

# **FINAL REPORT OF THE CITY OF MADISON JOINT TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION AND TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND PLANNING BOARD TRAFFIC CALMING SUBCOMMITTEE**

**MARCH 16, 2021**

## **Members from the Transportation Commission (TC):**

Brigit Brown, Vice-Chair  
Harald Kliems

## **Members from the Transportation Policy and Planning Board (TPPB):**

Badrinath Lankella  
Tom Wilson, Chair (TPPB Chair)

## **Joint TC/TPPB Member:**

Ald. Grant Foster

## **First Alternate:**

Ann Kovich (TC Chair)

## **Second Alternate:**

Bill Bremer (TC Member)

## **City Staff:**

Renee Callaway, City Pedestrian Bicycle Administrator  
Patrick McGuigan, Recording Secretary for the TC and the TCS  
Thomas Mohr, Traffic Engineer, City Traffic Engineering  
Yang Tao, City Traffic Engineer

## Introduction and Background

### Summary

Final Report from the Joint Transportation Commission (TC) and Transportation Policy and Planning Board (TPPB) Traffic Calming Subcommittee (TCS) provides background on why the TCS was formed, summarizes its work, and provides its recommendations. TCS recommends members of the TC, the TPPB, and the Common Council accept the Report of the TCS and adopt the TCS Priority Recommendations.

### Background

As noted on the City of Madison's website and also stated in MGO Section 3.14 (Department of Transportation), the purpose of its Department of Transportation is to develop and maintain a safe, efficient, economical, equitable, and sustainable transportation system for Madison's residents and visitors in a way that is consistent with the City's land use system and regional transportation goals.

Imagine Madison Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Common Council on August 7, 2018 and addresses related transportation goals and strategies:

- Included in the Guiding Lenses (driving forces behind many of the plan's recommendations) are references to traffic safety, a multi-modal transportation system, technological changes that affect the transportation system, and equity.
- "Madison will have a safe, efficient, and affordable regional transportation system that offers a variety of choices among transportation modes."
- "Ensure all populations benefit from the City's transportation investments."
- "Expand and improve the city's pedestrian and bicycle networks to enable safe and convenient active transportation."
- "Both the city's pedestrian and bicycle networks have major connectivity gaps that must be filled to further encourage biking and walking as safe and convenient transportation choices."
- Sidewalk gaps are noted on the "Tier 1 Sidewalks Map." "These sidewalks are close to schools, transit routes, or along other features that attract pedestrians, and should be constructed without necessarily waiting for adjoining street reconstruction if site conditions allow."
- Report also encourages continuing a program of "context-sensitive" enhanced pedestrian and bicycle amenities and safety features (such as "raised intersections, rectangular rapid flashing beacons, bumpouts, bike racks, bike boxes, striped bike lanes, colored crosswalks, pedestrian islands, and/or pedestrian-oriented streetlights, among other things") in street reconstruction projects.
- "The City's RESJI tools can help facilitate conscious consideration of equity and examine how communities of color and low-income populations will be affected by proposed City transportation projects."

Madison in Motion was approved by the Common Council on February 28, 2017 and identified several related transportation goals and issues:

- "Madison in Motion, the City of Madison's Sustainable Transportation Master Plan, provides a framework for future transportation decisions in the City, ensuring a future with improved walkability, bikability, transit availability."
- "Bike and pedestrian networks are already popular alternatives, but require strategic interventions to provide network connectivity and further develop walking and biking as viable modes. "
- "Lack of sidewalk connectivity in some areas provides one of several barriers to walking. Other barriers include:
  - Uninviting streets that lack sidewalks;

- Difficult street crossings due to a lack of safe gaps in traffic, or traffic turning into the pedestrian right of way;
- Physical barriers such as highways and at grade rail crossings.”
- “Bus stops that are not located at controlled intersections can also create pedestrian crossing challenges.”
- “Gaps in the bicycle network can create challenges for cyclists in navigating and arriving safely at their destination. Gaps take various forms, from areas without or with poorly-defined bike facilities, to challenging intersections and or corridors that aren’t comfortable to most riders.”

Existing programs largely focus on answering residents’ complaints related to local streets (one block at a time); so they often do not take a broader perspective. This short-term view may not appropriately balance the needs of all modes of travel, address all safety and connectivity issues in that area/corridor, or consider less traditional types of solutions and interventions.

Observations by members of the TC and TPPB revealed that traffic safety interventions/improvements and pedestrian/bicycle (ped/bike) enhancements/improvements were being addressed through several different programs, and were using various evaluation methods and approval processes.

In light of the 2020 City of Madison transportation-related commitments to Vision Zero, Complete Green Streets, and Metro Transit Network Redesign initiatives, it was viewed as the appropriate time to develop a consistent approach to addressing traffic safety interventions/improvements and ped/bike enhancements/improvements across the city.

### Vision Zero

Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. In the traditional approach, traffic deaths are inevitable; but in the Vision Zero approach, traffic deaths are preventable. Madison became a Vision Zero Community on July 14, 2020, when the resolution was approved by the Common Council. As approved in the resolution, “the Mayor and the Common Council of the City of Madison commit to a goal of zero deaths and serious injuries that are a result of crashes on City streets by 2030; and that the Vision Zero Action Plan will put equity at its forefront, striving to impact most vulnerable and dependent users of the most dangerous parts of the transportation network to improve the health and well-being of those traveling on streets and paths in the City of Madison. And that, the Plan will use data and community outreach to develop strategies that aim to end death and serious injuries on City streets in the effort to ensure outcomes will be experienced equitably throughout the City.”

Also noted in the July 14, 2020 Vision Zero resolution, “pedestrian and bicycle safety shall be a priority for the City of Madison with updated infrastructure and safety improvements to ensure those most vulnerable on the roads are protected.” As shown on the City’s Vision Zero webpage, “City of Madison Vision Zero initiative strives to improve pedestrian and bike safety for all users throughout the city and improve the identified high injury intersections, all in an effort to prevent avoidable fatal crashes.”

Further information from the City’s Vision Zero webpage includes the following: “Vision Zero uses data to target improvements that will reduce crashes, save lives and address inequities experienced on the street related to crashes. Vision Zero focuses on creating a transportation system that is safe for all neighborhoods and for people of all ages and abilities, no matter how they travel. Data will drive our focus on where to invest time and money to improve the highest injury intersections and roadways. As The City of Madison recognizes the disparity, racial and economic difference in neighborhoods and will focus on improving lower income community roadways included in the high injury network.”

### High Injury Network

Data will be provided from the High Injury Network to facilitate the Vision Zero strategy to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries. High Injury Network will identify where crashes occur repeatedly and why, as well as facilitate prioritizing the areas in the city where resources should be invested to help prevent injuries and deaths in the future.

### Complete and Green Streets

On December 15, 2009, the Common Council approved a resolution reaffirming the City of Madison's commitment to Complete Streets, which indicates, "Complete Streets is a national movement to ensure that streets are designed to enable safe access for all users, pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders, of all ages and abilities, to be able to move safely along and across the street. Madison has a long history of following complete streets concepts without naming these as such. This resolution reaffirms the city's commitment to these concepts."

On September 1, 2020 the Common Council approved a resolution authorizing the Mayor to enter into an 18-month Complete and Green Streets contract with a consultant; and as noted in the RFP the consultant will "develop a policy document which will help Madison's policy makers assign priorities in the distribution of right of way. The policy document should consider network connectivity, location context and green streets priority areas." As noted in the RFP, "Anticipated outcomes of the study and policy document include:

- Establishing a modal hierarchy.
- Developing a street typology that addresses modal function of streets, with the goal of providing a complete network for each mode. The typology should identify how modes are prioritized by street within the available right of way. The typology is meant to acknowledge, yet be independent, of building and land use character. Parking and loading needs are a part of the consideration.
- Establishing the types of facilities that would be appropriate for the different street typologies. (Note, typical sections are not required.)
- Establishing recommendations for areas within the city where distributed green infrastructure (DGI) has been determined to be of greater importance in the allocation of right of way as a result of the storm water management studies that are currently underway by City Engineering. This may include providing a methodology for deciding in what context high cost treatments should be considered, and where demonstration off-site measures may be considered.
- Establishing areas within the city tree canopy has greater importance in the allocation of right of way and expenditure of funds. For undeveloped areas, determining optimal right of way dedications that balance distributed green infrastructure, street function/typology, and land use density."

### Metro Transit Network Resign Study

Since improved transit availability is one of our goals in Madison, improving access to transit is a companion goal. It will be important to take Metro Transit's redesigned network (planned for 2022 – 2023 implementation) into account as decisions are made on solutions and interventions to improve traffic safety and improve connectivity and enhance the City's ped/bike network.

As noted on the Metro Transit website, "The Metro Transit Network Redesign aims to create a new system of bus routes to better meet the needs of Madison area residents and businesses. The network redesign is balancing a number of important goals:

- Simplify service
- Reduce travel times
- Increase ridership
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled
- Improve service for underserved and disadvantaged communities

- Improve evening and weekend service
- Complement the East-West Bus Rapid Transit route.”

#### Traffic Calming Subcommittee

In February of 2020 the TC and TPPB jointly created the TCS. Resolution creating the TCS was approved by the TPPB on February 3, 2020 and by the TC on February 12, 2020.

Purpose of the TCS is shown in the Resolution as follows:

“The Traffic Calming Subcommittee (“TCS”) shall be responsible for developing and issuing a final report to be presented to the Transportation Commission (TC) and the Transportation Policy and Planning Board (TPPB) that identifies opportunities to improve outcomes and processes related to: traffic calming, safety enhancements, and pedestrian and bicycle system enhancements in the City of Madison (including, but not limited to, the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program and the Pedestrian/Bicycle Enhancement Program), with a goal of equitable distribution of resources that improves safety and encourages increased walking and biking across the city.”

Duties of the TCS are shown in the Resolution as follows:

“The TCS shall create a Final Report as described in the Purpose section above. The Final Report is due to the TC and TPPB no later than October 15, 2020, unless otherwise extended by both the TC and TPPB.

The TCS is encouraged to regularly update the TC and TPPB on its progress and to provide the TC and TPPB with draft reports, if available, leading up to the issuance of the Final Report.”

TCS was scheduled to begin meeting on March 16, 2020; however, the subcommittee meetings were suspended as a result of the pandemic and the limited IT resources available to support the transition to virtual city public meetings. Since the work of the TCS was delayed due to the pandemic, TC and TPPB approved extending the due date of the Final Report to February 15, 2021 (TC on October 14, 2020 and TPPB on October 19, 2020) and to April 15, 2021 (TPPB on January 4, 2021 and TC on January 13, 2021).

TCS began meeting on July 16, 2020; and it met 17 times with excellent attendance by members, alternate members and staff. In addition, members, alternate members and staff contributed significant hours outside the meetings researching and preparing assignments in order to complete the work of the TCS in a timely manner.

TCS progress report was presented to a Joint TC/TPPB Meeting on September 30, 2020, with support expressed for outlined goals and components of an effective program. Summary TCS Recommendations were presented to TPPB and TC (on January 4, 2021 and January 13, 2021 respectively); and these recommendations received full support from both bodies. **Draft Final Report and Draft Priority Recommendations are scheduled to be presented to a Joint TC/TPPB Meeting on March 24, 2021, in order to provide an interim report and to obtain feedback and additional suggestions from the members.**

TCS members and alternate members would like to express appreciation to staff for organizing the meetings, setting up a TCS folder in Legistar to store subcommittee documents, performing significant research, and providing valuable information and presentations which helped the subcommittee formulate the best solutions and recommendations.

According to the Resolution, the TCS shall automatically dissolve upon acceptance of the Final Report by TC and TPPB.

## TCS Work Plan

### Developing the Work Plan

TCS developed its initial Work Plan, and then updated it as appropriate throughout the process:

- Review the current programs and identify what is working, where there are issues, and where there are opportunities for improvement
- Research and study information on programs from other cities
- Consider equitable distribution of resources (where have investments been made; and where should investments be made)
- Importance of public input, participation and transparency
- Establish priorities and connect with Vision Zero and Complete Green Streets
- Remember to view traffic safety and ped/bike connectivity from a broader perspective (i.e. not block by block), and consider the impact on all modes of travel (i.e. negative impact of speed humps on EMS, Fire, and bus routes)
- Should existing programs be maintained and modified, or should a new program be created
- Focus on deliverables, and draft specific priority recommendations

### Goals of an Effective Program

TCS identified the primary goals of an effective program to be used in guiding its work:

- Outcomes focused (improves safety and encourages walking, biking and transit)
- Equitable (all ages and abilities, all areas of the city, all kinds of roadways)
- Good public process/access (transparency, accessibility, inclusivity, good outreach and engagement)
- Efficient and cost-effective
- Interventions should be considered for areas/corridors rather than block by block
- Priorities should be aligned with Vision Zero and Complete and Green Streets Initiatives

### Elements of an Effective Program

TCS identified the major elements of an effective program to be used in the next phase of its work:

- How to get requests/issues into the program
- Evaluating requests and determining solutions/interventions
- Prioritizing recommended interventions
- Public Input
- Decision making
- Implementation
- Evaluating the effectiveness of individual interventions
- Funding
- Assessing and reviewing the program to determine what changes might be needed in the future

### Current Programs

TCS reviewed the current programs, with primary focus on the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program and the Ped/Bike Enhancement Program.

- Staff reviewed current program requirements, timelines, ranking evaluation criteria, recent projects, and distribution of projects across the City over the past nine years.
- Flow charts were created by staff to demonstrate how requests flow through the programs.

- Staff was asked to provide a listing of elements they felt were critical to include in the new program.
- Staff presented a demonstration of CityWorks, which is currently used to track and map requests.
- 2021 budget data was reviewed for all related program and project accounts, with significant discussion regarding which programs and projects should be included in the new program.

### Vision Zero, Complete Green Streets, and Metro Transit Redesign Initiatives

In light of the 2020 City of Madison transportation-related commitments to Vision Zero, Complete Green Streets, and the Metro Transit Network Redesign Study, TCS members needed to ensure that they were familiar with each of these initiatives and how they impact moving toward the goals of improved traffic safety and a complete low stress all ages and abilities ped/bike network in Madison. Each of these initiatives was summarized in the Background Section of this Final Report.

### Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative Tools

TCS met with staff from the Mayor’s Office and Public Health Madison Dane County in order to obtain input and technical assistance regarding application of the Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) Tools. RESJI best practices were discussed at length. As noted in the RESJI Process Guide, “this is not a prescriptive or linear process;” so the TCS incorporated conversations regarding racial equity and social justice as each element and all aspects of the SSM program were reviewed, discussed, and developed.

### Fire Trucks & Vision Zero

TCS members watched this video from the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) website and reviewed the related FAQ before engaging in a lengthy discussion at the TCS about safety and danger levels on streets; and what traffic calming measures could be implemented on all streets including emergency service routes. Members agreed that it would be very helpful to have major and minor emergency services routes mapped and available to SSM staff as interventions are considered for improving traffic safety in Madison, as well as decision regarding improving connectivity and enhancing the ped/bike network.

### Research on Programs in Other Cities

Staff researched and prepared presentations on traffic calming and related programs in other cities, including information on goals/objectives/priorities, design/process, funding, measures of success, community feedback, and other factors the subcommittee members should consider in their work:

- Seattle, WA (Traffic Calming; Home Zone; Neighborhood Greenways; Safe Routes to School Mini Grant)
- Philadelphia, PA (Traffic Calming & Safety Initiative; Neighborhood Slow Zone Program)
- Boulder, CO (Neighborhood Speed Management Program; Vision Zero Innovation Program; Neighborhood Green Streets)
- Spokane, WA (Traffic Calming Program)
- Nashville, TN (Traffic Calming Program)
- San Francisco, CA (Traffic Calming Program)
- Birmingham, AL (Traffic Calming Program)
- Cambridge, MA (Traffic Calming)
- Fort Collins, CO (Neighborhood Traffic Mitigation Program)
- Ann Arbor, MI (Traffic Calming Program)
- San Antonio, TX (Traffic Calming)
- Eugene, OR (Traffic Calming)
- Portland, OR (Neighborhood Greenway)
- Charlotte, NC (Neighborhood Traffic Management Program)

- Milwaukee, WI (Neighborhood Traffic Management Program)
- Saskatoon, Canada (Traffic Calming – Both Neighborhood-Driven and City-Driven)
- Toronto, Canada (Traffic Calming Program)
- Vancouver, Canada (Traffic Calming)

#### **Developing the Priority Recommendations**

TCS developed the first draft of its Priority Recommendations in December 2020; and these recommendations were refined and enhanced as each element of the SSM program was reviewed, discussed and finalized.

**TCS Priority Recommendations (see separate document)**