

**CITY OF MADISON
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL
CORRESPONDENCE**

DATE: January 18, 1996

TO: CITY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: Paul J. Larrousse, Transit General Manager
Duane F. Hinz, Parking Manager
Larry D. Nelson, Interim City Traffic Engineer

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

On October 17, 1995, Ald. Ken Golden, District 10 and Chair of the Transportation Commission, presented a memorandum which outlined a possible organizational structure for the Madison Department of Transportation and proposed changes to the Transportation Commission. Subsequent to Ald. Golden's memorandum, a response was received from George Austin, Director of Planning and Development and a meeting was held between Ald. Golden and the authors of this memorandum. What follows is our response to Ald. Golden's memorandum and recommendations on how to proceed.

The approach to the organizational structure must take place on two (2) levels. The first is the staff or administrative level. The second is the commission or the policy level. Both areas need to be explored in order to provide the best transportation service delivery to the residents of Madison.

STAFF/ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The first recommendation is not to fill the Director of Transportation's position. The funds that have previously been allocated to this position primarily came from the transit and parking budgets. Transit provided 60% of the funding for the director's position. Given the need to maintain transit service in tight budget times, the City's ability to fund this position is questionable. Funding to continue a director's position would result in reducing services or a new commitment of City dollars.

During the interim period (from the Director's retirement to present), the transportation department division heads have been using a team approach to operating the department. The division heads have meetings when necessary and communicate on a regular basis. The transit manager is serving on the Mayor's Management

Team to represent transportation's interests.

During this interim period all work deadlines have been met. Staff has continued to provide service without any problem and has responded to many significant issue. Perhaps the most illustrative example of the continuation of service has been transit's response to the funding cuts it faced. Information was provided to decision makers on a timely basis and acceptable options for dealing with the situation were developed. The absence of a director did not affect this.

The second recommendation that we would make is to allow the department to continue to function on a team basis. This has proven effective during the interim period and has worked well in the Public Works Department. Having parking and transit report directly to the Mayor during the interim period has worked effectively. The transit manager's presence on the Mayor's Management Team has resulted in the uniqueness of the transit operation being expressed when policy decisions are being made.

A further advantage to using a team approach is to allow the new traffic engineer to have input into the final structure. The traffic engineer position has been vacant for seven (7) years and it has been a long time since the City has operated with this position. By not finalizing the administrative structure at this time and using the team approach, we can determine what structure would work best after some experience is garnered with the traffic engineer's position being filled. The administrative structure issue could be revisited a year to eighteen (18) months from when the traffic engineer's position is filled.

When the new traffic engineer is selected, there must be close coordination with the city engineer. The traffic engineering function and city engineering functions are dependent on each other. During the interim process, we have learned that improved communication between the two (2) divisions has resulted in a better transportation engineering product. It is important that the Transportation Commission and the Mayor require this improved level of communication and coordination.

One of the key needs identified during the reorganization study process is improving the long range transportation planning function within the City. Currently, the transit system is providing funding to both the City's Department of Planning and Development and the Dane County Regional Planning Commission in support of these agencies transportation planning function. The money provided to Planning and Development has supported the Isthmus 2020 planning and the money to RPC funds their general transportation planning efforts. These monies are provided through the transit system's FTA Section 9 planning grant.

By shifting the use of these monies, the City can develop a long range transportation planning function. The funding amounts to approximately \$100,000 (80% federal and 20% local). Other City

agencies such as the Parking Utility and the Water Utility could contribute funding which would result in more dollars being available. If this long range transportation planning function was desired, it should be housed in planning and development. An inter-agency staff team could act as a guidance team for this planning effort. This is our third recommendation.

COMMISSION/POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Using Ald. Golden's memorandum as a beginning point, we recommend a realignment of the Transportation Commission, its functions and its subcommittees.

First, the Pedestrian-Bicycle Subcommittee should be eliminated. Its functions should be incorporated into a new Pedestrian/Bicycle/Traffic Commission. This commission would handle all of the current Transportation Commission functions except parking and transit and would have the added responsibility of the Pedestrian-Bicycle Subcommittee. In terms of cross membership, the Commission ideally should have one (1) member from the Planning Commission and one (1) member from the Board of Public Works. Two (2) members should also serve on the Parking/Transit Commission which will be described below. The traffic engineer would serve as Executive Secretary of this Commission.

The second Commission would be the Parking/Transit Commission which would oversee the functions of the parking and transit utilities. The cross representation necessary for this commission would be the representation from the Pedestrian/Bicycle/Traffic Commission identified above and one (1) member from the Planning Commission. The transit general manager would serve as Executive Secretary.

The Transportation Commission/Planning Commission Subcommittee would be retained. However representation from both the Pedestrian/Bicycle/Traffic and Parking/Transit Commissions would be necessary.

The numbers of members on each of the revised commission must be decided. In addition, the nature of the representation--alder and citizens--must also be determined.

We look forward to the opportunity to discuss these recommendations with you so that we can improve transportation in Madison.

cc; Mayor Paul R. Soglin
Anne Monks, Assistant to the Mayor
George Austin, Director of Planning and Development
Brad Murphy, Planning Unit Director