

June 1, 2023

To: City of Madison Transportation Commission, and  
Greater Madison MPO Policy Board

From: Ben Lyman, Transportation Planner, Greater Madison MPO

Re: Transit Development Plan Update

The Greater Madison MPO (MPO) is updating the Transit Development Plan (TDP) for Madison Metro Transit (Metro) and contracted service providers. The TDP is a five-year strategic plan designed to identify the near-term future direction of the transit system. The TDP is intended to guide the planning activities, service and facility improvements, and budgets of Metro and other transit providers. The TDP guides transit service changes to meet the goals adopted in *Connect Greater Madison 2050* Regional Transportation Plan and transit performance measures, as well as building on the foundation of the Metro Transit Network Redesign service plan adopted in 2022, including the phased implementation of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) beginning in 2023 (routes only, BRT infrastructure opens in East-West corridor in 2024).

The Greater Madison MPO, Metro Transit, and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's (WisDOT) cooperative agreement states that the Greater Madison MPO's responsibilities include:

*Preparing and updating a mid-range (5 year) Transit Development Plan (TDP) in cooperation with the Transit Operator and other providers of public transit services. The TDP shall include, but not be limited to, transit system policies and an assessment of service demands, planned transit service improvements, transit fares, and transit system capital facility needs.*

The last TDP, adopted in 2013 for the 2013-2017 period, is outdated and does not account for many critical changes in the region and in society as a whole that have subsequently occurred. These changes include: new development, including redevelopment, infill, and greenfield development; the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel patterns; the redesigned Metro transit network; BRT; or the growing awareness of the impacts of systemic racism on minority populations which have followed the murder of George Floyd and nationwide protests against institutional racism.

The City of Madison's Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) was adopted after the last TDP was adopted, making this the first TDP to require use of an equity lens in its development. However, as a largely technical document (i.e. documenting how many buses provide how much service at what cost), the adopted RESJI processes and tools are ill suited to guiding public involvement in the TDP update. MPO staff have met with RESJI staff



ph: 608.266.4336  
greatermadisonmpo.org

GREATER MADISON  
METROPOLITAN  
PLANNING ORGANIZATION

100 State St #400  
Madison, WI 53703

from other departments, including the Department of Civil Rights and the Planning Division, to discuss how best to incorporate the RESJI process into the TDP update. Staff's consensus is that the TDP should make use of one or more focus groups of individuals who are familiar with the transit system, including BIPOC individuals and persons experiencing disabilities, to gather feedback on the subjective portions of the TDP, namely recommendations for future service planning guidelines.

MPO staff propose to conduct the TDP update with support from Metro and City of Madison Department of Transportation staff. Metro Service Partners (UW-Madison, UW-Health, and partner communities) will be involved on both one-on-one and group consultations throughout the update process. Other stakeholder groups, including area communities not currently served by Metro (e.g. City of Stoughton, Village of Waunakee, Village of Cottage Grove), Dane County Dept. of Human Services, WisDOT, and the Ho-Chunk Nation will be involved through one-on-one meetings and larger meetings upon request.

The TDP is adopted by both the MPO Policy Board and by the City of Madison Common Council, upon recommendation by the Transportation Commission (TC). The MPO Policy Board and TC will both be provided with project updates to ensure policy-maker support of recommended changes to the TDP.

As noted above, the majority of the TDP is composed of analysis of past performance and projecting future trends, and is largely a technical document that does not warrant a large public involvement effort. Goals established through other recent public processes, including the City of Madison's Let's Talk Streets, Vision Zero, and Complete and Green Streets, and the MPO's Connect Greater Madison 2050 Regional Transportation Plan, will be incorporated into the TDP and no new goals will be established as part of this update. Individual service changes, such as route realignments and schedule changes, are subject to public review and comment on a case-by-case basis, and no such specific changes will be proposed as part of the TDP. The route and service performance guidelines and standards, as well as the bus stop amenities guidelines and standards, however, directly impact how service will change in the future and will be the subject of review by stakeholder groups and the RESJI focus group(s).

The TDP update will be completed during the summer and fall of 2023, with adoption of the updated plan anticipated in winter 2023.