



# La Crosse Area Planning Committee

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

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## Minutes of Committee on Transit and Active Transportation Meeting, November 8, 2018

**Minutes of the meeting of the CTAT** held on Thursday, November 8, 2018 at 3:00 pm in room 1107 of the La Crosse County Administrative Center, 212 6<sup>th</sup> St N, La Crosse, WI.

**Members Present:** Susan Lundsten, Krista Heinz, Francis Schelfhout, Kurt Wayne, Sandy Sechrest, Cathy Van Maren, Carolyn Dvorak, Peter Fletcher, Jim Longhurst, Rick Diermeier, Adam Lorentz, Bob Fisher, Jackie Eastwood. **Excused:** Ginny Loehr, Steve Johnson, Linda Larson. **Others Present:** None.

Jackie Eastwood called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm.

### 1) Approval of minutes of the September 13, 2018 CTAT Meeting:

*Sandy Sechrest motioned to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2018 meeting; Rick Diermeier seconded. All others were in favor.*

### 2) Approval of Wagon Wheel Trail connection to La Crosse:

Jackie Eastwood stated that Don Smith from La Crescent got a group together to develop a connection between the Wagon Wheel Trail in La Crescent and the City of La Crosse. The purpose was to identify the improvements needed along USH 14/61. Ms. Eastwood presented the map with the proposed improvements. Jim Longhurst voiced concern that the proposal didn't address the long-term for the Cass St bridge or current bicycling practice. Francis Schelfhout responded that the group put together a general routing plan that could be referenced when applying for grants. After additional discussion, the members present agreed that a long-term consideration for the Cass St bridge be added to the proposal.

*Rick Diermeier motioned to approve the presented proposal for the Wagon Wheel connection to La Crosse with the addition of a long-term recommendation for the Cass St bridge to accommodate westbound bicyclists; Jim Longhurst seconded.*

Kurt Wayne and Francis Schelfhout wanted to iterate that they support the routing, but they are not speaking for their respective DOTs.

*With a motion on the table, Francis Schelfhout abstained (non-voting member) and all others were in favor.*

Jackie Eastwood stated that the next step would be for the City's BPAC to approve the proposal.

### 3) Update on new MTU Circulator route and AVL implementation:

Adam Lorentz stated that since September ridership on the new circulator is already up 20% over the old circulator, which had operated for three years. He hears nothing but positive feedback, except riders would like to see Saturday and Sunday service. He hopes that ridership keeps growing so that MTU can expand service to the weekend. He has been reaching out to the business community to promote lunch-hour usage and the Work Pass Program.

Mr. Lorentz stated that implementation of AVL is taking a bit longer than originally planned, but MTU wants to make sure that the system will be compatible with the new buses that are coming and that MTU can grow with the technology. They want to get it right the first time.

Jim Longhurst voiced his disappointment with the University and the missed opportunities for providing better transit access to its students.

**4) Announcement of MTU Open House:**

Adam Lorentz announced the MTU Open House to be held at the Grand River Station transit center next week on Wednesday, November 14 from 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm. Because MTU didn't use much of its advertising budget this year, he has a healthy budget to promote the event which will include a full-page ad in the Tribune. He recognizes that the biggest barrier will be to get first-time riders on the bus, so staff will be on hand to talk about how to use the system and will be handing out free passes.

**5) Sierra Club *Arrive Together* report:**

Jackie Eastwood stated that this item is just an FYI. The link to the document was sent out with the agenda. Cathy Van Maren stated that the Sierra Club has been working on this report, which talks about how things can be a lot better for a lot of people if there was more funding for transit, for the last couple of years. The Sierra Club held a press conference at the transit center on October 23 to advertise the report.

Jackie Eastwood added that she had been interviewed by Wisconsin Public Radio, but the soundbites they used sounded bad. She was trying to make the link to land use policies and our low densities, but it didn't come out well.

**6) Other updates and information items:**

Jackie Eastwood informed the committee that the Director of the MPO, Tom Faella is retiring and that his last day is December 14. Unless the MPO needs to take action on a pressing matter like a TIP amendment, we will likely postpone having meetings until a new director is hired.

Peter Fletcher provided an update on the SMRT Bus. He stated that ridership is up 9.2% over last year and that the City of Prairie du Chien would no longer be the sponsor for that service. La Crosse County, as the central hub for the service, will be taking over that duty in 2019. Because of the change in administration, the service had to be re-bid. Two companies submitted proposals and Running, Inc was awarded the contract. They are looking to add a mid-day service to the Tomah route and incorporate a card-swipe pass system in 2019. They are also looking at an electric bus, but there are concerns with the length of the routes for recharging and the terrain.

Jim Longhurst stated that there seems to be a lot of confusion over the new bump-outs and sharrows installed on Cass St. Jackie Eastwood stated that she had e-mailed Matt Gallager about the placement of the sharrows. Carolyn Dvorak commented that she biked part of the new section and that she feels safer without the markings than with the markings the way they were installed. The consensus was that the bicycle accommodations were not installed correctly. Concerns should be directed to Matt Gallager.

Francis Schelfhout stated that the Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MRPC) passed a resolution that included a clause to pursue a Mississippi River Trail route through the City of La Crosse that is closer to the river. [The City of La Crosse signed an MRT through the city that follows the road network on the eastern side of the city and the western side of the bluffs. This is not an official MRT route.] The resolution supports the idea of where to route the MRT through Wisconsin in the future. Statewide signing will require legislative action. The CTAT will propose the steps for routing along the regional route 1 and then Francis will report back to the MRPC.

**7) Future agenda items:**

None suggested.

**8) Other business; Adjourn; Next meeting to be announced:**

*Sandy Sechrest motioned to adjourn at 4:12 pm; Bob Fisher seconded. All others were in favor.*