - while adding additional staff resources. This does not rule out recreating a Director's position in the near future.

In sum, I think that your participation in this discussion would be timely and frankly, would be appreciated. That is why I am extending this invitation for you to come to the hearing. I would prefer that the format of the hearing turn into more of a discussion should you want to engage in a little give and take on these issues. These are important issues and I think that you need to be a major player in their ultimate resolution. Please come.

Ald. Ken Golden  
District Ten

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