



# La Crosse Area Planning Committee

*Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Serving the La Crosse/La Crescent Urbanized Area*

Peter Fletcher, Director     Jackie Eastwood, Transportation Planner  
La Crosse County Administrative Center  
212 6<sup>th</sup> Street North ☒ Room 1200 ☒ La Crosse, WI 54601-1200  
PH: 608.785.5977     Website: www.lapc.org

## LA CROSSE AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Minutes of January 20, 2021**

**Held via Microsoft Teams**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	Mike Poellinger, Martin Gaul, Kim Smith, Patrick Barlow, Monica Kruse, Tim Candahl (arr. 4:45p)
<b>MEMBERS EXCUSED:</b>	Terry Schaller, Linda Seidel, Stan Hauser, Dennis Manthei
<b>OTHERS PRESENT:</b>	Peter Fletcher, Jackie Eastwood, Steve O'Malley, Angel Much (Recorder), James Kuehn, Bob Gollnick, Olivia Herken, Stephen Flottmeyer (WisDOT)

### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mike Poellinger called the meeting to order via Microsoft Teams. Roll call was taken and a quorum was called.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no public comment.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 18, 2020 LAPC MEETING

**MOTION** by Gaul/Barlow to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2020 La Crosse Area Planning Committee meeting. **Motion carried unanimously with 5 excused: Manthei, Schaller, Seidel, Hauser, Candahl.**

### APPROVE AMENDING THE 2021-2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Fletcher advised he had sent the revised resolution and amendment in the meeting packet.

The TIP amendment includes:

- 2 MTU bus replacements (low floor diesel hybrids)
- Wisconsin TAP projects awarded last year are being added to TIP
  - Hwy 16 Veteran's Park Bridge - \$832,600
  - Multi-use trail adjacent to Hwy 16 - \$681,000
- Resolution addresses \$260,000 of Emergency Relief funding for MTU (Covid related safety improvements)
- Pages 23-28 has been rewritten incorporating performance targets approved by LAPC at the November 2020 LAPC meeting
- The required 15-day public comment period was conducted

TAC recommended approval of the TIP amendment.

**MOTION** by Kruse/Smith to approve amending the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program. **Motion carried unanimously with 5 excused: Manthei, Schaller, Seidel, Hauser, Candahl.**

### REGIONAL TRANSIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

At November meeting, the LAPC as part of the 2021 MPO work program approved \$76,250 funding for local studies to hire consultant in 2021 to develop Regional Transit Development Plan. A goal of the Transit Development Plan is to identify transit improvements that meet the travel needs of residents and visitors. This includes improving MTU, OSR, and SMRT transit services as individual agencies and improving coordination as well as interaction with human services agencies, and other transportation modes (Amtrak, Jefferson Lines, Airport, park-and-rides, etc.).



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After working with the County Finance Dept on the Request for Proposal, project bidding & procurement, and RFP was developed and put out for bid in mid-December. One qualified bid was received by SRF Consulting Group that was within the budget.

MPO staff along with representation from MTU, SMRT, and OSR reviewed the proposal and met with the consultant and are moving ahead with finalizing project details. The project will start in February and should be completed by the end of the year. The consultant will give a presentation of the project to the LAPC at the May meeting and by that time will have background information, market analysis information, and initial public input will have been received.

Questions from the committee were answered by Fletcher.

## **UPDATE ON STATUS OF THE COULEE REGION TRANSPORTATION STUDY – WI DEPT**

Fletcher explained that LAPC had updated its Metropolitan Transportation Plan last fall and within the long-range transportation plan there are numerous action items to be accomplished beginning in 2021. One of those action strategies was to facilitate discussions between WisDOT and the LAPC Policy Board to move the Coulee Region Transportation Study (CRTS) forward such that it can inform future efforts in TIP projects 243-06-012 and 243-06-013.

Fletcher advised that since the CRTS went through its planning process in 2014-2015 no final report has been presented. Based on past minutes a draft final report was forwarded to FHWA for their review in 2016 but no further action has taken place and no final report was released.

Steve Flottmeyer, WisDOT, followed with a PowerPoint presentation which provided some background on the Coulee Region Transportation Study (CRTS) and updated LAPC on the status of the study. Flottmeyer's presentation included some of the following:

Summary of past plans/studies:

- General Plan for La Crosse Area -1970
- La Crosse Area Transportation Plan – 1977
- I90 – Gillette Street – 1980s
- La Crosse River Valley Study -1997
- N/S Corridor Study -1998
- Coulee Connection – 2007
- Coulee Region Transportation Study (Planning & Environmental Linkages)– 2015
- La Crosse MPO Plans

Flottmeyer provided a brief history of the North-South Corridor and CRTS studies before going over strategies to move forward which were the following:

- H+A1: 6 Lane WIS 16 from I90 to La Crosse Street with 4 Lane on La Crosse Street.
- H+F1: Extend US 53 south, connect to WIS 35 at St. Cloud Street.
- H+F3: Extend US 53 south, use Gillette Street to connect to WIS 35 and US 53 (railroad corridor)
- H+F4: Extend US 53 south, cross WIS 35, continue south to US 14.
- H+F5: Extend US 53 south, connect to WIS 35 at Monitor Street, continue to Rose Street.
- H+E2+F5: New road from I90 to Downtown La Crosse – French Island



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Flottmeyer then provided additional details regarding Strategy H which were as follows:

- TDM (Travel Demand Management) – Park and Ride; Support flex hours; Promote rideshare
- Policy and Legislation – Support parking management strategies; complete streets, intergovernmental cooperation
- Bike and Pedestrian – Bike lanes/separated bike lanes; sidewalk/multi-use paths; Enhanced crossings at logical locations; dedicated bike lanes
- Transit – Express bus service; Support Regional Transit Authority; Bus priority signals
- TSMO (Transportation System Management, Operations and Technology) – Upgraded signals; Increased traveler information
- Improve Existing Road – Replace pavement; add bike lanes/sidewalks; Intersection improvements; Add turn lanes

Flottmeyer followed with “next steps moving forward” which is the Traffic Operational and Safety Analysis advising WisDOT doesn’t have immediate plans for a major highway project in the La Crosse Region. Although plans to reconstruct the US 53 corridor have been discussed in the past, there are no projects currently planned for the region.

WisDOT is currently conducting a safety and operations study of all north-south corridors, looking at congestion and crash rate data to help address safety concerns there. That study is vital to keeping the US 53 corridor safe, regardless of whether a major project is ever constructed. The results of the study will help determine whether the dept. will continue with previous environmental evaluations or move forward with individual improvements. That study involves the following:

- Gathering traffic volume data throughout the corridor using city provided 2019 turning movement counts; 2017 average annual daily traffic (AADT) and collect other turning movements not included in city data. New data to be adjusted based on historical traffic data resources and to be verified with future counting.
- Summary of existing roadways and bridges; updated crash information; analysis methodology and identify potential factors for observed safety and operational concerns.
- Analyzing the crash history of project roadways and intersections to determine where safety problems have been occurring.
- Analyzing the capacity of existing project roadways and intersections to determine the level of service (LOS) of the corridor. The operational analysis will include the existing conditions (2017 & 2019) and the design year (2050).
- The project will analyze future operations, safety concerns and other impacts to the local transportation system.
- No public involvement anticipated as part of this study. Public involvement would be in the next stage.



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The final slide showed the following timeline:

- Traffic Data Collection Plan – September 1, 2020
- Traffic Data Collection – October 15, 2020
- Existing Conditions Memo – February 1, 2021
- No-Build Conditions Memo – April 1, 2021
- Traffic Data Verification Collection – May 1, 2021
- Amend Memos – June 1, 2021
- Draft Safety & Operations Report – December 1, 2021
- Final Safety & Operations Report – July 1, 2022

Fletcher advised that in November 2020 the City of La Crosse passed a resolution and forwarded it to the WisDOT “Transportation Projects Commission” requesting “the Wisconsin Department of Transportation’s Transportation Projects Commission remove the currently enumerated U.S. Highway 53 corridor alternative 5B-1 of 1997 from the state’s list of major highway projects”. The resolution also referenced the six build strategies in the CRTS. Via a letter, the WisDOT Transportation Project Commission said the enumerated US Hwy 53 major project and resolution will be taken into consideration at a future meeting of the TPC.

Some committee members commented. Questions from the committee were answered by Flottmeyer.

## **FIRE/EMS STUDY**

O’Malley gave an update on the Fire/EMS Study advising the study was completed and will be presented to LAPC at the March meeting. After getting feedback and direction from the LAPC, this will also be presented to County Board the same month in order to get input from elected officials.

## **DIRECTORS REPORT**

Peter Fletcher gave his Director’s Report:

- Working with County IT updating the website and launching the new site by the end of this month
- Future meetings in-person/Teams hybrid was discussed. Committee consensus was that the next meeting should be virtual and to revisit this then.
- Town of Holland Board approved becoming a dues paying member; will formally announce at next meeting
  - In future meetings, bylaws and various agreements will have to be updated

**OTHER BUSINESS** - none noted.

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

- Fire/EMS Study consultant presentation
- 2021-2024 TIP Amendment

**NEXT MEETING DATE: March 17, 2021**

## **ADJOURN**

**MOTION** by Gaul/Barlow to adjourn the meeting at 5:29 p.m. **Motion carried unanimously with 4 excused: Schaller, Seidel, Hauser, Manthai.**



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Disclaimer: The above minutes may be approved, amended or corrected at the next committee meeting.

Recorded by Angel Much